



## "Turned" agent exposes infiltration

# ASIO targets Spartacist

Since its establishment by the Labor government of Prime Minister Ben Chifley in 1949, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) has devoted the overwhelming bulk of its resources to surveillance, infiltration and harassment of radical and labour organisations. In the last two years, three ASIO agents have been uncovered in the ostensibly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP): Max Wechsler, Lisa Walter and Ian Gordon.

On Friday, 10 June, the shroud surrounding ASIO's nefarious campaign against the left was pierced again when Janet Langridge, a candidate member of the Spartacist League (SL) since April, voluntarily confessed that she had been a paid agent of ASIO for almost a year. Langridge, 21, was a first-year student at Sydney University and had been a member of the campus Spartacist Club. Together with her boyfriend and accomplice, Mark Tiernan, who was never a member of the SL, Langridge had been submitting reports to ASIO on the Spartacist League since last November. Langridge was expelled by the Spartacist League the same night as she made her confession. The following day Langridge provided further details of her ASIO connections in a taped interview with a solicitor, Tom Kelly, and a Spartacist spokesman.

Since her confession and subsequent expulsion, Langridge has returned all her internal documents to the SL. She has also co-operated in documenting her ASIO activities by signing the transcript of the interview, providing a statutory declaration confirming her work for ASIO, and revealing further information. After the first interview on 11 June, Langridge was subsequently interviewed by Senator Arthur Gietzelt, George Petersen, NSW MIA, and John Edwards, a journalist for the *National Times*. A week later her exposures of ASIO received widespread coverage in the bourgeois press, television and radio. But her co-operation has been inconsistent and vacillating; her break with ASIO has been shown to be incom-

plete and untrustworthy. After agreeing to break off all relations with both ASIO and Tiernan, Langridge continued seeing Tiernan, who in turn fed information to ASIO, and even allowed herself to be visited by ASIO agents twice.

In the initial interview Langridge recounted that she first applied to ASIO two years ago when Tiernan dared her to do it as a lark. ASIO acknowledged her application with two letters, noting only that it had been considered but that there was no "suitable vacancy" to which she could be appointed. As later became clear, this was a cover for ASIO's covert recruitment methods.

Almost a year after the letters arrived, Langridge was visited at her flat by two ASIO agents several times and offered a part-time job spying on "targeted" left-wing organisations. They drove Langridge around town, pointing out the headquarters of the SWP, the Communist Party of Australia and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party (SPA). According to Langridge, the agents told her that her first target "would be very soft

Council of Auctioneers and Agents in St Leonards to receive her written reports and pay her \$50 per month in cash, tax free. She signed receipts for the money under a pseudonym supplied by ASIO, Jan Thomson.

In October 1976, Poulus directed Langridge to visit the SPA bookshop and make contact with the Young Socialist League (YSL), youth group of the SPA. On her first visit Langridge was invited to an SPA barbecue and shortly thereafter started attending YSL meetings and other events.

It was over a month later, in late November, that Langridge bought a paper from an *Australasian Spartacist* seller. ASIO was pleased; they told her the SL was an important "target", having never before been infiltrated. She was encouraged to contact the SL through the phone number listed in the paper. Following the initial contact Langridge was invited to attend an SL public class series on Marxism which lasted from December until mid-January, during which time she also came to several personal contact sessions and social events. Poulus had warned her that the Trotskyist groups were generally harder to infiltrate than other organisations, and that the SL was an "extremely hard target". According to ASIO's "expert" on left-wing organisations, Poulus said, the SL was politically the hardest of the left-wing groups in Australia.

When, in January, Langridge was accepted to go to university and the SL began making increasingly heavy demands on her time, she began to express doubts to ASIO about continuing her involvement with either ASIO or the SL. Poulus offered her a twelve-month contract at \$600 per month, again tax free, and arranged a meeting at the Artarmon Motor Inn for her and the head of the Sydney office and a special agent flown up from the head office, who were introduced to Langridge as Bill and Laurie. Laurie's surname was subsequently given as Pollard. (Another unconfirmed report indicates Pollard may actually be the head of ASIO in Sydney.) Langridge again accepted.

In addition to the sort of information she had gathered on the SPA/YSL -- names, addresses and car license numbers, reports on meetings and activities -- there were particular questions ASIO



Janet Langridge and Mark Tiernan -- paid to spy on the Spartacist League. ASp photos

### ASIO agents exposed by Langridge

#### Terry Poulus

Field officer. Home phone, 625-5660. ASIO office phone, 92-7920. Described as about 34, short, stocky, blond hair. Phone book lists TJ Poulus, same number, 45 Westminster St, Rooty Hill, NSW. Electoral roll lists Terrance John Poulus, "clerk", same address.

#### "Ken"

Field officer. Described as middle-aged, slim build, with dark hair and a moustache.

#### "Bill"

Introduced as the head of the Sydney office. Has been reached at the 92-7920 ASIO number. Described as about 52, with silver-blond hair.

#### Laurie Pollard

Introduced as a special agent from the ASIO head office in Melbourne. Described as about 35, tall, slim, dark hair. Claimed to have been exposed two years ago.

just to give me background". She would start on a part-time basis, with relatively meagre pay. She accepted. She was given a declaration to sign committing her not to divulge any information about her connection with ASIO.

Of the two agents who initially visited Langridge, one, known to her only as Ken, stopped coming after the first few visits. The other, named Terry Poulus, was to be her ASIO "contact". Langridge was given a special direct phone number, 92-7920, to reach Poulus at ASIO headquarters without having to go through a receptionist, as well as Poulus' home phone number, 625-5660. Poulus would generally pick her up in an unmarked car after she left work at the

### Langridge speaks

"(Poulus) said that it was going to be very difficult (to infiltrate the SL)... Because it was an extremely hard target... Because they were a Trotskyist organisation and their politics were a lot harder; their entire organisation was a bit more difficult and a lot more demands would be put on a person who was involved in their activities..."

"... (their politics) went into a lot more depth and there's a lot more expected of a person."

"(ASIO said) they didn't know anything about it (the SL) and that's why it was so important that I infiltrate it... They knew of it, that was all..."

"(They were curious to find out about it) especially because it was a Trotskyist organisation... They had information from the (fake-Trotskyist) SWP and they just wanted to see what the Spartacist League was like in comparison."

"... I had to work my way into their confidence; become a member, do everything that was expected of me, go to the local meetings, make thorough reports of the people, how many were there, the positions they held."

"... they promised that if I did okay that they would make sure that I could get to university which was my dying ambition to do."

"It was exciting, it was stimulating, I had to work in the public service and I wanted to go to the university and I wanted to have plenty of money."

(Question: "So what happened?")

"I had to be honest. I couldn't stand what I was doing anymore..."

"It's just the fact that I respect them and I respect what they stand for and I don't respect myself for what I've been doing."

— Interview with Langridge, 11 June

(Question: "In your so-called career as a spy, what do you regard as your biggest triumph?")

"Confessing."

— Channel 2, ABC News, 20 June

Dear Miss Langridge,

I refer to your letter in which you seek information concerning an appointment to this organisation.

At the present time there are no existing vacancies in this office to which you could be appointed. However, your name has been forwarded to our Headquarters for examination and you may expect to hear from us again.

Yours faithfully,

Senior Administration Officer

Dear Miss Langridge,

Further to my letter to you dated 15 July last, your letter of application was forwarded to our Headquarters as previously indicated to you and I am advised to inform you that your application has been generally considered but there is no suitable vacancy to which you could be appointed.

Your interest in this matter is appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Senior Administration Officer

| DATE     | DEPOSIT | CASH   | SAVINGS | BALANCE |
|----------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 02-09-76 | 31A     | 50.00  | CSH     | 100.00  |
| 15-09-76 | 920     | 50.00  | CSH     | 150.00  |
| 19-09-76 | 920     | 50.00  | CSH     | 200.00  |
| 30-09-76 | 31B     | 50.00  | CSH     | 250.00  |
| 17-11-76 | ...     | ...    | ...     | ...     |
| 19-04-77 | 31A     | 390.00 | CSH     | 640.00  |
| 05-05-77 | 31A     | 400.00 | CSH     | 1040.00 |
| 18-05-77 | 31A     | 400.00 | CSH     | 1440.00 |
|          |         |        |         | 3252.00 |

ASIO letters to Langridge; "D" Branch indicates security agencies. Langridge's bank passbook, no 17.351849: last three entries are ASIO payments, deposited under the name of T Poulus. According to Langridge, prior entries, in March, included a transfer from her cheque account, superannuation from previous job and TEAS payment.

had for Langridge with regard to the SL. Poulus wanted her to determine the method of elections to and the composition of the SL's leading bodies, detailed information on floor plans and locks in the SL offices, what relations the SL had with international co-thinkers -- particularly from a financial aspect. ASIO wanted to know about the personal lives of individual members and any personal tensions that might exist; they could use such information, Poulus told her. Curiously, ASIO's interest showed a distinct sexist bias, focusing overwhelmingly on information concerning *male* comrades.

Indicating the high level of routine ASIO surveillance of the left and in this case the SL, ASIO told Langridge that they already had the names and addresses of numerous Spartacist members and supporters even before her infiltration. They also had at least one photograph of an SL supporter, which was shown to her for identification.

ASIO took measures to cover up Langridge's income, augmenting it indirectly in the process. They encouraged her to accept her TEAS allowance and not reveal her ASIO salary. To make sure she didn't appear to be living beyond her means and draw suspicion, most of the money would be banked in her account at St George's Building Society in Crows Nest and ASIO would keep the passbook, showing it to her regularly to verify that deposits were being made.

ASIO also began paying Tiernan up to \$75 per month in cash for giving Langridge "moral support". Tiernan, an apprentice electrical fitter at Delairco, 90 Sussex Street, Sydney (he attends courses one day a week at North Sydney Technical College), was fully aware of Langridge's spying activities from the start. Though he accompanied her to SL classes and social events and for a time expressed interest in joining the SL, Tiernan did not have the fibre necessary to infiltrate the SL, with the rigorous demands of bolshevik professionalism SL membership would impose. But this lackey remained loyal to ASIO to the end. When Langridge phoned him to say that she was about to turn herself in to the SL on the Friday evening, Tiernan warned ASIO, thereby making further exposure difficult. On Sunday, 12 June, he met with Poulus to report on Langridge's confession, and then accompanied Poulus on a visit to Langridge's home.

On the second visit on Wednesday, 15 June, Poulus and Pollard attempted to persuade Langridge to repudiate the confession she made in the taped interview. Assuring her there were no hard feelings, Pollard (who did most of the talking) sneered that all the left groups jump on the bandwagon of popular issues. (Evidently he was thinking of the SWP.) He affected an attitude of social concern: some of these popular issues were very fine. During the Vietnam Moratorium days, he whinged, it was difficult to get anyone to infiltrate left groups because everyone supported the Moratorium -- even he did. Consider how the revelations would affect ASIO's public image and the work of its field agents and the embarrassment they would cause "poor" Poulus, he pleaded. This time she refused.

Langridge revealed her spy role to the SL, she claims, because she came to "respect them and ... what they stand for and I don't respect myself for what I've been doing". This may well be true. The truth of the class struggle and the honesty, dedication and commitment of those fighting for the cause of proletarian revolution have often proved more attractive than the bourgeoisie's blood money. ASIO's "major fear", according to Langridge, was that she might follow in the steps of ex-ASIO agent Lisa Walter, who exposed her ASIO connections after infiltrating the SWP in Adelaide and then "turning".

But the social democrats of the SWP, instead of expelling this self-confessed former police spy, trumpeted her conversion to socialism and kept her in the organisation. In fact when Ian Gordon, a long-time SWP member, last month confessed to the SWP leadership to having been bought off by ASIO money, even he was not expelled -- his resignation was "demanded" (*Direct Action*, 2 June). Unlike the SWP, there is no place in our organisation for "turned" agent Langridge. For a fistful of dollars and a few kicks Langridge and Tiernan were prepared to hand working-class militants over to the ruling class's apparatus of repression. They cannot be trusted. Principled socialist militants will not want to have anything to do with these people -- yesterday's or today's police pimps. Tiernan's co-workers should want to purge their workplace of infection by this unrepentant ASIO accomplice. The Electrical Trades Union should keep him out of its ranks. He is a conscious enemy of the workers movement.

What broke Langridge was the SL's bolshevik discipline and programmatic integrity. Langridge noted that ASIO considered the SL a "hard target" because our politics "went into a lot more depth and there's a lot more expected of a person". But apparently basing their observations of Trotskyist organisations on the menshevik SWP, ASIO hardly comprehended what that meant. When Langridge complained of overwork they suggested that she stop attending an internal SL class series. She replied that she could not do that -- that wasn't how the SL functioned.

Despite the utmost vigilance on the part of revolutionists, it must be assumed that the bourgeoisie's secret police agencies can penetrate our ranks. But the promiscuous slander mongering and paranoid cop-baiting of renegades like the Healyite Socialist Labour League create an atmosphere of apolitical mistrust within the entire workers movement which only facilitates the work of the secret police. The best defence against police infiltration into the workers movement is

**STATUTORY DECLARATION**

I, JANET LANGRIDGE of 8/10 Coulter Street Gladsville do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

- On or about the 10th August, 1976, I was interviewed by 2 persons who identified themselves as working for ASIO.
- These names were Terry Poulus and a person called Ken. I was asked to attend meetings of the Young Socialist League and later made contact with the Spartacist League, and report on a monthly basis for which I was paid personally in cash \$50 per month.
- From February 1977, I was offered a full time salary, and was given to understand that I should not mention to the TEAS Authorities that I was in receipt of this income.
- My salary was \$600 per month which sum was initially paid in cash to me but more recently partly in cash and partly into the St. George Building Society account number 17-351849 directly by the organisation (A.S.I.O.).
- In return for this remuneration I understood my duties were to report on the identities of the members of the Spartacist League and substance of the debate and resolutions passed at their meetings.
- I was led to believe that reports on the personal associations of the members, relationships and habits, would be of use to the organisation.
- On the 11th June I voluntarily informed Mr. Tom Kelly Solicitor of my involvement with A.S.I.O. and with my consent a tape recording of the interview was made.
- On the 12th June 1977 I spoke to Terry Poulus and indicated that I no longer wished to continue my association with the organisation.
- On the 15th June Terry Poulus and Laurie Pollard, both as members of A.S.I.O. visited me at my flat and indicated that they wanted me to sign a statement refuting the unsigned transcript in the possession of Tom Kelly.
- I am making this declaration at the offices and in the presence of Senator Arthur Gietzelt.

AND I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act of 1900-1953.

Subscribed and Declared at  
Caringbah this 17th day of June, 1977.

Before Me: *J. Burt J.P.*  
*Langridge J.P.*

Langridge's signed confession, witnessed by Sen Gietzelt.

arrest and assassination when defence of the "security" of capitalist class rule requires it, as it inevitably will -- however remote this eventuality may seem in wealthy, social-democratic Australia. The only law for the bourgeoisie's secret police is always and by any means necessary to maintain and defend the de-

## Letter to Attorney-General

19 June 1977

Hon R J Ellicott, QC, MP,  
Attorney General,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra, ACT.

An individual by the name of Janet Langridge has recently admitted to having been paid up to \$600 a month by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) to spy on our organisation. Documentation of her admissions is being made available to the public. These spying activities, carried out over a period of eight months, constitute an intolerable violation of our democratic rights. We are a fully legal political organisation, entitled to carry on our activities, openly propagating our political views, without subversive infiltration by government bodies. The government has no right whatsoever to pry into our internal affairs, seeking information the only conceivable purpose of which is to facilitate harassment and repressive action against us.

This is the fourth exposure of ASIO spying on left-wing groups in Australia in a little over two years. Left-wing groups are singled out for special treatment and "surveillance" solely on the basis of their political

views. This systematic, politically discriminatory activity is clearly intended to intimidate the left and attack the labour movement as a whole.

At a time when your government is demanding workers give up their rights and submit to "austerity", at a time when your government brutally slashes social service provisions for working people, ASIO lavishes money on its hired informers and snooping operations, to harass critics of these anti-labour policies.

We demand an immediate stop to all government spying on, infiltration and harassment of the socialist and labour movements. We demand the opening of all ASIO's files to the victims of its outrageous prying, and a complete revelation of ASIO's activities against the left and labour movement. We demand that you release full details of ASIO's surveillance and infiltration of the Spartacist League at once. We demand the abolition of ASIO and all political police agencies.

David Scott, for the  
Spartacist League

copy: Hon Malcolm Fraser, MP,  
Prime Minister

to maintain a high level of political debate unmarred by slander and violence. Genuine revolutionists respond to police infiltration not by coddling inherently untrustworthy "turned" agents, nor by spreading vicious, unsubstantiated rumours, but by exposing actual, known agents to the entire left and workers movement.

Symptomatic of ASIO's cynical disdain for the bourgeois legality it claims to defend is its non-payment of taxes on its hirelings' wages. Nor does ASIO's charter, as defined by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act of 1956 (quoted in *National Times*, 16-21 May), "to obtain, correlate and evaluate intelligence relevant to security ..." on any rational interpretation encompass investigations of the personal habits of left-wing activists or infiltration of socialist organisations. Social democrats and liberals will raise a hue and cry over such "excesses" and demand that the secret police be reformed. For Gough Whitlam it is sufficient for ASIO to be run by a judge to guarantee its propriety. The liberal Committee for the Abolition of Political Police, headed by Joan Coxsedg, would like to see "All crimes ... defined and offenders prosecuted by the existing police apparatus" in order to do away with the need for ASIO (quoted in *Scope*, 26 August 1976). In other words, once the bourgeoisie declares some aspect of left-wing activity to be "criminal", then suppression is justified.

For revolutionists, ASIO's real crimes do not consist in its violations of bourgeois standards. Nor is its real charter defined by acts of Parliament. Its real charter determines that it will daily commit crimes against the working class. Its surveillance and harassment of working-class militants and organisations are carried out with the purpose of preparing their

crepit, destructive system of capitalism.

Unlike the stealthy would-be assassins of ASIO, we have nothing to hide. We stand proudly under the red banner of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky. We state our aims openly and explicitly: the abolition of capitalism and all class society around the world. To this end we fight for an international revolutionary leadership of the working class, for the rebirth of the Fourth International. We demand that ASIO, ASIS and all the other secret police agencies be abolished, that all infiltration into and harassment of the workers movement cease. But we also recognise that the bourgeoisie will never do away with its political police, an essential part of the repressive apparatus on which its state power and class dictatorship rests. Only after the proletarian revolution, mobilising the great toiling majority against the privileged capitalist minority, destroys that apparatus and installs the working class in state power will ASIO and all the bosses' spooks and spies meet the fate they deserve. ■

The 38-page transcript of Langridge's confession is available from the Spartacist League for \$2.50 plus mailing costs. Photographs of Langridge and Tiernan are also available at \$2.00 each.

Order from/pay to: Spartacist League,  
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Phone: (02) 660-7647

For more information, contact the Spartacist League at the above address in Sydney, or, in Melbourne, at

GPO Box 2339,  
Melbourne, Vic, 3001  
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