

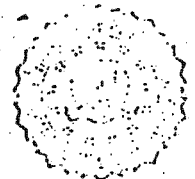
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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In Reply, Please Refer to File No. **NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION**

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467849
Washington, D. C.
January 24, 1968

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According to the records of the Visa Office, United States Department of State (USDS), Artem O. Melikyan is a correspondent for the Tass News Agency, Washington, D. C. (WDC). The Tass News Agency is the official Soviet Government news-gathering organization with headquarters in Moscow, U.S.S.R., and branches through the world.

The Women Strike For Peace (WSP) is a publicly identified pacifist organization.

On January 22, 1968, a confidential source, who furnished reliable information in the past, learned that Melikyan, on that date, was in contact with Mrs. Lagmar Wilson of WSP regarding her personal assessment of the United States Department of Justice decision to prosecute Dr. Benjamin Spock and four associates for conspiracy to violate Selective Training and Service Laws. Source learned that Wilson told Melikyan that Spock giving his unqualified support to the draft resisters and purpose is to demonstrate his belief in the courage and conviction of those young men who refuse to kill their brothers in Vietnam.

With regard to the government's attempted prosecution of Spock and his associates, source learned Wilson is of the opinion that when a man like Spock takes a stand such as he is taking, the attention of the public is deflected to the legal aspects of the action, and this is not the purpose in the demonstration of support for draft resisters. Source learned Wilson believes it is important to test United States laws that the real objective is to manifest our moral and human convictions. Wilson, according to source, told Melikyan that

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"RESIST"

a continuation and intensification of the repressive policies of the government will mean hard times ahead for protesters in America. She pointed out that she sees parallels in public opinion in the USSR, China and other countries, and thinks this more informed public opinion is good.

Source also learned that Melikyan, on January 22, 1968, contacted another official of WSP regarding the planned prosecution of Spock. This person termed the war in Vietnam both "illegal and immoral."

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On January 23, 1968, the same source advised that he had learned that, on that day, Melikyan, who is writing a book on the forthcoming trial of Dr. Spock, was in contact with Mr. Lauter, National Director of "RESIST," concerning Melikyan's interest in securing information regarding that organization's activities and on Lauter's personal feelings about the trial.

When asked by Melikyan about the status of "RESIST" campaign to obtain signatures on a petition the organization is gathering to protest Spock's prosecution, Lauter said that he could not give him the exact figures at this point as they are still being collected from all over the country. Source learned Lauter did say a lot of signatures are coming in and that in the San Francisco area approximately nine hundred signatures were secured in two days. Source learned that Lauter told Melikyan that better estimates of the number of signatures secured to date would be available at the National Office of "RESIST" in Cambridge, Massachusetts, telephone number 617-491-8373. Melikyan indicated that he would get in touch with this office for later information.

With regard to activities of "RESIST," Lauter, according to source, advised Melikyan that they had already staged several rallies around the country in such cities as New York, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington. According to Lauter, there will be a rally in Boston on January 26, a demonstration at the Boston Commons on the 29th the day Spock and his co-defendants appear for their hearing as well as a rally on the same evening in New York. According to source, Dr. Spock is going to be at a rally in Chicago on Saturday, the 27th.

Source learned that "RESIST" is in the process of setting up a resistance defense fund. This will be used in

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getting additional legal cases through the courts. Court actions will also be brought against illegal procedures, draft boards. "RESIST" is also organizing various events to occur on college campuses on the day that Spock and the others are brought to trial.

These activities, according to source, will vary from place to place, with some being "teach-ins" and some "teach-outs." Source learned Lauter defined a "teach-out" activity as students and professors, on the day of the Spock trial, appearing at local Selective Service induction centers or at a chemical plant like the Dow Chemical Company to demonstrate against the war.

In late May or early June, "RESIST" plans to organize what the organization terms "Vietnam Counter-Commencements" at the time of the regular commencements and graduations from colleges in the United States. Instead of having the ordinary commencement exercises, "RESIST" plans to stage an activity which will say in effect that, having graduated from college, students will now be more directly involved in the struggle against the war.

Source learned that Lauter personally assessed the forthcoming Spock trial as a political action to silence and intimidate anti-war people. He thinks, according to source, that resistance to the war is becoming politically costly, that opposition to the war has been spreading to more and more people, and that the opposition is becoming more and more militant. He thinks that the Johnson administration is trying to break the spirit of the anti-war movement in the United States, but that the prosecution of Spock and the others has the effect of solidifying the anti-war movement. Source advised Lauter has indicated that "RESIST" has received tremendous support with people calling long distance, wanting to know how they can help or if they can send money.

Source learned that Melikyan left his telephone number at Lauter's office and told Lauter that he would be interested in any other activities which are forthcoming since he gives wide coverage to all such movements, and since his news organization would like to be one of the first to know about these things. Melikyan indicated that, in case he is out and Lauter calls and has something to dictate, he can just dictate to any of the press correspondents.

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The January 11, 1968, issue of the "Washington Post" reports that noted pediatrician Benjamin Speck, Yale University Chaplain William Simon Coffin, Jr., Harvard Graduate Student Michael Ferber, Mitchell Goodman, an author from New York City, and Marcus Rasnik, Washington, D. C., will all face arraignment in United States District Court, Boston, Massachusetts, on January 29, 1968, on charges of Conspiracy to Violate Draft Laws.

It is noted that during a demonstration in front of the United States Department of Justice Building, 9th and Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., on January 12, 1968, leaflets were passed out which requested people to contribute to the "RESIST" defense fund to help defend present and future draft resisters. The leaflet indicated contributions to "RESIST" should be directed to 3 Thomas Circle, Washington. The leaflet also contained the following, purporting to be a statement signed by those persons listed at its conclusion:

"We stand beside the men who have been indicted for support of draft resistance. If they are sentenced, we too must be sentenced. If they are imprisoned, we will take their places and will continue to use what means we can to bring this war to an end. We will not stand silently by as our government conducts a criminal war. We will continue to offer support, as we have been doing, to those who refuse to serve in Vietnam, to those indicted men, and to all others who refuse to be passive accomplices in war crimes. The war is illegitimate and our actions are legitimate.

"Signed,

(Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)
(Linus Pauling)
(Robert Leifce Brown)
(Howard Zinn)
(Paul Goodman)
(Noam Chomsky)

(Arthur Waskow)
(Lwight Beckman)
(Paul Carter)
(Lt. Roy Marlan Weitz)
(Sidney Beck)
(Richard Manning)

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