

# The role of Security and the Fourth International in the fight for the continuity of the International Committee of the Fourth International

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*The following lecture was delivered by Eric London, a leading member of the Socialist Equality Party (US), to the SEP (US) International Summer School, held between July 30 and August 4, 2023.*

*The opening report by WSWs International Editorial Board Chairman and SEP National Chairman David North, “Leon Trotsky and the Struggle for Socialism in the Epoch of Imperialist War and Socialist Revolution,” was published on August 7.*

*The second lecture, “The Historical and Political Foundations of the Fourth International,” was published on August 14.*

*The third lecture, “The Origins of Pabloite Revisionism, the Split Within the Fourth International and the Founding of the International Committee,” was published on August 18.*

*The fourth lecture, “The Cuban Revolution and the SLL’s opposition to the unprincipled Pabloite reunification of 1963,” was published on August 25.*

*The fifth lecture, “The ‘Great Betrayal’ in Ceylon, the formation of the American Committee for the Fourth International, and the founding of the Workers League,” was published on August 30.*

*The sixth lecture, “The continuing struggle against Pabloism, the centrism of the OCI and the emerging crisis within the ICFI,” was published on September 6.*

*The seventh lecture, “The ICFI’s exposure of Ernest Mandel’s ‘neo-capitalism’ and the analysis of the global economic crisis: 1967–1971,” was published on September 8.*

*The eighth lecture, “Wohlforth’s renegacy, the renewal of the struggle against Pabloism in the Workers League, and the turn to the working class,” was published on September 13.*

*The WSWs will be publishing all of the lectures in the coming weeks.*

In the spring of 1974, Tim Wohlforth, then-national secretary of the Workers League, traveled to England for the Fifth World Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), attended by delegates of international sections and sympathizing groups. Some of those attending the conference were living under military dictatorships, including Franco’s Spain, where the penalty for revolutionary activity could be death.

Wohlforth had recently started a relationship with a young member of the Workers League, Nancy Fields, whom he decided to take with him to attend the congress despite her lack of political experience and interest in Marxism. Though he initially denied it, Wohlforth would soon admit that he knew at that time that Nancy Fields had close family connections to leading members of the Central Intelligence Agency. He did not inform the IC comrades of her ties in advance of the congress in London, and he

did not seek to obtain a security clearance for her to attend.

The meeting took place under conditions of an extraordinary political crisis with serious security implications for the party and all those in attendance. In February 1974, the coal miners had launched a strike and the Tory government of Edward Heath called a general election that same month based on a direct appeal to crush the working class, under the slogan, “Who governs Britain?”

Harold Wilson and the Labour Party won the election, and the British intelligence agencies quickly began preparing what we now know was called Operation “Clockwork Orange” to prepare a possible coup, fearful that Wilson would be unable to contain the growth of the class struggle. Troops were mobilized to seize Heathrow Airport and a disinformation campaign was initiated claiming Wilson was a Soviet spy.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) was under heavy surveillance at the time Fields traveled with Wohlforth to the conference in London. Contemporaneous reports from MI5 and the Metropolitan police released through the British Undercover Policing Inquiry show party offices were bugged and police agents were being placed throughout the party to report on the WRP’s activities.

Newly released documents show the WRP was referenced in the National Public Order Intelligence Unit’s so-called Special Demonstration Squad’s reports in 1973, 1974 and 1975, and that several police agents were providing detailed information about party members, their private lives, internal disputes, plans for campaigns and initiatives, and other party matters during this time. From other sources, evidently in WRP leadership positions, the police were kept informed of the content of political committee meetings.<sup>[2]</sup>

Examples of titles of police reports regarding rank-and-file party members include “report concerning upcoming marriage of the secretary of the Little Ilford branch of the Workers Revolutionary Party,” “report concerning meeting of Highbury section of Hackney branch of Workers Revolutionary Party,” “report concerning details of the pregnancy of national organizer of young socialist section of Workers Revolutionary Party,” etc.

Under these conditions, Wohlforth and Fields traveled to Britain and attended the IC conference together without informing anyone of her ties to the CIA.

Throughout 1974, Fields, with Wohlforth’s support, was playing a destructive role in the Workers League. A deeply subjective person who promoted herself as an organizational wiz, Fields was rapidly elevated to political leadership through her personal relationship with the national secretary. She and Wohlforth traveled the country in a sports car paid for with party money, barking orders at party members and driving them out.

One Workers League member said of her attitude toward the cadre that “she treated us like dogs.”

The party was in a serious crisis. Wohlforth admitted to Healy that from 1973 to mid-1974, 100 people left the movement, including half the National Committee and Political Committee.

He wrote to Healy on July 19, 1974, “We are, of course, very much of a skeletal movement these days with very good work carried on by very, very few people in many areas. We are virtually wiped out as far as intellectuals are concerned—one big bastardly desertion. What is done on this front I have to do along with Nancy.”

The crisis in the Workers League grew more urgent and exploded to the surface at the Workers League summer camp held that August. Two weeks before the school, Wohlforth was called to travel to England to discuss the crisis in the Workers League. By this time, reports of Fields’ extremely subjective and hostile attitude had reached the leadership of the IC.

At a meeting of the WRP Political Committee on August 18, 1974, Healy confronted Wohlforth about Fields’ rapid rise to authority and asked if Wohlforth had any reason to suspect that she might be connected to the Central Intelligence Agency. Healy expressed a particular concern about her attendance at the Fifth Congress of the IC that spring. Given her wrecking activities in the US, Fields’ attendance seemed politically inexplicable. This was the period of COINTELPRO, and it was public knowledge that the FBI and other domestic surveillance agencies flooded left-wing and anti-war groups with agents whose responsibility was to wreak havoc on their target organizations.

Wohlforth replied that he did not have any reason to suspect she had connections to the CIA.

But within two weeks, information would become available to the IC making clear that she did have such connections. She had been raised and financially supported since childhood by her uncle, Albert Morris, a high-level operative of the Central Intelligence Agency, who was in charge of the agency’s IBM computer division and was a close personal friend of CIA Director Richard Helms, who was a frequent guest at Morris’s home when Fields was growing up.<sup>[3]</sup>

Helms was personally implicated in a massive domestic surveillance operation against over 10,000 socialists, left-wing and anti-war activists at precisely this time. According to a December 1974 report from Seymour Hersh in the *New York Times*:

As part of its alleged effort against dissident Americans in the late nineteen-sixties and early nineteen-seventies, the CIA authorized agents to follow and photograph participants in anti-war and other demonstrations. The CIA also set up a network of informants who were ordered to penetrate antiwar groups.<sup>[4]</sup>

A summer camp of the Workers League had been scheduled in Canada for the end of August, and it soon became clear that Wohlforth had done practically nothing to prepare it. Cliff Slaughter, who had been present from the start of the camp, appealed to Healy to fly over to respond to the crisis. The Workers League was on the verge of collapse. At the school, when confronted about Fields, Wohlforth admitted that he *had* been aware of her family connections to the CIA, though he said he felt they were “unimportant.”

The relationship of this omission to the crisis that had been building up within the party was becoming clear. On August 31, 1974, the Workers League Central Committee voted to remove Wohlforth as national secretary and to suspend Fields from membership, pending the outcome of an investigation by a control commission into Fields’ family ties. The

votes were unanimous, with both Wohlforth and Fields voting in favor. The Workers League established a two-person control commission to investigate the charges, and the commission planned to interview both Wohlforth and Fields as a part of the investigation.

Both subsequently refused to participate in the control commission in any way, rejecting requests for interviews and failing to submit written explanations about Fields’ connections to the CIA. A month later, at the end of September, Wohlforth left the movement. In his September 29, 1974 resignation letter, he suddenly declared:

I am completely and utterly opposed to the proceedings and decisions of the Central Committee meeting held on August 31st at our camp at the request and in conjunction with the International Committee comrades. I believe this meeting represented a serious setback in the construction of the revolutionary party in the United States and in the construction of the revolutionary party on a worldwide basis.

Wohlforth continued:

I was removed as National Secretary under conditions of a completely hysterical meeting, on the basis of charges of a completely slanderous nature, in the middle of the night at a camp so that there had been no, absolutely no, prior discussion of the questions in the Political Committee, the Central Committee and the whole party.<sup>[5]</sup>

Wohlforth did not, of course, acknowledge that the reason there had been absolutely no discussion before the camp about Fields was that he himself had covered up her ties to the CIA for so long. He called concerns over her CIA connections “unsubstantiated, ludicrous and absurd,” and said “the procedure in this matter is monstrous. The reputation of a comrade is in any event irreparably damaged by making such a charge...”<sup>[6]</sup>

Wohlforth declared any investigation of Fields would be an “inquisition” and a “witch-hunt,” and then said, “I would suggest the place to find agents in the Workers League is among those who spread scandal against the leaders of the League and not among those who are the victims of the slander. So it was in the days of the Fourth International under Trotsky.”<sup>[7]</sup> This claim, as we will review, was 100 percent false.

Cliff Slaughter, writing on behalf of the International Committee, responded to Wohlforth in a letter dated October 6, 1974. The reasons for Wohlforth’s resignation, Slaughter wrote, were “totally unacceptable in our movement, and misrepresent completely the proceedings of the Central Committee of the Workers League on August 30 and 31.”<sup>[8]</sup>

Slaughter explained, “You were removed as Secretary by unanimous decision of your own Central Committee. ... The reason for this decision was your own action at the IC Conference in April [sic] 1974. You permitted that Conference, with comrades present from countries where they work illegally, to complete its work in the presence of Nancy Fields, one of your delegation, whom you knew to have had very close family connections with the CIA. Neither you nor she brought this question before the committee so that it could be investigated and cleared.”<sup>[9]</sup>

Slaughter demanded that Wohlforth withdraw his claim that the commission of inquiry was an “inquisition” set up to “dig up” evidence against Fields. He took Wohlforth up for the latter’s complaint that the Workers League’s Central Committee voted to suspend Nancy Fields “only because of the intervention of the IC.”

He wrote:

As a comrade who has had to fight against the anti-internationalism of Cannon and Hansen, then Robertson, you must surely pull up sharp when you re-read these words. ... With such an appeal, you deny your own past struggles and appeal to the worst elements around the movement, and particularly to the hostile groups waiting to attack and destroy it. Every rotten petty-bourgeois revisionist concentrates his attack on the alleged authoritarianism of the IC and defends his national independence.

At this late hour, Comrade Wohlforth, we call upon you to reconsider and immediately change your position. It is not too late. You are called upon to resume immediately the leading responsibilities to the Workers League and the IC and collaborate in the work of the inquiry. ... Only in this way can you prepare to resume your positions in the leadership.<sup>[11]</sup>

On November 9, the Commission of Inquiry published its findings. The report explained that Wohlforth and Fields “refused to collaborate with the inquiry, placing their personal considerations above the decisions of the party, a position which is impermissible.”

The commission concluded that Tim Wohlforth “did withhold information vital to the security of the IC and its 1974 conference.” It explained that it took the statements of 22 members and ex-members and as a result:

The inquiry established that from the age of 12 until the completion of her university education, NF was brought up, educated and financially supported by her aunt and uncle, Albert and Gigs Morris. Albert Morris is the head of the CIA’s IBM computer operation in Washington as well as being a large stockholder in IBM. He was a member of the OSS, forerunner of the CIA, and worked in Poland as an agent of imperialism. During the 1960s a frequent house guest at their home in Maine was Richard Helms, ex-director of the CIA and now US Ambassador in Iran.<sup>[12]</sup>

Regarding Nancy Fields, the Commission explained:

We found that the record of NF in the party was that of a highly unstable person who never broke from the opportunist method of middle-class radicalism. She adopted administrative and completely subjective methods of dealing with political problems. These methods were extremely destructive, especially in the most decisive field of the building of leadership. Tim Wohlforth was fully aware of this instability, and bears the responsibility for bringing NF into leadership. He found himself left in an isolated position in which he eventually concealed Nancy Fields’ previous CIA connections from the IC. He bears clear political responsibility for this.<sup>[13]</sup>

The Commission then held:

After interviewing and investigating all the available material, there is no evidence to suggest that NF or TW is in any way

connected with the work of the CIA or any other government agency. The inquiry took into account TW’s many years of struggle for the party and the IC, often under very difficult conditions, and urged him to correct his individualist and pragmatist mistakes and return to the party.

We recommend that TW, once he withdraws his resignation from the Workers League, returns to the leading committees and to his work on the *Bulletin*, and has the right to be nominated to any position, including that of National Secretary, at the forthcoming National Conference early in 1975.

We recommend the immediate lifting of the suspension of NF, with the condition that she is not permitted to hold any office in the Workers League for two years.<sup>[14]</sup>

The Commission concluded:

The inquiry urgently draws the attention of all sections to the necessity of constant vigilance on matters of security. Our movement has great opportunities for growth in every country because of the unprecedented class struggles which must erupt from the world capitalist crisis. This situation also means that the counterrevolutionary activities of the CIA and all imperialist agencies against us will be intensified. It is a basic revolutionary duty to pay constant and detailed attention to these security matters as part of the turn to the masses for the building of revolutionary parties.<sup>[15]</sup>

Before addressing the response of the revisionist and Pabloite organizations, it is first necessary to make a number of points about the control commission itself. For all the attacks on the Workers League and IC for “hysteria,” the control commission conducted its work responsibly and without any panic whatsoever. In contrast to control commissions held by the SWP in the years after Trotsky’s assassination, it told the truth to the membership. It offered Wohlforth and Fields both the opportunity to participate in the inquiry and to rejoin the movement after it had concluded. It did not bar either from occupying leadership positions, even indicating that Wohlforth could run for national secretary again in the immediate future. Fields was barred from occupying a leadership position for two years, but was also given every chance to continue work. The Workers League did not remove them from membership, they removed themselves.

None of this mattered to the revisionist groups, which used Wohlforth and Fields’ attack on the IC and Workers League to launch a campaign aimed at discrediting and destroying the party. Within a few months, the national secretary of the Workers League who had helped found the American Committee for the Fourth International in 1964 announced he had re-joined the Pabloite movement, almost overnight.

The depth of the subjectivism he and Fields both evinced in this struggle is a bitter lesson for the movement. Political subjectivism, based on the elevation of personal interests above those of the working class, are totally incompatible with revolutionary socialist politics. We do not tolerate such an approach. We are not a party for careerists and self-promoters, who use personal relationships to cultivate cliques, which Trotsky characterized as “circle chumminess, you for me and me for you.” In *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, written about the 1939-40 split with Shachtman, Aberg and Burnham, James Cannon wrote:

The petty-bourgeois intellectual, who wants to teach and guide

the labor movement without participating in it, feels only loose ties to it and is always full of “grievances” against it. The moment his toes are stepped on, or he is rebuffed, he forgets all about the interests of the movement and remembers only that his feelings have been hurt; the revolution may be important, but the wounded vanity of a petty-bourgeois intellectual is more important.<sup>[16]</sup>

In February and March 1975, Joseph Hansen praised Wohlforth for his decision to leave the Workers League, and the SWP’s weekly publication, *Intercontinental Press*, published Wohlforth’s denunciations of the movement.

On March 22, 1975, the Workers League responded to Wohlforth’s attacks on the party, writing:

The CIA is not an incidental question for our movement, but a question of indispensable tasks flowing from the principles of the construction of revolutionary parties of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Only someone who fails to take at all seriously the building of the world party of socialist revolution can dismiss the question of security against the CIA, the international center of the counterrevolutionary plans of the imperialists.<sup>[17]</sup>

On March 31, 1975, Joseph Hansen issued his infamous denunciation of the IC and his defense of Wohlforth, the man who had been his political opponent for 14 years and whom he had helped expel from the SWP over a decade earlier. Hansen wrote that Wohlforth’s “sincerity is undeniable and one can only wish him better luck in his next venture.” Attacking Gerry Healy, Hansen wrote:

Wohlforth describes Healy’s performance as “madness.” Would it not be preferable, and perhaps more precise, to use a modern term like “paranoia?”

If the term fits, then the true explanation for Healy’s obsessions about CIA agents, police agents, and plots against his life, as well as his rages, “extreme reactions,” and strange version of dialectics is to be sought not in his politics, philosophical methodology, or models like Pablo or Cannon, but in the workings of a mind best understood by psychiatrists.<sup>[18]</sup>

This statement, and the coordinated attack on the IC that was then unfolding, had profound significance, which the International Committee immediately recognized. Joseph Hansen had been Trotsky’s guard in Coyoacan. He was present at the August 20, 1940 assassination, which was carried out as a result of the infiltration of Trotsky’s compound and of the SWP in the United States by Stalin’s GPU. By 1975, it was public knowledge that Mark Zborowski, Lev Sedov’s right-hand man in Paris, had infiltrated the movement and played a critical role in the assassination of Trotsky and Sedov, as well as GPU defector Ignatz Reiss, Erwin Wolf and Rudolph Klement, secretary of the Fourth International. No revolutionary who had lived through this period of disastrous breakdowns in security would refer to security concerns as “paranoia.” The IC recognized in Hansen’s words and actions a deliberate effort to disorient the revolutionary movement and create a climate of violent hostility to the International Committee.

The IC replied to Hansen in a statement published in April 1975.

The statement addresses the very essence of what makes a revolutionary

party:

Security is not an abstract or secondary question. A party that is not founded on revolutionary discipline in its own ranks cannot command the support of the working class in confronting the capitalist state machine, overthrowing it, and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The IC statement continued, noting that Hansen’s attack on the Workers League and the IC “enables us to reopen vital pages in the history of Trotskyism.”

It stated: “We are obliged to present this history, warts and all, since our movement has in the past paid a terrible price when it has ignored and derided security training in its ranks. These are the pages that Hansen wants to suppress.”

The International Committee “is not going to be intimidated by the shouts and screams of the revisionists,” the statement read.

They can call us “sectarians” and “paranoids” until they are blue in the face. In using these labels, they are in fact attacking the IC’s fight for principles and its attention to discipline and security vigilance in our ranks. We are not building a bucket shop for middle class free-booters and adventurers, which is the hallmark of Hansen’s international groupings. That road is an open invitation to the CIA and penetration by the police, because it is precisely among such elements that the police agencies operate so breezily. Hansen wants to hide the security question; we want to elevate it in the training and building of our movement. That is why we feel it necessary to reopen the pages of the history of Trotskyism to explain the background of why action was taken against Wohlforth and why similar steps will be taken again in the future if the necessity arises.<sup>[19]</sup>

Re-opening the pages of history required, first and foremost, addressing the events leading up to Trotsky’s death.

The assassination of Leon Trotsky was the most consequential political assassination of the 20th century. It was the criminal culmination of the GPU conspiracy spanning many years and many continents, involving countless agents and almost endless resources. It was the highest expression of the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinist reaction.

It was the product of the Great Terror, the pre-emptive civil war through which Stalin and the bureaucratic caste liquidated generations of socialists and leading figures in intellectual, scientific and cultural life. Hundreds of thousands of opponents of the regime and sympathizers of the Left Opposition and Fourth International were murdered.

The bulk of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, including almost all the old Bolsheviks, were killed. Ninety percent of the leadership of the Red Army was murdered. Revolutionaries were jailed and tortured in dungeons across Spain, where the Stalinists suffocated the revolution and paved the way for Franco. An entire section of Lubianka, the headquarters of the GPU, was set up to plan Trotsky’s assassination. The cultural and political impact of the Great Terror is still felt today.

1975 was only 35 years after Trotsky’s assassination. At that time, a limited amount was known about how the GPU killed Trotsky, although the SWP published Trotskyist lawyer Albert Goldman’s pamphlet *The Assassination of Leon Trotsky: The Proofs of Stalin’s Guilt* less than two months after the assassination.

When arrested, the assassin was using the name Frank Jacson. His true

name, Ramon Mercader, was finally made public in 1950 due to the work of Mexican criminologist Alfonzo Quiroz Cuaron, who would later be interviewed by David North as part of the investigation the IC was about to launch.

That little was done after the publication of Goldman's pamphlet to uncover the facts surrounding Trotsky's assassination was due largely to the role played by the Socialist Workers Party in the US, the party that had been responsible for ensuring Trotsky's security in Mexico. As a result of this, figures like Mark Zborowski and Sylvia Callen continued their work within the movement for many years, passing on to the GPU every piece of information that came across the desk of James P Cannon. Sylvia Callen and then Sylvia Ageloff walked away from politics and lived long and comfortable lives.

At the Sixth Congress of the International Committee, held at the end of May 1975, the IC initiated the Security and the Fourth International investigation. On May 29, immediately after the congress adjourned, Cliff Slaughter wrote to Hansen proposing to the Pabloite United Secretariat, with which the SWP was affiliated, the establishment of a parity control commission to investigate state penetration of the workers movement. The proposal was not made from the standpoint of papering over the political differences between the Pabloites and the IC, and it was not a step toward reunification. Rather, it was an attempt to find common ground for investigating questions of party history and party security, issues which any socialist would have recognized as necessary subjects of investigation, especially in light of recent revelations about state surveillance.

This offer was immediately rejected by Hansen in a letter of June 5, 1975, which exemplified the cynicism that characterized his work. Hansen mocked the signature Slaughter had affixed to his letter proposing the parity commission, joking that it indicated Slaughter was himself an agent.

Hansen wrote, "I am sure that your Central Committee, in view of its expertise in such matters, will acknowledge the necessity to be alert to seemingly insignificant clues like these. They can lead to identifying an agent planted in the organization by the police or the CIA. ... Perhaps this will help you locate the police agent if it was written by one." [20]

It is notable that Wohlforth concluded his September 29, 1974 statement by making a similar inference.

The IC published the initial findings of Security and the Fourth International in a series of 19 articles in the WRP's publication, the *Workers Press*, in August and September of 1975.

The findings documented how the SWP had systematically covered up the role of GPU agents in its midst. It also included the publication of documents from the National Archives showing that Joseph Hansen had initiated a relationship with the US State Department and FBI beginning days after Trotsky's death.

Here we can only briefly summarize all of the documents published by Security and the Fourth International related to Hansen's meetings with the US government. These meetings were carefully followed in the highest levels of the state, including by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Hansen's points of contact included leading men such as George P. Shaw, Robert McGregor and B.E. Sackett.

During his first meeting, Hansen provided the government with information surrounding Trotsky's assassination. At this time, Hansen communicated to the US government that he had met, in 1938, with agents of Stalin's secret police. McGregor's report, from the August 31, 1940 meeting, notes that Hansen said "he was himself approached by an agent of the GPU and asked to desert the Fourth International and join the Third." The report states that Hansen met with a GPU handler named "John," aka Dr. Gregory Rabinowitz, GPU spy ringleader in New York, for three months. [21]

Hansen provided the US government with copies of the unpublished

writings of Trotsky, a copy of the "W" Memorandum—a list of names of GPU agents the SWP had received from ex-Communist Party member Whittaker Chambers—and information regarding the SWP's internal investigation into the assassination of Trotsky.

The Security and the Fourth International investigation would also reveal that on September 25, 1940, the American consul to Mexico, George P. Shaw, wrote to top State Department official Raymond E. Murphy that Joseph Hansen "wants to be put in touch with someone" in order to pass on "confidential information ... with impunity." FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover responded positively and encouraged his men to follow up with Hansen, writing on October 1, "Should Hansen call at the New York Office, he should be handled tactfully and all information which he can supply and his assistance in this investigation should be obtained." [22]

None of this was known by any leading member of the SWP, as the Security and the Fourth International investigation would later establish. Hansen's justifications for both his FBI and GPU meetings were also revealed to be false. Hansen's absence from the list of 29 SWP leaders prosecuted by the Roosevelt administration for sedition in 1941 is explained only by the relationship he had initiated with the state. The IC has since established that prosecutors based their case on the proximity of the SWP to Trotsky in Mexico, and introduced every piece of evidence they could get their hands on showing the closeness of the SWP to Trotsky in Coyoacan.

Hansen, who was there for three years, would have been critical to establish this connection. However, Hoover was primarily concerned with the possibility that his agents would be exposed during the trial. At one point in the trial, the prosecutor mentioned Hansen in passing, referring to him as "Joe."

The International Committee did not accuse Hansen of being an agent when it initiated Security and the Fourth International. The IC instead charged Hansen and the SWP "with criminal negligence in relation to the security implications of the death of Trotsky and the tasks of revolutionary security in relation to the defense of the Fourth International." Hansen and George Novack "have covered up the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Trotsky," the IC wrote. "They have remained silent about the Stalinist agents who penetrated their own ranks. This has not been an oversight. It is a conscious and deliberate policy." [23]

Hansen was responsible not only for covering up his own ties to the GPU and FBI, but also for covering up for other GPU agents working within the Fourth International. They included:

(1) Mark Zborowski, whose perjury trial in 1958 the SWP had failed to cover in the *Militant*.

(2) Sylvia Callen (Caldwell or Franklin), who had served as Cannon's secretary for nine years and who was reported to have been a GPU agent by Louis Budenz, first in 1947 and then more explicitly in 1950. The SWP had been provided incontrovertible evidence of her role in March 1947 due to a tip from Max Shachtman and Albert Glotzer, but covered up her role in a phony control commission held that May.

(3) The Soblevicius brothers, Jack Soble and Robert Soblen, who had first served as agents within the Left Opposition in Germany in the early 1930s, using the names Senin and Well, and later spied on the Trotskyist movement in the United States after having immigrated to the US. Sylvia Callen had also been named as an unindicted co-conspirator in 1960 when Robert Soblen was prosecuted for atomic espionage. Again, Hansen and the SWP refused to cover Soblen's trial, which confirmed his role in surveilling the Trotskyist movement and concluded with his conviction in 1961.

(4) Floyd Cleveland Miller, a prominent ex-SWP member, was also listed as an unindicted GPU co-conspirator in the Soblen case and testified that he provided information to the GPU about Trotskyist merchant marines on ships bound for the Soviet Union.

(5) Thomas Black, a Stalinist agent who testified before a Senate

committee in 1956, revealed that there were a number of GPU agents operating in Trotsky's household in Mexico. The SWP never conducted any investigation into Black's testimony.

(6) Robert Sheldon Harte, who would later be revealed as a GPU agent in the Venona Papers, was the guard who allowed the assassination team led by David Alfaro Siqueiros to enter Trotsky's compound on May 24, 1940. He was killed by the GPU to prevent him from talking.

(7) Though it was not raised as prominently in 1975, we can now add Sylvia Ageloff to this list. Ageloff's public 1950 testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities also received no attention in the SWP press. In a February 15, 1941 article in the *Militant*, Hansen referred to Ageloff as having been "known to Trotsky's friends for years as dependable and loyal," helping to establish the myth of "poor Sylvia."

Notably, during the trial of Robert Soblen, GPU spymaster Jack Soble testified that he had 10 agents operating within the Trotskyist movement under his control. Six had been named publicly, but not the other four. The SWP leadership was uninterested in discovering who the other agents were, in no small part because Hansen himself was one of them.

In August 1975, Comrade North located Zborowski outside his home in San Francisco, where he lived in comfortable semiretirement after holding a professorship at UC Berkeley's anthropology department.

North photographed Zborowski with his wife Regina. Zborowski attacked North while Regina threatened, "You can do nothing with these pictures if you know what's good for you." Hansen called the investigation of Zborowski a "dry well."<sup>[24]</sup>

But Hansen's response to the call for a parity commission only raised further questions about the role he was playing. In the November 24, 1975 edition of *Intercontinental Press* Hansen again rejected the call for a parity commission into security and the circumstances of Trotsky's assassination. He denounced Security and the Fourth International as a "geyser of mud" and brazenly defended Sylvia Callen, Robert Sheldon Harte and Sylvia Ageloff.

Of Franklin-Caldwell-Callen, he wrote: "Sylvia Caldwell, (that was her party name) worked very hard in her rather difficult assignment of managing the office of the Socialist Workers Party, which included helping Cannon in a secretarial capacity. In fact all the comrades who shared these often irksome chores with her regarded her as exemplary. They burned as much as she did over the foul slanders spread by Budenz."<sup>[25]</sup>

He defended Harte as a victim of malicious attacks and innocent of the charges of having been a GPU agent, though this has now been definitively proven. Notably, Hansen also presented Ageloff as an innocent victim.

"The odor of the old GPU slanders against Harte, we see, still persists in the headquarters of the Workers Revolutionary Party," he wrote. "There is no thought there that Harte might have been victimized by Jacson the way Sylvia Ageloff was victimized. There is no admission there of the possibility that Harte could have been deluded into taking Jacson as a trusted friend just as Ageloff, who fell in love with Jacson, was deluded into believing that her love was reciprocated."<sup>[26]</sup>

Hansen called Ageloff "a trusted member of the Trotskyist movement who did not have the faintest idea of his real identity,"<sup>[27]</sup> repeating the claim he first published in 1941. In so doing, he helped solidify the myth of "poor Sylvia," which we have now established to have been concocted to protect her and shield the GPU network behind her and Mercader.

In the December 8, 1975 edition of *Intercontinental Press*, leading SWP member George Novack, who helped Zborowski enter the United States during World War Two and had covered up this fact for 30 years, attacked Healy's "reckless and indiscriminate allegations" against "Sylvia Caldwell, Cannon's secretary," writing that "anything goes in his frantic endeavors to cast a net of suspicion around Joseph Hansen and his colleagues."<sup>[28]</sup>

On December 23, 1975, Trotsky's former guard Harold Robins published an open letter to the National Committee of the SWP, the organization to which he had belonged. Robins, who would accompany Comrade North on two trips to Mexico City to reconstruct the attacks on Trotsky's life, demanded that the SWP repudiate Hansen's November 24, 1975 article. Robins wrote to the SWP:

The role of labor spies, of the frame-up of trade union militants and the hounding to death of social opponents of capitalism at the hands of the capitalist and pre-capitalist states runs back through the entire course of class society. Always—without any exception—the question of "security" necessarily had to be on the agenda for rebels and revolutionaries. Comrade Hansen's views take a diametrically opposite "line." Can you continue to go along with that policy?<sup>[29]</sup>

The SWP did not answer this letter. In January 1976, the International Committee issued a public indictment of Hansen, calling him an "accomplice of the GPU." Shortly thereafter, in early 1976, the SWP published a collection of essays memorializing the life of James P. Cannon, who had died in August 1974, in which Joseph Hansen's wife, Reba Hansen, referred to Callen as someone whose "devotion to the movement and her readiness to put in long hours of hard work inspired us all. Sylvia and I became close collaborators and good personal friends. She was a warm human being."<sup>[30]</sup>

Not only did the SWP reject the call for a parity commission, it mobilized the world Pabloite movement against the International Committee. In September 1976, they published a phony "verdict" declaring Hansen and Novack innocent.

In December 1976, the SWP published a pamphlet titled "Healy's Big Lie," which began with an introduction from Wohlforth calling Security and the Fourth International a "bizarre witch-hunt Healy launched against Nancy Fields, charging her with being a 'CIA agent.' When Fields stood up to Healy's bullying and I supported her, we were denounced in hysterical terms."<sup>[31]</sup> This was, of course, a total falsification of how they left the movement.

In the SWP press, Wohlforth praised Hansen and deepened his attacks on the IC. He wrote, "Having already begun to reconsider a number of political questions, Nancy Fields and I were impressed by Hansen's evaluation. This opened up a process of discussion and collaboration which led us to join the Socialist Workers Party at the beginning of 1976." He concluded, "The resemblance between Healy's methods and those of Stalin in the Moscow Trials is striking." He called Hansen a "selfless revolutionist."<sup>[32]</sup>

Wohlforth and Fields' rapid entry into the SWP raises questions about Fields' political past. She had boasted that she was close to the Black Panthers and told the *Militant* that when she was attending Western Reserve University in Cleveland, she "went to some classes a YSA member, John McCann, was giving on campus." In this interview, published May 7, 1976, she said that throughout her time in the Workers League, she "always liked Fred Halsted," the SWP's presidential candidate in 1968, and "thought the Linda Jenness campaign was important."<sup>[33]</sup> Jenness was the SWP's candidate for president in 1972.

Nancy Wohlforth later became a member of the AFL-CIO executive board and an active campaigner for the Democratic Party.

Following the publication of "Healy's Big Lie," the world Pabloite movement held an event on January 14, 1977 at Friends Hall in London which the International Committee labeled the Platform of Shame. The leaders of the world Pabloite movement gathered to denounce Security and the Fourth International in hysterical terms, with Wohlforth as a

featured speaker. When WRP leader Gerry Healy raised his hand, at the conclusion of the meeting, to respond to the slanders against him and the movement, he was denied the right to speak. Tariq Ali, a leading British Pabloite, attempted to drown him out by leading the crowd in a chant.

Even the bourgeois press acknowledged the shameful character of the Pabloite gathering. The *Sunday Observer* reported: “Mr. Healy quietly sat down again, feeling perhaps that he had made his point more eloquently than any words could have done.”<sup>[34]</sup> The WRP’s *Newsline* wrote: “By avoiding all the main issues, the meeting has only intensified their crisis. It has settled nothing.”<sup>[35]</sup>

The International Committee wrote of the platform of shame event:

Those acquainted with the history of the struggle against revisionism will find difficulty in suppressing a spontaneous desire to retch at the temerity of the organizers who defend the criminal activities of the GPU and their accomplices under the banner of a bogus “workers democracy”... the exposure of Stalin’s crimes and complicity of the revisionists in the cover-up of these crimes is central to this preparation of a new cadre of revolutionaries. Those who oppose this task in whatever form are serving the interests of counterrevolutionary Stalinism. We have been warned.<sup>[36]</sup>

The International Committee continued its investigation. In May 1977, David North and Alex Mitchell located Sylvia Callen in Wheaton, Illinois.

When asked about her political past, Callen acknowledged working as Cannon’s secretary, but sought to brush aside her years in the SWP as a minor episode in her life. The *Bulletin*, the newspaper of the Workers League, reported on May 31, 1977 that she said: “I don’t see why it’s even important. I was never really in politics. I never read. I never understood it. I was just an immature child, that’s about all I can say ... It’s like I blacked it out. All that period of my life.”<sup>[37]</sup>

Of Cannon, Callen said, “He wasn’t an important man, in my opinion. Is he? What part did he play in the world?” When asked by Comrade North why she was indicted as a co-conspirator in a GPU spy ring, Callen said she could not remember.<sup>[38]</sup>

That summer, North also interviewed Felix Morrow, a former SWP National Committee member who was one of the 18 SWP members jailed for sedition following the Smith Act trial of 1941. Morrow told North there were no official efforts by the party leadership to reach out to the American government following the assassination of Trotsky. “None,” Morrow told North. “They weren’t involved in any way.”<sup>[39]</sup> Hansen’s communications with the State Department and FBI were for personal purposes, they took place in secret, behind the backs of the SWP leadership.

Later, in deposition testimony ordered by a judge in the Gelfand case, SWP leaders Farrell Dobbs and Morris Lewit would similarly state that they had no knowledge of Hansen’s meetings with the FBI. Hansen’s house of cards was falling down.

After the publication of the interview with Callen on May 31, 1977, Hansen responded in an *Intercontinental Press* article on June 20, 1977 titled “Healyites Escalate Frame-up of Trotskyist Leaders.” In the article, Hansen attempted to cast doubt on what he called the “purported” interview with Callen, stating that the ICFI had “escalated their slanders on the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party.”<sup>[40]</sup>

Hansen attacked the Security and the Fourth International investigation by ridiculing the claim that Callen was an agent. In his June 20, 1977 article, Hansen wrote: “The members of this select body of witch-hunters [i.e., the ICFI] commit themselves to a slander they had previously only hinted at; namely, that the control commission set up by the Socialist Workers Party in 1947 to examine the rumors circulating about Caldwell

[i.e., Callen] was ‘rigged.’”<sup>[41]</sup>

The May-June 1947 SWP control commission was rigged, as a 2018 WWSWS series of articles definitely established. That control commission heard devastating information presented to the SWP that Sylvia Callen was a GPU agent. Rather than investigate the allegations, the commission covered up Callen’s role as an agent and swore those present to secrecy.

Hansen also wrote: “The Healyites are quite capable of initiating physical violence against other sectors of the labor movement.” He threatened the International Committee, warning that the investigation would bring “deadly consequences.”<sup>[42]</sup>

In the early morning hours of October 16, 1977, Hansen’s threat became reality. Comrade Tom Henehan was shot and killed in New York City by two hitmen while supervising a party event at the Ponce Social Club. Tom was 26 years old.

The Workers League immediately launched a campaign demanding the arrest of the two killers and an investigation into who was behind the hit. The assassins were quickly identified as Edwin Sequinot and Angelo Torres, but the New York City police refused to arrest them. The press immediately referred to it as a “senseless killing.” Police detective John Mohl told the *Detroit Free Press*, “We know who did it, and I can tell you there was no political motivation at all.”

It took a three-year campaign to mobilize the labor movement for the killers to be arrested. The Workers League demanded that Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold arrest the killers and investigate the assassination. It campaigned in the working class and among the trade unions, gathering signatures and soliciting letters demanding that District Attorney Gold take action. Letters were submitted by unions representing over a million members. Signatories included Anthony Mazzochi, William Winpisinger, Gary Tyler, Ed Asner and representatives of the ACLU, IRA, PLO and American Indian Movement. In October 1980, police finally bowed to the growing pressure and arrested Torres and Sequinot. They were found guilty in 1981 but did not testify as to who was behind their actions. Their public defender told the party, “Word on the street was it was a hit.”

Unfortunately, there is not sufficient time to review the campaign following Comrade Henehan’s assassination, or to recount in sufficient detail every blow dealt by Security and the Fourth International to the Pabloite movement in the years that followed. In 1979, the International Committee exposed the fact that nearly the entire leadership of the SWP graduated from Carleton College, a small private school in rural Northfield, Minnesota.

As the SEP (US) historical document states:

Another peculiar set of facts emerged as a byproduct of the Security investigation. Virtually the entire central leadership of the Socialist Workers Party—including a majority of its political committee—had attended Carleton College, a small liberal arts school in the Midwest. There was no record that the SWP had conducted any systematic work on the Carleton campus during the period between 1960 and 1964, when so many of its students, including Jack Barnes, entered the party and were rapidly promoted into its leadership. The medium of their transformation from conservative Midwestern students (Jack Barnes had been a Republican) into leaders of an ostensibly revolutionary organization was the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which was manipulated by, and riddled with, FBI agents. No credible explanation has been provided by the SWP leadership for the Carleton College phenomenon.<sup>[43]</sup>

Another milestone in the investigation was the Gelfand case, a lawsuit

initiated in 1979 by then-SWP member Alan Gelfand, who was expelled from the SWP for raising questions about Security and the Fourth International. Gelfand and his attorneys succeeded in forcing the depositions of many leading SWP members, which added to the evidence of widespread infiltration of the organization.

The prior year, in December 1978, Gelfand had filed an amicus curiae brief in support of a lawsuit by the SWP related to the FBI's surveillance of the movement through COINTELPRO. This lawsuit, which had been initiated by the SWP primarily as a fundraising activity, was not being conducted with the intention of exposing past or still active agents inside the party. In fact, the US government eventually settled the case by paying the SWP hundreds of thousands of dollars, without identifying a single agent that it had infiltrated into the party. In the course of the trial, the FBI admitted that between 1960 and 1976 there were 300 informants serving as members of the SWP.

Gelfand's lawsuit argued that his first amendment rights were violated when he was removed from a party that was run by government agents. It succeeded in securing the release of Sylvia Callen's grand jury testimony, in which she admitted she had been a GPU agent. Judge Pfaelzer, after a long delay, finally provided Gelfand's attorney, John Burton, with the definitive information that the SWP had been covering up for a GPU agent, and all of its efforts to lie or warp half-truths were just that. The judge produced this grand jury testimony shortly after SWP leader Jack Barnes declared in court that Sylvia Callen was his "hero" for all she suffered due to the accusations from the International Committee. All this time, the SWP had been defending a GPU agent.

The release of the Sylvia Callen grand jury testimony also coincided with the release of the full text of the June 8, 1976 letter to Hansen from Vaughn T. O'Brien, Hansen's childhood friend from Utah. Hansen had cited part of the letter in *Intercontinental Press* in his attempt to justify his prior meetings with the GPU, at first falsely claiming that they were conducted under Trotsky's instructions in order to trick the GPU into paying \$25,000 for a copy of Trotsky's biography of Stalin.

Hansen had not cited the full letter from O'Brien, however, and thanks to the Gelfand case we now know why. The letter, ordered released by Judge Pfaelzer, included a staggering revelation. In a section of the letter not cited by Hansen publicly, O'Brien had recalled to Hansen an encounter O'Brien had in the late 1940s or early 1950s—the general time frame of the SWP control commission covering up for Sylvia Callen and the publication of Louis Budenz's book identifying her as an agent. The encounter with O'Brien took place with Pearl Kluger, a former member of A.J. Muste's American Workers Party, who knew Budenz personally. O'Brien wrote, "I had not seen Pearl for a considerable period of time, but she immediately said, 'Budenz says your friend Joe Hansen worked with the GPU.'" [44]

This revealed that Hansen and the SWP *had* to defend Callen because it was Budenz who had originally outed *her*, and if his warnings were correct, this also would have served as further proof of *Hansen's* role as a GPU agent. To protect Hansen, he, Barnes and the SWP defended Callen as their "exemplary comrade." Though Budenz went public with information about Callen, he did not release what he knew about Hansen, who by that time had become an agent for American imperialism.

The Gelfand case also included another staggering exposure of the SWP's transformation. During the trial, for the first time, it appeared that Gelfand succeeded in forcing the deposition of Mark Zborowski. But the SWP helped Zborowski's attorneys file a motion to quash his subpoena and Jack Barnes said Zborowski had a democratic right not to speak to the court. As a result, the SWP prevented Zborowski from being forced to answer for the first time for his crimes against the Trotskyist movement.

The CIA also wanted to block Zborowski from testifying and to block the truth about other agents from leaking out through the trial. A June 11, 1982 memorandum from Central Intelligence Agency General Counsel

Stanley Sporkin to CIA Director William J. Casey cited the Gelfand case as an "item of major interest" for the CIA. A recently uncovered CIA memo reads:

In *Gelfand v. Attorney General, DCI, et al.*, Gelfand claims that alleged CIA and FBI agents in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) expelled him from the party. In pretrial discovery, Gelfand submitted interrogatories asking the DCI [Director of Central Intelligence] whether 19 named SWP members are or have been CIA agents and whether CIA believes that one named individual is a Soviet intelligence agent. [45]

The revelations made public by the Gelfand case went nearly unreported by the Workers Revolutionary Party. By the time of the conclusion of the case in early 1983, the WRP had by and large ceased to pay attention to Security and the Fourth International. Its role in developing the investigation stopped. This coincided with the WRP's increasing adaptation to Pabloite nationalist politics in the lead-up to the split.

Beginning in late 1985, as the crisis erupted within the WRP, the faction of the WRP leadership led by Banda and Slaughter openly attacked Security and the Fourth International, the investigation which they themselves had voted to initiate and participated in actively in the mid-1970s.

On November 26, 1985, without any discussion with the International Committee, of which he was still a part at the time, Cliff Slaughter appeared at a meeting of Pabloites and Stalinists and denounced Security and the Fourth International before shaking hands with prominent Stalinist Monty Johnstone. Just weeks before, Slaughter had defended Security and the Fourth International before a meeting of the Workers League Political Committee.

On December 11, 1985, the Workers League wrote to the WRP Central Committee:

What took place at Friends Hall was not a meeting; it was a perspective. What was revealed at this meeting is a move toward what the SWP once called "regroupment"—that is, the abandonment of Trotskyism in favor of unprincipled alliances with radicals, revisionists and Stalinists of all description. [46]

As they moved toward the explicit renunciation of Trotskyism, Slaughter and Banda denounced the IC and Comrade North, claiming Security and the Fourth International marked a "turn away from the international struggle against revisionism." Slaughter and Banda presented Security and the Fourth International as the central proof of their so-called theory of "equal degeneration," which asserted that the entire international movement and all of its sections were just as rotten as the WRP.

In December 1985, the WRP CC called for an investigation into Security and the Fourth International and demanded "an international commission of enquiry on state penetration of the Trotskyist movement, publicly." This staggering demand to investigate the IC and all its sections was a cynical attempt to warp the demand raised by the IC (and supported by Banda and Slaughter) in May 1975 for a commission of inquiry into the penetration of the SWP and turn it against the IC.

Now we return to the roots of Security and the Fourth International. In early 1986, both Slaughter and Banda each called for a reassessment of the experience with Tim Wohlforth, with Slaughter attempting to contact



him and Banda declaring in his “27 Reasons” that “the crisis with Wohlforth was artificially exacerbated by Healy with his paranoid ravings about security and his total failure to deal with the Workers League’s problems of perspective and policy. The issue of Nancy Fields was exaggerated and distorted beyond all proportion.”<sup>[47]</sup>

In the infamous Resolution 1 of the WRP Central Committee, issued January 26, 1986, the WRP denounced the IC and resolved that “Security and the FI was a substitute for a real struggle against revisionism and for Trotskyist principles, that all evidence presented and conclusions drawn be reexamined together with material published by the American SWP or anybody else on this question.”<sup>[48]</sup>

On February 2, 1986, Comrade North responded with a letter to the WRP membership titled “In Defense of Security and the Fourth International.” The letter denounced the WRP leadership’s attacks on Security and the Fourth International as “part of a wider attack on the entire history of the International Committee,” orchestrated for factional purposes and as “an essential prerequisite for a rapprochement with the revisionists.”<sup>[49]</sup>

On February 7, 1986, Banda published his “27 Reasons,” which concluded: “No examination of the IC would be complete or honestly objective if it didn’t include the *most sinister and reactionary manifestation of Healyism in the IC—Security and the Fourth International.*”

He called the Security investigation a “monstrous frame-up” led by “the paranoid North and his cronies in the IC.”<sup>[50]</sup>

The SWP, just as it had with Wohlforth after his break from Trotskyism, welcomed Slaughter and Banda’s break with the IC and their denunciation of Security and the Fourth International with open arms. In its March 10, 1986 edition of *Intercontinental Press*, the SWP republished *News Line* articles, with Carleton College graduate Doug Jenness writing that “A staggering blow has been dealt” to Security and the Fourth International by the attack launched by the WRP renegades. The SWP wrote, “By renouncing the Healyite agent-baiting campaign, these WRP leaders have taken the first, necessary step toward having their views taken seriously as a legitimate part of the political debates that are occurring among revolutionists today.”<sup>[51]</sup>

Responding to the celebration of their recent former adversaries, Comrade North wrote a series of articles titled “The Case Against the SWP—What the Facts Show,” which was serialized in the *Bulletin* from March 11 to 18, 1986. North wrote:

Banda’s article confirms a political law: all those who break with Trotskyism immediately align themselves with Hansen. For such renegades the denunciation of Security and the Fourth International is an obligatory ritual.<sup>[52]</sup>

The Security and the Fourth International investigation constituted a significant part of the day-to-day political activity of the party’s leading cadre, and in particular Comrade North. It entailed an immense gathering of historical information. The articles and broadsides produced during this period were pored over by the party membership and studied with care and immense interest. It is essential to understand the impact of the struggle during the years 1974–1975 to 1983 on the entire party membership, which allowed the cadre to ground their day-to-day political activity in the struggle against Pabloism, and in the framework of bringing forward the whole historical content of the Trotskyist movement. Far from replacing the struggle against revisionism, it facilitated and deepened it.

It is not accidental that this time period serves as a bridge between two milestone events in the history of the movement: the split with Wohlforth and the transition to a new political leadership, and the emergence of

differences in 1982 between the Workers League and the WRP. When these differences were later brought to the full attention of the membership of the Workers League, the receptivity of the membership to Comrade North’s criticisms of the opportunism of the WRP was prepared, in part, by the impact that Security and the Fourth International had had on the consciousness of the membership.

In a 1987 open letter responding to Cliff Slaughter’s denunciation of the Gelfand case, Comrade North wrote:

The present leadership of the Workers League was developed in the theoretical and political struggle against Wohlforth. The defense of the party’s heritage and program against his renegacy produced a renaissance of Trotskyism inside the Workers League. Its cadre could only defeat Wohlforth in a political sense by reassimilating all the lessons of the past struggles of the International Committee to construct the Trotskyist movement in the United States...

Precisely because the Workers League was conducting the struggle against Wohlforth on the highest political and theoretical plane, it saw the security issues which arose around Fields within the historical context of the international struggle for Trotskyism. The Workers League leadership ... was drawn into the Security and the Fourth International investigation on this principled basis. The Workers League never saw Security and the Fourth International as a forensic exercise. In so far as it was compelled to conduct investigations, it did so as part of the struggle to clarify the historical record and rearm the cadre of the world movement in the bitter lessons of the past.<sup>[53]</sup>

It was a testament to this process that the Workers League could produce, in its 1978 perspectives document, the following summation of Security and the Fourth International:

Security and the Fourth International represents nothing less than the reclamation of the whole historical continuity of Bolshevism through the Fourth International and the International Committee from the evil grip of Stalinist counter-revolution and falsification. All the lies and distortions and crimes committed by Stalinism against Trotskyism, the political embodiment of the struggle for the world October; all the monstrous acts committed to confuse and disorient generations of workers about the real history of the October Revolution and the role of Trotsky—these have been dealt a blow from which Stalinism and all the agencies of imperialist counter-revolution will never recover.<sup>[54]</sup>

Today, those who attack Security and the Fourth International only embarrass themselves. The evidence is too overwhelming. Susan Weissman could not respond to Comrade North’s letter when she defended Hansen, denounced Security and the Fourth International and proclaimed that Zborowski “ran rings around” Gelfand’s lawyers during the Gelfand case. She will be remembered for her loud silence.

A new generation of socialists who have grown up in the time of mass NSA surveillance, the militarization of the police and endless assaults on democratic rights will be educated on matters of revolutionary security by Security and the Fourth International. To this generation, efforts to downplay the security of the movement from state infiltration appear absurd. But for precisely this reason, a new set of opportunists are attempting to repeat the SWP’s claims that it is absurd to worry about

state penetration. This is why Nathaniel Flakin of the *Morenoite Left Voice* wrote in a June 23, 2022 article that Security and the Fourth International was a “vile conspiracy theory” which “never came up with anything more than the most laughably circumstantial evidence.”<sup>[55]</sup>

Flakin was, and will remain, unable to challenge any of the evidence uncovered in Security and the Fourth International. It is his goal to present as “laughable” attempts to maintain the physical independence of the revolutionary movement from agents of the state regardless of the evidence, for the same reason that the Pabloites defended Sylvia Franklin even after the testimony of her admitting to being a GPU agent was released to the public. They are not opposed to state infiltration of their movements because their movements are not politically opposed to capitalism and the capitalist state. It is notable that Flakin wrote his article attacking our “laughable” evidence of GPU penetration over a year after the *World Socialist Web Site* established that Sylvia Ageloff was a GPU agent and a linchpin in the GPU plot to kill Trotsky. He could not respond to it. Nobody could.

Compare their approach to the way in which the IC explained Security and the Fourth International in the introduction to *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*:

In referring to Security and the Fourth International as an “investigation,” it must be grasped that this word only partially embraces the full political and historical content of the struggle waged by the International Committee during the last six years. Like Trotsky’s exposure of the Moscow Trial frame-ups of 1936-38, it is the highest conscious expression of the objective movement of the working class against the bourgeoisie and all its agencies. ... The development of the investigation established that the whole fate of the World Socialist Revolution hinges on the outcome of the struggle embodied in Security and the Fourth International...

The findings of Security and the Fourth International constitute an indispensable foundation for the training of Marxist cadre and a powerful material weapon of the World Revolution. The agents which this weapon has already exposed and those whom it will ultimately destroy politically represent the spearhead of the counterrevolution. This fact must be grasped by every class-conscious worker and youth: All the historically accumulated instinct of the bourgeoisie for self-preservation finds its greatest level of consciousness in the elaboration of its strategy for destroying the revolutionary leadership of the working class.<sup>[56]</sup>

The International Committee is the only organization which defends this critical examination of the GPU and imperialist penetration of the revolutionary movement because we are the only organization which views as its aim the conquest of power. Our existence is the product of a systematic, highly conscious struggle for the political continuity of Bolshevism against agents of the state and their political accomplices in the pseudo-left. That was the political essence of the split with Wohlforth, it defined the Security and the Fourth International investigation, it guided the IC in the split with the WRP, and it is the backbone of the fight for socialism today.

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clockwork\\_Orange\\_\(plot\)#](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clockwork_Orange_(plot)#)

[2] [https://www.ucpi.org.uk/search-results/?fwp\\_search=Workers+Revolutionary+Party](https://www.ucpi.org.uk/search-results/?fwp_search=Workers+Revolutionary+Party)

[3] See David North, *The Heritage We Defend*, (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 2018), Chapter 32.

[4] Seymour Hersh, *New York Times*, December 22, 1974. Available: <http>

<s://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1974/12/22/432151792.html>  
[5] Tim Wohlforth’s Letter of Resignation from the Workers League, *Trotskyism versus Revisionism*, Volume Seven, “The Fourth International and the Renegade Wohlforth” (Detroit: Labor Publications, 1984), pp. 250–51.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] From Cliff Slaughter to Tim Wohlforth, *ibid.*, p. 258.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 262.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 264.

[12] Findings of the Commission of Inquiry, *ibid.*, pp. 269–70.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 271.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 271-72.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] James P. Cannon, *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), p. 41.

[17] “An answer to the slanders of Robertson and Wohlforth,” *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*, ePub edition (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 2015), p. 49.

[18] Joseph Hansen, “Healy’s Big Lie,” *Socialist Workers Party Education for Socialists*, December 1976, p. 5.

[19] “A reply to Joseph Hansen’s ‘The Secret of Healy’s Dialectics,’” *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*, ePub edition, pp. 60–62.

[20] Letter from Joseph Hansen to Cliff Slaughter, June 5, 1975, *Security and the Fourth International* (New York: Labor Publications, 1975), p. 136.

[21] *The Gelfand Case* Vol. 1 (Detroit: Labor Publications, 1985), p. 8.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

[23] “We charge Joseph Hansen,” *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*, ePub edition, p.374.

[24] “Healy’s Big Lie,” p. 11.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[29] Letter from Harold Robins to the SWP National Committee, *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*, ePub edition, p. 395.

[30] *James P. Cannon as We Knew Him* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1976) pp. 232–33.

[31] “Healy’s Big Lie,” p. 2.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Militant*, May 7, 1976, p. 17.

[34] *The Observer*, Sunday, January 16, 1977, p. 1.

[35] *Newsline*, Monday, January 17, 1977.

[36] David North, “The case against the SWP—What the facts show,” *Fourth International*, Vol. 13 no. 2, p. 173.

[37] Eric London, *AGENTS, The FBI and GPU Infiltration of the Trotskyist Movement* (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 2018), p. 91.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 91–92.

[39] Interview with Felix Morrow by David North, June 2, 1977 (Reprinted in *AGENTS*, pp. 38–39).

[40] Joseph Hansen, “Healyites Escalate Frame-up of Trotskyist Leaders,” *Intercontinental Press*, June 20, 1977, Vol. 15 no. 23, p. 700.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 701.

[43] Socialist Equality Party, *Historical and International Foundations of the Socialist Equality Party* (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 2008), p. 106.

[44] *The Gelfand Case* Vol. 2, p. 651.

[45] June 11, 1982 memorandum from Central Intelligence Agency General Counsel Stanley Sporkin to CIA Director William J. Casey.

- [46] David North, "A Comment on the Gelfand Open Letter," *Fourth International*, Vol. 14 no. 2, June 1987, p. 73.
- [47] David North, *The Heritage We Defend*, p. 439.
- [48] Resolution 1 of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party, January 26, 1986, *Fourth International*, Vol. 13 no. 2, Autumn 1986, p. 118.
- [49] David North, "In Defense of Security and the Fourth International," *ibid*, p. 139.
- [50] "A Comment on the Gelfand Open Letter," pp. 73–74.
- [51] Doug Jenness, "Giant blow to agent-baiting campaign," *Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 24 no. 5, March 10, 1986, p. 147; p. 150.
- [52] "The case against the SWP—What the facts show," *Fourth International*, Vol. 13 no. 2, p. 174.
- [53] "A Comment on the Gelfand Open Letter," *Fourth International*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 81.
- [54] The World Economic-Political Crisis and the Death Agony of US Imperialism: Draft Resolution on the Perspectives and Tasks of the Workers League, 1978, p. 38.
- [55] Nathaniel Flakin, "The Strange Story of Trotskyism in the Alps," *World Socialist Web Site*, June 26, 2012, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2012/06/26/the-strange-story-of-trotskyism-in-the-alps/>
- [56] *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*, ePub edition, pp. 13–14.



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