

# Communist Party USA was an FBI-Soviet joint venture

by Edward Spannaus

Documents recently released in connection with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy have provided official confirmation of U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation penetration of the highest levels of the Communist Party USA, conducted through a 30-year operation which simultaneously gave the FBI and U.S. government a secret channel to the highest levels of the Soviet leadership.

The disclosures concerning the FBI's "Operation Solo" shed additional light on two other circumstances involving the CPUSA: 1) FBI and Soviet complicity in CPUSA efforts directed against economist and political leader Lyndon LaRouche, especially FBI-CP discussions of "eliminating" LaRouche in 1973; and 2) secret Soviet funding of the CPUSA from the 1920s onward, involving "Trust" agent Armand Hammer, and later the FBI's Operation Solo.

None of this should come as any surprise to readers of *EIR*, which has over the years published extensive documentation of FBI-CPUSA links, and also of Soviet "Trust" operations involving Armand Hammer.

The FBI's Operation Solo actually involved two informants: Jack and Morris Childs. It was first identified in a 1981 book, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.*, by David J. Garrow, which was originally subtitled *From "Solo" to Memphis*. The origins of "Solo," as described by Garrow, are as follows.

Morris Childs and his brother Jack had joined the CP in Chicago in the 1920s. Around 1930, Morris was selected to attend the Lenin School in Moscow. Returning to the United States, he became a CP official in Milwaukee, then held party offices in Chicago; in May 1938 he was elected to the National Committee of the CPUSA. In mid-1945 he took over the party's political action work and moved to New York City, and became editor of the CP newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, in early 1946. But about a year later, Morris was dumped as editor in the course of an internal faction fight in the party.

Jack, Morris's younger brother, was never a public figure in the CPUSA, but he worked behind the scenes dealing with party finances and money.

It is not clear what happened after this, whether the embittered brothers actually quit the party or not. But around 1951-52, the FBI successfully recruited Jack and Morris as informants. They renewed their activities in the upper levels of the CP, where they worked as informants for the FBI for the

next 25-30 years. Author David Garrow contends that Jack and Morris Childs "came to be the crucial link by which Soviet funds approximating \$1 million a year were channelled secretly to the American Communist Party." In fact, this would have been one link in a chain of secret funding going back to the 1920s.

Most of the money business was transacted in New York, according to Garrow, with Jack receiving the Soviet money in American bills. Once a year, one of the brothers, usually Morris, would travel to Moscow. Morris also travelled the world as the representative of Gus Hall, with whom both Jack and Morris became very close.

This is also confirmed in the recently released FBI documents, which contain numerous reports of the Childs brothers' travels, including one particularly fawning, sentimental report written by Jack Childs to Gus Hall, reporting on Jack's reception in Moscow and in Cuba in 1964 as a representative of Hall and the American CP.

Garrow wrote in 1981: "From Hall, Jack and Morris learned virtually everything that was occurring within the American Communist Party. Thus the FBI and the U.S. executive branch knew the full activity of the American party. . . . As one American official remarked, for years the FBI had virtually been paying Gus Hall's salary, and with Soviet money."

Within the FBI, Garrow wrote, it was often discussed to shut the project down and expose the Soviet funding of the CPUSA. "Each time the decision went the other way. Entrée to Moscow and the virtual control of the American CP that 'Solo' afforded the FBI were too valuable to be sacrificed for a public relations coup."

## The Kennedy file

This was all disclosed by Garrow's book in 1981, in the context of showing how information given by Jack Childs was used by the FBI as the pretext for investigation and intensive surveillance of Martin Luther King, Jr., on the grounds of King's association with attorney Stanley Levison, who was alleged to be a secret member of the CPUSA. The allegations against Levison, made by Jack Childs, were passed on to Attorney General Robert Kennedy and his closest aides by the FBI, in order to justify the electronic surveillance of Dr. King which Kennedy authorized in early 1962.

Nevertheless, the FBI did not officially acknowledge Operation Solo until the recent release of certain FBI files relative to the JFK assassination. A couple of hundred pages of these files pertain to "Solo," and contain reports of Jack Childs's discussions in Cuba with Fidel Castro and others about the Kennedy assassination, and Morris's conversations in Moscow immediately following the assassination in November 1963.

Morris reported that Soviet leaders viewed Kennedy's assassination as a "well-organized conspiracy on the part of the ultraright in the U.S. to effect a coup." They feared that this would be used to attack Cuba and spread an anti-communist war. "As a result of these feelings on the part of Soviet officials, the U.S.S.R. immediately went into a state of alert," says the report of Morris's trip, "Solo Mission 14," written by F. J. Baumgardner, an internal security section chief in the FBI's intelligence division, to FBI Assistant Director William C. Sullivan.

The memo cited Morris's conversations with, among others, Boris Ponomarev, the head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's international relations department, who said that the CPSU was preparing to turn over its entire file on Lee Harvey Oswald to the U.S. government, to show that Oswald "was no responsibility of theirs." Ponomarev wanted this communicated to the CPUSA, so they would know that the Soviets were cooperating with the U.S. government.

James Fox, a retired FBI official who supervised the operation for years, confirmed the published reports about Jack and Morris Childs in an interview with Reuters published on March 30. Fox acknowledged that Jack Childs had acted as a conduit for covert Soviet funding for the CPUSA, and had reported on this to the FBI. Fox also confirmed that Morris Childs was an FBI operative who had befriended Soviet and East European leaders, and gave the United States extraordinary access to Cuban and Soviet leadership thinking. "I know of no one who had greater access to the Soviet Union's top officialdom and to KGB records and information," Fox said.

Jack Childs, who died in 1980, is referred to in the FBI documents by his informant symbol NY-694-S\*. Morris Childs, who is said to have died about five years ago, is identified as CG-5824-S\*.

### **The conspiracy to 'eliminate' LaRouche**

If and when the full truth about the FBI's Operation Solo is ever known, it would shed much light on the direct Soviet input into the joint FBI-CPUSA targeting of Lyndon LaRouche and the movement built around LaRouche's ideas.

In the early 1970s, as LaRouche's friends in the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) were involved in efforts to prevent a growing clash between employed and unemployed, through the creation of the National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization (NUWRO), they came into direct conflict with the CPUSA and other "left" groups en-

trenched in the labor movement and in government-sponsored anti-poverty organizations. The result was an intensification of direct FBI harassment of NCLC members and supporters, combined with a mobilization of FBI assets in the CP to try and discredit the NCLC.

By 1973, officials of the CPUSA and the FBI were actively discussing assassinating LaRouche. The following is from a November 23, 1973 FBI memo:

"TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

"FROM: SAC, NEW YORK

"SUBJECT: LYNDON HERMYLE LAROUCHE, JR.

"In reviewing New York case file it is noted that information has been received that the CPUSA is conducting an extensive background investigation on the subject for the purpose of ultimately eliminating him and the threat of the NCLC, on CP operations. Several sources have furnished this information to the New York office, and this information has appeared in the Daily World newspaper several times.

"NCLC sources have advised that the subject is the controlling force behind the NCLC and all of its activities. A discussion with the New York NCLC case agent indicates that it is felt if the subject was no longer in control of NCLC operations that the NCLC would fall apart with internal strife and conflict.

"New York proposes submitting a blind memorandum to the 'Daily World' CP newspaper, in New York City which has been mailed from outside this area to help facilitate CP investigations on the subject. It is felt that this would be appropriate under the Bureau's counter intelligence program."

In fact, an assassination plot against LaRouche was uncovered at the end of 1973. The FBI continued massive harassment and dirty tricks operations against LaRouche and associates. *EIR* has previously documented how a number of these operations were run through the CPUSA.

In 1976, when the FBI was under pressure to close many of its domestic security investigations, the principal justification provided for the FBI's continued investigation of the NCLC, was that the NCLC had attacked the Communist Party!

In 1977, the FBI was forced to officially terminate its domestic security investigation of the NCLC. But in 1983, an official FBI investigation of LaRouche and associates was reopened at the personal behest of Soviet agent-of-influence Henry Kissinger. After the Reagan administration adopted a form of LaRouche's strategic defense proposal in March 1983, the Soviets began open attacks on LaRouche. The FBI and Justice Department obliged by opening a new grand jury investigation in October 1984. In the summer of 1986, the Soviets escalated their attacks, demanding that the Reagan administration show its good faith by jailing LaRouche. Immediately, the FBI obliged, with the massive October 1986 raid against LaRouche, and the indictment and ultimate imprisonment of LaRouche and numerous associates.

Solo may have ended by this time, but the spirit of cooperation between the FBI and the Soviets lived on.