The Rev. Alan Thomson is honored as a pioneer in the ranks of those who have long struggled for an end to the Cold War.

He stood up for sanity in U.S.-Soviet relations when President Reagan was demonizing the USSR as the "focus of evil" and proclaiming his belief that a nuclear war could be fought and won. Thomson's years of toil are now producing bountiful fruit under the warm sun of perestroika and glasnost. Even George Kennan, author of the anti-Soviet "containment" policy calls the Cold War "dead." Yet Thomson, Executive Director of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship finds himself today the victim of a sleazy FBI frame-up attempt. It is replete with hidden cameras, microphones, and stoolpigeons. It is a throwback to the days when J. Edgar Hoover used peeping tom tactics in an attempt to frame—and defame—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The alleged incident occurred two years ago. Thomson is accused of evading a currency reporting requirement aimed presumably at drug traffickers. The FBI seems unable to enforce the law against cocaine dealers who routinely launder billions through U.S. banks. But boastfully the Buffalo FBI announced Thomson's arrest for failure to report $17,000 in deposits, to the accounts of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship.

The FBI Attack

In the last few weeks, some of the details of the FBI's dirty campaign to destroy the National Council have become known. For at least four years, and probably much longer, the FBI had agents infiltrate the Council. One of them, Barbara Makuch, achieved a leadership position in the Council in Buffalo and nationally. Throughout this period Makuch was secretly recording conversations with Alan Thomson, both in person and on the telephone. The FBI has admitted to Thomson's lawyers that they have at least 76 reels of recordings, but have released only a handful to the defense, on the grounds that the others are irrelevant to this case. Thomson's lawyers have asked the Court to order the Government to release the fruits of all of the surveillance of Thomson and the Council. The reason that the Government refuses to release the massive quantities of additional information it collected on the Council and Thomson is that its release will demonstrate that over four decades the FBI conducted a campaign of slander and infiltration in an attempt to destroy an organization that was not involved in illegal activity, but stood for peace and friendship.

Makuch, to the chagrin of her FBI handlers, only found out what is well known about the Council: that it promotes friendship and cooperation between the U.S. and Soviet peoples, and to that end organizes exchanges, and distributes educational materials such as films and books.

That was not enough for the FBI, so Makuch cultivated a close personal relationship with Alan Thomson in an effort to both compromise Thomson and steer the affairs of the Council in a direction more likable to the FBI.

The Alan Thomson Defense Fund asks the obvious question: Why did the FBI wait two years to launch this "sting"? What is the motivation of this sordid frame-up?

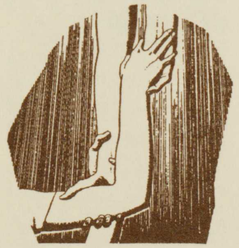
Reason for the Attack

The answer is to be found in the changes now "blowing in the wind" here in Washington and across the country. Cold War anti-Sovietism was the policy adopted in the 1950s to intimidate the mass movements of the people. The thawing of the Cold War over the past two years has seen a new upsurge in the people's movements. Together with the world's peace movement, these movements forced Reagan to stop vilifying the USSR, admit a nuclear war cannot be fought and won and sign the INF Treaty.

These initiatives strike fear in board rooms of military corporations that have fattened on the arms race. An end to the Cold War will destroy the rationale for their profiteering. Big business as a whole has grown rich on Reagonomic tax gifts and deregulation. They are determined to defend these policies. Renewed Cold War anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism is their weapon of choice for intimidating the democratic mass movements. The attack on Alan Thomson is no isolated incident. Rep. Bill Alexander (D-Ark) warns that the forced resignation of House Speaker Jim Wright (D-Tx) and Majority Whip, Tony Coelho (D-Ca) is the result of a "neo-McCarthyite witchhunt" orchestrated by ultra-right Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ge). Gingrich boasts that he has eight to ten more Democrats in his sights.

The coalition of people's organizations has an answer: to require the lawmakers to introduce legislation to slash the military budget in half to $150 billion, as proposed by former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and close $150 billion in tax loopholes. That will provide enough to fund social programs, reduce the federal deficit, and create a safer world, all at the same time. For those who argue that nuclear and conventional disarmament will destroy million of jobs, Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY) has introduced his bill HR-514, backed by the Machinists and other unions. It would save military-related jobs by planned conversion to peacetime production. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn) has reintroduced his Act for Better Childcare. Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) has introduced bills that would drastically increase the availability of low and moderate income housing both public and private.

Bipartisan coalitions are challenging Bush on his plan to build both the Minuteman and Midgetman missiles; pressure is developing to scrap the B-1 and the B-2 Stealth Bomber; other lawmakers seek abolition of or further cutback of Star Wars. Senator Mark D. Hatfield (R-Or) and Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass) have reintroduced legislation for a mutual ban on all nuclear weapons testing.



Everyone is Attacked

The FBI and President Bush's Justice Department are deeply involved in this new witchhunt using "ethics" as its pretext. On Memorial Day, the FBI in a brazen legal fishing expedition, interviewed William Gray, Chairman of the House Democratic caucus just as he is preparing to run for the position of House Majority Whip. Justice Department officials then leaked to the *Washington Post* that the interview has occurred as part of an inquiry on Gray's "ethics" that has been underway for two years. Gray, an African-American minister long known for his moral rectitude, wrote a furious letter to Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, "Why did the department wait until the eve of Democratic leadership changes to inform me or to ask my cooperation?" Gray demanded. He said the FBI interview has the earmarks of a political ambush intended to intimidate him and spoil his chances of election to a higher leadership position.

Three House leaders wrote to Thornburgh blasting the Department of Justice for "using leaks for political purposes against House Democrats."

Clearly, the aim of the Bush administration and right-wing Republicans in the House is to force Congress on the defensive. They seek to block peace legislation such as the Kennedy-Hatfield Nuclear Test Ban, reductions in the Military budget and the "family agenda." A similar neo-McCarthyite campaign is underway in the U.S. labor movement. All leaders who challenge the Cold War positions of the AFL-CIO International Department have been targeted.

Despite efforts to refurbish the FBI's sordid image, it is still up to the same old Hoover dirty tricks. The Frank Varelli case lifted the lid on the sewer. Varelli was an FBI stoolpigeon sent into the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Varelli broke with his FBI handlers and exposed the FBI's covert campaign to infiltrate and destroy CISPES. Varelli charged that he was instructed to plant incriminating evidence that CISPES was involved in "terrorist" activities. During CISPES chapter meetings he was to incite CISPES activists to engage in illegal activities so that CISPES members could then be entrapped by the FBI. The FBI was not able to prove that CISPES had committed a single illegal act.

About the same time, the Center for Constitutional Rights began compiling more than 100 cases of unsolved break-ins of the offices of Central America and South Africa solidarity groups. Nothing of monetary value was stolen. But membership