

The Case Of The George Jackson Brigade

On June 20, 1976, the Seattle Police Department raided a Seattle apartment as part of their ongoing investigation into the terrorist George Jackson Brigade, finding components of timing devices, diagrams of public buildings, and a "hit list," which included names of U.S. Labor Party members and others. With this evidence in hand, the entire Brigade, but especially the above-ground support networks that protect the terrorists, of which the apartment's occupants, Paul Zinsel, Helene Ellenbogen and Wayne Parker are top figures, could have been dismantled.

They weren't, and the prospect of continued terrorist attacks by the Brigade looms even larger. In the past 12 months, the Brigade has been directly responsible for the deaths of two policemen, two Brigade members, the wounding of one policeman and numerous innocent bystanders by George Jackson Brigade bombings.

Having failed to complete the job of rounding up the George Jackson Brigade, the Seattle Police Department Intelligence Unit is now trying to save its own neck against a multi-million-dollar civil damages suit brought against it by the Coalition on Government Spying for maintaining files on organizations and individuals associated with the Brigade's "radical" support networks.

This offensive against the police department occurs in the midst of a renewed terrorist spree by the Brigade including 5 bank robberies and several bombings since May, 1977.

Seattle Police and the FBI have stated that only two actual Brigade members remain at large. The others, Edward Mead, and Mark Edwin Cook are serving jail sentences, and Bruce Seidel died in a shootout with police. The support networks however are still actively involved in recruiting new footsoldiers to carry out the terrorist dirty work. Two recent arrests provide an opportunity once again to finish off the terrorist network:

- On Nov. 4, 1977, Rita Brown was arrested while casing a bank and promptly extradicted to Oregon to face charges in connection with several other bank robberies.

- On Nov. 19, 1977, the Los Angeles Police Department and the FBI arrested five people identified as members of the Weather Underground shortly before they were to set off a bomb at the offices of a California State Senator. Three of those arrested, Clayton van Lydegraf, Thomas Michael Justensen and Judith Emily Bissell, had used Seattle as a base of operation since the early 1970s, when Justensen and Bissell were members of the Seattle Liberation Front.

The tragic irony of the Seattle situation is that it serves as a model to the rest of this nation's law enforcement community as to what is in store if the concentric circles of "radical support" for terrorism — reaching into federal agencies and national institutions — are not

immediately dismantled. As documented here, the very same organizations backing the suit against the Seattle Police Department are up to their ears in bankrolling the George Jackson Brigade, providing the printing presses, legal defense funds, and, in some cases, the "safe houses" for Brigade members that ensure the existence of terrorism in this country.

The Coalition on Government Spying (CGS) is itself part of the national organization under a similar name, the Campaign to Stop Government Spying. The CGS in Seattle works in conjunction with the Institute for Policy Studies of Washington, D.C., the Center for National Securities Studies. Locally the Coalition is composed of the Seattle Left Bank Collective, the National Lawyers Guild, El Centro de la Raza, and the American Friends Service Committee.

The Coalition and the publicity from its lawsuit against the Seattle Police Intelligence Unit have prompted the Seattle City Council to begin hearings in January that will consider legislation to hamstring the police's efforts in locating and detaining George Jackson Brigade members once and for all. The CGS intends to use its anticipated success in restricting police counterterrorist capabilities in Seattle to wage similar battles against the law enforcement agencies of Philadelphia, New York, and Los Angeles, for starters. They will simultaneously mount a campaign in the U.S. Congress for federal legislation.

The stated intentions of the Coalition in the Seattle lawsuit demonstrate the inadequacies of any locally defined antiterrorist efforts by municipal law enforcement officials. What is at stake here is not a local phenomenon, but the national and international networks which make terrorism possible.

There can be no other explanation for the fact that the three occupants of the apartment raided on June 20 are not only still on the streets but, in fact, playing leading roles in shaping the defense of George Jackson Brigade terrorists and in suing the Seattle Police for destruction of their intelligence files. Paul Zinsel is the head of the Seattle Left Bank Collective Bookstore, the official center for the release of all Brigade communiqués.

Helene Ellenbogen is known to have personal ties to the West German Red Army Fraktion (RAF — the "Baader-Meinhof gang"), having worked with the third occupant of the apartment, Wayne Parker, in smuggling the memoirs of RAF member Michael "Bommi" Baumann, into the United States for translation into English. The resulting book, published by Pulp Press, is a "how-to" manual on urban terrorism and widely circulated throughout U.S. underground terrorist networks. Parker is also a writer for *Open Road*, an anarchist publication based in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The question to be answered is, "who is protecting

these people?" Once the problem of terrorist activities is approached in that way, not only will the police have a fighting chance to do their job, but another facet of current terrorist deployments will rapidly emerge. It is no mere coincidence that the agencies and individuals in these terrorist support networks interface in a fundamental way with the environmentalist movement.

These radical networks are, in fact, molding a new fascist movement, which will justify the use of terrorist deployments in a specifically "anticapitalist," "anti-industrial" context of a broader push for "soft energy" development.

The Seattle radical community has been reshuffled in the past six months to reflect this "new revolutionary" bent; Ellenbogen and Zinsel are emerging as leading spokesman at antinuclear protests. The shift is also suggested by minor bombings of Washington State industrial firms by the "Environmental Protection Unit of the New World Liberation Front." The modus operandi of the bombings is strikingly similar to that of the George Jackson Brigade.

I. Origins of the George Jackson Brigade

Beginning in about 1972, the prison systems of California, New York, Washington, and Massachusetts became experimental laboratories for the creation of domestic terrorist groups through programs run under the auspices of the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. Through the use of behavior modification and "small group" brainwashing — with a heavy infusion of "radical" ideology from prison reform and prisoner support networks — the U.S. prison population became the manpower pools for groups like the Black Liberation Army, the Symbionese Liberation Army, the New World Liberation Front, the Sam Melville/Jonathan Jackson Brigade, and the George Jackson Brigade.

Outside of the official government channels, the Institute for Policy Studies, a "New Left" think tank run by "retired" National Security Council advisors in the Kennedy Administration, Marcus Raskin and Richard Barnett, was training the "community activist" counterinsurgency forces to staff and help set up the prison "reform" system. Since its founding in 1963, the controllers of every terrorist operation from the Weatherunderground to the Japanese Red Army have been through the Washington headquarters of IPS or one of its offshoots for ideological indoctrination and network building.

In 1973, Washington State Governor Daniel Evans began importing this LEAA network into the state correctional system and began incubating what would emerge less than two years later as the terrorist George Jackson Brigade. From the California prison system, Evans brought in Milton Burdman and Harold Bradley, both innovators in the psycho-political therapy programs that spawned the Symbionese Liberation Army; and Douglas Vinzant, warden of Massachusetts' Walpole Prison, the target for IPS organizing in New England from which subsequently emerged the Sam Melville/Jonathan Jackson Brigade, another of IPS's commando units.

Evans' plan for Washington State was to replace prisons with community-based, mini-centers and vastly expand programs like the University of Washington's LAMP program where convicted felons served out their sentence by enrolling in a University curriculum. By 1972, these programs were already under the control of the National Lawyers Guild and heavily infiltrated by the Maoist Revolutionary Union, which used the halfway houses as recruiting centers.

In mid-1973, Seattle was the site for Con-Vention, a two-day affair bringing together enlightened corrections officials with "reformed" ex-convicts. Held at the headquarters of El Centro do la Raza, a Chicano community center, Con-Vention was co-sponsored by the Office of Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle University, the State Department of Institutions, the Washington State Parole and Probation Department, the Prisoners Coalition, the University of Washington, and the Seattle Public Defenders Office. In attendance were Washington State Attorney General Slade Gordon and three individuals who would later become notorious for their activities as George Jackson Brigade terrorists — Mark Edwin Cook, Edward Mead, and Bruce Seidel.

Any doubts that the George Jackson Brigade would not have been created but for this massive government-backed and foundation-funded prison operation are laid to rest by examining the history of Edward Mead. Mead, 34 years old, is now serving time in Walla Walla prison for an attempted robbery of a bank in Tukwila, Washington by the George Jackson Brigade on Jan. 23, 1976. During the attempt, two policemen and one of his accomplices, Bruce Seidel, were killed in a gun battle. Mead's history of convictions for armed robberies and similar crimes date back 15 years, but while serving time in MacNeil Island Federal Penitentiary in the early 1970s he came into contact with prison reform networks and the writings of Mao Tse-tung.

"One day, I looked at myself," says Mead in an April 1, 1976 *Seattle Times* interview, "I didn't see myself as a criminal but as a radical. I stepped over a line."

In 1972, both Mead and John Sherman, now a fugitive from the Tukwila bank robbery who had also been at MacNeil, were released and began working at Inside-Out, a halfway house in Steilacoom, Washington. Inside-Out was a recruiting center for the Revolutionary Union. Sherman and Mead became members of the RU, an operation that uses "small-group therapy" techniques to brainwash its members. (1) Mark Edwin Cook, also convicted for the Tukwila action, went through a similar "radicalization" at Munroe State Prison.

From 1972 to 1975, Sherman and Mead became part of the Seattle "left" working through the American Friends Service Committee-National Lawyers Guild "Prisoners Coalition." In the midst of a radical mobilization against the use of hollow-nosed bullets by the police, the George Jackson Brigade came into being. Explained Mead: "I decided that the way you stop them (the police) from using hollow nosed bullets is to use hollow-nosed bullets in your own gun."

(1) See "Carter and the Party of International Terrorism," Aug. 1976, U.S. Labor Party, for the role of the RU in creating the Black Liberation Army at Lincoln Detox Methadone Center in South Bronx, N.Y.

II. How The Support Networks Protect Terrorism

The six to 12 remaining criminals-turned-“revolutionary” terrorists of the George Jackson Brigade have succeeded in eluding federal, state and law enforcement officials for over two years only with the support of an extensive proterrorist milieu that has festered in the Seattle area since 1969, when a faction of the Weathermen led by recent Democratic Party City Council candidate Charles “Chip” Marshall chose the area as a base of operations.

The top level of protection for the Brigade operations comes from the King County Democratic Party, whose political endorsement of “reformed” Weatherman Marshall has served the interests of terrorism in two critical ways: first, by insulating Marshall’s political associates, many of whom are presently involved in some level of support for the Brigade, from public accountability; and second, through the control of positions in the city and state government through which deliberate sabotage of the investigation of the terrorists by police has been carried out.

Marshall’s creation, the Seattle Liberation Front, an amalgam of the Seattle “radical community,” was the direct forebearer of the George Jackson Brigade. In 1970, the Seattle Liberation Front organized a series of anti-war riots for which Marshall and seven others were

indicted and became known as the “Seattle 8.” (2).

Thomas Michael Justensen, one of the “8,” went underground and was arrested last month in Los Angeles for conspiracy to conduct bombings and assassinations. The FBI has identified Justensen as a member of the “Revolutionary Committee” of the Weatherunderground.

At the same time, other members of the SLF were indicted and tried for direct terrorist acts: John VanVeenendal, Jan Tissot, and police informant Jeff Desmond were charged with bombing a Seattle Post Office; Silas Trim Bissell and his wife Judith Emily Bissell became fugitives after posting \$50,000 bail on a charge of planting a dynamite bomb at the University of Washington Air Force ROTC building. Judith Bissell was arrested with Justensen last month in Los Angeles.

VanVeenendal and Roger Lippman, who is presently a fugitive from charges filed against him by the U.S. Labor Party both served their sentences at MacNeil Island at the same time that imprisoned future Brigade members Ed Mead and John Sherman were introduced to the writings of Mao and other ideologues used in programming the George Jackson Brigade’s terrorist belief structure.

(2) The indicted co-conspirators of the Seattle “8” were Marshall, Justensen, Jeff Dowd, Michael Lerner, Michael Abeles and Weathermen Susan Stern, Joseph Kelley and Roger Lippman.

The First Domestic Trial Against Terrorism: USLP Vs. Counterspy Et Al.

The future of the George Jackson Brigade and other active terrorist groups in this country depends in large part on the U.S. Labor Party’s success in prosecuting its suit against *CounterSpy Journal*, Fifth Estate, the Terrorist Information Project, Paul Zinsel, Tim Butz, and others. The civil action was brought by the Labor Party in U.S. District Court in Seattle, charging that Seattle and Washington-based terrorist groups had conspired to stop the electoral campaigns of the Labor Party through physical violence and intimidation.

The complaint, in documenting the conspiracy which led to at least 30 instances of assault and intimidation, describes the operating method of terrorist networks and their aboveground supporters. Tim Butz, a Washington-based *CounterSpy* agent, traveled out to the West Coast to initiate the campaign against the Labor Party, as part of a much larger national campaign to mobilize “left” terrorist support networks to attack the USLP. With the assistance of Paul Zinsel and his Left Bank Bookstore Collective and Donovan Workman, associated with the National Lawyers Guild, Butz was able to address a meeting organized to “get the Labor Party.” Butz stated, in an article in *CounterSpy*, that his intention was to “put an end to the (USLP) presence at meetings, demonstrations, and workplaces.” Butz and others solicited information that would allow them to target Labor Party

organizers for attack, made the attacks, and then published a booklet detailing their activities and recommending that others follow their example.

The method of operation involved, using both underground and above ground means, directly corresponds to the pattern followed by every terrorist deployment. In *USLP v. CounterSpy*, that method will be clearly established in court. However, perhaps even more significant is the potential to apply civil discovery and trial procedures to prove the *direct* connection between the underground and legal organizations.

At this point in the litigation, the USLP’s attorney is moving to compel the Seattle Police Department to release information, including manuals and “hit lists,” seized during a raid on Paul Zinsel’s apartment, which concretely prove Zinsel’s determination to wipe out the Labor Party and, through the terrorist networks, other pro-growth organizations on the West Coast. The Justice Department and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division of the Treasury also possess crucial information on the defendants’ terrorist connections and activities which this lawsuit will attempt to gain release for.

In addition to information on the methods of terrorist operation which *USLP v. CounterSpy* will produce, a successful civil damages claim will create ripples of “terror” in the terrorist community internationally.

The second level of support comes from the National Lawyers Guild and the American Friends Service Committee, which have provided lawyers for Mead and Cook, raised funds for George Jackson Brigade legal defense, and presently are operating the "United Families and Friends of Prisoners" at Walla Walla prison and other state institutions through which information and marching orders are conduited to Brigade members in prison.

From April to June 1976, the National Lawyers Guild and the American Friends Service Committee organized the precursor to the Coalition to End Government Spying, then called the "Committee to Stop Grand Jury Abuse," a national operation to organize resistance to grand jury subpoenas in investigation of terrorism. The Left Bank Bookstore was the Seattle centerpiece of the Grand Jury Coalition, which also operated in New York City and Chicago to obstruct the investigation of the Puerto Rican terrorist Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN).

Among the top leading members of the National Lawyers Guild in Seattle are Helene Ellenbogen and Michael Withey, a national officer of the Guild who recently left Seattle to head up the Guild's "Puerto Rican Project," a euphemism for the organization's legal defense of the FALN. Withey's departure from the Seattle area came as his ties to the George Jackson Brigade were increasingly becoming the subject of law enforcement scrutiny and investigation. Withey was subpoenaed to appear before a state grand jury in relation to the Jan. 23, 1976 Tukwila bank robbery. The jury wanted to learn more about his apparent prior knowledge of the aliases used by Brigade members who were captured in the aborted heist. Withey was named by Ed Mead as his defense attorney and refused to give testimony on the grounds of attorney-client privilege.

The third and most apparent level of George Jackson Brigade is the network of bookstores and anarchist publications including the Left Bank Bookstore in Seattle, the Bay Area Research Collective and Prairie Fire Publishers in Berkeley, California, the United Front Bookstore in Portland, Oregon, the John Brown Book Club in Seattle, and Open Road-Pulp Press in Vancouver, British Columbia. This network, extending from California to across the Canadian border, is the information/logistics line linking the George Jackson Brigade, the New World Liberation Front, and the Weatherunderground.

III. Busting The Network: Who Protects Zinsel?

Paul Zinsel's Left Bank Bookstore is presently the contact point for all communiqués to and from the underground members of the George Jackson Brigade. A 27-page political statement issued by the Brigade on Nov. 3, 1977 giving their political history, aims and a summary of activities is available to the general public for the asking.

The connections do not end there, yet for unknown reasons, Zinsel, a middle-aged former physics professor whose daughter, Joanna, is a Weatherunderground fugitive in Vancouver, B.C., has inexplicably escaped prosecution or even Grand Jury subpoenas in all of the following cases:

- On September 14, 1975, Ralph Patrick Ford, a member of the Left Bank Collective, and employee at Zinsel's bookstore, was killed while planting a bomb at a Seattle Safeway Supermarket. Three days later the George Jackson Brigade set off a bomb during shopping hours at the same Safeway store, seriously injuring nine innocent people. That same week, an undetonated bomb was recovered by police in the Seattle Federal Building after a call from a person claiming to be from the New World Liberation Front. Nancy Michelle Whitnack, another Left Bank member spent six months in prison on contempt charges for refusing to testify before a Federal Grand Jury on the Federal Building bomb. Zinsel was not subpoenaed.

- In April 1976, an apartment occupied by Zinsel and two other unidentified individuals was raided by police who found blasting caps, a shotgun and ammunition. The three were arrested as suspects in a burglary of a van, but never charged for the burglary or possession of the blasting caps.

- In 1972, Seattle police circulated internal memoranda about a group called the North West Liberation Front which was surveilling police and suspected of conspiring to set up Black Liberation Army-type assassinations of police officers. Later that year, six men — James Akers, Max Severin, Leslie McKeel, Chester Wallace, Robert McSherry, and Lyn Bruce Meyer, alias "Scheller" — some of whose names were on the North West Liberation Front memo were arrested in a Seattle apartment for possession of dynamite and an underground shooting range. Zinsel and his wife, Lynn Thorndicraft, were also included in the memo, but were never charged in relation to the arrest. Instead, Zinsel became head of the "Scheller Defense Committee" and testified as an expert witness on explosives in defense of the five charged.

- On June 20, 1976, Zinsel, Ellenbogen, and Parker were arrested in a raid on a Seattle apartment. The court ruled that the raid was legal, yet none of the information of the individuals involved were called before the grand jury which was already investigating the Brigade and several other unsolved bombings.

There is no doubt that if the investigation of Zinsel, Ellenbogen, and Parker had been pursued, the entire George Jackson Brigade network would have been destroyed. The Nov. 3 communiqué by the Brigade openly states that the intensity of the investigation of the support networks forces the Brigade into a "tactical retreat" into Oregon for training from June 1976 to February 1977.

Shortly before the 1976 bicentennial celebration, which had been announced as a target for massive terrorist attacks by the weatherunderground, the FALN, and other terrorist units, similar raids occurred in Massachusetts and in Philadelphia where the U.S. Labor Party was collaborating with law enforcement and elected officials to inoculate and prevent the terrorist actions. Zinsel's "hit list" found in the June 20 raid included the U.S. Labor Party as one of his targets for that reason.

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