

2025 Summer School Lecture 6 Part 2

Revisionism, spies and cover-ups: The origins of the Security and the Fourth International investigation

David Rye
16 October 2025

This is the second part of the lecture “The Wohlforth-Fields violation of party security and the response of the International Committee,” delivered by Kathleen Martin and David Rye to the 2025 Summer School of the Socialist Equality Party (US) on the history of the Security and the Fourth International investigation. To accompany this lecture, the WSWS is publishing further sections of “How the GPU Murdered Trotsky,” first published in 1981, which contains documents from the first year of the Security and Fourth International investigation.

This portion of the lecture on the Tim Wohlforth-Nancy Fields violation of party security and the response of the International Committee will review the manner in which the issue of security was raised following Wohlforth’s desertion of the Workers League (WL) in September 1974, and the subsequent intervention by Joseph Hansen of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) on his behalf. I will provide background information and review the contents of the Workers Revolutionary Party’s (WRP) replies to Hansen’s attack on our movement.

The books or documents that form the basis of this lecture are *Trotskyism vs Revisionism Volume 7: The Fourth International and the Renegade Wohlforth*, the WRP’s response to Hansen’s “The Secret of Healy’s Dialectics” (in *How the GPU Murdered Trotsky*) and the correspondence proposing a parity control commission following the formal initiation of the Security and the Fourth International investigation in 1975, 50 years ago.

The majority of the lecture is dedicated to reviewing specific cases of spies and provocateurs who were revealed or exposed in the period prior to the formal initiation of Security and Fourth International, including three international cases, which Hansen sought to obscure or for which he attempted to provide a political cover.

The background to these specific cases is essential to understanding the political origins of Security and the Fourth International. At this point in the lengthy saga, Hansen was recognized as a revisionist, a dishonest factionalist and opponent of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). He was not accused at the outset of being an agent or an accomplice of agents.

Wohlforth’s attack on the Workers League and return to the SWP

“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 slanders. So it was in the days of the

Fourth International under Trotsky.” This statement from Tim Wohlforth comes from one of his first attacks on the ICFI. It was a theme that would later be provocatively echoed by Hansen in his correspondence with the International Committee and articles in the *Intercontinental Press*.

As part of the work of the commission set up in the aftermath of the 1974 Workers League summer educational camp, and agreed to by Wohlforth and Fields, Fred Mazelis wrote to Wohlforth on behalf of the commission,

I want to ask you, especially in view of this statement [that “the place to find agents in the Workers League is among those who spread scandal against the leaders of the League”], to come before the inquiry and present any information you have on these matters. If as you say our movement, the movement to which you devoted so many years, is endangered, then you bear a political responsibility to help bring this out.

Wohlforth did not appear before the commission of inquiry, which ultimately recommended he return to the Workers League and stipulated he was eligible to run for the post of national secretary at the next Congress. Fields was permitted to resume her membership with a restriction on holding any leadership roles for two years. This proposal was never replied to by Wohlforth and Fields, who deserted the movement.

Wohlforth proceeded to write a falsified account of the circumstances of his departure from the WL and the character of Fields’ CIA connections. This document, titled “The Workers League and the International Committee,” was published in January 1975 in *Intercontinental Press*, the publication of the Pabloite SWP under Hansen’s leadership. Hansen, endorsing Wohlforth’s diatribe, wrote that the latter’s “sincerity is undeniable and one can only wish him luck on his next venture.”

Wohlforth’s attack on the Workers League and the International Committee offered arguments that have been repeated in various forms from that period to the present, for example, in Aidan Beatty’s recent dishonest efforts. Wohlforth argued that Socialist Labour League (SLL) leader Gerry Healy was reacting as a tyrant to the limited criticism he had made and had seized on Fields’ CIA family connection as a pretext to have him (Wohlforth) unceremoniously thrown out of the party.

Wohlforth would then join the SWP and be enthusiastically embraced by Hansen. The membership of the Workers League recognized this as a repudiation of the political principles for which Wohlforth had fought for

the previous 14 years. He had sharply opposed Hansen's opportunist politics since 1960—suddenly, however, they were embracing one another. Indeed, this was less than a year after Wohlforth published a series of articles with the scathing headline “An Aging Liar Peddles His Wares,” about none other than Joseph Hansen.

The Workers League responded to the assertion that Wohlforth had been driven out of the party in a statement that can be found in Volume 7, which explains that, on the contrary,

Wohlforth was not “terminated,” nor was he “purged.” He resigned. He deserted the movement of which he was a founding member. The circumstances of Wohlforth's resignation as presented by [the Spartacist League's James] Robertson (and Wohlforth) are a pack of lies. It is reduced to the question of whether or not Nancy Fields, an ex-leading member of the Workers League and a close associate of Wohlforth's, was a CIA agent. That was not the issue.

....We believe that Wohlforth had a political responsibility to bring these connections to the notice of the leadership of the Workers League and his fraternal colleagues in the IC.

Hansen's attack on the ICFI and Gerry Healy

The attacks on the ICFI by revisionists often dwelt on the SLL's Gerry Healy as an individual and revolved around two key claims:

1. That Healy and the ICFI were “ultraleft” and “sectarian,” and required scapegoats for organizational failures.
2. That the ICFI was a dictatorship controlled by Healy, who utilized what Hansen referred to as “Stalinist” or “witch-hunt” methods on matters of security, instead of the cavalier attitude that dominated the SWP and United Secretariat (USFI).

Hansen, in “The Secret of Healy's Dialectics,” attempted to corroborate the attack by raising and falsifying the cases of various petty-bourgeois renegades from the ICFI. In each instance Hansen presented these as examples of Healy's organizational “tyranny,” utilizing distortions, cheap jokes and a thoroughly dishonest method of argumentation to slander the International Committee. Politically, Hansen was incapable of discussing any of the issues involved but attempted to bury Healy and the ICFI under a heap of rubbish, gossip and the sob stories of renegades.

“The Secret of Healy's Dialectics” contains the central “argument” of Hansen's campaign against security, with the comment rightly infamous in our movement:

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.

This statement was remarkable: Hansen had immediately experienced

Trotsky's assassination in 1940! How and why could Hansen disregard the question of security in a movement that had undergone persecution and penetration unlike any other, especially in light of the then-recent revelations of US government infiltration and sabotage of left-wing movements? For the leaders of the WRP, it drew attention to Hansen's role.

The WRP's reply to “The Secret of Healy's Dialectics”

The WRP, in replying to “The Secret of Healy's Dialectics,” was once again compelled to answer the false presentation of the circumstances of the Wohlforth-Fields desertion of the Workers League and refute the claims of a sectarian witch-hunt led by Healy. The reply contemptuously rejected the claim of “paranoia,” and grounded the question of security in both a review of the then-known information about the role of agents in Trotsky's time, and a review of the more recent experience of the Fourth International with spies.

The first sections of the reply summarized and reviewed the cases of Senin and Well in the German Left Opposition (the Sobolevich brothers) in the early 1930s, and that of Mark Zborowski alias Etienne. These cases, although many details of which were still to be uncovered, were already well known prior to the security investigation. The WRP raised these criminals and their crimes in answer to Hansen's despicable and unprincipled attack.

The WRP reply also raised and analyzed important and well-documented security violations committed by the international Pabloite movement in the years prior to the Wohlforth-Fields desertion. What emerges in each case is a pattern of severe security violations committed by the principal Pabloite parties, followed by cover-ups and Hansen's downplaying of the significance of these violations. There was no possible innocent explanation of these scandalous incidents.

1. The Bala Tampoe affair

Bala Tampoe was the General Secretary of the Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers Union (CMU) and a leading member of the Sri Lankan section of the Pabloite international, the LSSP(R). The LSSP(R) split from the LSSP following the Great Betrayal of 1964 when the LSSP, the official Pabloite party in Sri Lanka, joined the bourgeois coalition government of Sirimavo Bandaranaike. This was the first time a party identified in any way with the Fourth International entered a bourgeois government. Following the entry of the LSSP into the Bandaranaike government, it was expelled from the United Secretariat. A centrist faction calling itself the LSSP(R) split from the LSSP and affiliated with the United Secretariat.

In 1969 the USFI established a Commission of Inquiry to look into Bala Tampoe's political dealings. The Pabloite leaders were concerned that Tampoe's activity would discredit the LSSP(R), just as the entry of the LSSP into the Bandaranaike government had discredited the LSSP.

The commission established that in 1967 Tampoe traveled to the US as a part of a program paid for by the Asia Foundation, which in the years leading up to the trip had become widely acknowledged across Southeast Asia as a front organization of the CIA.

The findings of the commission were leaked and published, and the SLL at the time reported on the commission's findings in its publication, the *Workers Press*. These findings included:

(a) A series of incidents which together constitute compromisingly close relations between Comrade Bala and the Ceylonese embassies or missions of the imperialist countries.

(1) A trip to the US in the summer of 1967, financed by the Asia Foundation.

(2) His acceptance of a small private luncheon invitation at the residence of the British High Commission, during the 1966 plantation workers' strike—a luncheon that was also attended by Thondaman, a trade union leader who was playing an open strikebreaking role against the plantation workers.

(3) His attendance at a small dinner party at the West German embassy for visiting Chancellor Kiesinger.

(b) A letter sent to the Ceylonese Prime Minister on January 22, 1966 by Comrade Bala in his capacity as union general secretary, concerning the state of emergency in which he implied support for the imposition of a curfew in response to the “violence” that occurred in Colombo.

(c) Comrade Bala's policy in regard to the struggle against devaluation of the rupee in November-December 1967. The CMU did not support the strike that took place at that time in the private sector. Serious questions are raised concerning why the LSSP(R) did not take the lead in fighting for united action by all the trade unions and working class parties against devaluation.

The commission criticized and took a skeptical view of the circumstances of Tampoe's invitation to the United States, under a project which was sponsored by Harvard University. The commission described how Tampoe argued that he had kept the United Secretariat and SWP informed about his trip. The investigators rebuffed these claims, arguing that some of his activities in Washington were never explained, pointing to his private interview with Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, the US warlord in Vietnam, as the chief example!

The conclusion of a minority report submitted to the Control Commission insisted that “there are enough grounds to feel that there is something rotten about the functioning of the Ceylon section as it stands.” That description of Tampoe's political dealings came from a Pabloite. The strength of the language used in that report derived from concern about Tampoe's credibility.

The WRP statement made the following characterization of the findings of the Ceylon Commission on Tampoe:

Even in the politically degenerate circles of revisionism, there had been nothing like this before: CIA-financed trips; private discussions with McNamara, director of US imperialism's war machine in Vietnam; wining and dining with Christian Democrat Chancellor Kiesinger, an ex-Nazi, and the British ambassador; strikebreaking; and supporting a government-imposed curfew against the working class ...

In the International Committee of the Fourth International such actions are completely indefensible. They are grounds for immediate expulsion. But not in the so-called “Unified Secretariat.” Not only were Tampoe's activities condoned and covered up for three years, but Tampoe himself was reelected unanimously to their International Executive Committee at the very meeting the Ceylon Commission was discussed. Only one restriction was made on him. It was recommended that “the double function of Comrade Bala as secretary of both the CMIJ and the section be terminated as rapidly as possible.” This has been completely ignored. Tampoe remains head of the CMU and

general secretary of the “Revolutionary Marxist Party” with the full backing of his Pabloite accomplices.

The statement explained that Tampoe's political dealings were only the logical continuation of the LSSP's Great Betrayal in 1964, and issued this unqualified pledge:

Picture, for a moment, a situation in which a leading member of the Workers Revolutionary Party went to Washington at the expense of the CIA to spend an afternoon with Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, former director of the CIA. Imagine that this same leading member had dinner with the French ambassador during the miners' strike, consorted with West German demagogue Herr Strauss and led his union in strikebreaking.

No matter how “big” he was, he would be expelled. He would have betrayed the working class and gone over to the class enemy—actions which would automatically put him outside our movement.

In building the International Committee of the Fourth International on these basic Bolshevik traditions and principles, Hansen and the Pabloite revisionists label us as “paranoids.”

The *Workers Press* published an account of the Ceylon Commission on Tampoe in a series of four articles published from October 18 to 21, 1972. Hansen replied with a furious denunciation published in *Intercontinental Press* on October 29. Published as a Statement of the United Secretariat, the piece was headlined “Healyites Smear Bala Tampoe.”

In a response, the WRP noted that its condemnation of Tampoe was “definitely a very strange ‘smear’ since we had only reproduced documents and reports that had been drawn up by the revisionists themselves.” The Pabloite's own commission referred to these incidents as “undisputed facts.”

The facts which were found proven by their own Ceylon Commission became “slanders” and a “bucket of mud” when they were published in *Workers Press*.

2. The Max Wechsler revelation and cover-up

In February 1975, the *Sunday Observer*, a weekly newspaper in Melbourne, Australia, began serializing the memoirs of a state spy. The police agent was an individual by the name of Max Wechsler. This Wechsler had been a member of the executive of the Pabloite Socialist Workers League (SWL), their section in Australia. Wechsler had been the minutes secretary of the SWL leadership committee, of which he was a member.

The articles detailed Wechsler's spying activities, carried out on behalf of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO), the Australian equivalent of the FBI or the British MI5. The reports also revealed that Wechsler had previously infiltrated the Communist Party in the state of Victoria where the Stalinists occupied leading positions in the trade union bureaucracy. The articles explained he was given a job in the Communist Party's offices after having demonstrated his ability to sell the party's newspaper.

Wechsler was then tasked with infiltrating the SWL. The WRP's

document described how the Pabloites viewed Wechsler's rise as "glamorous." He had similarly proven himself to the Pabloites as one of the party's best paper sellers and was elevated to the group's executive as minutes secretary.

The WRP, basing itself on the *Sunday Observer*, described how "Wechsler's paymasters in the ASIO were delighted with his progress. He graduated from receiving \$12 per month—mere pocket money—to \$100 per week plus a sickness benefit paid into a bank account held in his name by his ASIO contact man." Adjusted for inflation, Wechsler was being paid \$1,420 per week for his spying activities, over \$5,600 per month.

The WRP report continued,

Every Sunday night after the SWL meeting, Wechsler would telephone his contact with a complete report on proceedings. He gave details of demonstrations, dates, times and places as well as background information on those involved.

The *Sunday Observer* described Wechsler's activities, explaining how he had arranged

eavesdropping, stealing documents, committing sabotage, manipulating finances and obtaining sets of duplicate keys to allow ASIO agents to do a Watergate-type break-in at the SWL headquarters in Melbourne and Adelaide.

From information supplied by Wechsler, ASIO agents filmed demonstrations from pre-arranged vantage points. They made peepholes in adjoining buildings to spy and film SWL meetings and Wechsler would then assist the ASIO to identify those who were present from mug shots.

The *Observer* recounted how ASIO agents using mini-cameras, movie cameras and cameras with telephoto lenses would interact with demonstrators and set up spyholes in buildings to film the activities of the SWL and other organizations. Wechsler was frequently asked to join officers in the ASIO in cars, staking out city parks to identify mug shots of people the ASIO had photographed. (Some of this surveillance footage of youth activists has been published and is available on YouTube.)

Wechsler organized the wiretapping of the phones of the leaders and offices of the SWL. This was organized at the highest levels of Australian law enforcement, by Senator Lionel Murphy, who was, at the time of the surveillance operations, the attorney general. The WRP document points out, "The fact that Murphy was behind the SWL surveillance is fraught with ironies."

Senator Murphy was seen at the time as a leading "left" in the Labor government headed by Gough Whitlam. He had a reputation as a defender of "civil rights" for having personally led a raid on the ASIO's Melbourne headquarters to get hold of secret intelligence files. This action was praised by the Stalinists and the Pabloites, and they were responsible for laundering Murphy's phony left credentials.

The WRP describes the Pabloites as "mesmerized" by Murphy's posturing, while he was at the same time authorizing the police penetration of their group. The spy Wechsler reported directly to Murphy who was no doubt reading the minutes of the leadership meetings of the SWL that Wechsler was delivering to him. Murphy was responsible for initiating much of the surveillance directed against the SWL.

On March 28, 1975, the *Militant*, published an article on the Wechsler revelations, titled "Gutter press witch-hunts Australian Trotskyists." The

article referred to Wechsler as "a former member of the SWL." The article failed to mention the fact that Wechsler was on the SWL executive committee as its minutes secretary, presenting Wechsler as a rank-and-file member of little or no importance. The WRP's reply to Hansen characterized these omissions as censorship.

The *Militant's* coverage of this incident reeked of Hansen's trademark cynicism, treating the revelations in a facetious manner, as though government penetration of the Trotskyist movement could be dealt with in this way. The article begins:

Is Trotskyism spreading at such a rapid pace throughout the world as to now threaten to take over Australia? The answer is an encouraging yes, if the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO), the country's secret political police, is to be believed.

The WRP replied:

Thus, Hansen and his accomplices conceal from the SWP membership in the US the true facts about the spy penetration of the SWL, thereby completely undermining the training of their organization in the US (and Australia too) on questions of Security.

Not only did Hansen cover up the significance of the surveillance of his own organization, he also downplayed the significance of the Trotskyist movement itself. He was arguing effectively that the Trotskyist movement did not merit state surveillance, fostering an attitude within the SWP that the state was merely acting foolishly and wasting its time spying on the SWL. The government clearly did not and does not view the Trotskyist movement as insignificant. The ruling class knows its enemies. The state was taking the Trotskyist movement ten times more seriously than the Pabloite leadership did.

The WRP reply to Hansen drew a sharp distinction between the approach of Hansen and the Pabloites to questions of security and the attitude of the Australian section of the IC, writing:

Neither the Wechsler affair nor the complicity of the Australian Labor government came as any surprise to the Socialist Labour League, the Australian section of the International Committee of the Fourth International. The SLL and its weekly newspaper, *Workers News*, have played the leading role in the labor and trade union movement highlighting the threat to basic democratic rights from the police and its spy agencies.

3. The IMG witness and the case of Red Lion Square

The notorious 1974 case surrounding the Red Lion Square demonstration in London is important, not only for what Hansen and company wrote about the affair, but for what it said about the miserable, opportunist politics in which the British Pabloites, the International Marxist Group (IMG), and the international Pabloite movement were engaged. The Red Lion Square protest, against the fascist National Front, resulted in the death of 21-year-old Kevin Gately and a major government

inquiry.

The episode directly exposed the total disregard the Pabloite leaders had for the physical safety of their own members and for attendees at the demonstrations they organized. The WRP had recognized this and boycotted the protest.

The Pabloites, especially as exemplified by the IMG in the UK, led by the likes of Tariq Ali, were the kind of movement that engaged in mindless activism, including provoking confrontations with the police and right-wing forces.

Our movement, the ICFI, does not encourage our members to engage in brawls with the police or street battles. That is not our politics. During our interventions in the No Kings protests we were diligent about paying attention to the police operations and right-wing forces to avoid unnecessary confrontations, because we are fighting for our program and perspective, and talking to demonstrators.

In the incident in question, the IMG and various other political tendencies, including the International Socialists (IS) of Tony Cliff (the “state capitalists”), the Stalinist Communist Party and the Militant Tendency of Ted Grant, organized a demonstration against the far-right National Front, which was calling for forced repatriation of international residents of the UK. The demonstration took place on June 15, 1974 in Red Lion Square.

At the demonstration, the IMG participants threw themselves at the police, resulting in fighting and eventually dozens of arrests, during which Kevin Gately was clubbed on the head by police. He would die of his injuries later that day.

In the aftermath, every left-wing publication blamed the police for the killing of Gately, while Home Secretary Roy Jenkins appointed Lord Justice L. G. Scarman to head a special inquiry into the Red Lion Square riots. The Scarman inquiry found that the IMG was “morally” responsible for the death of Gately, for allegedly having initiated the riot.

We can certainly discuss the political culpability of the IMG for the consequences of its petty-bourgeois methods. But a pressing security concern emerged during the Scarman inquiry.

An IMG member gave secret testimony to Scarman, exposing what the WRP called “gaping contradictions in the verbal evidence given by [other] IMG witnesses.” The testimony enabled Scarman to discredit the IMG and claim the group had plotted in advance to provoke confrontations with the police at Red Lion Square.

The IMG had publicly blamed the police for the violence resulting in Gately’s tragic death. This effort was shattered by the testimony of this witness. The IMG directly saw its credibility severely damaged with the publication of the Scarman inquiry’s findings. Further, the findings legitimized the brutal tactics of police repression of protesters.

The *Workers Press* demanded to know the name of this unidentified IMG witness. The response of the IMG leadership to the questions of the *Workers Press* was astonishing.

R. Pennington, IMG national secretary, wrote a reply on behalf of its political committee, in the March 13 issue of *Red Weekly*. Pennington asserted that the secret witness, who remained anonymous with the agreement of the Pabloite organization’s leadership,

had just taken a job in a factory which was unorganized, and he was involved in trying to organize the labor force. Obviously had he been called, and his name blazoned across the press, it would have been very easy for the employers to fire him.

In other words, Pennington was arguing that the IMG trusted the representatives of the ruling class and police forces with the identity of one of its members, but not the working class public!

The WRP replied:

In printing the IMG statement in the *Militant*, Hansen is consciously legalizing the actions of the Pennington leadership in covering up the identity of the unnamed witness. The conspiracy to keep the member’s name a secret is endorsed by Hansen.

The consistency of Hansen’s campaign of slander of the International Committee and concealment of the crimes of his Pabloite revisionist associates establishes a pattern. When a question of security is raised, Hansen responds with unerring speed and hysteria to try and bottle it up.

Behind Hansen’s slanders

The WRP’s replied continued:

Where Wohlforth undermined the internal security of the Workers League, Hansen sets out consciously to whip up a lynch atmosphere of violence to threaten the external security of the Workers League and the International Committee. There is not a shred of politics in the attack on Comrade Healy. Hansen is incapable of that. He resorts to personal abuse of the most slanderous kind with no other purpose than to frame him.

The WRP reply to these slanders by Hansen also drew a parallel between the Pabloites’ stance and the treatment of Trotsky by the Stalinist and so-called liberal press in the 1930s:

When Trotsky was fighting against enormous historical odds to build the youthful Fourth International under the continuous threat of assassination by Stalin’s GPU, he had to contend with the slanders of the Stalinist and “liberal” press which accused him of “persecution mania.”

The WRP statement stressed that a political understanding of the significance of security was inseparable from the fight for Trotskyism and that diminishing the security question was a product of revisionism:

In fighting against any complacency on security questions in the building of revolutionary parties, the International Committee is carrying forward the tradition and principles of Marxism, Leninism and Trotskyism. If this is suddenly derided as “madness,” then it is not the International Committee which has strayed, it is an expression of the complete political degeneration of Pabloite revisionism.

This lecture is not the place to review in its entirety the history and politics of Pabloism and Hansen’s maneuvering, to the elucidation of which a substantial part of the WRP’s reply to “The Secret of Healy’s Dialectics” is devoted. That document presents a valuable account of Hansen’s statements proving his utterly pragmatic and unprincipled political operations, and their consequences.

The record makes clear that as Hansen's immediate factional needs changed he would switch his political line accordingly.

To sum up, the disastrous consequences of the Pabloite line following the reunification of 1963, which Hansen played a major role in engineering, had proven correct all the warnings of the International Committee.

The reply draws the following conclusion about Hansen:

Hansen's explicit defense of that international fraternity of Mensheviks—and his ingrained and remarkable indifference to police surveillance combined with his deep hatred for the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party—confirms the extremely reactionary and politically suspect nature of the Socialist Workers Party leadership.

The Initiation of the Security and the Fourth International Investigation

The WRP's reply concluded with the recommendation to the Sixth World Congress of the ICFI in May 1975 that a special fund be started to provide resources for the investigation into security issues in the Fourth International.

At the congress, attended by Workers League delegates David North, Fred Mazelis, Jeff Sebastian and Alex Steiner, Healy introduced a motion for the initiation of an investigation into Trotsky's assassination. He proposed the IC review the circumstances of the assassination from the point of view of the significance of security issues for the revolutionary education of the cadre. The motion was agreed to and the ICFI formally initiated the Security and the Fourth International investigation.

Once Security and the Fourth International was formally adopted by the International Committee, one of the first steps taken was a letter to Hansen by Cliff Slaughter on behalf of the ICFI. The letter proposed a parity commission of the ICFI and USFI, not as a step towards reunification or for the watering down of principles, but to find common ground to carry out an objective investigation into security.

Slaughter raised an *Intercontinental Press* article from April 1975, titled "Red Lion Square—where were the heroes of the WRP?" The article asked if the WRP was infiltrated with agents and suggested the WRP required investigation for the potential agents who determined that it should not participate in the IMG punch-up. Confident in the political line and the security vigilance of the WRP, Slaughter's letter volunteers the WRP for inspection on questions of security and appeals to Hansen's organization to do the same.

The parity commission would have been the place for these mutual suspicions and accusations to be worked through objectively, for the presentation of evidence from both the ICFI and the USFI.

Hansen's reply to the proposal pointed to the typewritten letterhead, the fact that Slaughter referred to the body as "Unified" rather than "United" secretariat (both terms are used in the documents of that organization), and the shape of Slaughter's signature, declaring pseudo-jocularly, "It could be a forgery." Hansen did not answer anything and instead insinuated there was an agent in the International Committee impersonating Cliff Slaughter:

These are small items. However, 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. Just in case the letter is a fake, I am enclosing a photocopy of it.

Perhaps it [the copy of the letter] will help you to locate the police agent if it was written by one.

Hansen rejected the proposal for a parity commission declaring the issues were already transparent: Healy was an ultraleft-sectarian. He repeated yet again the lie that Wohlforth and Fields were witch-hunted and concluded that it was impossible for an impartial commission to be established.

Hansen himself had raised the issue of agents in the workers movement, in the course over the controversy of Red Lion Square, before the Security and the Fourth International investigation began. There needed to be an investigation, but the Pabloite movement rejected any investigation into security.

Hansen was not accused at the outset of being an agent or the accomplice of agents. As the investigation was to unfold, Hansen's role would come into sharper focus. This will be explained in the subsequent lectures.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact