

PATCO strike used to militarize economy

by Robert Greenberg, Editor, *Investigative Leads*

The PATCO air traffic controllers' strike should have come as no surprise to anyone. It is a matter of public record that both PATCO and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have been planning for the strike for at least two years. What is not generally known is that the script presently being played out by both parties involved was written by the U.S. branches of the Sussex-based Tavistock Institute, as an important step toward the militarization of the U.S. economy.

Tavistock is the international center of psychological warfare planning, where psychological engineers have developed techniques for shaping a population's behavior through the creation of a controlled environment, in which all choices are predetermined. Thus any choice "freely" made is guaranteed to fit into Tavistock's game-plan.

According to spokesmen for the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, which is heavily staffed by personnel from the RAND Corporation, a U.S. Tavistock Institute affiliate, the PATCO strike fits perfectly into a long-term plan for restructuring the U.S. economy. These plans—which are fully supported by the Department of Defense through the new Office of Industrial Response and Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci—are designed to result in both the restructuring of the U.S. economy centered around the defense sector, and the total consolidation of the economic infrastructure—logistics, travel, communication—under military control. It is being sold to the Reagan administration by Secretary of Defense

Weinberger as a necessary part of a U.S. defense buildup.

The PATCO strike sets the stage for fulfilling the three preconditions necessary for the plan to succeed: breaking the trade unions, rationalizing industry, and acclimating the population to military involvement in the civilian economy.

Breaking labor

A spokesman for the Industrial College of the Armed Forces who is close to FAA head Lyn Wells openly admitted that one of the major problems for the militarization plan is organized labor. "We can no longer tolerate these bottleneck union situations. It is like the tugboat workers in New York threatening to cut off the city's food supply. . . . The firmness of the administration will break labor's expectation of getting more and more by threats. This is a signal to the Teamsters, machinists, auto workers and steel workers. This [the PATCO strike] is the opening salvo by the administration which wasn't possible under Carter because of the AFL-CIO."

This same sentiment was stated by former FAA general counsel Clark Omstad, who helped draft the emergency measures the Reagan administration is presently enacting. "The second question here is the fact that there is an air traffic control system on the drawing boards that will cost \$3 billion. It has been worked on for six or seven years. The aviation community agrees with it and Lyn Helms will decide in October if we will

go with it. The unions could hinder implementation of this plan.”

Interviews with a variety of trade unions confirm that the effect of the strike has been to serve as a pacesetter for labor-management negotiations and thus a major setback for labor.

EIR's special report, “Who’s Who in the Reagan Administration,” profiles both Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis and FAA head Lyn Wells leaning towards rationalization and consolidation of the airline industry. The strike is giving the airlines exactly the rationale they need to accomplish this, as we show in the accompanying article.

As soon as the strike was announced, the two-year-old emergency measures drawn up by the FAA/DOT/DOD task force were put into effect. President Reagan fired all striking workers and replaced them with active-duty military personnel from the Air Force. Presently there are 653 Air Force personnel fulfilling that function, with up to 400 more in reserve. This move was greeted with a collective sigh of relief by a population faced with the spectre of major air disasters.

This is not where the military role ends, however. Because air traffic control (ATC) is vital to the smooth functioning of the economy and is partially integrated with the military in coordinating commercial and military flights, a second, classified, contingency plan was drawn up to reduce the effect of the strike on national defense. The trigger for activating this plan is believed to be when the exhaustion factor overwhelms those presently in ATC functions, and the military has to provide more than 1,000 people. At that time the Air Force, the National Guard, and the Reserves will be put on standby to be immediately called up if necessary. Moreover, the task force will begin prioritizing all flights, commercial and military, from a national-security standpoint, further militarizing the economy.

Tavistock and the Socialist International

The full extent of this only begins to emerge when it is realized that both principals in the strike negotiations—President Reagan, and the union—have been totally manipulated to achieve the result desired by the RAND-Tavistock planners. Sources close to the administration admit that everyone knows how Reagan would react when confronted by such a strike; Reagan’s profile was established when, as governor of California, a wave of student riots occurred. At that time, Reagan’s policy, supported by Ed Meese and others in his present inner circle, was to move hard against the rioters, “six-gun” style, just as he has done during the PATCO strike.

The manipulation of both sides was outlined at the December 1980 conference of the Socialist International in Washington, D.C., at which labor leaders such as

William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, and Bill Lucy from AFSCME joined with West German Social Democratic Party Chairman Willy Brandt, Tavistock fellow Stuart Holland, François Mitterrand, now Socialist president of France, and other Socialist leaders, in making plans to use Socialist International agents provocateurs within the trade unions to start strikes and foment chaos. President Reagan would then react according to his “cowboy” profile.

Trade-union sources as well as Senate sources close to the strike negotiations report that PATCO deliberately sabotaged the negotiations, focusing on financial rather than safety issues. PATCO President Robert E. Poli walked out on a good-faith offer from the government, knowing that the illegal strike of his 12,000 members would be met by Reagan’s hard-line policy.

The Socialist International, which functions as a Trojan Horse in the labor movement, controls Poli and PATCO through its American Federation of Government Employees. The AFGE leadership, particularly President Ken Blaylock and political organizer Jane McMichael, is very close to Poli’s top circle of radical advisers as well as to Poli himself. Sources close to AFGE speculate that Poli’s fiancée, who is very close to McMichael, is a major influence on Poli’s decisions. It was the AFGE that urged PATCO to force a showdown, according to these sources.

AFGE’s McMichael is a protégé of Socialist International executive member William Winpisinger and, in fact, traveled with him to meet Raul Castro in Cuba last year. In carrying out the Socialist International policy of destabilizing the Reagan administration, AFGE has not hesitated to work directly with a series of proterrorist organizations such as the Communist Workers Party and the Institute for Policy Studies. Blaylock is quoted in the July 29-Aug. 4 issue of *Workers Viewpoint*, the Communist Workers Party’s newspaper, as stating, “People are ready to take this country back. The poor can overturn this country. . . . We’re in a better position to overthrow the government than the Communists in El Salvador.” Winpisinger himself stated at that Dec. 1980 Socialist International conference, “the quickest way to progress often is to self-destruct.”

The Tavistock manipulation of the air traffic controllers is carried out by the Maine-based National Training Laboratories, a Tavistock affiliate. From 1968 on, both controllers and FAA supervisors were forced to attend workshops at the NTL on how to handle occupational “stress,” in which they were manipulated around the fact that their job is much more difficult than others. One participant reports that previous to the NTL workshops, PATCO workers displayed none of their present radical militancy.