

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 15, April 7, 1978

Present: Blackstock, Breitman, Britton, Clark, Dixon, Garza, Hawkins, Jaquith, D. Jenness, L. Jenness, Kramer, LaMont, Levine, Lovell, Reid, Seigle, Stapleton, Stone, White

Guest: Sedwick

Chair: Jaquith

AGENDA: 1. New York City Municipal Crisis  
2. Gelfand Correspondence

1. NEW YORK CITY MUNICIPAL CRISIS

(Markey, Rose, Sahrer, Seidman, and Shangold invited for this point.)

L. Jenness reported on plans of New York local to respond to latest round in municipal crisis.

Discussion

Motion: To approve.

Carried.

2. GELFAND CORRESPONDENCE

(Hansen invited for this point.)

Seigle reported.

Discussion

Motion: That the Political Committee send attached letter to Gelfand.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.

Typed on National Office letterhead.

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April 7, 1978

Alan Gelfand  
Los Angeles

Dear Comrade Gelfand,

The Political Committee has discussed the series of communications received from you. These include: (1) The "Intended Tasks and Perspectives Discussion of Comrade Al G." dated January 23, 1978, which you had prepared for your branch meeting held to discuss the Los Angeles Local Tasks and Perspectives; (2) your letter of January 25 to the Los Angeles leadership; (3) your letter of January 29 to the Political Committee requesting "any and all suggestions as to how I may proceed to obtain the answers to my questions in a manner that is in conformity both with the norms of our party and our obligation to defend it from all attacks"; (4) your letter of February 13 to the Political Committee complaining that you had not yet received a reply to your January 29 letter; and (5) your letter of March 26 addressed to the National Committee, demanding, among other things, that "Joseph Hansen be required to give a complete and full accounting of his involvement with the GPU and the FBI, and that he hand over to the party any and all files, memos, manuscripts, letters or other correspondence in his possession or under his control." The Los Angeles local leadership has informed us that you leafleted your branch meeting with copies of this last item.

You have asked for our opinion about how you may proceed to press your charges against Joe Hansen. The answer to that question is simple. The party cannot and will not allow agent-baiting within its ranks. Any further repetition by you of the Healyite slanders will not be tolerated.

Since you may not be aware of the long-standing tradition of our movement on agent-baiting, and therefore may not fully understand how seriously the party views your actions, we would like to take this opportunity to explain the party's position on this question.

In the voluminous material you have compiled you raise not one point that has not previously been raised by the Healyites in their three-year campaign of slander of Joe Hansen, George Novack, and the rest of the SWP leadership.

The verdict was brought in long ago on the Healyite slander campaign: it is nothing but a frame-up. It collapses like a house of cards under even the slightest scrutiny. It is based on the technique of the Big Lie.

Joe Hansen himself subjected the entire pack of lies to a detailed examination in the November 24, 1975, issue of Intercontinental Press. Hansen showed at great length that the Healy charges were nothing but slanders based on faked quotations, outright lies, and crude amalgams.

He also showed that the Healy witch-hunt is motivated by the Healyites' political opposition to the SWP and to the Fourth International. In particular, it flows from a desperate attempt to hold together the disintegrating "International Committee," which the Healyites have kept going as a rump organization since their sectarian opposition to the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963 and their split from the International.

The slander campaign against Comrade Hansen began shortly after Intercontinental Press published a document by Tim Wohlforth explaining the circumstances under which he and Nancy Fields left the Workers League, the American Healyite group. Wohlforth described Healy's vilification of Nancy Fields as a "CIA agent" and his preoccupation with "security," which he used as a weapon to silence critics. It was Hansen's accompanying comments in Intercontinental Press on this Healyite method of internal functioning that triggered Healy's slander campaign.

Healy responded to Hansen's answers by extending the charges and the list of "suspects" in the case. After George Novack published an article that branded the slanders as a frame-up "that stinks to the heavens" Healy uncovered "evidence" proving that Novack, too, is an "accomplice of the GPU."

Hansen prepared a second detailed refutation of the new, escalated charges. This appeared in the August 9, 1976, issue of Intercontinental Press. But once again, rather than pulling back, Healy escalated the slander campaign still further.

As Healy pressed deeper into the "Big Muddy" he had created, leaders of the Trotskyist movement around the world came forward to repudiate the abhorrent slanders and demand that Healy halt his witch-hunt. Finally, a wide range of individuals representing virtually the entire spectrum of groups identifying themselves as Trotskyists on a world scale, as well as individuals not belonging to any organized formation, and including numerous present and past leaders of the Fourth International, published a statement denouncing the Healy slander campaign.

"Healy and his associates," the statement declared, "have not brought forward the slightest probative evidence, documents, or testimony to substantiate their libelous accusations against Hansen and Novack, the nominal targets of the attacks. The script of their polemics is fabricated out of baseless innuendoes, gratuitous suppositions and outright lies that do not have any political content or foundation in fact. They constitute a shameless frame-up."

"A shameless frame-up." This was the verdict of those who had examined the evidence on both sides. It was unambiguous.

In December 1976, the National Education Department of the Socialist Workers Party published all of the materials repudiating the Healy slander campaign in a rather thick pamphlet. It is, as you know, available to all those who have questions about the Healy charges and are interested in how we have answered them.

Unfortunately, Healy still refused to pull back from his destructive course. Once again he fabricated new "proofs" of Hansen's guilt. This is a procedure he apparently intends to continue on a permanent basis.

It is, of course, possible to cook up endless variations on any slander theme, and to demand new answers each week. Each "answer" can then provide new material for yet more "questions."

However, once the charges have been rebutted in detail, once the character of the slander campaign has been exposed before the world movement and universally denounced as a frame-up, and once the political origin and purpose of the slander campaign have been revealed and analyzed, then the victims of the slander campaign are no longer obligated to spend their time unraveling each "new" pack of lies.

This is why you have not found comrades interested in answering the "new" Healyite accusations. The Healyite slander campaign has already been answered: in detail, in public, and in print.

Now let us turn to the question of what you assert to be your right as a member of the SWP to raise these slanders against Joe Hansen inside the party.

The established principles of the revolutionary workers movement are quite clear on this question. The party has an obligation to protect itself from spy scares and internal witch-hunts carried out in the name of "security." This obligation is at least as important as the party's need to protect itself from infiltration by enemy spies and provocateurs.

These principles were summarized in an article written by James P. Cannon in the August 28, 1950, issue of the Militant. The article took up the charge by one Louis Budenz, a notorious FBI stool pigeon and ex-GPU operative, that one of the comrades working in the SWP national office was a Stalinist agent. Cannon reported that this particular accusation had, several years earlier, been referred to the party Control Commission, which had found the information on which the charge was based to be false, and exonerated the comrade. (The Healyites have now taken up Budenz's charge anew, and Cannon's article was reprinted in Intercontinental Press of November 24, 1975, along with Joe Hansen's initial reply to the Healy slanders.)

Cannon wrote: "A 'spy scare' caused by planted 'disinformation' can do a hundred times more damage than any spies by undermining the confidence of comrades in each other and disrupting the comradely collaboration which is necessary for fruitful work."

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"Character assassins are more dangerous than spies," Cannon said. "Those who make false accusations or circulate slanderous rumors must be thrown out."

This approach is the polar opposite of the Healy "security" system. As the unimpeachable testimony of former members of Healy's movement proves, the Healyite "security" method amounts to a permanent witch-hunt inside his own organization. The Healyite concept of protecting the security of the party is to generate the highest possible level of mutual suspicion among comrades who are supposed to be working together for a common cause.

We can add some concrete examples to what Cannon wrote in 1950, as the result of the mountain of materials that has been dislodged from the FBI's secret files. These show that the planting of accusations about spies inside an organization is one of the FBI's favorite tricks. They have used anonymous tips, forged documents, and other fabricated evidence to make the case look convincing. They know quite well that setting an organization on the tracks of uncovering spies in its own ranks can do more to destroy its functioning than anything the FBI's own spies can do by themselves.

What's more, such spy scares rarely uncover the real spies, who are invariably among the most determined and enthusiastic about "security." In fact, starting and fueling spy scares aimed at others is one of the favorite tricks of FBI informers.

The Militant has written extensively about the disastrous effects of this FBI tactic on the American Communist Party, and on ultraleft groups like the Black Panther Party. The FBI had the members of these organizations looking under every bed for spies, suspecting their comrades of being agents. This had a devastating impact on the internal life of these groups, and was absolutely fatal to their internal security because it gave the real agents a free hand to disrupt and create havoc.

Fortunately, despite repeated attempts, the FBI has never been able to use this tactic effectively against our party. This is because we simply do not allow agent-baiting in our ranks.

If anyone persists in spreading rumors or false accusations about the loyalty of other comrades, they find themselves subject to the disciplinary proceedings the party constitution provides to protect the party from disloyalty and disruption from within.

Any other course would only lay the party open to all kinds of disruption efforts. It would permit suspicion and distrust among comrades to become widespread. And, as we have seen from the Healyite groups themselves, it would allow bureaucratic paranoia about "security" to infringe on the democratic rights of the membership to question and raise criticisms of party positions and policies.

We repeat: any further steps by you to circulate slanders

against Joe Hansen or any other party member would be in violation of the organizational principles of the party, and will not be tolerated.

Political Committee

*Larry Seigle*  
Larry Seigle

MAR 3 0 1978

March 26, 1978

National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party  
14 Charles Lane  
New York, New York

Dear Comrades,

I consider the writing of this letter to be the most important task I have undertaken in my life. It is the product of an intensive and thorough study of the history and principles of our movement. This study was initially promoted by a series of events which began in Oberlin at our convention this summer.

At this convention I became deeply concerned over government documents printed in the August 5, 1977 issue of the Bulletin which was being distributed by the Workers League. On its face these documents indicated that Joseph Hansen had requested and obtained a confidential relationship with the FBI.

Prior to this time I had not taken seriously the numerous charges made by the Healyites regarding Hansen's alleged GPU/FBI involvements and in fact, was only vaguely familiar with the substance of these charges. Upon an examination of these government documents, however, I knew that I, as well as all comrades, were obligated to pursue this issue in the most serious and thorough manner.

As an attorney who is familiar with government documents, understanding how easily their authenticity can be verified and also being aware that it is a federal crime to distort or otherwise misrepresent a government document, I had to assume that these documents were in fact true. I also assumed that our party had answers to all the questions and implications which these documents posed.

The impact of these documents was even more striking by the fact that only a few days before, the ACLU had made the front page of most major newspapers when it was revealed that government documents indicated that the leadership of the ACLU had collaborated with the FBI and had informed upon its own membership.

In light of this fact, the distinct possibility existed that the press could obtain these Workers League documents and make similar conclusions about the SWP. This factor, coupled with the knowledge that many comrades considered these documents to be forgeries, necessitated in my opinion the need to immediately answer and clarify any and all questions raised by these documents.

From this standpoint, I proceeded to discuss this matter at the convention with Comrade Jack Barnes. Comrade Barnes indicated to me at the time that these documents were in fact true, that Hansen met with the FBI for six months following Trotsky's assassination. Comrade Barnes further informed me that this was not a secret and that this aspect of our history was well known to many

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comrades. Comrade Barnes assured me that a prompt reply would be forthcoming in Intercontinental Press.

After our convention I anxiously awaited Hansen's reply. I became deeply distressed, however, as the weeks passed and no reply was issued. Recognizing the vulnerable position our party was in as a result of these government documents, I was compelled to raise this matter at our fall city-wide meeting.

I attempted at this meeting to explain to our local the significance of these recently published government documents and the need to take seriously the charges that were being made. By failing to respond or to comprehend the danger which these government documents posed to our party, placed the reputation and integrity of our party in jeopardy.

Additionally, I urged leading comrades to come forward to answer the charges posed by these documents and/or to provide sources of information such as books, discussion bulletins, memorandums, etc., from which comrades could study in order to properly equip themselves to defend our party from any charges made as a consequence of these government documents.

The few responses which I got as a result of this contribution were disheartening to say the least. One comrade diplomatically suggested to me that I should be quiet and not raise such questions. One leading comrade even had the audacity to repeatedly shout, 'Who Cares, Who Cares!'

Well comrades, it is clear from both the length of this letter and the research I have done, that I care very much. I care about the GPU murder machine that slaughtered Trotskyists throughout the world, and who today, continue to carry out their counter-revolutionary role by suppressing the dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In this country, the GPU certainly continues to function, and in all probability even functions in our own party, we being the primary exponent of Trotskyism in the world today.

I also care about the FBI. The FBI who framed and sent to prison 18 of our leading comrades in the 1940's. The FBI, who has infiltrated every progressive movement in this country, including our own, as well as having played an active role in the murders of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and numerous Black Panthers.

Any documentation which shows or even suggests GPU and/or FBI involvement by any member of our party is a matter that any dedicated revolutionary would address himself to at once. It is upon this basis that during the last several months I have read and re-read all of our replies to the Healyite charges, many of the materials published by the Healyites, the Writings of Leon Trotsky, and most recently, The Case of Leon Trotsky (Dewey Commission).

Based upon what I felt to be a knowledgeable understanding of the issues involved, coupled with the fact that we had failed to print one word in reply to the questions raised by these most recently revealed government documents, I attempted to raise these issues



during the Southeast Branch Tasks and Perspectives discussion held in late January. Before, however, I had a chance to complete one sentence of my contribution, I was ruled out of order. Leading comrades came forward to explain that my contribution was in conflict with a political resolution adopted at our convention and/or Political Committee directive issued on this subject.

It is not necessary for me to discuss whether or not my contribution was or was not in conflict with said political resolution or Political Committee directive, in that no such resolution or directive exists. Suffice it to say that certain leading comrades deemed it important enough to fabricate the existence of such resolutions and/or directives, in order to insure that I would be silenced. One should also note that the incident seems to reflect the attitude amongst a certain section of our party that one is out of order if one attempts to defend the reputation and integrity of our party.

A few days after this unprecedented and shocking incident took place, a meeting was held with Comrade Camejo, my branch organizer and myself. I had hoped that this meeting would remedy the fraudulent and unprincipled conduct which resulted in depriving me of my right to free and open discussion at our own branch meeting.

Again, however, I was gravely disappointed. During the 40 minutes of this meeting, I answered every question put to me by Comrade Camejo. He, however refused to answer even one of the numerous questions I put to him, including such basic questions as the following:

- \*Was or was not Sylvia Franklin a GPU agent?
- \*Did or did not Joseph Hansen have a confidential relationship with the FBI?
- \*Have we contacted Felix Morrow to confirm whether or not he in fact gave an interview to the Healyites in which he allegedly stated that we never used the FBI to investigate aspects of Trotsky's assassination?
- \*Hypothetically, if it was revealed that a branch organizer had been meeting with Police Chief Ed Davis for the last 6 months, would it be appropriate to inquire as to whether these meetings were authorized? If so, for what purpose? What did our comrade tell the Chief? What did he tell our comrade?

Even to these most basic questions, Comrade Camejo refused to answer. Comrade Camejo's reply to all of this was that either I was very foolish and naive, or a Healyite agent.

I offer, however, a third and far more plausible explanation. That is, that I am absolutely right in raising these questions. That the unprecedented and unprincipled resistance which I have encountered ever since Oberlin, when I began to undertake this

elementary revolutionary obligation, coupled with the 9 month silence by our leadership regarding the new charges raised by the Healyite publication in August of government documents indicating that Joseph Hansen had a confidential relationship with the FBI; reveals that a conscious cover-up is underway to prevent our membership from being fully informed of all aspects of our party's history.

To support this contention I will draw a balance sheet of the facts regarding the allegations dealing with Sylvia Franklin's GPU involvement, Joseph Hansen's GPU involvement, and Joseph Hansen's FBI involvement.

### I.

WAS SYLVIA FRANKLIN, PERSONAL SECRETARY TO JAMES P. CANNON, A GPU AGENT?

Essentially, the only attempt that has been made to defend Sylvia Franklin was made by Joseph Hansen in the November 24, 1975 issue of Intercontinental Press. In reply to the charge that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent Joseph Hansen offered the following:

"Sylvia Caldwell (that was her party name) worked very hard in her rather difficult assignment of managing the national 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 slander spread by Budenz.

"Sixteen years later, in a letter dated November 12, 1966, James P. Cannon, discussing the function of the Control Commission in the Socialist Workers Party, recalled how the slander had been handled.

"In another case," he said, "a rumor circulated by the Shactmanites and others outside the party against the integrity of a National Office secretarial worker was thoroughly investigated by the Control Commission which, after taking stenographic testimony from all available sources, declared the rumors unfounded and cleared the accused party member to continue her work."

It should be noted that at no time has Hansen chosen to publish the findings of the Control Commission which investigated Franklin, or to publish any of the testimony that was taken which presumably was in defense of the "exemplary" comrade. Nor has he chosen to reveal why Sylvia Franklin left our party soon after the Control Commission was held, and presumably has never been heard from again.

If an attorney defended Sylvia Franklin in the same manner as Hansen has done, he would be subject to suit for malpractice.

As a revolutionary, Hansen has also failed to conform to the standard set forth by Lenin which Hansen himself quotes at the beginning of his November 24, 1975 reply:

"The careful verification of every fact and every figure was typical of Ilyich. He based his conclusions on facts.

This eagerness to base every conclusion on facts is plainly revealed in his early propaganda pamphlets... He did not foist anything on the workers, but proved his contentions with facts."

Clearly Hansen's defense of Franklin is not based on hard facts, but only on broad generalizations, inadmissible hearsay, and blind faith.

The contention that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent is supported by the following affidavits, documents, testimony and statements.

1. In the late 1940's Max Shactman notified the SWP National Office that information had been received that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent.

2. On November 11, 1950 Louis Budenz, an ex-Communist Party member, turned FBI informant, submitted a sworn affidavit to the House Un-American Activities Committee naming Sylvia Franklin as a GPU agent.

3. On November 29, 1960 Sylvia Franklin was named by the US Government as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Soviet espionage trial of Robert Soblen.

4. In the summer of 1961, Jack Soble, an admitted GPU agent gave the following testimony under oath during the espionage trial of his brother Dr. Robert Soblen:

Jack Soble: There were people--there was a secretary of Cannon, who was a secretary of the Trotskyist organization at that time here in the United States who had been one of the secretaries working for the GPU. I never recruited her; I never introduced her. The GPU introduced her to me.

Judge Herlando: What was her name?

Jack Soble: I knew her under the name of Sophie or Sylvia.

In later testimony, this line of questioning was resumed again:

Jack Soble: I went further into the Trotsky field and worked with the secretary of Cannon, Sylvia, whom I knew only under the name of Sylvia or Sophie, also introduced to me by the same Russians who worked for them already before.

Question: What did she do?

Jack Soble: She gathered material at the secretariat of Cannon and gave it to me. (over)

Question: The same Trotsky material?

Jack Soble: The same Trotsky material.

Question: Trotsky material?

Jack Soble: Yes, it had pure Trotsky material.

5. On March 8, 1977, Jean Van Heijenoort, Trotsky's secretary from 1932 to 1939, stated at a public meeting in Paris the following:

"Everything in my mind at the present time goes in the direction that Sylvia was an agent of the GPU."

6. On March 8, 1977, at the same meeting, Michel Pable, former secretary of the Fourth International stated:

"Oh, I think so, definitely. I think she was, yes, an agent. I think it is right that they must admit it. That's my position. The Socialist Workers Party must admit it."

These six items of evidence should clear any doubts or reservations one might have as to the role Sylvia Franklin played in our movement. These six items of evidence cover a period of 30 years. It includes two statements made under oath (Budenz and Soble). It includes statements from three highly prominent Trotskyist leaders (Shactman, Van Heijenoort, and Pable). It further indicates that the US Government recognized that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent (government indictment), that the GPU admitted that she was one of its agents (Soble's testimony) and that the FBI recognized that she was a GPU agent (Budenz' statement in 1950).

In short, we have the US Government, the GPU, the FBI and several prominent Trotskyist leaders all recognizing and admitting that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent. This broad group would seem to just about cover everyone. However, there seems to be a few notable exceptions in the SWP, who at even this late date, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, continue to insist that Sylvia Franklin was an "exemplary comrade."

Such a conclusion is not just contrary to objective truth, but a conscious falsification. Sylvia Franklin was not an exemplary comrade, but a butcher, who must be held accountable for assisting in the murders of leading Trotskyists, including the founder of our movement, Leon Trotsky. Her conduct was only exemplary from the standpoint of the GPU, and anyone who continues to describe one of the murderers of Trotsky as an "exemplary comrade" is speaking for the GPU, not the Trotskyist movement.

As a final note, I am sure one must ask how we ever got into this predicament. Why didn't we, or why can't we, just admit that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent? Could it be that by doing so we would result in legitimizing, at least to a certain degree, many of

other charges raised by the Healyites, thereby promoting a much closer examination of these charges?

## II.

WAS JOSEPH HANSEN AUTHORIZED BY THE SWP TO HAVE PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE GPU IN 1938?

In the spring of 1975 the Healyites accused Joseph Hansen of having suppressed from the movement for 37 years details of his personal contacts with a GPU agent named John in New York in 1938.

The basis of this accusation was a State Department report by Robert G. McGregor, an employee of the American Consul in Mexico City who had a meeting with Joseph Hansen on August 31, 1940, eleven days after Trotsky's assassination.

This report states in part the following:

"Hansen stated that when in New York in 1938 he was approached by an agent of the GPU and asked to desert the Fourth International and join the Third. He referred the matter to Trotsky who asked him to go as far with the matter as possible. For three months Hansen had relations with a man who merely identified himself as 'John', and did not otherwise reveal his identity."

On November 24, 1975 Hansen, in Intercontinental Press, issued his reply to the Healyites' initial charges. In this reply, he printed in full McGregor's report. He, however, at that point declined to either confirm or deny or otherwise comment on the accuracy of McGregor's statement contained in the report about Hansen's meeting with the GPU. Hansen simply evaded the entire issue.

This obvious evasion simply fanned the flames for the Healyites who proceeded on January 1, 1976 to "indict" Joseph Hansen as an accomplice of the GPU.

It was not until August 9, 1976, well over a year after the revelation concerning Hansen's GPU involvement had been made known that Hansen issued his reply in Intercontinental Press. This reply consisted of 23 pages. The first 18 pages consists of numerous poor jokes and snide remarks and evasions. Finally, on the 18th page, Hansen begins to respond to the issue of the GPU contact. It is at this point that Hansen offers three items of evidence in an attempt to confirm that he was authorized to meet with the GPU.

The first item is referred to as a "Hitherto Unpublished Letter by Trotsky." Hansen contends that the fourth paragraph of this letter was really a code for referring to his GPU contact. This paragraph read as follows:

"As you can imagine, it is with the greatest impatience that I await your ultimate information about the manuscript. Your procedure is not clear to me, but I am inclined to suppose that it is good. We will see the results."

The credibility of Hansen's contention regarding this letter is quickly tarnished as soon as one recognizes that this so-called "Hitherto Unpublished Letter" was in fact published, at least in part, by Pathfinder Press in the 1974 edition of Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-1939.)

Hansen then goes on to contend that his meeting with the GPU was consistent with the tactical turn toward the CP which the SWP made in this period. Even a cursory reading, however, of "Our Work in the Communist Party" found in the Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-1939) reveals clearly that Trotsky argued for our intervention among the rank and file of the CP. To extend this logic to intervene among the GPU is not only qualitatively different, but implies somehow that the GPU may be won over or reformed, which of course throws Revolution Betrayed, as well as the Fourth International itself right out the window.

Aside from this previously alluded to letter, Hansen fails to submit any direct correspondence between himself and Trotsky which even refers remotely to this rather "unique" maneuver. Hansen does, however, attempt to "explain" why there does not exist any communications from him to Trotsky.

"For security reasons, we followed the rule of keeping the number of persons to a minimum. For instance, in communicating to O'Brien on this topic, I was to use invisible ink, writing between double spaced typewritten lines of letters on other subjects."

Hansen lastly submits a memorandum dated April 7, 1939 which was ostensibly signed by Cannon, Shactman, and Hansen. This memorandum does refer to Hansen's GPU involvement, but it raises as well, several intriguing questions.

This memorandum begins by stating that, "Upon his return to the US Comrade Joseph Hansen chanced to meet an agent of the GPU." This "chanced" meeting is in direct contradiction to Hansen's explanation on the previous page of his reply when he stated, how through a number of discussions and letters he was specifically instructed to "take on a GPU agent."

This memorandum then goes on to conclude that through these conversations "valuable information has been gained for the Fourth International." This of course compels one to ask, what was this "valuable information"?

Hansen obviously had many opportunities to publish this "valuable information." One would think that such "valuable

information" would have been very helpful after the May 24, 1940 machine gun attack on the Trotsky household. Certainly, immediately following the assassination of Trotsky, such "valuable information" would have been priceless in exposing the Stalinists as the assassins.

After Trotsky's assassination, Hansen did however, on August 31, 1940 release a certain amount of this "valuable information". Unfortunately it was to Robert McGregor, of the US State Department and not to the Trotskyist movement.

It has been almost 40 years and Hansen still refuses to disclose the facts and details concerning his GPU contact and what in fact this "valuable information" consisted of. The GPU certainly is aware of what this "valuable information" is, since they gave it to Hansen. The US Government in all probability knows or has a good idea of what it is, based on Hansen's conversations with McGregor. Why is it that only the Trotskyist movement is left in the dark?

In conclusion, Joseph Hansen must be required to immediately come forward to provide a full and complete accounting of his involvement with the GPU. Secret codes, invisible ink, political distortions, evasions, and silence are not answers. Hansen's attempted reply therefore is totally unacceptable.

### III.

#### WAS JOSEPH HANSEN AUTHORIZED BY THE SWP TO MEET WITH THE FBI IN 1940?

In the spring of 1975 the Healyites published a report by Robert McGregor, a State Department official, who met with Joseph Hansen in Mexico City on August 31, 1940, 11 days after Trotsky's assassination. This document is the same one which contained the revelation about Joseph Hansen's GPU involvement. The Healyites concluded, that based upon this previously undisclosed meeting, Hansen was in association with the FBI.

In Hansen's November 24, 1975 reply he responds to this accusation in a section entitled, "FBI 'Associations'--A geyser of Mud," He states,

"In the whole series of 26 articles, the Healyites in no place indicate the basis of their charge that McGregor was an "FBI agent who was operating under diplomatic cover at the American Embassy." ...for the moment it is sufficient to note how the Healyites use this label to suggest that at Coyacan I was in 'association' with an agent of the FBI."

At this point in time many of our opponents reached the same conclusion as Hansen. In the December 31, 1975 issue of "Socialist Press", (reprinted beginning on page 20 of Education for Socialists Bulletin entitled, "Healy's Big Lie"), the WSL made these comments:

"...Healy's 'investigation' add evidence or qualification as "fact" that McGregor was an FBI agent...and draw the following inferences:

1. That Hansen was familiar with an FBI official and met with him probably "clandestinely"...

"It is, of course, logically conceivable that while Hansen's meeting with McGregor was wholly legitimate (and McGregor's report does nothing to suggest otherwise) he was simultaneously in undisclosed contact with the FBI through quite different channels--but the WRP produces not one shred of evidence to support such a verdict."

Betty Hamilton and Pierre Lambert took a similar position in the February 27-March 4, 1976 issue of Information Cuvrieres, which is found in "Healy's Big Lie", pages 25-28, by again stating that the conclusions which the Healyites had reached were not based on facts but only conjecture and speculation.

"Workers Press makes a big to-do about a visit Joseph Hansen made to the American consul McGregor, a visit he made as Trotsky's secretary eleven days after Trotsky was murdered."...From this "proof", which is no proof at all, it concludes that Hansen could very well have maintained relations with the FBI, and then it goes on as if such a link had been established..."

The argument that the Healyites had failed to produce facts and evidence to substantiate their contention of Hansen's FBI association, was eliminated by the publication of government documents in the August 5, 1977 issue of the Bulletin.

These government documents, which are available at the US National Archives, indicated that the US Embassy employee Robert G. McGregor was an agent for a US Intelligence agency, that Hansen met with McGregor not once, but at least on five occasions after Trotsky was assassinated, and that, Hansen provided to McGregor, among other items, an internal security document removed from Trotsky's desk, and a memorandum of a conversation between a member of the Directing Committee of the Fourth International in New York and a prominent member, 'W', of the Fourth International.

With respect to McGregor the Healyites have produced documentation that he was the third-ranking member of the embassy staff, placed ahead of a Commander Dillion and a Captain Piper, who were in charge of naval intelligence, and Colonel McCoy, who was responsible for military intelligence.

McGregor's specific duties at the time of his meetings with Hansen are described in great detail in a memorandum dated April 24, 1940:

"Prepares under the direction of the principal officer such special reports as are now called for, including narcotics, smuggling, counterfeiting, Communist activities, and reports on European refugees in Mexico and the general effect of their residence in this country."

The Bulletin article then proceeds to correctly point out that the most distinguished European refugee in Mexico at that time was Trotsky.



The impact of this document is that it effectively destroys the contentions of Hansen in late 1975 and early 1976, as well as those statements of support previously referred to from the WSL, Hamilton, and Lambert. They had all refuted, at least in part, the accusations of Hansen's FBI associations, on the basis that there were no facts or evidence that would indicate that McGregor was in fact an intelligence officer.

Another alarming aspect of these documents is that they reveal that Hansen met at least five times with McGregor, not just once as was originally charged.

It would seem that Hansen certainly had the opportunity to set the record straight back in November 24, 1975 when he published his "FBI Associations--Geyser of Mud," reply. Why at that time did he fail to disclose that he met with McGregor not just once but at least five times?

A careful reading of the relevant sections in this reply would certainly tend to lead a reasonable person to conclude that Hansen is suggesting that in fact, only one such meeting took place.

As an example, in said reply Hansen states as follows, "Healy's bloodhounds have really exposed the "dubious" Trotsky. He was in "association" with the FBI at least twice, according to the agent's report and not just once as in the case of Hansen."

Aside from meeting with a top US intelligence officer on several occasions, and providing said officer with internal SWP documents and information, the most astounding revelation which these government documents expose is in a memorandum between the State Department and the FBI indicating that Joseph Hansen, "wishes to be put in touch with someone in your confidence located in New York to whom confidential information could be imparted with impunity." That "someone" turned out to be none other than B.E. Sackett, the FBI agent in charge of the New York District of the FBI.

To further confirm this the Healyites also published a letter from Joseph Hansen to George Shaw, the American Counsel, in which Hansen states, "I received your letter concerning Mr. Sackett in good condition and shall visit him shortly."

To further show that Hansen was never authorized by the SWP to meet with the FBI, the Healyites published the following interview with Felix Morrow, who in 1940 was a member of the SWP Political Committee.

Q: I was wondering whether or not you had any recollection about the steps taken by the Socialist Workers Party at the time to learn more about the assassination, how it was carried out. Particularly whether it received any assistance from the American government in any way.

Morrow: None.

Q: None whatsoever?

Morrow: None.

Q: Well, what was the attitude of the FBI, in your opinion toward the assassination?

Morrow: They weren't involved in any way.

Q: Well, did the SWP to your knowledge have any policy of trying to obtain the assistance of the FBI?

Morrow: There would be no reason. It was an open and shut case. Jacson had done it. The only problem was to establish that Jacson was a GPU agent.

Q: I see. Then to your knowledge the SWP made no initiative at any time toward establishing contact with the FBI?

Morrow: None. None.

Q: Nothing at all?

Morrow: I'm sure of that.

Q: You're sure of that?

Morrow: Yes.

Q: Let me ask you something. Who was more or less in charge in the party with investigating the death of Trotsky? I know that Goldman wrote a book on the assassination.

Morrow: Well, all involved--you know, the whole Pol-Com (Political Committee).

Q: I see. How about Joseph Hansen?

Morrow: He was down in Mexico.

Q: And when he came back in late September 1940?

Morrow: He was not a member of the Pol-Com.

Q: And therefore he would not have been given a special responsibility?

Morrow: No.

Q: Does the name Sackett mean anything to you?

Morrow: No.

Q: It means nothing to you?

Morrow: Nothing.

Q: Politically speaking, in that period of time, as I recall there was some serious problem in terms of repression against the SWP and the labor movement by the FBI. This was before the war.

Morrow: Uh-huh.

Q: In 1940, around the period of August, had the repression already started, building up toward the Minneapolis case?

Morrow: I would say so.

Q: In what particular way?

Morrow: I couldn't really remember the details, but you know...

Q: The heat was on?

Morrow: Yes, the heat was on.

Q: And by the beginning of 1941 it probably became quite serious?

Morrow: Yes.

Q: In light of that, how would the party have looked upon an attitude--given Trotsky's political positions on defense of the workers' state, his attitude toward imperialism and Stalin--how would the SWP leadership at that point, the Political Committee, have looked upon reliance on the FBI in terms of--

Morrow: There was no reliance on the FBI.

Q: I see.

Morrow: It just didn't exist.

Q: But politically speaking, it would have been considered out of the ordinary...

Morrow: Of course!

Q: ...for someone to suggest that be done?

Morrow: Yes.

Q: I'm asking this because the question has come up in documentation, but to you that would be complete news?

Morrow: That's right.

Q: I see, and you're quite sure that there was never any authorization given.

Morrow: None. (over)

To even further substantiate that Hansen was not authorized to carry out any ongoing meetings with the FBI the Healyites published a report filed by Special Agent M.R. Griffin dated December 9, 1940. This report, in part, contains the following:

"The writer interviewed James P. Cannon and Joseph Hansen regarding the Trotsky affair and was advised by them that they had no information to offer. They appeared very reluctant to discuss the matter and gave very brief answers to questions put to them by reporting agent---".

This report certainly contradicts other reports indicating Hansen's desire to impart confidential information with impunity and is totally inconsistent with Comrade Barnes' explanation to me about "Hansen meeting with the FBI for 6 months to tap all sources of information."

Does this contradiction indicate that perhaps Hansen was acting one way in the presence of Cannon and in an entirely different manner when he was out of the presence of the party?

Aside from this fact that these government documents on their face suggest a highly suspicious relationship between Hansen and the FBI, the most alarming fact concerning these specific issues is the fact that for 9 months we have not printed one word about these latest revelations. I can only conclude from this silence and the refusal on the part of leading comrades to answer even the most basic questions raised by the publication of this latest material, is that we essentially have no answer.

Even if one assumes that Hansen was authorized to meet with the FBI, one still has to explain why this fact and information that was exchanged, was not disclosed to the party. A consistent pattern seems to have developed where the only ones who seem to have possession of crucial party information is Joseph Hansen, the GPU, and/or the FBI.

#### CONCLUSION

I am confident that upon any objective reading of my letter one will conclude that Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent and that Joseph Hansen's relationship with the GPU and FBI are at the minimum, highly questionable, and in need of an immediate and exhaustive examination.

One who reads any of Hansen's replies to these charges, must conclude that his "answers" are riddled with evasions, distortions, and misrepresentations. His only defense essentially amounts to the fact that he has been a leader of our party for 40 years, and in that period devoted all of his energies to our party.

This however, is not a defense based on fact, but one that is based solely on blind faith. One's revolutionary integrity is not measured by one's seniority in the movement or on the amount of hard work performed (eg. Malinovsky, Zborowski, and Franklin).

One must note the way Trotsky defended his revolutionary integrity. Trotsky whose revolutionary reputation was spotless, who was a leader of the Russian Revolution, and founder of the Red Army, did not rest on his laurels, but vigorously and aggressively answered factually any and all charges made against him.

This method was epitomized by Trotsky when he went before the Dewey Commission in 1937. In this proceeding, Trotsky voluntarily subjected himself to 13 days of exhaustive questioning in which he opened up all of his files to the Commission, making available every book, manuscript, and letter which he had ever written.

At the beginning of the proceeding Trotsky made the following statement:

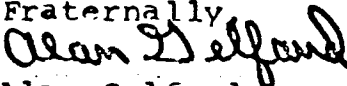
"I do not demand any a priori confidence in my affirmations. The task of this Commission of investigation is to verify everything from the beginning to the end. My duty is simply to help it in its work. I will try to accomplish this duty faithfully before the eyes of the whole world."

By Trotsky pursuing this course throughout the proceeding, Isaac Deutscher in the Prophet Cutcast was able to conclude, "By the end no question had been left unanswered, no important issue blurred, no serious historic event unilluminated."

Anyone who reads the Case of Leon Trotsky and then compares it with Hansen's responses, or lack thereof, would surely be tempted to paraphrase Deutscher--"By the end Hansen had answered not one question, had blurred every important issue and had insured that every serious historic event had remained unilluminated."

Accordingly, it is incumbent upon every comrade to assume their historic responsibility by demanding from our leadership the following:

1. That Sylvia Franklin be repudiated as a GPU agent.
2. That Joseph Hansen be required to give a complete and full accounting of his involvement with the GPU and the FBI, and that he hand over to the party any and all files, memos, manuscripts, letters or other correspondance in his possession or under his control.

Fraternally  
  
 Alan Gelfand