
**Circular Letter to Division Superintendents
of the Bureau of Investigation
from Special Assistant to the
Attorney General Warren G. Grimes
in the name of
Chief of the BoI Lewis J. Baley,
June 30, 1921**

Copies in DoJ/BoI Investigative Files,
NARA M-1085, reel 928, file 202600-391, p. 266-269.

WWG-AS

June 30, 1921.

R.B. Spencer, Esq.,
Division Superintendent,
Box 987,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Sir:

In returns from the field on the United Communist Party and particularly in the reports on the recent unity convention and formation of the Communist Party of America (Unified) [Woodstock, NY: May 15-28, 1921], there is considerable confusion as to the identity of "Charles E. Scott," a representative of the American Agency of the Communist International. Reports show variously that he is Nicholas Hourwich, L.E. Katterfield [*sic*], and [Alfred] Wagenknecht. The descriptions given of Scott as he appeared at the unity conference do not tally with the descriptions on file of any of these three men.¹

¹ "Charles E. Scott" was the pseudonym of the Latvian Old Bolshevik Karlis "Charley" Janson [Johnson]. Janson came to the USA in 1908, living in Roxbury, MA and serving as Secretary of Boston Lettish Branch No. 2, SPA, in 1917.

The reports on the identity of “Paul Holt,” Executive Secretary, are also confusing with regard to his real name. It is stated in some reports that he is Edgar Owens, in others Katterfield [sic], Wagenknecht, and in some, Isaac Ferguson.²

It is desired that the identity of Scott and Holt be definitely established and every possible effort is to be made by the offices in your division to straighten out the matter. In view of the fact that the Communist activities have increased and received material encouragement as a result of the unity proceedings, it is desired that this matter be given immediate attention. Photographs of these individuals, particularly Hourwich, are understood to be in the possession of the offices.

Very truly yours,

[Lewis J. Baley],
Chief.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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² It is now known with virtual certainty that “Paul Holt” was the pseudonym of Alfred Wagenknecht.