

The IPS and the Media: Unholy Alliance

The liberal media have publicized the connections that some conservative journalists have with the controversial Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon. But liberal-left journalists have disguised their links to a more controversial organization, the Institute for Policy Studies. The IPS has supported CIA defector Philip Agee and Communist regimes such as Cuba and North Vietnam.

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The question of which conservative journalists are "associating" with the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon has become something of a hot topic in the Nation's Capital.

The Washington *Times*, the Washington, D.C., newspaper launched in May 1982 by businesses related to the Moon organization, stands at the center of the controversy. Despite the fact that the majority of its top editors and reporters are not disciples of Moon, and despite the fact that the newspaper was promised journalistic independence, critics of Moon have alleged that conservative journalists who write, work for, or contribute to the *Times* are somehow promoting Moon's "doctrines." Even those conservatives whose syndicated columns are carried by the *Times* have been denounced as "Moonie columnists."

But the controversy surrounding the *Times* is unusual in one major respect because many members of the news media, including some critics of the *Times*, have themselves associated with a controversial organization that has maintained links to unfriendly foreign governments.

This organization, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), was the subject of an article by Joshua Muravchik that appeared in the April 28, 1961, *New York Times Magazine*.

The IPS was formed in 1963 by Richard J. Barnet and Marcus Raskin, who both served in the Kennedy Administration, and it has grown to the point that it operates on a budget estimated at more than \$2 million a year. This money, obtained from nonfederal sources such as foundations, is used to underwrite the "scholars and activists" who work at the Institute as fellows, associate fellows, visiting and guest fellows, research and staff associates, administrators, and members of the "Washington School" faculty.

On defense and foreign policy issues, Muravchik pointed out, some of those associated with IPS have voiced support for Communist regimes such as Cuba and North Vietnam and revolutionary movements in Africa, Central America and the Middle East.

In addition, Muravchik noted, the IPS facilitated CIA defector Philip Agee's travels in Europe, sponsored the controversial figure, Orlando Letelier, a Chilean Marxist with close ties to Cuba, and played a key role in the effort to restrict the operations of American intelligence agencies.

On domestic issues, Muravchik said that in 1978, at the request of 56 members of Congress, the IPS prepared a study of the federal budget that proposed a number of Socialist economic measures and a cut in the military budget by nearly 50 per cent. (Fifty-two members requested a similar study in 1982.)

But the Muravchik article, while noting that the IPS was seeking to strengthen its ties with Congress, the Democratic party and organized labor, failed to explore in detail the IPS's considerable influence in the national news media.

Yet the IPS 1979-1980 annual report, the latest available, boasted of such influence. The report stated that IPS fellows have appeared on the NBC "Today Show," ABC's "Good Morning America," "Bill Moyers Presents" on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and "a range of national television documentaries." The report added that commentaries by IPS fellows "are heard regularly over National Public Radio and through local radio interviews and broadcasts."

The annual report also pointed out that "IPS fellows and associates" have written for *Christianity and Crisis*, *The Nation*, the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Washington Post*, *Mother Jones*, the *New Yorker*, *In These Times*, the *Baltimore Sun* and other publications.

In fact, however, as this investigation will demonstrate, the annual report *understated* the degree of influence and access that the IPS enjoys with the national news media.

The Cover Up

Herbert Aptheker, a leading theoretician of the Moscow-funded U.S. Communist party, once wrote, "There are precious few positive and stimulating products coming out of Washington these days; a large proportion are being issued by the non-profit Institute for Policy Studies."

As a non-profit, tax-exempt group, the IPS said in its annual report, "The Institute endorses no institutional political line: it serves no political interest and no political party." IPS described itself as "a source of radical scholarship, posing fundamental questions, providing conceptual thought for engaging the world around us."

Not surprisingly, the journalists who have been associated with the IPS echo this line.

For instance, Karen DeYoung, the *Washington Post* foreign editor who teaches at the IPS "Washington School" and received \$1,000 for one class, told me, "The organization itself doesn't stand for an ideology."

Frank Mankiewicz, the president of taxpayer-funded National Public Radio, who taught some classes at the "Washington School" but doesn't remember if he was paid for them, told me, "I really don't know the institutional position of IPS." He added that "I'm not even sure they've put out documents on behalf of their position. . . ."

Scott Armstrong, the *Post* investigative reporter and coauthor of *The Brethren*, who has also taught at the "Washington School," said about the IPS: "I'm not sure how it's structured."

Curiously, one relevant fact about IPS which provides some important insight into its "political line"—its publication of the self-described "independent socialist newspaper," *In These Times*—was not mentioned in its annual report. Also not mentioned was the fact that *In These Times* cosponsored a June 1980 "Marxist Union Conference."

It was in December 1978 that *In These Times* became a "project" of the IPS, announcing that since its "inception" it had enjoyed a "close relationship" with the fellows of the Institute. Near the end of June 1982, without any fanfare, *In These Times* assumed a new publisher—Mid-America Publishing Co. Fellows of the IPS continue to write for the publication, however, and it appears that the "close relationship" continues.

Apparently, the official IPS connection, though unacknowledged in the annual report, became too controversial. It is known, for example, that not too long after Ronald Reagan took office, *In These Times* Editor James Weinstein sent out an hysterical fund-raising letter in an envelope that bore the ominous statement, "They're Out to Destroy Us. . . ." The envelope was marked "postage paid" by the IPS.

The Secret of Success

When IPS fellows appear on television programs, or when they are mentioned in magazine articles, the liberal media never refer to them as Socialists, let alone pro-Marxists or Marxists.

When *Newsweek's* David C. Martin, for instance, wrote a May 18, 1981, article on the anti-defense spending views of IPS co-founder Richard J. Barnet and former Jimmy Carter speechwriter James Fallows, he referred to IPS as a "liberal" group.

Even worse, the *New York Times* op-ed page, which was edited until June 1982 by Charlotte Curtis, wouldn't even identify IPS as "liberal," preferring to label it as just a "research organization."

To further confuse matters, on Dec. 18, 1981, the *Times* published an op-ed piece by an IPS "visiting fellow" on the media's misapplication of political labels such as "extremist," a term that could be applied to the IPS.

Entitled "Winging It in Politics," the author of the piece argued that the Communist-backed terrorists in El Salvador were not extremists, but were "landless peasants and destitute laborers taking up arms against repressive economic and political conditions."

The real extremists in the world today, the author continued, were those "in power" in the U.S. who had given us "the genocidal war in Indochina."

The *Times* identified the author of the piece as Michael Parenti, the author of several books and a "visiting fellow" at the IPS, an "independent research organization."

To say the least, the tone of the column led me to suspect that the *Times* had not accurately identified Michael Parenti. And sure enough, in a telephone conversation, he identified himself not as an "independent researcher," but as "a Socialist—a democratic Socialist."

He refused to comment—in fact he hung up the phone—when I asked him about a report in the Communist party newspaper, *Daily World*, that he had appeared at a conference of Marxist scholars held in October 1980 at Hostos Community College in New York. The *Daily World* reported that "Michael Parenti of the Institute for Policy Studies" had spoken about "the

mythology of anticommunism," which was referred to as "the 'great scare' technique, and how it is used to build up armament spending."

The *Daily World* reported that Parenti "debunked the myth of pluralism which states that the U.S. is democratic because it is a multi-party system. He pointed out how the political process is, in fact, dominated and controlled by one class."

Parenti wrote an article for *The National* of April 11, 1981, explaining the latter point. Even though we have "a diffuse array of groups situated in such varied places as the Pentagon, the scientific and academic establishments, the large corporations, the media and in Congress," he said, "... all of them work in perfect orchestration to increase the military budget and propagate the imperialist, interventionist interest of the ruling class."

He went on to identify himself not as "a Socialist—a democratic Socialist," but as a "Marxist." He said, "we as Marxists pledge our lives and our sacred honor" to the "struggle" to expose "the myths of the ruling class," including the "imperialist myth" of the "Giant Red Menace."

The case of Michael Parenti—a self-proclaimed Marxist who criticizes the media for false labeling, while being falsely labeled himself—illustrates the curious relationship that exists between the IPS and the media.

Going to School at IPS

For a couple of years now, the IPS "Washington School" has offered courses on a variety of subjects, including the media, sex and politics, feminism, socialism, human rights, religion, national security, natural resources, the Congress, civil rights, the Third World and the Soviet Union. The courses are intended to attract congressional aides, government employees and assorted political activists.

A number of journalists have participated in these courses, either as instructors or guest lecturers. Perhaps the best known of these is veteran radical journalist I. F. Stone, a long-time associate of the IPS who told a national television audience on the CBS program, "60 Minutes," that Ronald Reagan was a nice man who "scares the hell out of me" and that Libyan dictator Col. Qaddafi was a provocative "flea" who should be met with "patience, restraint, good sense and humor."

Stone told a National Press Club audience on June 18, 1981, that "disinformation" was a "very paranoid term about the press" and that "the chief source of disinformation is the [U.S.] government, particularly the State Department. . . ."

An assistant to I. F. Stone in the 1960s, Peter Osnos served as national news editor at the *Washington Post* and is now its London correspondent.

During the summer of 1980, Osnos was a guest lecturer at an IPS "Washington School" course on "foreign reporting" taught by Karen DeYoung, who is now the *Post's* foreign editor, and who was then deputy foreign editor.

Osnos, a former Moscow correspondent for the *Post*, admitted under questioning by members of the class that he was ignorant about the ultimate intentions and goals of the Soviet Union. He said, "I've given up trying to decide why they do what they do because they're aggressive or because they're scared." Osnos concluded that the Soviets were "just bullies."

In March 1979, Osnos visited Cuba and couldn't find evidence of Moscow's control of that island. He reported in the *Post* on March 11, 1979, that ". . . despite the enormous Soviet influence on Cuba's foreign policy, the Kremlin is not in charge here."

He also reported that there was "apparently genuine rapport" between Castro and the Cuban people. But a little more than a year later hundreds of thousands of Cubans fled the island, complaining about economic and political repression.

Karen DeYoung told that class, attended and taperecorded by this reporter, that "most journalists now, most Western journalists at least, are very eager to seek out guerrilla groups, leftist groups, because you assume they must be the good guys." DeYoung herself demonstrated

the truth of that remark when she wrote a series of stories datelined "At a Sandinista Training Camp," during the Cuban-backed revolution in Nicaragua.

At that time, she reported that despite claims by Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza that the Sandinistas were Communist terrorists, the Sandinistas said they were committed to the establishment of a "pluralistic democracy," not a "new Cuba."

During this eight-week class we were treated to a steady stream of left-wing journalists as guest lecturers, including Eric Roulea of the French newspaper *Le Monde*, who was described as one who "sort of sides with radical elements of the Arab world"; Peter Pringle, who was then with the London *Sunday Times*; William Shawcross, author of the book, *Sideshow*, which tries to blame the U.S. for contributing to the Communist genocide in Cambodia; and Elizabeth Becker, who continues to cover events in Southeast Asia for the *Post* and who now serves as a "visiting scholar" at IPS.

Letelier and the Media

Perhaps the most controversial figure ever associated with the IPS was Orlando Letelier, the former top official of the Marxist Salvador Allende regime in Chile who was identified as both an associate fellow of IPS and a director of the IPS international branch, the Transnational Institute, which is based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Letelier began working for IPS after Allende was overthrown by a popular military coup in 1973.

Letelier was thought to have been opposing the new military regime in Chile because he wanted to restore "human rights" in his native land. But he was exposed by papers found in his briefcase after his murder in 1976 to have been secretly promoting Communist goals, with the assistance of Cuba.

The papers contained a letter addressed to Letelier datelined, "Havana, May 8, 1975," which showed that Letelier had received a \$5,000 payment and a promise of another \$1,000 a month "from here" to support his activities. The letter was signed by Tati Allende, who was living in Cuba and married to Luis Fernandez Ona, identified by U.S. intelligence as a top official of the Cuban intelligence service, the DGI.

Another important item in the Letelier briefcase was an address book, revealing that Letelier had contacts with Soviet and Cuban officials in Washington and New York, some of them identified by U.S. intelligence as Communist intelligence operatives, as well as a large number of prominent journalists.

One journalist for whom both home and office phone numbers were listed was Laurence Stern, who served as national news editor at the *Post*.

Stern emerged into the spotlight of left-wing activities when he was identified as a "participant" in the 1974 founding conference of the Center for National Security Studies (CNSS), the anti-CIA organization once headed by Robert Borosage, the current executive director of the IPS.

When Stern died in 1979, a large, well-dressed, dark-skinned man appeared, shook hands with Washington *Post* Executive Editor Ben Bradlee and others attending the funeral and declared:

"I am from Cuba. I am a Marxist-Leninist. I am human. Larry Stern was one of my friends, one of my best friends. I loved him."

The speaker was Teofilo Acosta, a first secretary at the Cuban Interests Section (Castro's embassy) in Washington, and one of the many Communist-bloc contacts that Letelier had listed in his address book. A defector from the Cuban intelligence service, the DGI, has identified Acosta as a Cuban intelligence agent.

But there was no uproar in our major media about Laurence Stern's Cuban connection. And it's the curious failure of the major media to cover such stories that is the subject of *The Spike*, the novel about Communist disinformation activities written by the noted journalists, Robert Moss and Arnaud de Borchgrave.

The Alternative Press, Philip Agee and IPS

De Borchgrave said that Agee "has his connections in this country" and "gets his information into [the] alternative press—*Mother Jones*, *Village Voice*, *Soho News*, and *The Progressive* magazine—and worms its way through the establishment or mainstream press."

Adam Hochschild, a contributing editor to *Mother Jones*, and Erwin Knoll, editor of *The Progressive*, dismissed de Borchgrave's charges. But the truth is that all of the publications cited by de Borchgrave, along with others such as *The Nation*, the *Guardian* and, of course *In These Times*, have been closely associated with the IPS, which, by its own admission, has facilitated Agee's anti-CIA activities in Europe.

An IPS "fact sheet," put together in response to Muravchik's *New York Times* magazine article, acknowledged the charge that the IPS had made some "efforts on behalf of Agee," but claimed they were "negligible."

The "fact sheet" explained, "When Agee was booted out of England after a Star Chamber proceeding in which no charges were filed and no evidence presented, IPS's Amsterdam Center provided him a place to stay while he figured out where he would live. *We would make the same decision again.*" (Emphasis added.)

Yet even the *Washington Post* reported that Agee, who has said "I aspire to be a Communist and a revolutionary," was kicked out of Britain because he was accused of disseminating material harmful to British security and maintaining "regular contacts with foreign spies," especially Cuban agents.

Mother Jones, a magazine named after "pioneer socialist" Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, is published by the tax-exempt Foundation for National Progress, which stated in its 1976 financial report that it was established on the West Coast to carry out the "charitable and educational activities" of the IPS.

Perhaps the most effective outlet for the IPS is the Pacific News Service (PNS), an "alternative news agency" that began as a project of the Bay Area Institute, an organization established with the help of IPS money in 1970. IPS co-founder Richard J. Barnet serves as a "contributing editor" of PNS.

The PNS supplies about 30 stories a month to more than 200 subscribers. These have included newspapers such as *In These Times* and the *Guardian*, as well as major newspapers such as the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the *Atlanta Journal*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *San Francisco Examiner*.

Perhaps the most important outlet for the PNS, which is marketed nationally by the Des Moines Register and Tribune Syndicate, is the *Washington Post*. According to Sandy Close, an editor at PNS, *Post* Executive Editor Bradlee made the decision several years ago to purchase a subscription to PNS stories.

The *New York Times* doesn't subscribe to PNS, Close told me, but Charlotte Curtis, the recent editor of the *Times* op-ed page, is a "strong advocate" nonetheless. Curtis still serves as an "associate editor" at the *Times*.

Liberation News Service, IPS and the Post

But one of the oldest alternative news services, the Liberation News Service (LNS), recently disbanded operations. An openly pro-Marxist organization, LNS officials spent their final days "selling off printing presses, desks and chairs, along with the posters of Lenin, Malcolm X and Che that decorate their loft," according to *In These Times*.

In his very revealing book, *A Trumpet to Arms: Alternative Media in America*, David Armstrong said that the LNS had "worldwide contacts among Western radical groups and Third World guerrilla forces." It began, he said, as a radical news service for underground and college media. Its name was proposed by Ray Mungo, a past editor of a campus newspaper in Boston, who was

"inspired by what he saw as the dedication of the NLF [National Liberation Front] to the liberation of their homeland."

"The news service was financed by hook and by crook," Armstrong reported. "According to Mungo, some of LNS's equipment was 'liberated,' and many of the LNS's bills went unpaid. Friends at the *Washington Post* helped to develop LNS photographs on the sly, while typesetting equipment at the Institute for Policy Studies—Washington's leftist think tank—was commandeered for setting copy. In earlier days, LNS shared a house with the underground *Washington Free Press* and Students for a Democratic Society. Staffers occasionally lunched with I. F. Stone, who took a paternal interest in the news service."

Although the LNS is now defunct, many of the news organizations associated with the IPS continue to carry on its work by sponsoring reporters who actually seek out and report on revolutionary movements and governments around the world.

- Wilfred Burchett, who reported the Korean and Vietnam wars from the Communist side, was a correspondent for the *Guardian* before breaking with that paper over its reluctance to back Hanoi's invasion of Cambodia. Despite Burchett's long record of service to the cause of Communist "journalism," he then went to work for the IPS newspaper, *In These Times*.

- The *Guardian* itself carried reports from El Salvador's guerrillas written by Robert Armstrong, who is now with NACLA.

- Laurence Johnson, a free-lance writer, was working for both PNS and *Mother Jones* when he was apprehended and kicked out of Colombia, accused by authorities there of serving as "an international liaison agent" of the terrorists. A few years ago Johnson traveled to the Philippines, where he searched out Communist guerrillas opposed to the regime of Ferdinand E. Marcos.

- Chris Koch, who worked on projects for National Public Radio, began his career with the Pacifica Radio station in New York and in that capacity traveled to North Vietnam in 1965 with a delegation that reportedly included Michael Myerson, the current head of the Communist-controlled U.S. Peace Council. Koch's stories about the war were regarded as favorable to the Communist Vietnamese.

- Lionel Martin, who was an occasional correspondent, a stringer, for the *Washington Post* in 1977, served as a correspondent for the *Guardian*, and actually worked for the Castro regime in Havana.

Media Criticism, IPS Style

At the "Washington School" class on "foreign reporting" taught by the *Post's* Karen DeYoung, participants were not given homework, but were given suggestions about what to read as background. DeYoung suggested *The First Casualty*, a book about war correspondents by Phillip Knightley, and some articles from the *Columbia Journalism Review (CJR)*, a publication usually described as "prestigious" and the bible of today's journalism students.

The recommended *CJR* articles included "Iran," written by Edward W. Said, a PLO sympathizer, which appeared in the March/April 1980 *CJR*. In this article, written during the Iranian crisis, when Americans were being held hostage by pro-Marxist fanatics in Teheran, Said argued that the media had been too critical of the Iranians. There were exceptions to this anti-Iranian coverage, Said acknowledged, including one op-ed piece by Fred Halliday in the *Boston Globe*. Halliday just happened to be a "fellow" of the IPS Transnational Institute.

The other article recommended by DeYoung was "The Greatest Story Ever Told," written by Garry Wills, which appeared in the January/February 1980 *CJR*. In this article, Wills criticized the media for glorifying that year's visit to the United States by Pope John Paul II. The *CJR* described Wills as a syndicated columnist and author, but didn't mention that he was a member of the IPS board of trustees.

The White Paper Controversy

The IPS connection to the newspapers and publications already named in this report may help explain why themes and story ideas pursued by the alternative press get picked up by the major media, which expose them to millions of ordinary Americans. Although such a trend is noticeable in coverage of several domestic and foreign policy issues, the campaign to discredit the State Department White Paper on El Salvador, the Feb. 23, 1981, document that exposed Soviet-bloc arms smuggling to the Salvadoran guerrillas, is an important case study.

Even before the White Paper was officially released, when it was the subject of leaks and speculation in the press, CIA defector Philip Agee held a news conference in West Germany to claim that some of the captured guerrilla documents on which it was based were probably forgeries manufactured by the CIA. After Agee finally got his hands on the White Paper, he produced a 46-page critique of the document, which included his charge that some of the captured materials were, indeed, forgeries. This critique was released in Washington, D.C., by Agee's associates.

By that time, however, John Dinges had already written an article for Pacific News Service claiming that the U.S. government's documentation of arms shipments to the guerrillas was faulty. The Dinges story, according to PNS Editor Sandy Close, appeared in 30 major newspapers in the U.S.

The anti-White Paper campaign was also joined by Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway in the *Village Voice*, James Petras and ex-CIA employe Ralph McGehee in *The Nation*, Roger Burbach of NACLA in *Mother Jones*, and Jeffrey Stein in *The Progressive*.

Eventually the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* published attacks on the White Paper, with reporters for these two newspapers admitting that they had seen some of the above-mentioned stories, as well as the Agee critique. Peter Osnos of the *Post* who was then national news editor, admitted at the time that a call from Jeffrey Stein urging an examination of the White Paper promoted him to assign reporter Robert Kaiser (with assistance from Karen DeYoung) to do just that.

After HUMAN EVENTS exposed the fact that the *Post* and the *Journal* (reporter Jonathan Kwitny) had used the Agee critique as a confidential source, and after Arnaud de Borchgrave charged in a *New York Times* column that Agee's critique was prepared with Cuban help, John Dinges prepared another story for PNS trying to obscure Agee's role in the anti-White Paper campaign.

Ignoring Agee's own claim that his critique formed the basis of the articles in the *Post* and *Journal*, Dinges noted that his own criticism of the White Paper had been distributed by PNS before the Agee critique was even released. "I wrote it with no help from Agee or the KGB or the Cubans or any other creatures from the conspiracy seekers' menagerie of villains," he said. Therefore, Dinges tried to argue, the fact that similar criticism of the White Paper appeared in the Agee critique, his own article, as well as the *Post* and the *Journal*, meant only that some of the "same discrepancies" had been discovered.

Yet, as Reed Irvine pointed out, Dinges made only a few feeble criticisms of the White Paper. The Agee critique, on the other hand, included scores of criticisms, 14 of which were echoed in the *Journal* article and 11 of which were echoed in the *Post*. "The articles in the *Post* and the *Journal* clearly owed a lot to Agee and little to Dinges," Irvine pointed out.

Moreover, a HUMAN EVENTS comparison of the Agee critique with the *Journal* and *Post* stories showed striking parallels. In one case, both Agee and *Journal* reporter Jonathan Kwitny made the same clumsy mistake.

Incredibly, on Jan. 7, 1982, months after Agee's role in the White Paper controversy had been completely exposed (though the *Post* has not yet acknowledged the fact that it used Agee as a source), Jack Anderson charged in his column that the White Paper had been "shown to have relied on highly questionable and probably forged documents"—the same line that had

been pushed by Agee himself! Anderson ignored the fact that the criticisms of the White Paper, including those made by Agee, were all answered by the State Department.

Philip Agee and the Media

On some occasions, Philip Agee has been able to make his views known directly to the American people. For example, he starred in the series "On Company Business," an attack on the CIA, which was aired by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in 1980.

Like Agee, associates of the IPS have also been able to present their views directly to the American people by way of public broadcasting. IPS fellow Saul Landau, for example, helped produce the anti-nuclear film, "Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang," which aired on public television in 1979. He has said that his latest film, "Target Nicaragua," which attacks the U.S. for allegedly assisting the Nicaragua freedom fighters, may also be shown on public television.

Last year public broadcasting aired a film, "From the Ashes . . . Nicaragua Today," directed by Helena Solberg-Ladd, a member of the "Washington School" faculty at the IPS. The film was a glorification of Marxist rule in Nicaragua.

But just as the relevant facts about Philip Agee are withheld from the selection audience, the nature of the IPS connection is not explained to those who view the Landau and Solberg-Ladd films on public television.