2025 Summer School Lecture 9, Part 1

The Carleton Twelve

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This is the first part of the lecture on the degeneration of the US Socialist Workers Party in the years following the publication of the initial findings of the investigation into Security and the Fourth International, delivered at the 2025 Summer School of the Socialist Equality Party (US). The first part, titled "The Carleton Twelve," was given by Tom Mackaman. The second part, "Hansen builds a world network of agents," was delivered by Andrea Lobo. The third part, "The Barnes group and the decline and fall of the SWP," was delivered by Patrick Martin. To accompany the first part, the WSWS is publishing as a supplementary text, the pamphlet "The Carleton Twelve," first published in 1981. This document is a milestone in the development of the Security investigation and is essential reading for the education of Trotskyist cadre today.

This lecture addresses a pivotal development in the history of Security and the Fourth International investigation: the discovery in 1979 that 12 prominent leaders of the Socialist Workers Party all hailed from a single small Midwestern college, Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, located in the farming countryside an hour's drive south of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The resulting investigation led to a series of further revelations: That the mechanism through which these 12 students were first funneled into the SWP leadership was the agent-ridden Fair Play for Cuba Committee; that these Carleton graduates had no credible political history prior to their entry into the SWP and no connection to the SWP branch in Minneapolis, once a center of Trotskyism in the US; and that they had been recruited on the basis of their hostility to the IC and orthodox Trotskyism and had worked from the beginning—in fact even before their entry into the SWP—as a cohesive political bloc aligned with Joseph Hansen. These revelations, which I will explore in this lecture, were first made public in the Security and the Fourth International publication titled *The Carleton Twelve*.

There could have been no innocent explanation for the ascension of 12 students from a single, rural, and at that time very conservative college—bear in mind as well that we are speaking of the period before the youth radicalization of the mid-to-late 1960s—to supply almost the entire leadership of a self-described Marxist party. Anyone acquainted with the history of the socialist movement in America, and the lengthy, intricate process required to build a revolutionary leadership within an enormous, complicated country at the very heart of world capitalism would find such a development vanishingly improbable.

The discovery appeared all the more sinister in light of the considerable evidence the Security investigation had already assembled connecting Hansen to the spy agencies of the capitalist state, and the revelations that had emerged earlier in the 1970s that starting in 1960 the SWP was massively infiltrated by the FBI through the COINTELPRO program—a subject which Tom Carter will address in the subsequent group of lectures on the Gelfand case, and to which I shall refer more briefly.

This history is not merely of academic or forensic interest. The Carleton clique's sudden and improbable rise to control the SWP was prepared for by, and in turn accelerated, a major rightward political shift of the SWP. Joseph Hansen's definition of Cuba as a workers state, and the attendant reorientation of the SWP to the Cuban nationalist government, served both as the wedge for the entry of the Carleton 12 through the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and prepared the way for the SWP's reunification with the Pabloite United Secretariat and its rupture with the IC in June 1963. Tomas Castanheira dealt with this broader history in his important lecture to our summer school two years ago, "The Cuban Revolution and the SLL's opposition to the unprincipled Pabloite reunification of 1963." It is also addressed in T*he Heritage We Defend* in the chapter titled "The Cuban Revolution." I encourage the careful review of these sources.

The Carleton clique has been ensconced in control of the SWP ever since, guiding the party over a rightward path that began with its embrace of Castro's guerillaism, continued through its promotion of identity politics and its subordination to the Democratic Party in anti-Vietnam War protest movement in the late 1960s; escalated through its formal rejection of Trotskyism and massive purge of older members in the early 1980s; and culminated in the SWP's transformation in recent years into a right-wing cult, that, among other things, supports Donald Trump and welcomes Israel's genocide of the Palestinians and its wars on Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. But this protracted degeneration of the SWP is a subject that Andrea Lobo and Patrick Martin will address in the lectures that follow this one. Suffice it to say that, outside of its name, the SWP has nothing in common with the party that was built by James P. Cannon and other pioneers in the late 1930s under the guidance of Leon Trotsky.

The Carleton 12 are: Jack Barnes, class of 1961, Betsey Stone '61, Mary-Alice Waters '63, John Benson '63, Dan Styron '63, Doug Jenness '64, Paul Eidsvik '64, Caroline Lund '66, Larry Seigle '66, Margaret Brundy '66, Barbara Matson '66, and Cindy Jaquith '69. Over the course of the 1960s, these individuals all entered the SWP and quickly rose in the leadership. By 1976, six of the twelve were full members of the National Committee, and four more were alternates. Moreover, the most significant posts in the party were held by Carleton graduates: Barnes, national secretary; Waters, head of international work; Jenness, editor of *Intercontinental Press*; Jaquith, editor of *The Militant*; Seigle, head of legal affairs; Stone, head of organizing and the Los Angeles group; Brundy, manager of party finances. They ran everything, in other words.

On first glance, it defies all statistical probability that the whole inner leadership of a socialist party could hail from the same small college—bear in mind that the average total enrollment at Carleton in any given year over the 1960s averaged only 1,500 students. But more fundamentally, the rise of the Carleton 12 in the SWP could not be explained politically.

This was a most unlikely host for socialist politics, as research into these individuals' biographies first carried out by the Workers League in 1979 showed. All came from wealthy or upper-middle-class families. Almost all came from conservative or religious Protestant households from small Midwestern and New England towns. Most were heavily involved in religious youth activities and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America.

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It would take too much of our time to go through all the astonishing biographical detail presented to the reader of *The Carleton Twelve* pamphlet, but please allow me to offer a sample. Betsey Stone was the daughter of a college president, and as a youth was a Sunday school teacher. While at Carleton she busied herself in the Methodist Group and the Liberal Religious Fellowship.

Mary-Alice Waters was the daughter of a surgeon and a member of Baptist Youth Fellowship, and, at Carleton, identified as a Republican, served as the co-chair of the Winter Carnival Tea festival and was a member of the equestrian Saddle Club.

Doug Jenness was the son of a University of Minnesota chemistry professor and rose through the ranks of the Boy Scouts of America all the way to the rarified air of Eagle Scout, and while at Carleton snitched to college administration about the political activities of classmates.

Cynthia Jaquith was the daughter of a wealthy corporate attorney, a member of her church youth group, the Glee Club, the bridge club, and the Girl Scouts.

Lund and Mattson were noted while at Carleton for organizing the college's annual May fête social mixers. Charles Styron, the son of a Congregationalist minister, published anti-communist columns for the school newspaper. John Rodney Benson was a regular attendee at Carleton's Sunday church and Vespers services.

One could go on. But what is most striking about these biographical sketches—which can be substantiated through use of the massive newspapers.com archive—is the complete absence of any credible political history prior to the rise of the Carleton 12 to leadership of the SWP. These 12 men and women replaced the generation of leaders linked to Cannon, as one old-time SWP member observed, "without even a detour into the class struggle."

The strange career of Jack Barnes

But of all of the biographies of the Carleton 12, the strange career of Jack Barnes is the most dubious. Barnes grew up in a middle class, Republican family in Dayton, Ohio, a "big Eisenhower fan" as he told a local newspaper in 1966. He was active in the Young Republicans chapter at Carleton College through his first three years of college.

Then in advance of his fourth and final year at Carleton, in the spring of 1960, Barnes was awarded a Ford Foundation grant for travel to Cuba, leaving for Havana in April or May that year and staying for ten weeks over the summer. It was an odd moment for a Young Republican to be traveling to the island for supposedly academic reasons. As *The Carleton Twelve* puts it, "When Barnes set off, there was a virtual state of undeclared war between Washington and the Cuban government."

Cuba by then was subject to ferocious condemnation in US ruling circles, including, for example, by the highest-ranking Republican senator, Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, who declared in a Senate speech delivered on January 18, 1960 that Cuba was "well on the road toward Communist domination [under] the Kremlin's control. This, I say, America can never permit… Castro is the Achilles heel of our national security. We cannot allow Moscow to gain a foothold too close to our shoreline." As the public rhetoric escalated, behind the scenes plans were being put in place to topple Castro. By March 1960—one month before Barnes' visit—President Eisenhower approved a secret CIA program to organize and train Cuban exiles for future operations against Castro, ultimately leading to the Bay of Pigs invasion exactly one year after Barnes' arrival, in April of 1961.

Here something must be said about the Ford Foundation, which paid for Barnes' travel. This was far from a neutral academic or purely philanthropic organization. Alongside its peers, the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations, and a panoply of smaller foundations, Ford then operated as a shadow extension of the American state in Latin America. The Ford Foundation created and maintained powerful webs of influence—composed of academics, intellectuals, think tanks, policy experts, and business leaders—tightly aligned with US geopolitical interests.

As one researcher put it, "The Foundation's mission in terms of development and democracy in Latin America paralleled United States foreign policy at the time." The Ford Foundation was, she concludes, "a political actor" intensely engaged in the Cold War fight against communism in Latin America.

A turning point came in 1958 when John J. McCloy was made Ford Foundation president. McCloy was a powerful Washington insider, one of the so-called "foreign policy wise men" of the post-World War II era. He had earlier created the Office of Strategic Services or OSS, the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency, and also served as the chair of the predecessor of the National Security Council. Later in his career, McCloy was put on the Warren Commission investigation into the assassination of John Kennedy and is credited for brokering the consensus behind "the lone gunman theory" that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone.

In 1959, as a direct response to the Cuban Revolution, McCloy redirected the focus of Foundation's efforts from Eastern Europe to Latin America. The ostensible separation between the CIA's and the Ford Foundation's operations in Latin America became little more than a mask for covert operations. As the Church Committee, officially known as the US Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, revealed in its final report issued in 1976,

"The CIA's intrusion into the foundation field in the 1960s can only be described as massive… Bona fide foundations, rather than those controlled by the CIA, were considered the best and more plausible kind of funding cover for certain kinds of operations… A 1966 CIA study explained the use of legitimate foundations was the most effective way of concealing the CIA's hand as well as reassuring members of the funded organizations that the organization was in fact supported by private funds."

If this was the Ford Foundation's real aim in Latin America, then why, specifically, give out travel grants of the sort that was awarded to the young economics major, Jack Barnes, from Carleton College?

Historian Inderjeet Parmar provides an answer: The aim was to "convert social scientists into sources of intelligence ahead of possible military or other interventions to ensure that societal problems were resolved within the 'existing political and legal order.'" That was the purpose. The question remains what these Ford Foundation recipients actually knew of their intended use. Barnes has never offered any accounting.

Bear in mind the sequence of events, because the context is crucial:

In 1958, CIA founder John J. McCloy is put in charge of the Ford Foundation. In 1959, he redirects its anti-communist efforts to Latin America in response to the Cuban Revolution, which had come to power on January 1 that year. In early 1960, Jack Barnes, the Young Republican from Carleton College, is selected by the Ford Foundation to travel to Cuba. In September of 1960 Barnes returns to Carleton.

The Fair Play for Cuba Committee

While the American state and its agencies, including the Ford Foundation, deepened imperialist machinations against Cuba, a parallel set of developments unfolded involving the SWP and a dubious organization known as the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. These two lines

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of development, as we shall see, converge on Jack Barnes and Carleton College.

On April 1, 1960, just as Barnes was preparing to travel to Cuba on the Ford Foundation grant, the Fair Play for Cuba Committee was formed in New York City. That very month, April 1960, SWP Secretary Farrell Dobbs joined Joseph Hansen on a "fact-finding mission" to Cuba. Based on "the facts" that Hansen claimed to have uncovered in Cuba, the SWP embraced Castro and his guerilla movement as "unconscious Marxists" that had created a workers state—betraying the principle held by Trotsky, Lenin, Engels, and Marx that the socialist revolution could only take place through the conscious revolutionary intervention of the working class. Having returned from Cuba, Hansen redirected all the work of the YSA to Fair Play for Cuba, bypassing the YSA's National Executive Committee majority under Tim Wohlforth, which supported the orthodox Trotskyist ICFI position defending Cuba from American imperialism, but insisting no socialist revolution had taken place.

It is now well-established that the Fair Play for Cuba was heavily infiltrated by both the CIA and the FBI. But setting that aside for a moment, it should first be underlined that this shady organization, which became the central political axis of the SWP from 1960 through 1963 and the means by which it created a field of cooperation with the Stalinists of the CPUSA—which had also "entered" Fair Play for Cuba—had nothing whatsoever to do with international socialism or the class struggle in the US.

The SWP's turn to Castro marked the reemergence of its abortive "regroupment policy" from 1957-1959, which, as David North describes in *The Heritage We Defend*,

> represented a decisive turn away from revolutionary policies based on the mobilization of the working class, toward reformist protest politics based on unprincipled alliances with Stalinists, radicals, pacifists and other representatives of the American middle class.

By way of comparison, the SWP evinced very little interest in the civil rights movement, then emerging as a mass movement of the most oppressed section of the American working class and just beginning to draw support among the student youth.

Taken at face value, Fair Play for Cuba was the project of influential liberals connected to the Democratic Party—again, taken at face value. The Committee attracted a broad range of left-liberal intellectuals, students and activists—including some with genuine anti-imperialist sentiments, but also many with little or no connection to the working class or to Marxism.

An advertisement placed in the *New York Times* on April 6,1960 that first let the world know of the existence of the FPCC also clearly laid out its class outlook. Under a banner title "WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN CUBA?" the advertisement flatly denied that the Cuban Revolution had anything to do with communism or even with the nationalization of property. It was signed by a number of liberal and left-leaning notables, including the writers James Baldwin, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, and Jean-Paul Sartre.

One other name that appeared on the FPCC list of signatories was that of Alan Sagner. It emerged later that the FPCC had been proposed and initially funded by Sagner, a multi-millionaire real estate developer from New Jersey closely connected to the highest-ranking figures in the Democratic Party. Sagner went on to serve as the chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and as chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Yet in spite of congressional hearings on FPCC in March of 1963, and in spite of the considerable interest raised in Fair Play owing to Oswald's membership, it has never been explained why Sagner, as *The Carleton Twelve* put it, "took so great an interest in the fate of the Cuban revolution that he proposed the formation of a committee to defend it, thought up its name, and provided it with its first contribution. Nor was it ever explained why Sagner apparently lost all contact with it immediately afterwards."

Declassified documents later revealed that the two nominal founders of FPCC, Richard Gibson and Robert Taber—who worked with the real, behind the scenes founder, Sagner to form the FPCC—each cooperated with the CIA and the FBI. And the FBI's leading agent in the FPCC was Victor Thomas Vicente, who was the head of its Social Committee, in which capacity he handed over its entire mailing list to J. Edgar Hoover.

But Vicente was only the best-placed agent. The FBI inundated Fair Play with spies. There can be no doubt that Fair Play provided the spearhead for its COINTELPRO takeover of the SWP which began precisely in the year 1960. Between that year—again, the very moment Barnes and the Carleton 12 began their entry from Fair Play for Cuba and the SWP—and 1976 some 1,300 informants reported on the SWP and YSA. A further 300 agents were actually full, active members of the SWP or YSA, some of whom it is known held significant positions within the party, such as officers, organizers and even National Committee members. The SWP fought tooth-and-nail to squelch all attempts to reveal these agents in its leadership, as lectures on the Gelfand case will discuss. But one self-admitted FBI agent in the SWP leadership who entered in 1960 and was centrally involved in Fair Play for Cuba—and who was a close associate of Hansen and Barnes—was Ed Heisler. And Patrick Martin will have more to say about that.

There is one other fairly obvious agent connected to the SWP through Fair Play for Cuba who in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1963 worked closely with Jack Barnes, by then a leading figure in the YSA. *The Carleton Twelve* brings to light the relationship between Barnes and this individual, the mysterious John R. Glenn. Glenn was one of Fair Play's most active members, and, as it emerged in a House Unamerican Activities Committee (HUAC) testimony involving FPCC activity, a pupil of Joseph Hansen.

The Carleton Twelve presents testimony from Glenn, given at a HUAC hearing held on November 18, 1963, in which he freely answers all questions except for one: a direct question about his career as a spy for Air Force intelligence. Glenn responded: "You are not supposed to tell anybody that, and I never have." But in the same hearing, Glenn responded to a question about the nature of his security clearance in the following terms: "I had a secret, top secret and cryptographic clearance, which is the highest one granted."

Glenn revealed other information that strongly suggested a career as an agent. In the summary of one organization that keeps track of released state secrets, the Mary Ferrell Foundation, John R. Glenn is sketched out in the following terms:

> Member FPCC. Traveled to Cuba in July 1963 without passport. Studied Russian 5 years. Air Force Intelligence with Crypto Clearance and Top Secret Clearance. State Department paid his way back from Spain. Testified before HUAC on 11/18/63. Glenn and Lee Harvey Oswald purchased almost identical material (Internationale,etc.) from Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York, NY.

The comparison between Barnes' roommate, Glenn, and Oswald, has been noted by others. The longtime BBC journalist Anthony Summers, in his book on the Kennedy assassination, *Not in Your Lifetime*, put it in these terms:

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> In November 1963 just four days before the Kennedy Assassination, a young American called John Glenn testified before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. His questioning revealed that he had joined the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in autumn 1962, that he had tried to visit Cuba, at first by traveling through Mexico and that he eventually succeeded. In summer of 1963, at the very time Oswald was becoming active in New Orleans, Glenn did reach Cuba. He outstayed his original visa and then tried to travel on to another citadel of the left, Algeria. The parallels with the Oswald case are numerous. Just as Oswald's fare home had once been paid by the State Department, so Glenn's was paid from Europe. Like Oswald, Glenn used a post-office box as a mailing address and subscribed to *The Militant*. Like Oswald, he had traveled to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in his case supposedly as a guide for an American "travel agency."

Four days after Glenn appeared before HUAC, Oswald assassinated Kennedy in Dallas, Texas. Exactly 48 hours later Oswald, who had claimed after his arrest, "I am just a patsy," was himself assassinated, live on national television, by Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby.

Of course, the Fair Play for Cuba Committee will forever be associated in public consciousness with Oswald, its most famous, or infamous, member. As more information comes to light, it becomes increasingly clear that Oswald was himself part, wittingly or not, of the CIA infiltration of FPCC. We now know that Oswald was closely monitored by the CIA prior to the Kennedy assassination, and there is credible testimony connecting him as well to Taber. But that is for another discussion. In any case, Kennedy's killing and revelations of Oswald's membership in FPCC caused the organization to voluntarily liquidate itself. It was quite literally here one day, gone the next—thereby showing that, if nothing else, this was not any sort of democratic, mass movement, as Hansen and the SWP had insisted. The SWP quietly dropped Fair Play for Cuba, maintaining a discreet silence on it for decades.

The Fair Play connection at Carleton College

Yet, it was Fair Play for Cuba that would provide the SWP with its core leadership for decades to come, all of them drawn from little Carleton College. Fair Play was the mechanism through which the Carleton 12 were "plugged into" the SWP, as the president of Carleton College conceded to a Workers League reporter in an interview.

Let's return to the timeline. In December 1960 and January 1961, just a few months after his return from Cuba, Jack Barnes organizes, simultaneously, the YSA and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee at Carleton. In May 1961, Barnes joins the SWP. In June 1961, Barnes graduates from Carleton, and, extraordinarily, the very same month is invited to attend a national plenum of the YSA. In January 1962, Tim Wohlforth is removed from YSA leadership by a clique figureheaded by Barry Shepherd and Peter Camejo, but organized by Hansen with the backing of Barnes and his classmate and new bride, Betsey Stone.

On March 31, 1961, a revealing article appeared in the *Minneapolis Star*, based heavily on an interview with Barnes, then a senior at Carleton College, where he headed both the YSA and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, headlined, "Cuba Friends Doubt Reds Stalk Group." Most striking in this source is Barnes' anti-communism. I quote from the article:

> When the Carleton chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee was formed in February, Barnes said, "we discussed the whole matter of being tied to unwelcome Communists. We passed a resolution saying that if the committee did not follow its declared aims of promoting travel, trade and friendship between the United States and Cuba or showed signs of being duped in any way, the Carleton chapter would cancel its charter and connections."

Not only did this supposed socialist say nothing in defense of socialism when given the chance by the leading Minnesota newspaper, he freely deployed the language of McCarthyism, announcing that his group would "cancel" its membership to Fair Play if it turned out it had been "duped."

Even more telling is what follows. Barnes states that he joined the Fair Play for Cuba Committee while he was in Cuba. Again, I quote from the *Minneapolis Star* edition March 31, 1961.

> Barnes said he joined the FPCC by responding to an advertisement in the *New York Times* last year while he was studying economics in Cuba. He said he paid $3 dues for a year in the national organization, but the Carleton chapter has no dues.

I have already mentioned the Fair Play for Cuba advertisement Barnes said he responded to. It appeared in the *New York Times* only once, on April 6, 1960. In other words, Barnes joined the Fair Play for Cuba Committee a full half-year before he joined the YSA.

The other notable fact shared by Barnes was his claim that the Fair Play for Cuba Committee at Northfield had 27 members by April 1961. This surely made Northfield, population under 10,000 between college and town, one of the largest chapters in the country, far larger than the Committee's presence in the Twin Cities, whose metropolitan area was 1.7 million at the time. How was it that Fair Play became so prominent at Carleton? And how, precisely, did these Fair Play students enter the SWP, which had no presence in Northfield in 1960?

The Carleton Twelve includes a transcribed phone interview carried out by a reporter for the Workers League with Richard C. Gilman, the dean of Carleton College, during the time Barnes founded the group and the Carleton 12 passed through its ranks en route to control over the SWP. Gilman would later be the president of Occidental College, near Los Angeles, in the years that Barack Obama attended it. The following is a selection of that interview:

> Gilman: There was an active chapter of the SWP in Minneapolis-St. Paul at that time and some of our people at Carleton were plugged into the SWP and they ...
>
> Reporter: You mean the SWP came down and recruited them?
>
> Gilman: It was just as easy for them to go up, but the SWP had an organization in the Twin Cities. Some of the students, some of the Carleton students, were plugged into that.
>
> Reporter: How did that happen?
>
> Gilman: I don't recall, I just know there was linkage and it was through that linkage that we became very much involved in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and that was really, I believe, the strongest political movement at the time that I was there. I remember, for example, I think I knew more about the Cuba situation ... I mean I knew more about both sides of the Cuba situation than anybody. I made it my business to find out about it. I went to New York and went to the headquarters of the FPFC and I began doing a lot of getting of information on this because I

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needed to have it to deal with the situation.

There are several things revealing about this interview. First, that Gilman recalls that the FPCC students were "plugged in" to the SWP. Second, that he corrects the suggestion that the SWP organized the students by traveling to Northfield. Rather, it "was just as easy for them to go up" to the established SWP organization "in the Twin Cities." And third, that a college president would travel to New York to visit the FPCC offices—that he "made it his business to find out" about the FPCC.

It is crucial to bear in mind that Gilman was not only involved, oddly one should add, in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, having inexplicably visited its New York offices in 1960. Gilman would also have been directly involved in the selection of Barnes for the Ford Foundation travel grant to Cuba. The selection process for grants like the one Barnes won relied on existing networks of college deans and presidents, who, particularly at prestigious schools like Carleton, were well-connected to government and corporations. Applications were analyzed by college leadership, who evaluated individual qualifications. They were "intimately informed concerning the personnel" selected. Recommendations or nominations from college leadership could carry persuasive weight in selection.

The Gilman interview strongly hints that the YSA student group that emerged at Carleton simultaneously to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, and drawing its membership from the latter, had no direct connection to the SWP. And yet, these YSA members already had access to sensitive, internal SWP documents, as internal YSA National Executive Committee meeting minutes from 1961 reveal.

These documents, discussed in *The Carleton Twelve*, relate to a tour undertaken by James Robertson, then part of the YSA majority with Tim Wohlforth, and later the founder and principal leader of the middle-class radical formation, Spartacist. Without going into great detail, Robertson's visits to Minneapolis and Carleton College revealed the following: 1) That there was little or no connection between the SWP in Minnesota and the YSA at Carleton; 2) That the Carleton College students were not even aware that they were part of a national socialist youth group; 3) That these students, nonetheless, had been handed over internal IC documents related to the conflict within the SWP, the YSA and the IC over Cuba. Barnes, indeed, seems to have had possession of these documents even prior to his formally joining the YSA.

A letter from Robertson, included in those 1961 meeting minutes, stated:

> Something else which struck me as odd when at Carleton College and which I hope has no relation to the paragraph immediately above was that the Carleton group had all the party bulletins on the Cuba discussion and in the presence of a whole group of 18 students, their leader innocently asked me to fill them in on Wohlforth's side in the dispute…I "tabled" that until, as I put it, the people present join our organization and thereby take responsibility for political decisions.

To repeat, the Carleton students had been supplied, in breach of party security, with internal documents. The individual in the SWP leadership who had both access and motive to do so was Joseph Hansen.

Hansen was then moving against Tim Wohlforth, Fred Mazelis, Robertson, and the rest of the YSA NEC majority as part of his broader effort to break the SWP away from the ICFI and effect a reunification with the Pabloite United Secretariat. The Carleton students then appeared on the scene, ready-made for their role.

To cite only one example, as early as September 9, 1961, Betsey Stone—Barnes' wife—acting as the Chicago YSA branch secretary, was involved in a letter-writing campaign against Wohlforth, insisting that unless action was taken against Wohlforth it would "have the effect of continuing the unprincipled clique formations which have plagued the NEC for so long." Yet only a few months earlier Stone knew nothing of the YSA!

The documents related to Robertson's trip are further substantiated by testimony given in the Gelfand case.

On March 9, 1983, Jean Brust, a longtime leader of the Trotskyist movement in the Twin Cities, confirmed that there was no contact with the Carleton YSA group in the early 1960s.

> Q. I want to ask you one question here about this issue. During the period of the time that you were a member of the Twin Cities branch, which I guess carries you through 1964–a
>
> A. Yes.
>
> Q. –was there any effort made to recruit new members at Carleton College, to your knowledge?
>
> A. Never.
>
> Q. Now, directing your attention to the period from 1960 to 1963, how would you describe the political activities that were going on at the Minneapolis branch during that period?
>
> A. The Minneapolis branch was in shambles during that period. It was disintegrated. It had no political leadership…

Jean Brust, who was one of a few active leaders of the Twin Cities SWP who remained, confirmed that there was no contact with Carleton—nor could there have been. As her testimony went on to explain, the SWP in Minnesota was completely rudderless in the early 1960s.

Which brings us to Farrell Dobbs, who had risen from the Minneapolis branch of the SWP to the position of national secretary of the party. Although Dobbs was a hostile witness in the Gelfand case, his testimony supported some key points. In his April 1982 deposition, Dobbs—who had nominated Jack Barnes to succeed him as SWP secretary—was asked about Barnes and the party leadership's background at Carleton College, and whether they had any ties to the labor movement.

Dobbs, who was still mentally sound in his mid-70s, was first asked whether he knew that a large section of the party leadership had attended Carleton College. Dobbs replied:

> I had no reason to inquire just precisely who came from Carleton College. I worked with whoever I worked with in the movement on the basis of their presence there. If you say they all came from Carleton College and you have knowledge of that, I have no way to quarrel with you about it.

The questioning continued:

> Q: Did anybody from the Minneapolis branch report to you as national secretary during, let's say, the years '60 to '63 or '64 that there was a large number of students who were promising who were coming into the movement?
>
> A: I don't remember that, and I'm not at all sure there would have been a report to me, because, in general, the students that came into the party—or into the movement, rather, at that time first came into the Young Socialist Alliance and then, at one or another time, some among them came into the party. I don't remember

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anyone ever giving me an explicit report as the national secretary about the student youth at Carleton.

Q. Did Jack Barnes work in the trade union movement?

A. Not that I know of. He may have, but I don't have any knowledge of it.

Q. Did he come into extensive contact with workers?

A. I suppose he came into contact with some, but I have no way of knowing whether it was limited or extensive.

Q: What working class struggles has Mr. Barnes been involved in?

A: I can't give you direct knowledge of any such matter.

Q. What were the qualities exhibited by Mr. Barnes which caused him to be the individual selected out to your successor?

A. I don't know the reasons…

Dobbs' ignorance of, and indifference to, Barnes' history of work in the working class is astonishing. After all, Dobbs was a veteran of the great Teamsters struggles of Minneapolis of the 1930s and 1940s.

If he was ignorant of Barnes' history at Carleton, he certainly knew nothing about his Ford Foundation grant, or the fact that after leaving Carleton and now a member of the SWP—Barnes received a second prestigious grant, this time a Woodrow Wilson Foundation fellowship for study at Northwestern University graduate school in Evanston, Illinois. These were politically significant fellowships. Candidates for the Wilson Foundation were typically nominated or recommended by college administrators. They were subject to rigorous evaluation, undergoing a thorough review that involved campus and regional selection panels. The process was described as "a domestic version of the Rhodes Scholarship."

It is extraordinary that Barnes, now a public leader of both the YSA and Fair Play for Cuba, would receive such a grant. But he did. The graduate married Betsey Stone and moved into a six-bedroom, three-bath house in a well-to-do Evanston, Illinois neighborhood.

Conclusion

The rise of the Carleton 12 did not occur in a vacuum. It must be seen alongside the documented history of state infiltration of the Trotskyist movement. As uncovered by the Security and the Fourth International investigation, the SWP was riddled with agents, including those who covered up for Stalinist assassins and informers. The sudden elevation of an insular group like the Carleton 12—unmoored from the class struggle and deeply connected to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which itself was manipulated by the US state—raises the gravest suspicions about the real social and political function of such a leadership.

This lecture has reviewed a mass of damning circumstantial evidence surrounding the ascendency of the Carleton 12 to command of the SWP. It is indisputable that the SWP became overrun with FBI agents, starting in 1960, the very year that the Carleton 12 began entering the party through the agent-dominated Fair Play for Cuba Committee. The precise role of the agents in the leadership of the SWP—and it is established that there are agents in the leadership—remains hidden. Perhaps not all of the Carleton 12 were agents. But one thing is certain: None of them were Trotskyists.

On a global scale, what took place within the American SWP mirrored the degeneration of other formerly revolutionary parties that abandoned the struggle for socialism and adapted themselves, following in the steps of Hansen, to "the facts" of the postwar order dominated by the labor bureaucracies and Third World nationalist movement, and behind it all, imperialism. In this sense, the rise of the Carleton 12 was not an accidental episode, but the outcome of profound class pressures.

The SWP, which had once built the Trotskyist movement in the US, was increasingly isolated from the working class. In this context, the rapid emergence of a homogeneous, privileged, and insular group into party leadership reflected a shift in the party's social base—from the proletariat to the petty bourgeoisie.

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