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NEWS AND COMMENT

Caucus of Labor Committees: Radicals with Own Edge on Truth

What do B. F. "Ratman" Skinner, Herman "Megadeath" Kahn, "the aging Swedish fascist planner" Gunnar Myrdal, "CIA physicist" Hans Bethe, and "Rockefeller food control specialist" Lester Brown all have in common?

Pretty much the same thing that the Rand Corporation, the Hudson Institute, the Brookings Institution, and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in Great Britain all have in common, too. All have been attacked during the last

3 years from a radical group claiming to be on the political left, best known as the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC).

At a time when radical groups of the left and right, active in the middle and late 1960's, are quiescent or busy with internal problems, the NCLC has been actively demonstrating against prominent American scientists and intellectuals at scientific gatherings, in university lecture halls, and at least once—it is alleged—by "trashing"

their laboratories. For certain scientists, phone calls—sometimes information-seeking, sometimes harassing—from persons identifying themselves as from NCLC or one of its related organizations have become a common, and for some a daily, fact of life. Moreover, the group's tactics, its choice of targets, and its apparently generous funding have raised suspicions about its true backing and goals among scientists and others who have followed its activities closely (see box).

The NCLC is a large, well-disciplined organization with perhaps 200 members (it claims 1000), with "cells" in some 20 American cities and another dozen or so in Europe and in Latin America. The cells communicate directly to the group's headquarters in a rundown building in the garment district in New York City through an elaborate system of Telex links. The Euro-

pean cells have Telex lines to an office in Wiesbaden, West Germany, which in turn has links to New York. The group's southern arm, the Latin American Labor Committees, has a Telex link to New York from Mexico City.

Whereas many scientists and scholars have become accustomed to encounters with long-haired, counterculture-styled radicals, NCLC members tend to be clean-shaven and neatly dressed. They move around the map-filled rooms of their extensive New York headquarters addressing each other in low tones, with almost military formality. Whereas many self-styled left-wing groups are manned, so to speak, with a fair share of women activists, there are relatively few women in NCLC groups. At the headquarters, a sign giving security instructions says, "Women must be accompanied at all times."

Historically, the NCLC is an offshoot of an attempt by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to mobilize workers in the late 1960's; SDS then formed NCLC and an electoral arm that remains a part of it, the U.S. Labor Party. Both had a role in the Columbia University strike, but isolated themselves from other groups,

dropping their SDS affiliation in 1969, when they opposed community controlled schools during the New York teachers' strike. For years, NCLC's leader has been Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., who sometimes uses the name of Lyn Marcus. LaRouche, a long-time socialist, at 53 now appears to function as guru and general arbiter for the group's youthful members. In 1973, NCLC members were arrested in alleged beatings of members of the Communist Party. And, in 1974, the group came to public attention through a series of bizarre incidents in which a few members claimed that NCLC held them against their will and tried to "deprogram" them; in turn, NCLC charged that these members had been "brainwashed" by the CIA and were traitors to the group.

Now in addition to the NCLC and the labor arm, there are the news services, the International Press Service and New Solidarity News Service, as well as several publications including *The Campaigner* and *New Solidarity*, a biweekly paper which is published in six languages.

Recently, the group has focused on fusion energy as the sole means of promoting worldwide development and on using

technology to solve the food crisis. Hence its interest in a number of scientists and technologists, from Norman Borlaug, winner of the Nobel prize for his work on plants, to Edward Teller. The group's interest—some might say obsession—with psychological warfare and brainwashing (LaRouche has written a book on psychology) accounts for its denunciation of a number of psychologists and behavioral scientists.

Typical of the experience of those who are singled out for attack by NCLC is that of food expert Lester Brown, who for years was with the Overseas Development Council (which is partially sponsored by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations). In the summer and fall of 1974, Brown says, he attended meetings in Stockholm, Bucharest, and Rome, as well as in Washington, D.C., and Minneapolis, Minn. At all these places, he says, after starting to speak, he was virulently harangued by demonstrators from NCLC. Like others who have observed NCLC in action, Brown was struck by the members' discipline, the similarity of their dress and manner, and even the rhetoric they used to denounce him in five cities and in four countries. At the end of the year, the protests ended almost as suddenly as they had begun.

In an interview at NCLC's New York headquarters, three members of NCLC's research staff explained to *Science* that Brown was objectionable because he has advocated labor-intensive techniques of agricultural production in the developing world—which in their view will take decades to bring results. They, on the other hand, believe that high-technology, capital-intensive techniques can avert imminent Third World starvation.

But one member, Eric Lerner, discoursed also on how Brown and other scientists are part of "the real CIA," which includes "not only the CIA in McLean, Virginia," but the Rockefeller family and organizations he claimed are related to it: the Ford Foundation, the Brookings Institution, the Hudson Institute, and a host of others. Evidence of such a network, Lerner said, consists of the fact that "they're always meeting together and planning policy together. . . . We targeted various segments of this machine because it was attacking us."

Other prominent figures who have been harassed by NCLC include Margaret Mead, the anthropologist. For a period of several months, about 3 years ago, she says that callers identifying themselves as from NCLC would telephone her hosts at places where she had been scheduled to

(Continued on page 860)

What Is the NCLC?

To many scientists and scholars who have dealt with the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) (see p. 857), the group's true purposes and backing remain a mystery. The NCLC claims to be on the political left, but many of the positions it has taken—against organized labor, against Nelson Rockefeller, against the Communist party—are substantially in agreement with those of the political right. Similarly, its position on any one issue can shift dramatically, leaving its ultimate aims obscure.

Regardless of what it stands for, the NCLC clearly seems to be conducting an extensive operation that has both backing and credit. The question is where the support comes from. An article about NCLC's budget in the 9 November 1974 issue of *New Solidarity* claimed that NCLC had weekly expenses of \$28,000, an income of \$6500, and a deficit of \$21,500—yet it announced plans to lease more equipment and incur other costs. On an annual basis, this would have NCLC incurring expenses of \$1.4 million, leaving a deficit of \$1.1 million. The article claimed that NCLC's principal income comes from *New Solidarity* sales, but this revenue was listed as only \$4000 a week (indicating 16,000 copies sold).

The financial reports of the NCLC's electoral arm, the U.S. Labor Party, show a similar pattern. Most of the group's operation is genuinely shoestring—state affiliates of the party raised \$200 here or \$6.25 there, according to 1974 federal election records. Yet the party was chiefly supported, in the summer of 1974, by six large, unspecified contributions of both \$1500 and \$1000, totaling \$8000, from the NCLC. A search of the Federal Election Commission's files revealed no report from NCLC directly regarding the donations.

Several news articles, in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, and other publications, have mentioned speculation that NCLC is a front for some other organization. Two theories have been frequently put forward. One is that it is supported by the Central Intelligence Agency, possibly as a cover for activities in Latin America or Europe. The other is that NCLC is backed by some wealthy, right-wing group or individual. For its part, NCLC denies both charges, claiming they are "CIA propaganda."—D.S.

Surprise Appointments Restore Science to White House Favor

President Ford reinstalled science advice in the White House last week by announcing the formation of two special purpose panels of prominent scientists to begin a study of specific national problems right away. At the same time, the prospects for the reestablishment of a permanent science office in the White House brightened on 6 November when the House passed, by a vote of 362 to 28, an Administration-backed bill to create such an office and, if the President so chooses, a new science adviser.

Senate action on parallel legislation is expected by January. Hence, President Ford may sign the bill that month, exactly 3 years after former President Nixon banished the post of science adviser and the adviser's office to the National Science Foundation (NSF).

The two panels are to be headed by long-term scientific friends of Vice President Nelson Rockefeller: Simon Ramo, vice-chairman of the board of TRW, Inc., and William O. Baker, president of Bell Laboratories. The panel headed by Ramo will study the time-honored subject of "the contribution of technology to economic strength," in the words of the White House press release.* Baker's panel will look at advances in science and technology which could have an impact on national policy in the next decade.† The subjects as well as the memberships of the panels are outgrowths of a series of meetings that have taken place between high officials and these and other scientists, particularly a day-long session with Rockefeller on 17 July, which Ramo organized (*Science*, 15 August).

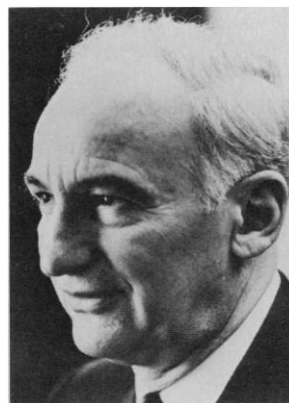
The present science adviser, NSF Director H. Guyford Stever, said in Senate testimony last week that the new committees were not intended to preempt the work of a new science adviser, who would take office once the legislation now in Congress becomes law. Other Administration sources say that they see the panels as working with the new, legislatively mandated office, to help it prepare an agenda. Russell Drew of the NSF staff will be executive director of both panels.

But the relation between the panels and the new adviser may prove to be a moot point, since Ramo is currently rumored to be the Administration's front-runner for the new White House advisory job. (But Ramo, who, as the "R" in TRW, has overseen the growth of the company from a tiny operation to one of the country's aerospace giants, may turn down the job. The Administration's next choice may be Hans Mark, director of the Ames Research Center in California.

Only he has been marked for favor by being appointed to both panels.)

Reaction of scientists to the formation of the panels seems generally favorable. The panels symbolize a return to Presidential favor, the loss of which has been the subject of much study—and many hurt feelings—in the scientific community. But there were also some objections to the fact that many panel members have had long association with the defense and intelligence communities. (TRW has two representatives on the panels and is, for example, the largest builder of intelligence satellites; Baker and Ramo, along with Rockefeller, have for many years served on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, which assists government intelligence agencies.) Another problem is the sweeping nature of the subjects they will study, according to one government scientist. "They will study everything cosmological—but maybe the word should be cosmetological."

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) praised the President's "attempts to move forward" with obtaining science advice. But Kennedy criticized the lack of environmentalists, younger scientists, and representatives from small R & D companies on the panels.



Simon Ramo



William O. Baker

The House action on 6 November in passing a bill that would create a science office marked a climax, however predictable, of a process of legislative study of the science advisory issue which has been going on for over 2 years. The bill leaves the President several options (he may choose to have a single science adviser or a council) but it defines the office's scope, which will include the economy, national security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery of and use of resources. The House bill was worked out with the White House and has the Administration's endorsement.

In the Senate, Stever's testimony of 12 November concluded three separate hearings during which the three committees with jurisdiction examined the House bill and previous Senate bills. The three must now draft one bill that they can all agree on; this could be difficult since the committee leaders all have pet provisions that they would like to see included. However, at the moment, all concerned in the Senate seem willing to compromise for the sake of having something which will pass and which the President will sign.

—DEBORAH SHAPLEY

*The members of the Advisory Panel on Contributions of the Technology to Economic Strength are Chairman Simon Ramo, TRW, Inc.; Ivan Bennett, New York University; C. Fred Bergsten, The Brookings Institution; Lewis Branscomb, International Business Machines Corp.; Arthur Bueche, General Electric Company; Joseph Charyk, Communications Satellite Corp.; Edward E. David, Jr., Gould Inc.; Carl Djerassi, Stanford University; Robert Gilpin, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University; Patrick Haggerty, Texas Instruments, Inc.; Charles Hitch, Resources for the Future; J. Herbert Holloman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Edwin Land, Polaroid Corporation; Hans Mark, Ames Research Center, NASA; Norman Rasmussen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Marina v. N. Whitman, University of Pittsburgh.

†The members of the Advisory Panel on Anticipated Advances in Science and Technology are Chairman William O. Baker, Bell Laboratories; John Bal-deschwieler, California Institute of Technology; Manson Benedict, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Solomon J. Buchsbaum, Bell Laboratories; Melvin Calvin, University of California, Berkeley; Harry Eagle, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Eugene Fubini, Arlington, Va.; Murray Gell-Mann, California Institute of Technology; Arthur Kantrowitz, Avco-Everett Research Laboratory; Donald Kennedy, Stanford University; Hans Mark, Ames Research Center, NASA; Frank Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Frederick Seitz, Rockefeller University; Charles Slichter, University of Illinois; Edward Teller, Lawrence Livermore Laboratory; Charles Townes, University of California, Berkeley.

speak. The callers threatened to "picket" if she was allowed to talk. When she encountered NCLC members, she says, they seemed very concerned about the late British psychiatrist J. R. Rees. Members of the NCLC staff say that Mead used to be associated with Rees, who wrote a book on psychological warfare and invented operational brainwashing techniques that, they say, are now in wide use.

Wassily Leontief, the Nobel prize-winning economist now at New York University, has also been denounced by NCLC. Leontief's politics are often viewed by his associates as left of center, but NCLC spokesmen say his economics are "corporatist" and similar to the economic policies of Mussolini.

Edward Teller is also no friend of NCLC's think tank, the Fusion Energy Foundation, even though Teller is a well-known champion of fusion research. Staffers at NCLC call Teller "a caricature of a right-wing Neanderthal," and say that their archenemy, Nelson Rockefeller, once called Teller "my own scientist."

One prominent East Coast scientist who has talked to NCLC's members about their views on fusion finds them extremely well informed. But he refused to be quoted by name on any matter connected with the group, "I'm physically afraid of them," he told *Science*. "I know of no other political grouping which reflects such intellectual depth and personal involvement but has such an air of unreality."

The concept of zero population growth and the Club of Rome, which sponsored the original "limits of growth" report,

have been targets, too. Club of Rome member John R. Platt, of the University of Michigan, went to the American Orthopsychiatric Meeting in San Francisco last year to find NCLC handbills being distributed calling for his "indictment" under "Article Two of the Nuremburg Charter" for crimes against humanity. Similarly, *New Solidarity*, NCLC's biweekly, recently denounced Aurelio Peccei, President of the Club of Rome, for favoring "the essence of Rockefeller's fascist plans" to eliminate world population through "genocide."

Laboratory Violence

The NCLC's feelings about psychology has led in several instances to violence. Lerner and fellow NCLC research member Chuck Stevens told *Science* that "at least 20" members of their own group had been "brainwashed" by the CIA at one time or another. (In January 1974, the *New York Times* reported that NCLC member Alice Weitzman, who had "expressed skepticism" about the group, had been held involuntarily by NCLC members, who in turn claimed she had been "brainwashed" by the CIA. Weitzman tossed a note outside the window of a Washington Heights apartment where she allegedly was being held to get the attention of the police, and filed charges against six group members for unlawful imprisonment.)

Associates of Eugene Galanter, a Columbia University psychologist, say that his laboratory was forcibly entered, one of his students was manhandled and the la-

boratory was vandalized by NCLC members who had demonstrated against him on several occasions. A New York judge continued the case for 1 year, on the condition that the eight defendants stay off the Columbia campus in the meantime.

One psychologist who has dealt with the NCLC notes that the members' two outstanding traits are their almost robotlike language and behavior and their conviction that almost the entire world, led by the CIA and the Rockefellers, is arrayed against them. He characterizes these as "clear-cut hysterical symptoms"—an ironic diagnosis in view of NCLC's constant accusations that various scientists and world leaders are "hysterical" themselves.

Whether hysterical or no, many scientists and academics seem destined to have to deal with NCLC and its tactics for some time to come. A Brookings Middle Eastern affairs scholar was recently called several times by an unusually well-informed "reporter" who said he was with the International Press Service (IPS) but refused to give his name. A Middle East scholar at the Rand Corporation received a call from an IPS representative who claimed to have an authoritative report that war was breaking out in the Middle East and what could he learn about troop mobilizations? The Rand scholar said he thought a Middle East war highly implausible, and that in any event he didn't know anything about troop mobilizations. "But *I know* that you know," the caller reportedly insisted. It seems that NCLC, with its particular edge on truth, will be around for some time.—DEBORAH SHAPLEY

Military Medical School: It Survives Despite All Efforts to Kill It

A new military medical school that was opposed by virtually every major professional organization in the medical field and was criticized as "unjustifiably costly" by a high-level commission will almost certainly be built anyway.

The school—known as the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences—surmounted its last major congressional hurdle on 13 November when a House-Senate conference committee approved a military appropriations bill that

included \$64.9 million in construction funds for the new facility. Thus the school, which has been controversial from the beginning, appears to have survived the biggest threat yet to its continued existence.

The school was launched in 1972, almost single-handedly by F. Edward Hébert (D-La.), then chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Hébert had advocated such a school for some 25 years, and when he became chairman he promptly seized the opportunity to force authorizing

legislation through Congress despite massive opposition from civilian medical schools, health-professional organizations, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Senate Armed Services Committee, among others. Even the Defense Department was lukewarm about the idea. But Hébert prevailed, and start-up funds were appropriated to found the school at a site in Bethesda, Maryland, on the grounds of the Naval Medical Center, close to the campus of the National Institutes of Health.

Then, earlier this year, a series of blows threatened the life of the fledgling institution. First, Hébert was deposed as chairman of the armed services committee, and while he remained a popular senior member of the committee, his influence was somewhat diminished. Next, the Defense Department trimmed back plans for the