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Strategic Command. Writing 17 years ago for the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Gen. Butler condemned the thought of initiating nuclear war. He said, "First-use policies are in direct contradiction to our self-interest..." The same year, Paul Nitze, a former hardline presidential advisor in the Reagan administration and founder of the anti-Soviet Committee on the Present Danger, wrote in the New York Times, "I can think of no circumstances under which it would be wise for the United States to use nuclear weapons."

The irrationality of nuclear weapons could hardly be more obvious. **CP**

JOHN LAForge is on the staff of Nukewatch, a peace and environmental group in Wisconsin, and edits its Quarterly newsletter. He is a regular contributor to Counterpunch online, Peacevoice, and the Duluth, MN Reader Weekly. He contributed Chapter 13, "A Vast Endless Experiment: Military Radioactive Pollution," to Angie Zelter's book "World In Chains" (Luath Press, 2014), and recently is co-editor with Arianne Peterson of "Nuclear Heartland, Revised: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States" (Nukewatch, 2015).

Portrait of the Radical as a Young Man

The FBI's Early Pursuit of Saul Landau

By DAVID PRICE

When Saul Landau died in September, 2013, America lost one of its brightest public intellectuals. Saul contributed to *CounterPunch* since its earliest days, and following Landau's death, Jeffery St. Clair asked me to file Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for files held on him by the CIA, FBI, and Department of State. The FBI acknowledged it has significant file holdings on Landau totaling over 14,000 pages. The FBI is now declassifying and redacting portions of these files, but this past month the Bureau sent me an initial release of 337 pages of FBI files which had previously been processed in the 1980s as part of a previous request—presumably a request made by Saul Landau himself.

As these files are released, I'll report in on their contents, but this initial file's account of the FBI's monitoring of young Saul Landau presents an intriguing portrait of a young radical coming of age as seen through the eyes of an oppressive governmental agency concerned about forms of political expression and analysis that challenged the narrow choices of main stream American politics. The story arch within this

first FOIA release of Landau materials finds the FBI monitoring Landau as a student in the 1950s involved in what would become the roots of the New Left, with growing FBI concerns over his socialist critiques and support for the Cuban Revolution.

Saul Landau was born in 1936 in New York to Sadie and Leon Landau, a New York pharmacist. He was a prolific author, documentary film maker, and public intellectual—publishing 14 books and making 40 films, and a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies since 1972. He was a close friend of sociologist Cecil Wright Mills, helping Mills with his post-Cuban revolutionary experimental novel *Listen Yankee*, and traveling in Europe and the Soviet Union with Mills during the last year of Mills' life. He produced films on topics like Castro in Cuba, the Zapatistas in Mexico, the Cuban Five, or Brazilian torture, working at an accelerated pace, reaching audiences with timely critical information in a pre-internet age, where things like secret wars or bombing campaigns could still happen, and when Americans could still be shocked by such atrocities. His work with the late Haskell Wexler, on several films, like, *Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang*, *The Sixth Sun: Mayan Uprising in Chiapas*, or *Brazil: A Report on Torture* created a symbiotic partnership that enhanced the work of both filmmakers.

Landau emerged as an important critical public intellectual voice, a writer, investigative journalist, social critical and film maker—changing public discourse on issues ranging from Cuba, the 1976 Washington D.C., assassination of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier, and the CIA's covert war in Nicaragua, and these earliest entries in his FBI file show him developing progressive political views as an undergraduate and graduate student studying history and politics at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, earning his BA in 1957, and his MA in 1959.

The Young Radical

Saul Landau's FBI file opened with a report from two Washington, D.C. FBI field agents sent directly to FBI Director Hoover, on March 6, 1956, after they observed two men, one a "white male, 26-28 yrs., 5'8", 140 lbs., black hair" and horn rimmed glasses," the other a "negro male... wearing dark blue topcoat, black trousers," enter the Soviet Embassy and then emerge sixteen minutes later, driving away in a 1954 Ford with Wisconsin plates that later investigation determined was registered to Saul Landau. Further FBI investigations determined Landau was enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, studying, where a campus informer told the FBI he was a member of the Madison Chapter of the Labor Youth League (LYL).

A report from the Milwaukee FBI's Special Agent in Charge identified an April 7, 1955, letter to the editor of the *Daily Cardinal* written by Landau defending the LYL, in which he wrote that, "the Attorney General and the Subversive

Activities Control Board have proved nothing against the LYL except that the group does not go along with US Government Policy." The FBI reported that, "LANDAU further stated in references to the LYL, 'It is called subversive for what it says, for wanting to end segregation, establish rest control, live in peaceful co-existence, and study Marxism. These are not subversive acts. They are beliefs which don't conform to 'good American' views.'"

FBI records listed Landau's name among Wisconsin citizens opposing a Subversion bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee, and the Bureau collected further biographical information on Landau and his family; noting Landau's involvement in the National Student Association—a left-leaning organization that would later be revealed as secretly coopted by the CIA at the national level; revelations of this would not be public until the publication of a 1967 *Ramparts* exposé. Within a few months, the FBI determined that Landau, and the unidentified Black male also observed entering Soviet embassy had attended the Washington, DC NAACP convention, as representatives of their campus chapter. The FBI tried to determine which of the black males traveling with Landau had entered the Soviet Embassy.

For several months during 1956, a series of Kafkaesque FBI reports flowed between Washington, DC and Madison struggling to determine exactly how the Madison office knew Landau was affiliated with the LYL. Crucial missing documents cast doubts on the sourcing of the agents initial report, and the informer originally identified as saying Landau was a LYL member, could not recall making this report; this led to an internal FBI investigation resulting in senior Special Agent Alexander D. Mason being disciplined. The obsession with tracing the source of this particular information seems odd, given the overall laxity of Bureau agents in such matters, including the common practice of inventing sources to support Agent's hunches, even trolling cemeteries and phonebooks for names of fake informers—as described by former FBI agent Wesley Swearingen in his memoir *FBI Secrets: An Agent's Exposé*. The FBI determined Landau was a member of the Wisconsin Student Peace Center, but the Bureau's failure to confirm his LYL membership led to a rejection for a request to place Landau on the Security Index—the FBI's national list of subversives, who were to be monitored, and in the event of national emergencies, detained. At its height, the FBI's Security Index held the names of half a million Americans—including luminaries like Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, Dalton Trumbo, Lillian Hellman, and James Baldwin. The Security Index became a register of visionary nonconformity, a monument to the FBI's foundational paranoia, and a muted proclamation of American un-Freedom.

While the reliability of the FBI's initial report identifying him as a LYL member was not fundamentally different from most other field reports of this period—perhaps more accurate than most, given that Landau was in fact a LYL member.

Decades later, Landau described the high level of secrecy governing Madison LYL meetings, where members were organized in secretive cells because of Party concerns of government surveillance and fears of a coming crackdown. In an interview with Matthew Levin, Landau described elaborate ruses, where LYL campus leader Henry Wortis would "put on his trench coat, ask me to feed his dog if, or some reasons, he didn't get back in time, and then mysteriously leave the house often turning his head several times to check that no one was following him."

Like many other US university campus groups with ties to the Communist Party, the Madison campus branch of the LYL disbanded in 1956 following Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin. The campus Socialist Club soon rose in prominence for campus radicals, and sponsored campus talks and forums on political issues like US interventions in Lebanon, Nixon's visit to Latin America, and the Cuban Revolution.

The Bureau's questions about Landau's LYL affiliation ended when Agent Mason filed a June 1959 report on Landau's activities in the Wisconsin Socialist Club, including a report on his attendance of the National Conference of American Socialists in Cleveland. An FBI agent monitored Landau's campus talk at a forum sponsored by the Wisconsin Socialist Club, reporting that "a group of students gave extemporaneous speeches on the United States foreign policy with regard to the Lebanon situation. Several of the students were from Arab countries, and the Agents observed that some of the Arab students gathered together in a group around another student who also spoke to the gathering." The FBI reported Landau's "attendance at a public forum conducted by the Wisconsin Socialist Club" discussing the "War Over China." In 1958, Landau was elected Chairman of the Wisconsin Socialist Club and he again attended the organization's National Conference.

Landau and Cuba

The FBI reported that at a talk at University of Wisconsin on October 30, 1960, Landau "had recently returned from a four month stay in Cuba, [and he] criticized the United States Department of State for such policies as a firm supporter of former dictator Batista and was markedly pro-Castro in his comments." The FBI characterized Landau as a "prominent member" in the pro-Cuban advocacy group, Fair Play for Cuba, which was "beginning to create a stir across the nation." The FBI noted Landau's work as an editor for the group's semi-monthly bulletin, and monitored his work organizing a trip taking groups of students to Cuba during the 1960 Christmas Break. Because with hindsight we know that Fair Play for Cuba's most famous member would be Lee Harvey Oswald, a tension is created reading these FBI entries monitoring Landau, as the dates of FBI reports count down towards the date of Kennedy's assassination, November 23, 1963.

During February and March of 1961, a series of FBI records show the Bureau concerned that Landau may have moved to New York and rented a room using the name David Eakins. After FBI investigates further, it determines that Eakins is in fact a grad student from Madison who worked with Landau in the Fair Play for Cuba group.

In his roles as editor of the Madison based publication *Studies on the Left*, Landau was at the forefront of a wave of new political expression emerging to form what would become the New Left. Landau helped establish *Studies* as leading the way for campus free speech, anti-war, and socialist movements arising on American college campuses in the coming decade. Following Landau's vision, the third issue of *Studies on the Left* was an expanded issue devoted exclusively to the Cuban Revolution and Castro's efforts to address poverty. This issue had a print-run three times the normal size, and rapidly sold all copies.

C. Wright Mills

Landau met American sociologist C. Wright Mills in Cuba in 1960. The two men hit it off and Landau soon became the key interlocutor shaping Mills' critical understanding of life in Cuba. Mills' political critique had been building to a crescendo the previous few years, with his works on *The Sociological Imagination* and *The Power Elite* exposing how capitalism short circuited American democracy. Working at a frenetic pace, Mills quickly cranked out a novel, *Listen Yankee*, that used composite fictive narrations of several Cubans describing the largely positive changes in their lives following Castro's revolution.

In June 1961, the FBI learned of Mills and Landau's plans to travel together to England, Yugoslavia, Poland, and the Soviet Union, and that "according to the informant, Landau was supposed to be helping Mills write a book" and Mills and Landau would "attend a Cuban Rally to be held in London." In effort to track Landau and Mills' travels, the FBI checked with New York American Express offices to see if travelers checks had been issued, but the Bureau failed to identify the purchase of any travelers checks. In July 1961, a postal carrier in Madison reported to the FBI that someone known to Landau [identity redacted] received a postcard mailed by Landau from Munich, Germany.

Mills' years of hard living, manic writing binges, drinking, smoking, motorcycles and fast living were catching up with him; a serious heart attack at only age 44 a few months earlier pushed him to look beyond his professorship at Columbia University, as he considered relocating to the UK. Mills and Landau set out for Europe, with a stop in the Soviet Union to see if their doctors could offer him better medical hope than he had received from American doctors. Landau accompanied Mills, traveling as his secretary, but Mills was enough of a mess that he needed someone to sort of his affairs.

Landau later published an account in *Ramparts* of traveling

with Mills, describing Mills' dissatisfaction with American liberalism and American universities, and writing that Mills had hoped the Soviet medical system could treat his heart condition that would kill him at age 45, half a year later. Landau captured Mills' critical approach to all social life, writing that while impressed with Soviet progress in some areas, on his last night in the USSR, Mills toasted a group of party leaders, lifting his glass saying, "here is to the day when the complete works of Trotsky are published and widely distributed in the Soviet Union." His hosts were not amused.

In the fall of 1961, the FBI learned Landau had written the Passport Office requesting clearance to travel to Cuba on behalf of C. Wright Mills and Ballantine books, "to gather facts and documents for defense of court actions" from Amadeo Barletta's lawsuit against Ballantine Books and C. Wright Mills. The Barletta suit sought \$50-million in libel damages, claiming that Mills' character in his novel *Listen Yankee* was clearly identifiable as Barletta. Barletta owned 42 radio and television stations in Cuba, and the suit claimed that Mills made false and damaging claims that Barletta was connected to the Dominican Republic's Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo and organized crime before being ousted by the Castro régime. The U.S. had no interest in helping Mills by allowing Landau to travel to Cuba to search for documents or testimony supporting Mills' depiction of Barletta as a crook, and the FBI's records show his passport application was denied.

Early 1960s San Francisco

The FBI tracked Landau's October 1961 move from Madison to San Francisco, noting that Landau was working as a social worker at the County Hospital. The FBI's interest in Landau intensified, and a June 15, 1962 memo from SAC, San Francisco informed Hoover that Saul Landau was being moved off of the FBI's "Reserve Index" and was being placed on the FBI's Security Index. Once placed on the Security Index, the FBI's monitoring increased, and his file shows the FBI monitoring his public talks, such as a Secret memo reporting on a KPFA radio broadcast where Landau said that "US congressmen foam at the mouth 'like rabid dogs' in their obsession to invade Cuba."

An artifact from late 1962 marks how quickly shifts in political consciousness can occur within social movements. With no inkling of the radical changes coming to American university campuses in just a few years, Landau's FBI file shows him, in 1962, worried about the conservative politics of American university students. The FBI reported that when speaking at an event sponsored by the National Guardian, Landau said that he had spoken about developments in Cuba, and that, "he said he found the hatred in the eyes of the students and felt that they wanted to lynch him. He stated many educators fear that the right wing is gaining control of the universities."

A June 11, 1963 FBI memo listed Saul Landau as a witness at

upcoming proposed open hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), slated for Los Angeles the following month. Landau was listed with 21 other individuals selected to be subpoenaed by HUAC to testify about their activities and contacts with Cuba in an Open Hearing in Los Angeles, and later memos suggested that separate hearings could be held in San Francisco.

The FBI appeared increasingly concerned that Landau planned to travel again to Cuba, even though such travel was now forbidden by the US government. An update in his Security Index file shows the FBI monitoring his remarks at the July 16, 1963 public meeting of the Bay Area Opposition (BAO) group. The FBI reported that Landau:

"spoke concerning the Cuban situation with particular reference to the 59 students who had recently visited Cuba for the purpose of testing the law banning their travel. He described the ban as immoral and a restriction of the individual's freedom to travel. He suggested that the students be met at the airport and a reception be held in their honor. He further felt that a series of speeches throughout the country by these students would be enlightening. He further brought forth the idea that on the day of their return or shortly thereafter to have one of their number go to the passport office of the State Department and pay the \$10.00 required for a visa to Cuba and at the same time have pickets posted outside the building with banners on the travel restrictions. Source advised that these ideas were presented to those present and voted on in the affirmative and that the Subject then picked several persons to head the committees charged with implementing his ideas".

A September 24, 1963, decoded FBI Cablegram sent from the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City to FBI Director Hoover reported that Landau "has been in Mexico City several months and plans to leave for Cuba in near future to teach English literature and political science at University of Havana...Source advised [in] September 24 [telegram] that subject has left Mexico to return to San Francisco briefly to wind up affairs, after which he will return to Mexico and proceed to Cuba."

The FBI intensified its focus on Landau, and Hoover's message to the San Francisco Special Agent in Charge expressed his desire to arrest Landau on his return from Cuba, and to file felony charges against him. Landau's passport had been stamped as invalid for travel to Cuba and other Communist countries, and a September 1963 FBI report clarified the need for the Mexico City Embassy to collect evidence relating to Landau's travels, and detailed the chain of evidence needed for a conviction of violations of Section 1185 (b), Title I of the U.S. Code, including knowledge of where he departed from the U.S., evidence of his entry to Cuba, and evidence of his intentions to travel to Cuba. The memo stressed the need

to monitor Landau's movements so that the FBI would know when he left San Francisco for Mexico, and it urged the FBI to alert their San Francisco informers to monitor Landau's movements.

The FBI contacted one of Landau's neighbors, who reported that Landau had not mentioned leaving San Francisco, and who assured the FBI that she would promptly notify the Bureau if Landau left town. The FBI monitored airline flights, and in mid-October the Bureau requested authorization for a mail cover for Landau's home address. Throughout the fall of 1963, the FBI was convinced Landau was about to travel to Cuba, but he remained in San Francisco and the FBI was not able to fulfill its plan of arresting and prosecuting him as he returned from Cuba. It is possible that news of Lee Harvey Oswald's connections to Fair Play for Cuba led Landau to suspect the likelihood that travel to Cuba was increasingly being monitored.

Two years later, on December 14, 1965, J. Edgar Hoover sent a confidential memo "concerning Presidential protection" to the Secret Service claiming that Saul Landau could present a danger to the safety of the President of the United States. Hoover filled out a form claiming that his concerns were raised, "because background is potentially dangerous; or has been identified as member or participant in communist movement; or has been under active investigation as member of other group organization inimical to U.S." and that Landau fell under the category of "Subversives, ultrarights, racist and fascists who met" the checked criteria of making "expressions of strong or violent anti-U.S. sentiment."

It is difficult to interpret this move as anything other than J. Edgar Hoover using another governmental agency to harass Landau. The coversheet for one FBI report had noted that Landau was "not to be interviewed because...in view of his activity, there is no indication that he would be anything but hostile, and since he is a writer, the risk of embarrassment to the Bureau far outweighs any potential accomplishment." With this backhanded passive-aggressive gesture, Hoover outsourced Landau's harassment to another governmental agency. Hoover wasn't stupid. Hoover knew Landau posed no threat to the President's life, but with the assassination of Kennedy, Oswald's membership in Fair Play for Cuba, and Landau's prominence in the group, this was an easy form of remote harassment for Hoover to arrange. Hoover also sent an identical Secret Service alert the following year.

This first release of Landau's file ends with a 4 page, March 1967, State Department report summarizing Landau's past passport applications, including a 1965 attempt to travel to Cuba as one of three *Ramparts* reporters. When the FBI questioned *Ramparts* sending so many reporters to Cuba, the FBI reported that *Ramparts'* publisher and editor-in-chief (likely Robert Scheer), amended his request, dropping Landau and the other reporter from the request, and traveled alone to Cuba.

This initial release falls silent with this 1967 passport report, but the FBI's admission of identifying another 14,000 pages of files they are now processing for release, means I will have future installments reporting on the FBI's monitoring of Saul Landau. Like many of the hundreds of FBI files I have read, this initial release of FBI files marks the narrowness of political dissent in a nation that so fervently self-identifies as a bastion of liberty—with narrative records depicting America's secret police's efforts to criminalize the human right of free movement, dissent from international policies, and advocacy for new approaches to democratic change.

But the knowledge that the state put such concentrated efforts into tracking his movements, work, and views could not have been surprising to Saul Landau. He, more than most, understood the nature of the struggle in which he engaged; and this knowledge did not slow him down or discourage his advancement; if anything, it was oxygen for the fire that burned within him and moved him to describe and confront the corruptions of power, and beacons of resistance that marked the times in which he lived. **CP**

DAVID PRICE is professor of anthropology at Saint Martin's University in Lacey, Washington. He is author of the forthcoming book *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, The Pentagon and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology* (Spring 2016).

Abolish Small Arms

The Real 2nd Amendment Debate

BY ANDREW SMOLSKI

The world's small arms cause irreparable damage through human rights abuses and the militarization of global conflicts. Their production is carried out by a government-supported industry promoting aggression as a solution. It is blaringly apparent that more small arms do not make us safer, especially when their proliferation is used to justify the use and monopoly of violence by governments and corporations. That violence is then wielded by these autocratic organizations with their dangerous authoritarian beliefs to reproduce the stratified inequality of the capitalist world-system. Simply put, small arms are a principal technology for oppression.

The problem of small arms proliferation is exacerbated by the U.S., with a sizable minority of the population obsessed with guns for a variety of vacuous reasons. Typically they fall into two types: self-defense (crime is in decline) or to defend against tyranny (US military capacity far exceeds any insurgency citizens could devise). This minority has oversized power in the debate because they are represented by a lobbying organization, the National Rifle Association (NRA),

funded quite well by the small arms industry. Year upon year the NRA spends 1.5 million to 3 million USD lobbying senators and representatives at the federal and state levels, along with their media campaigns and spokespersons advertising fear and paranoia.

And while gun ownership by household has been on a long-term decline according to the General Social Survey, now at around 32%, gun sales have been skyrocketing in recent years. This situation produces what Robert J. Spitzer calls a "security dilemma", whereby "a national policy that encourages and implements weapons ownership as a recognized means of self-defense invites a domestic arms race," one participated in by both citizens and their government. Our right becomes their fatuous reason to prepare for war. With mounting casualties from mass shootings and police brutality, we must begin to recognize that gun ownership in the US is untenable, as well as massively destructive for the rest of the world. From that, we must ask ourselves, what do we do about small arms?

The obvious solution would be universal small arms abolition as a way to deal with the crisis. Contemporarily, small arms abolition is rarely, if ever, mentioned. Using the productive capacity for a beneficial alternative is considered a fantasy of the perpetually ignored idealist. Disarmament is a deceased dream of the hopeful. Rather, we have resigned ourselves to the insane drive to further escalation. We do not question the dystopian picture painted by the chaotic splatter of empty shells. Small arms have fully integrated themselves into the treadmill of production built on the capitalist drive towards infinite accumulation. In order to understand how this monstrously productive death machine works, we should start from a global look at the small arms trade and go towards a national look at the country with roughly a third of all small arms manufacturers, the United States.

The internationally recognized definition of small arms is any weapon designed for personal use. The UN Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms clarified further in 1997 that this included revolvers, self-loading pistols, rifles, carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles, and light machine guns. In 2003 an Oxfam-Amnesty International joint report stated that there were "approximately 639 million small arms in the world today" and "eight million new weapons are produced every year." According to research fellow Mike Bourne, in 2007 worldwide there were 1085 manufacturers of small arms and light weapons, with 68-84 countries participating in the production of rifles, assault rifles, or sub-machine guns and 45-60 participating in the production of pistols. Bourne also reports that in the 1990s there was a 96 percent increase in companies manufacturing weapons.

As he states, "much of this increase was due to systemic shifts adding to the ongoing evolution of the producer base of the global trade: the fragmentation of the USSR into new republics, and the break-up of state controlled industries into