

Kurt Stand
#42289-083
FCC Petersburg Low
Petersburg, Virginia 23804

December 1999 (rev. 2/06)

An Open Letter to Friends,

My trial and conviction last year on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage left, I believe, more questions unanswered than answered. I thus feel a need to explain my actions, state what I actually did and my reasons for so doing, to those of you who have stood by me and my family this last year, and to the people whom I worked with in the past who must wonder where the truth lies. This I admit is difficult. I have always tried to keep my personal life personal, and the thought of opening up in this fashion is anathema to me. Furthermore, there is an inherent conceit in this kind of reflection - taking experiences out of context and putting them down on paper can give an impression of coherence (or of an undue sense of self-importance) that is not real, and which, in the present set of circumstances, may sound like special pleading.

It is far better to live as best one can and let others draw their own conclusions as to its worth or merit. Nonetheless, the accusations made at trial and the impression given of a person quite different from the one I believe I am deserve a response. Therefore I will try and give in the pages that follow some sense of the progress of my ideas, describe events in my life insofar as they related to changes in my thinking, as well as explain the specifics of my relations with people in the GDR (German Democratic Republic/East Germany). I will refer to my ex-wife's, Theresa's, actions, as well as some of the circumstances of what I know about Jim Clark's activities; but I will not attempt to speak for them. This for no reason other than because I want to reconstruct how events unfolded through my eyes. Memory is fluid; I have spent my life living in the present and focused on the future, not dwelling in the past - so all I claim for what lies below is that it is my best recollection of what has brought me to this moment. Others who have known me at various points in my life can speak themselves to the degree my memory matches their own. But the fact that I did not engage in any conspiracy to commit espionage can only be challenged by those who have not known me, for I never did.

Let me begin by simply touching on my background for it was the impressions I formed growing up that helped me develop the values that have guided and continue to guide my sense of right and wrong; my sense that private life and public commitment cannot be separated. My parents came to the United States from Germany in the 1930s. I was raised with the knowledge of the horrors of fascism and on the stories of those family members who took part in the resistance to the Nazis, and who often paid for that opposition with imprisonment,

exile and death. The question of how and why this occurred occupied me as did the feeling that neutrality in life only creates victims, that a commitment to justice needs to be expressed in action if it is ever to prevail over injustice.

And though I was aware enough to never equate contemporary problems in the U.S. with fascism, certainly I saw parallels in the blind (and quite false) patriotism used to justify the war in Vietnam and to condemn – often with violence – the voices raised in protest, and the experience of an earlier generation in Germany who had been sent off to kill and die in battlefields throughout Europe in the name of their patriotic duty. Our society's prevailing ethic of competition, of one against all, and the ever-present danger of a sense of failure even after a lifetime of hard work can lead some to embrace an alternative of empathy toward others and a commitment to social justice, but, especially when manipulated by demagogic politicians, the fear and uncertainties of our lives can lead others to embrace the politics of hate as happened in Weimar Germany. For confirmation in my own time all I had to do while growing up in New York was to observe the frenzied responses to what were always very modest steps toward school integration and open housing. Racism in the United States, just as anti-Semitism in Germany, by allowing people to be viewed as non-people – objects living a stereotyped existence – has served to turn anger inward and to blind people to the source of their sense of perpetual insecurity about job, neighborhood, or the future, with which too many live.

By the same token and for the same reasons I felt that it was too easy to lump people into simple categories; condemning all Germans for fascism, or denouncing with simpleminded slogans the soldiers who fought in Vietnam (which meant losing sight of the idea that the war itself was the obscenity). We are all too complex and capable of change far more than such rigid moralizing allows—and passing moral judgments on those with whom one disagrees contributes nothing to bringing about a change in people's hearts or in an unjust system. Certainly each of us is individually responsible for our own actions; but if our goal is to transform our current reality into something more humane, it means questioning the roots in daily life, in the functioning of society, of the public morality that creates or legitimates such attitudes. Of course this sense of things was incoherent at first, but it became conscious over time and led to my conviction that the point of political activity was to promote structural changes in society that could change the terrain of possible choices we have in life. Those structural changes to build true social justice require in turn social solidarity amongst the different people who comprise our country and an end to our foreign military adventures. In my mind this is the essence of democratic – and socialist – thinking and activism; addressing the causes of violence, hatred and poverty, so that systemic solutions can be found.

While growing up I also listened and learned a great deal about trade unionism from family members and my parents' friends (many of whom had lost their jobs because of their political beliefs). My grandparents talked of coal miners'

struggles in Germany and the U.S. Others described to me their experiences in the union-building battles in the maritime, construction, garment and other industries. Why I was so interested in the past, I can't say, but I was, and the more curiosity I expressed, the more adults would enjoy talking to me, the more I learned. Through these conversations came my conviction that union organization is a basic expression of human dignity, and that people could best obtain their rights by acting in their own behalf. This was brought home to me on my first full-time job at age 17 as a messenger in a print shop, where an organizing drive was being re-launched amidst much debate over a just-failed effort, defeated in part when the employer hired people from ethnic groups with traditional animosity. Since then, I have always sought to be active in the union when the job I held was organized and to participate in organizing where it wasn't.

In high school, working part-time in a bookshop, I began to read voraciously, studying U.S. and world history, philosophy, literature, economics, attending evening lecture series; participating in study groups; trying to make sense of what I grew up observing, hearing, experiencing. Historians such as William Appleman Williams, Staughton Lynd, Herbert Aptheker, Eric Hobsbawm; social theorists like Jean-Paul Sartre, W.E.B. DuBois, Herbert Marcuse, Louis Althusser, Franz Fanon, alongside the writings of Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, Lenin – all became the subject of debate and discussion among friends who were also trying to understand the world and their place within it. My passion for history was fueled by my search for answers, knowing that there was no easy explanation why the hopes of the 1918 German revolution could turn into the misery of fascism 15 years later, or why the promise of the New Deal turned into the repression of the McCarthy era. Simple answers would also not suffice to help understand the bewildering and conflicting variety of responses to the sense of changing times visible in the late 1960s. It was during this time that I read Thoreau's *Walden* and his essay on civil disobedience; he combined contemplation with principled action that struck a chord within me that has remained ever since. Thoreau embodied the interweaving between what one believes and how one lives, between private life and social commitment that corresponded to how I hoped to live my life.

When I look back it is remarkable to me how young I was to be so engaged, and I can't fully answer for it. In part, though, I believe it was because I grew up in a time when many social issues became very immediate and personal. The question of discrimination and civil rights was unavoidable; we had busing to my elementary school in the Bronx (successful despite the opposition of many parents and teachers); the 1968 New York City teachers' strike which led to the end of community control of the schools; even the public high school I attended in Manhattan had to face the question, for girls were admitted for the first time when I was in 10th grade after a legal challenge to its all-boys policy. Labor disputes were also not foreign; as the 1965 transit workers and 1967 (and the above-mentioned rather different 1968) teachers' strikes served as vivid reminders. I was also no stranger to the violence directed at national marches, at attendees of left

meetings or events; simply going to a Pete Seeger concert meant being met by hostile shouts and threats.

All that I saw and took part in was also taking place throughout the country on a wider scale. Certainly it was a time in which the undercurrent of violence in our society forcefully expressed itself, embodied in the beatings, shootings, and church bombings aimed at the civil rights movement; the assassinations of JFK, RFK, Martin Luther King, and too many others; and by the early 1970s, the systematic assaults on the Black Panther Party. And dominating all this was the war in Vietnam which seemed endless and unstoppable. Yet the various movements of protest stood in stark contrast to this violence in their affirmation that what we do can build an alternative, just as the existence of a youth culture embracing values of peace, love and cooperation, challenged the emptiness of a dominant culture that hid its coldness behind its glitter. There was a sense of motion that made the possibility of change seem real and meaningful, notwithstanding the obstacles clearly in place. Taken as a whole it seemed that the strands of the past – what I had learned in my many discussions and readings – while reflecting a different reality from my own, still had relevance to the experience I was living.

Entering high school, I acted on my beliefs—participating in the peace movement and in defense of such imprisoned activists as Angela Davis and Phillip and Daniel Berrigan, joining in local New York City battles for rent control and welfare rights and in support actions for striking postal workers and the United Farm Workers grape boycott. I also took part in events on behalf of movements for social justice abroad, be it for civil rights in Northern Ireland, on behalf of Puerto Rican independence, against the economic and cultural blockade of Cuba, or in opposition to South African apartheid. During this time I came into contact with a wide variety of left-wing and socialist groups which led me to join, in 1970, the Young Workers League (YWLL), a communist youth organization. I hoped that this would provide a context for my political activities and my studies, a way to understand how all these various events, which at times seemed at cross purposes, were somehow connected. And the best part of YWLL was when we tried to make a connection visible to those who would deny it; as when we handed out anti-war literature at construction sites across the city shortly after workers clashed with street demonstrators. I did not see the communist movement as an end in itself, capable of answering all questions, but I did feel it provided a way to discuss where all this activity was leading; a way to be not just against, but also for something.

My first trip to West Germany was in 1959 when we went to stay with my mother's family, while my father searched for work, after the FBI had him again fired from his job due to McCarthy-era blacklisting. Thereafter, we went back every few years, these trips eventually including visits to East Germany, where my parents met old friends who had participated in the anti-fascist resistance. It was during one of these that I attended an overnight camp for a couple of days

and which, contrary to one of the more absurd press accounts, had no visible politics attached to it, my primary memory being playing ping-pong. Nevertheless it is true that these trips heightened my interest in the nature and politics of the GDR. Similar to what I had done at home, I talked to, asked questions of, argued with and listened to the people whom I met. The existence of the GDR seemed to validate the sacrifices of those who fought against Hitler, standing in marked contrast to West Germany when, in the 1960s, many former Nazis still held powerful positions in government and business and where the Communist Party, which had fought fascism, was illegal.

My interests were apparently duly noted and in 1972 (shortly before I turned 18) on a visit I made myself to East Berlin, I was asked by Lothar Ziemer to work with him and others in the GDR as part of an “underground” fighting colonialism and neo-colonialism in struggles similar to those with which I participated at home. Our initial discussions took place just prior and subsequent to the 1973 World Youth Festival in the GDR (which I did not attend) – a gathering of student and radical youth organizations from countries across the globe to demonstrate their mutual solidarity. The context of our conversations was U.S. government foreign policy of the time, embodied in its support of the Portuguese attempts to hold on to their African colonies; the military junta ruling Greece; the death squads in countries from Guatemala to Brazil—all of which I felt it was just to oppose. The Nixon administration’s covert support for the 1973 coup that destroyed the democratic government of Salvador Allende in Chile, the secret and illegal bombing of Cambodia, and the 1974 Watergate hearings revealing the depths of efforts to suppress domestic dissent, all underscored in my mind the intimate links between protecting our rights at home and those of others abroad.

Lothar worked as part of the GDR foreign intelligence service, something which we did not discuss but which I implicitly understood. I didn’t challenge the notion that a government created out of the battle against fascism should use its resources in a covert fashion to support liberation struggles in other countries. What I failed to realize, however, was that this had a deleterious impact in multiple ways, including serving as a substitute for some in the GDR who remained true to their radical beliefs, but had largely given up the fight for reform in their own country. This contradictory outlook led to the acceptance of the GDR’s intransigent opposition to reform in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, giving credence to the idea that there was some kind of conflict between opposition to the West’s support of reaction on the one hand, and allowing democratic practices to prevail in Soviet Union and Eastern European governments on the other. Over time, this significantly contributed to the failure of a democratic socialism to emerge which could have been a vehicle for connecting struggles for justice east and west, north and south.

These issues only became clear to me over time; during the 1970s, when I made several trips to East Berlin; my concerns were rooted in the wrongs I saw being committed by the Nixon administration. The government during our trial made

these visits and accompanying travel through Europe sound lurid, as though extensive travel is itself subversive, and suspiciously extravagant. The truth is I flew on cheap student tickets, slept in youth hostels, mixed in an occasional visit to a friend or a family member, more out of a desire to catch a snippet of how others live, some sense of other cultures, than the pursuit of any political agenda. Meetings I had with people in the GDR were political, of course, but with a content rather different than that charged by the prosecution. What they asked is for me to plan to attend graduate school in international relations so that I could gain a deeper and better understanding of U.S. foreign policy in its formation and policy implications. The purpose they intended was for me to prepare analysis that could help inform movements and organizations such as those represented at the World Youth Festival. In this connection they asked that I withdraw from engagement in the various political groups with which I had been involved and that I keep my contact with them, my visits to the GDR, secret—the reason for both these steps being that otherwise I might jeopardize my ability to get a position in the future along the lines they hoped. Having known many people, including my father, who had lost or been denied jobs because of their avowed political beliefs, this did not strike me as an unrealistic assumption.

Neither then, nor at any time thereafter, was there any discussion of having me seek out a position with access to classified or military information; or to gain such access indirectly through third parties. For that matter, there was never any suggestion that I should try and obtain a government job. Why they never raised this I can't say; perhaps my membership in a communist youth group along with my family background made them think it not possible; perhaps my lack of enthusiasm for the more limited objectives they did propose was the reason; all I can say is that the issue never once came up.

In any event, I did not agree to their suggestions, and so we talked about other possibilities. I certainly had no intention to pursue studies or a career in international relations and never did either; neither did I agree to withdraw from engagement in the political arenas which motivated me. That notion was antithetical to how I lived. Political activity for me was not simply a matter of participating in a given event, but was an expression of a way of life, a sense that what you believe is how you live. I felt that one shouldn't choose a life's work because it would benefit a cause, but rather, within the limit of choices any of us really have, decide what makes sense on its own merits. Ultimately a contribution to peace and freedom can be made equally well whatever the job, be it as a janitor or a university professor. Finally, I felt that analyzing U.S. policies abroad could best be done by a participant focused on those issues, rather than by an academic who sat on the sidelines.

It was around this last point that we found our one area of concurrence as I agreed to write and then discuss reports on current political developments. I also agreed, in what was a fateful decision, to keep my contact with them secret; this not only for fear that visits to the GDR itself could lead to future blacklisting, but also

because they felt that if I talked about my trips I could compromise them. This secrecy became more and more of an issue over time, for the more trips, the more to conceal, even if nothing happened on that trip that itself needed to be kept secret. The vast majority of the circumstantial evidence in the trial was related to efforts to maintain that secrecy, which certainly gave the appearance that I must have been guilty of something. But ultimately there was nothing to keep hidden except for the fact of having kept things hidden before; a circular logic, one having nothing to do with trading classified information.

My decision to involve myself in this limited way was motivated by several factors, but principally it was because I felt that the GDR was giving a great deal of aid in the international fight for peace and justice, and by maintaining my contact with them I could in a small way aid that effort. Furthermore they stated as an objective finding ways to lessen Cold War tensions, which could remove the obstacle of high military spending that bedeviled (and still does today, albeit without the excuse of a Soviet threat) efforts to re-prioritize domestic spending to meet social needs in the U.S. The hope was that this might also contribute to opening up the process of democratic reform in the GDR as the threat of war served as the principle excuse for repression there. Over time I certainly began to question the effectiveness of anything I was doing with them, but I did not deny the sincerity or commitment to these goals of most of the people with whom I worked. There was always a sense, quite explicit at times, that the crimes of the Nazis against the people of the world created an obligation for the GDR to be even more forthright in providing aid to people fighting aggression in their own homelands.

One thing I was not asked to do was to go and find other people to work with the GDR, and I state that notwithstanding that I did arrange for Jim Clark to meet with them in the 1970s. Jim had been a roommate and a friend who was active in several of the same organizations I had been, including briefly the YWLL. I knew he was frustrated with the splits and internal arguments that plagued many radical groups in the mid-70s, and I also knew he was keenly interested in solidarity movements. I thought he might find a value and interest in doing the kind of analyses that had been urged upon me. I did arrange for him to meet the East Germans and I did so in an indirect way, to keep my own contacts with them secret, for the reasons noted above. They later told me that they decided not to meet again with Jim, and we decided that I would not repeat this and introduce anybody to them in the future. I did not know that Jim remained in contact with them after that first meeting in 1976 until he told me upon hearing of Lothar's arrest in 1992. It should be unnecessary to say that at no time did a discussion with the East Germans ever take place about Jim engaging in espionage; that issue never came up with me and it never came up in conversations about him. Jim did, however, apparently see working with Lothar as an opportunity to act on his political beliefs, in solidarity with Cuba, in opposition to the main currents of U.S. foreign policy, but in a very different manner from me. One of the key differences is that I remained committed and engaged in open political struggles and did not

hide my fundamental belief – my politics were stated openly and I expressed the same opinions whether in East Berlin or Milwaukee or Washington, D.C.

In 1973 I moved to Milwaukee to attend the University of Wisconsin and quickly became politically active. A simple recitation gives no sense of the feelings involved either toward the issues concerned, of the other people engaged, nor the sense of flow, of how involvement in all this was integrated in a whole lifestyle, the very informality of it making the friendship (and the commitment) all the stronger. Some of these issues were the same as in New York, such as support for the United Farm Workers grape (and lettuce and Guild Brandy) boycott, opposition to the war in Vietnam, participation in national demonstrations around these and related concerns. Other activities varied widely, including bringing progressive speakers to campus, helping start up an alternative radical bookshop, participating in a silkscreen collective, supporting the Clothing Workers' J.P. Stevens boycott, taking part in actions on behalf of meat cutters engaged in a very bitter local strike, and striving to maintain academic reforms the campus administration was trying to eliminate. Chiefly, though, while working at the university cafeteria, first washing dishes, later on the loading dock, I was committed to a several years-long attempt to organize campus student employees into a union. It is difficult to recreate the feelings of the time, both the hopes and disappointments, but those seven years from 1973 to 1980, were undoubtedly the most critical for me in shaping the person I have become.

One observation I made was that the informality that lay behind some of the more effective things I was involved in reflected something of a sense of a community engaged in a common undertaking. This experience brought to the fore a number of differences I had with the leadership of the YWLL that led to my leaving (and being asked to leave) the organization. I had become disenchanted with a sense of activism within the organization that was, in my opinion, more and more divorced from the people in whose name we were acting, issues almost becoming ends in themselves; the YWLL's political direction seeming too abstract and divorced from the personal realities that lay behind my original commitments. I still had friends who were members, but I became critical of a notion of a political vanguard in the sense of an organization separate and apart from popular movements which sought to give leadership and coherence to them. I certainly believe that such coherence – making labor's slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all" come alive – and direction is needed if the disparate injustices within society are to be challenged at their roots, but I felt that this could only be made meaningful through more broadly-based organizations that were themselves democratically run and diverse in perspective. In essence, I felt that organizations committed to a radical democratizing of our economy, our society, and our political institutions must themselves embody those principles in practice.

Some of this thinking was crystallized for me by events surrounding a dispute involving friends who had founded a union rank-and-file caucus in a Milwaukee factory. The caucus had joined with another in-plant group and together ran a

combined slate which swept the local union elections. Subsequently, however, the FBI visited the new union president and informed him that two of the leaders of the other caucus had been members of the Communist Party which, under then existing AFL-CIO rules, made them ineligible for union office (one had to have been out of the Party for over five years to overcome the ban) and so they were removed from their newly won positions. The case went to trial and, after a lengthy process, their ouster was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court – but the intervening time and focus on legal issues debilitated their caucus, which did not survive the victory in court.

A host of issues emerged from this, many of which one of the principals discussed with me at length. He had initially concealed his party membership for fear that he wouldn't get hired (an unproven, but very real, blacklist seemed to exist in Milwaukee factories at the time). He later concealed having left the Party out of a decision to not play into prevailing anti-communist attitudes. But the result of each decision, he felt, was that he was not able to fully articulate his underlying convictions with his co-workers, which served to inhibit the kind of broader political discussions with union members where the connection between workplace disputes and problems in society could be raised. Or, more specifically, though he could and did hold such discussions, his core beliefs and socialist convictions could of necessity be raised with but a few. Yet, socialist organization should be conducive, not an impediment, to talking about core issues and solutions; not from the sidelines chanting slogans, but in the context of the daily concerns that define all of our lives – absent this, radical politics loses much of its force and meaning. Clearly, at least since the Haymarket riot in 1886, labor radicals in the U.S. have suffered from a selective repression, which has meant that while often able to impact significantly on specific matters, they have been frequently unable or severely limited in opportunities to project systematic alternatives. The particular problem at this time was that in practice the Communist Party had come to accept rather than challenge the resulting isolation; which also had the effect of making it less susceptible to influence by anyone outside its ranks. All this seemed to point toward the need for forms of socialist organization that were more open about their identity, about their perspective – a change which would imply a more democratic form of operating and, by extension, a more democratic concept of the socialist goal. These talks reinforced my way of thinking, in which it was important that the underlying principles that motivate the actions we take in life should be visible and conscious.

This made the ambiguity of my relationship with people in the GDR more clearly marked, for in a sense it contradicted the openness I sought in my politics; being rooted in the separation between real beliefs and expressed opinion that I was calling into question. Yet the atmosphere of political repression that was in the air in the early and mid-70s, and the continued aggressiveness of U.S. foreign policy made me reluctant to sever my ties. In addition, and from a more selfish point of view, my trips to the GDR enabled me to get a glimpse of the type of society they were building, its various strengths and weaknesses, important to me in trying to

develop my own sense of socialism. An interest in this question – the relationship of people to society and how that changes over time – informed my studies in college. Most of the courses I took were in cultural studies, philosophy, and history; which I supplemented by participating in various study groups, as well as by extensive reading of works by the German philosopher Ernst Bloch and the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. I was trying to grasp the connection between our circumstances in life and our self-understanding and so better comprehend the terrain of political and cultural issues in the U.S. I also used it as a prism through which to view the GDR, its relation to the German past, and the possible direction its future might take.

In this regard, my thinking was stimulated by my association with an academic magazine "New German Critique" that published articles by radical West and East German writers, and which raised, from the left, many serious questions about the nature and authenticity of the GDR's socialist experiment, criticizing the authoritarianism which undermined its attempt to build an alternative to western capitalism. At the time I did not fully agree with this overall analysis, yet it was clear to me by both experience and study that many of the criticisms were valid. My principle difference was that I held out the hope that the GDR could change itself through a process of internal reform, democratizing its institutions, and making collective ownership real, not just formal. One further influence upon me was a course I took in Milwaukee in the mid-1970s given by a visiting East German playwright, Heinz Muller. Our class performed a play he rewrote from a work by Bertolt Brecht which raised the question of how loyalty to the ideals of a revolution could allow people to rationalize the betrayal of those ideals once in power. In conversation he posed for me the dilemma – and the need – of how to find a way to critique socialism as practiced in the GDR in order to help make the system more democratic, true to its own meaning and roots, without losing sight of how the capitalist system also thwarts democratic values through the power relations embedded within it, and by its own means, often subtle, of repressing dissent or making it ineffectual. These discussions heightened my interest in the struggle for reform in the GDR, issues which I raised when I had meetings there. Some whom I met were quite sympathetic (one later took an active part in the demonstrations in Leipzig which preceded Erich Honecker's fall from power); others, unsurprisingly, were not. But for me the opportunity to go there, discuss these issues, think through what I saw, were invaluable in my own understanding of the relations between means and ends in the movement for social change in the United States. And, for the record, nobody in the GDR ever asked (nor would I have consented) to provide information on the activities of the critics of their government whom I knew.

In stating this, I do not want to mischaracterize my attitude at the time. I was clearly sympathetic to the GDR; it's only that I object to the image that the prosecution attempted to create during our trial which would almost have one believe we were standing on the Berlin Wall cheering as people were shot. Being supportive did not mean being uncritical and I felt, with a conviction that grew

stronger over time, that there needed to be greater openness in the arts, within society and real democratic participation at the workplace and in political structures, if the socialism attempted in the GDR were to succeed. Some of my thinking about the socialist movement in the United States which I've alluded to – the sense that our structures must be designed for real power in practice, not just rhetoric, to be broadly distributed among those who do the work of society – began to reflect itself in my views on the GDR.

When change came it was brought about far more by independent peace and human rights groups than by reform within the GDR's Communist Party, the SED (though those efforts at self-reform contributed, I believe, to the positive changes and role of its successor, the PDS, in post-unification Germany) – while the resistance of the old GDR leadership to any meaningful openness meant that when change came the socialist ideal was so tarnished that people rushed to the image presented of a trouble-free Western society. But though I was quite wrong in many of my hopes or observations through the years, the simple-minded logic of the Cold War is as invalid today as in the past, for much that was right along with much that was wrong was done by the GDR, and it is only by balanced judgment that we can learn from this experience.

Meanwhile, I began to take fewer and fewer courses and, much to my subsequent regret, never graduated from college. While a student I worked a number of jobs, on and off campus, including increasingly as a longshoreman at the port of Milwaukee. Frustrated with issues in the movement, and unsure of what I wanted to do academically, working longshore began to revive an interest I had for many years of joining the merchant marine. Several friends of my parents were sailors who influenced me growing up, a friend in high school had dropped out of school to ship, and when a couple of friends in Milwaukee did the same, I decided to follow suit. On and off for several years I registered at different union halls and shipping companies and looked for work in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Houston and New Orleans. Success was sparse; I had only four shipping jobs for comparatively short periods of time to show for my efforts, and I frequently had to take day jobs in and around the ports while waiting for something to turn up. Taken as a whole, the experiences tended to reinforce my sense of the inadequacies of aspects of my political activity, a sense of having too often engaged in the politics of gesture, divorced from building the institutions and organizations that should be the vehicles for people to assert their rights through their own actions.

The unionists I met during this time strengthened my commitment to labor, laying bare the simple fact that on the worst job, with organization, you had rights; whereas, the best job, without organization, only privileges as easily lost as acquired. The strength of any union was rooted in how committed and willing the members were to enforce the contract – that is, to support each other – at any and all times, which commitment is really the core of meaningful democracy anywhere. I came to see how workplace issues, as much as wages and benefits,

were defining issues for union members as well as the flashpoint for labor-management conflict, bearing as it does on issues of control, respect and power. But while there was a strong sense of solidarity, of mutual support, that I consistently saw at work, it generally didn't extend beyond the workplace, even though most political issues arise out of the same desire to be treated with dignity, no different from community to community. My earlier sense about the absence of choice and resulting explosions of rage became quite personal, for although some whom I met reacted to anger at injustice to themselves with compassion to others, I saw that the same anger in another could be turned on somebody perceived as threatening, vulnerable or both – and so the outbursts of violence directed toward somebody with the wrong skin color at the wrong place at the wrong time; or at a woman not reading (or reading all too clearly) what some guy had in mind; or simply at the person sitting on the other side of the bar. All this served as a reminder to me of what one underlying purpose of the socialist movement ought to be, not because I imagine or pretend that any political solution can magically eliminate such moments of hatred, for that must come from inside oneself. Rather, I felt that the linkages a movement can create between people in the here and now, with the hope of another, a cooperative way of living, in a possible future provides a different context for people to confront their anger, a meaningful way for the positive side of each individual to come to the fore.

It was during this time, in 1978, that I met Theresa, and, as our relationship became serious and we discovered that we shared the same political beliefs and commitment to issues of social justice, I introduced her to Lothar, having no intention of keeping any part of my life secret from her. A rather exaggerated importance was given this introduction at the trial, for it was the basis of being deemed a “recruiter.” This despite the fact that it was a term I had never used about myself or ever heard used in connection with anyone in the GDR until hearing the charges after our arrest. I've explained about Jim, the one other alleged “recruit”; with Theresa it was an altogether simpler issue. We were to share a life, so I brought her to meet everyone I knew here and abroad. She was interested in meeting them, but did not make any commitments then, nor was there any talk of espionage, of stealing and transmitting documents. We did move, after our marriage in 1980, to Washington, D.C., which was viewed as very suspicious by the prosecution, but our primary reason was so that she could attend Catholic University Law School – and that because it had the reputation of having an excellent labor law section which, following in her father's footsteps, was the career path she chose. Theresa also applied to the University of Chicago (where her mother and other family members attended school) and had she been accepted there, that is where we would have moved. In any event, in terms of my being a “recruiter,” from 1972 to the time of our arrest, I traveled extensively in the U.S. and abroad, moved in different social circles, but in all that time there will be no record (there wasn't even an allegation) of my having approached anybody else about the GDR (or any other country's) intelligence.

Living in D.C. was an adjustment; but it was soon evident that the city was far more than the stereotyped “inside the beltway” home of faceless bureaucrats, for people have faces; and the city itself, suffering from neglect and meaningful self-rule owing to federal government oversight, was also home to many people valiantly addressing the poverty, the homelessness, the poor schools and lack of medical care, the despair that breeds high crime rates, the host of problems that plague the residents of our nation’s capital. During my first years in Washington I worked a variety of jobs—construction, building maintenance, canvassing—before I began to work directly for the labor movement, first for a small company producing videos and other educational materials for unions (and environmental groups) and later on the staff of a national union. And over the following years, I again became active in different local and national issues, such as support for rent control, participating in various municipal election campaigns, working for a neighborhood food coop, involvement in public election and special education parents’ groups, support for right to choice, opposition to the death penalty and advocacy of D.C. statehood. As in the past I took part in labor support initiatives, such as on behalf of striking Eastern Airlines workers or the Justice for Janitors organizing campaigns as well as in different international campaigns, including solidarity with unions in El Salvador threatened by U.S.-government supported death squads, and the labor-backed boycott of Shell in opposition to South African apartheid. As in New York or Milwaukee, simply listing these gives little sense of the people or the issues, but each entailed an effort to make our democracy more meaningful, and those so engaged reflected the humanism inherent in such efforts.

At this time I also started to look into how to put my changing ideas on the socialist movement into practice, and to that end, I joined Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) shortly after its founding in 1982. As far as I was concerned, the self-realization of those mutual interests by people who, seen from one vantage point might have vastly different interests – i.e., people on welfare and \$20 per hour union members, or people concerned about jobs and others worried about the environment – cannot be imposed or preached, but needs to be developed by a process of (as mentioned earlier) widening the choices or options people have. This in turn, is dependent both on political changes and political organizing. People are invariably far more complex than rhetoric allows, but, and this is a critical weakness in the structure of decision-making in the U.S., they have few outlets for that complexity to express itself. Thus we wind up with false, simple-minded choices, such as jobs or health, that nobody in their right mind wants or should need to decide between. Overcoming such dilemmas is central to DSA’s objectives; along with resolving the analogous difficulty of how its root critique of society and long-term goals can inform a program that of necessity deals with the more direct problems of good schools, secure jobs, safe neighborhoods, adequate health care, clean air and water that we all must face. There is thus a delicate balance (or, better, a creative tension) between the extent to which DSA seeks to guide or be guided by the movements of which it is a part.

The attraction of DSA for me was, and is, that it saw itself as a step in the process, not the solution itself, of addressing these dilemmas. We have had many differences on how to achieve our ends and the resources, breadth and size of DSA has been inadequate to its vision, but the organization has never pretended unanimity where it hasn't existed, or a strength that wasn't there – an internal honesty which has helped, not hindered, DSA in maintaining its viability and relevance. Ultimately it has been DSA's commitment to recognize different points of view while developing a common program, that made me feel that it was taking steps on the right path toward finding a way to make an open socialist presence meaningful in contemporary U.S. society.

In the mid-1980s, this sense of the dynamic and changing character of political movement was again brought home to me through my participation in the Rainbow Coalition and Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign. The depth of support Jackson elicited through wide swaths of American society for a different, a more human and humane set of domestic and international priorities than those of the Reagan administration (and different from policies implemented in the years since), confirmed for me my feeling that it was possible for critical alternatives, when given a hearing, to be taken to heart. The question which it posed (and which remains) is how that sentiment can be sustained and given organizational expression – a political voice and meaning – apart from a particular national campaign or candidacy. My thinking and activity, whether addressing critical domestic problems, the drift of U.S. foreign policy, or issues within the socialist movement, has since been largely directed toward answering that question.

Gorbachev's reforming policies in the Soviet Union, beginning in 1985, were meanwhile raising hopes of ending or limiting the threat of nuclear war and of challenging the framework of Cold War politics; perspectives shared by many in the GDR. That outlook, however, was clearly opposed by Erich Honecker and I was very disappointed that the leadership of the GDR resisted so strongly the growing impulse for change in Eastern Europe. The hopes I had entertained that internal self-generated change could lead them to a viable democratic socialism proved to be illusory. These developments alongside the direction of my activity at home led me to finally reconsider what I was doing. The last report I wrote was in 1985; and so the sum total of my connection with the GDR was about seven papers, not research reports but quickly written essays, largely on domestic issues, which then became the basis of subsequent discussions. While some were received better than others, none hold up that well in retrospect, and I know they would have preferred more care have been put in my writing. But whatever criticisms they ever raised, they never, just to reiterate, asked me to do something more "important," by providing classified material or "recruiting" someone who in the future might have such access.

The meetings I had in the GDR after 1985 were concerned with my desire to change the relationship, to find some way to make it more open. Our

conversations also began to largely focus on their internal changes, the possibilities of reform, and the prospects of German re-unification. In 1989, my last trip before the Wall came down, I attended political rallies of the different parties preparing for the elections which would lead to the dissolution of the GDR. I did express the hope that Lothar and I could stay in touch, as we had become friends in the intervening years; but we were explicit in acknowledging that there would be no basis of any future working relationship as even he couldn't imagine how it could serve any political purpose.

However, at this time, the mid-80's, as I became more inclined to withdraw from any activity with the GDR, Theresa became more drawn to it. Symptomatic of that, after 1985, we had no more joint meetings with Lothar or joint trips to the GDR. This interest on her part for both personal and political reasons, she expressed as based on her desire to be productive and contribute meaningfully to social change. Her idea even then, however, was never to seek and then pass on classified or unclassified documents, nor did she ever ask friends who had such access to pass such information on to her (which, contrary to the prosecution's contention, she could have attempted before the collapse of the GDR). She also never thought of passing such on to Lothar after 1990 (which would have been logical if the prosecution's contention that she was shopping around for someone to spy for was true), nor for anybody else prior to the FBI sting. She simply felt that she could write analytical reports similar to mine, but with more meaning because it would be based on institutional knowledge as she moved from labor law to procurement law at the Pentagon.

Now it was in the mid-1980's that we began to acquire the paraphernalia that figured so prominently at our trial – the idea again and again being propounded that only people doing something illegal would have all the “spycraft” equipment. But the reality was less dramatic or sinister; for the purpose of the short wave radio and the miniature camera was in order for us not to have to travel as frequently after our children were born. We could, in theory, photograph and mail reports, and we could listen to the radio for confirmation of the time and place for a future meeting. Of course what looks suspicious about all this is the concealment, and again there is no denying that we (and they) went to great lengths to maintain the secrecy of our contacts. But, for the umpteenth time, I will reiterate that it had nothing to do with sending illegally obtained information. As it was, the idea of using this equipment came to nothing; neither of us wrote any kind of report after 1985, so there was never anything of substance to send; and, as Theresa and I began to travel separately, we wound up with more, not fewer, meetings. The camera was used two or three times to send letters with no purpose other than to test out the equipment, it then lay forgotten in a closet for 10 years, which is probably why it was rusted when the FBI found it after our arrest. Similarly we listened to the radio a few times; I don't recall ever receiving any messages, and eventually we simply used it the way anybody might use a shortwave, occasionally listening to an overseas broadcast.

Of course they showed us how to use the radio and camera, I guess that's the "training" that made us "trained spies." I doubt, though, if we received more than a total of two or three hours of such "training" from 1972 to the present. We never learned Morse Code, studied how to follow someone or how to detect surveillance, or to make false documents. The false passports, which I think we used once, at most twice, were purely an internal GDR affair – to be used when leaving the country by train in order to avoid having a stamp put in our passport by an East German border guard. The passport was then immediately destroyed. We never had them in our house, never used them to travel in or out of the United States or to any third country.

The business about training only came up as part of the prosecution's attempt to fill the trial with language out of a bad movie in an attempt to create lurid images of conspirators furtively plotting to steal state secrets. But all this language about handlers, recruiting, training, I never used or heard used in my life prior to our arrest; I am never heard using such terms in any tape recording, nor could anybody ever truthfully testify that I talked that way. More pertinently, the image of a handler (repeatedly used by the prosecution to describe Lothar's relation to us) is that of someone who gives an assignment and expects it to be carried out, which is the opposite of what happened. Throughout the years, Theresa and I made our own decisions as to work, school, political activity and so on. I didn't join DSA or the Rainbow at their behest, any more than I worked at a construction site or joined the PTA because I was asked by them. On that score, Theresa's decisions, such as to seek a job at the Pentagon, were things she did on her own initiative, not as someone following marching orders. I know all this would be irrelevant if we were doing something illegal, but we weren't, which is precisely why so much time was spent during the case to build up images, an ambience, of something subversive.

In 1990, after German re-unification, I traveled to Germany to see Lothar and find out how he and others whom I had known in the GDR were doing. He told me then that he wanted to stay in touch and that he hoped, as a private citizen, to find some way to remain active on behalf of peace issues, still in a covert fashion, though he had no specific plans as to how he would do so. This contradicted a bit what he had said in 1989, and I told him that I had no interest in being drawn into such activity, nor saw what purpose it could possibly serve. I did add, though, that I hoped to see him in the future and reiterated my desire to find some way to speak openly about having known him in the past; a goal he still felt unrealistic. It was at this meeting that Lothar gave me a Casio card with a request asking me to write a paper on labor. I told him I wouldn't, and frankly I don't believe he expected me to do it. I had the distinct impression that he was trying to find some way to stay politically engaged, but was unsure himself what to do, for we spent a long time talking about the domestic situation in Germany and ways he might be openly involved.

It was on this Casio card that there was also a note to Theresa about an Alex in the Soviet Union, which was an issue which he did not discuss with me. As for Theresa, she never was in touch with an Alex, didn't know who he was or if he really existed, and never made any plans to go to the Soviet Union or to Russia. The charge of a conspiracy involving Russia, a charge with no basis in anything we ever did or thought of doing, was a piece of fiction designed to connect the dots in the government's case from our real (albeit non-espionage) relationship to the GDR and the entrapment. The question of being in contact with anybody else thus never came up, but had it arisen, I would have rejected it out of hand; for my sense of ties were with the GDR exclusively, the reasons for which may help clarify why I continued to maintain my contacts there long after I could see any real point to it. Obviously, part of this was broadly ideological. I felt that the GDR was making an honest, if flawed effort to build socialism; I felt they were making a sincere effort to help anti-colonial and other movements for peace and freedom around the world, and so on both counts I wanted to help. But the specific connection to me was that this was an effort in Germany by Germans to combat the militarism, the national chauvinism and anti-Semitism which had given rise to fascism, and on a personal level I wanted to make a contribution to that.

For the Nazis did not embody the essence of German character, but a distortion of it. More specifically fascism served as a reaction to the working people who had the temerity in 1918 to want to break free from the chains that held them; who strove to assert a democratic culture against the prevailing authoritarianism. It was in that movement that my family had its roots, and in its defeat, lay, in a sense, our defeat. What the Nazis wanted to do was to go beyond suppression, and permanently crush the hopes that could ever give rise to a spirit of liberation voiced in one form or another since 1848. And in re-defining German culture, they also redefined German nationality, and so to be a Jew meant to not be a German; and though in the list of crimes that may seem insignificant, yet it goes to the heart of how we see who we are – do we define our own identity or is it defined for us. For me, German American, half-Jewish as I am, that definition was based on a heritage of working people committed to revolutionary change in Germany, and I sought to find a way to support those who wanted to revive that spirit in today's world. It was for this reason that alongside my contacts in the GDR, I was interested and supportive of (though in no way active in) the broad range of the West German left – and in today's Germany (with more distance) I look on with sympathy at the SPD and the broad labor movement as well as the PDS and smaller radical organizations. For all these reasons I found it emotionally difficult to simply break from the people I knew in the GDR even as my political perspective changed, and it is for that reason that I never would have considered anything comparable with any other country.

These sentiments, despite the prosecutor's impassioned rhetoric, had nothing to do with hating or being disloyal to the United States. That is simply untrue, and profoundly insulting, yet an untruth so large that it is hard to know where to begin a refutation. But just as the government made its accusation by pointing a finger

at how I have lived my life, so my response can only be in the same terms: how I have lived my life. To me the rights and liberties of our country are precious, but not as museum pieces to be worshipped from afar, for they only have meaning to the extent that they are used to challenge the arrogance of power. And the point of our democracy is not for it to serve as a means to choose who will make decisions for us; but to make decisions for ourselves; to use it to address the imbalance of wealth that allows hunger and homelessness to coexist within blocks of comfort and ease; of power that enables a CEO to shut a plant without reference to the needs of its work force or surrounding community – though its outcome of broken homes, divorces, suicide are known to those willing to see. I don't believe that taking part in political fights to use our rights to secure social justice is unpatriotic (and though the prosecutor said we were not on trial for our ideas, he repeatedly and gratuitously attacked a make-believe version of them to the jury, admonishing us for wanting benefits from the government we were allegedly attacking).

Our foreign policy should also be subject to democratic control and not hidden by a veil of secrecy which permits actions taken in the name of the American people by officials who remain unaccountable. I don't believe that the national security of the United States was protected when our government helped overthrow Salvador Allende, the elected president of Chile, in 1973, nor by cooperating with the secret police of the Pinochet regime as they were murdering and torturing political prisoners. And I don't believe it is in our national interests today to refuse to disclose our role in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, and other countries whose security forces have benefited by training provided by U.S. taxpayers. Far from isolated instances, our government's past includes support for the apartheid regime in South Africa, the Shah of Iran, Suharto in Indonesia – always justified in the name of freedom and democracy. Today too, rhetoric aside, policies still seem to be based on might makes right and on what benefits a few Americans, rather than the general public; one can be outraged by the policies of a Hussein or Milosevic without thinking that it helps to withhold food or medicine or drop “smart” bombs that still kill and destroy. Many see these issues differently than I, but I have openly taken positions on these matters as is my right, and acted on my convictions. Certainly in retrospect some of what I have done, including my dealings with people in the GDR, I would approach differently. Even then, I never took one action that jeopardized our country or the life of a single individual. I simply have advocated a democratic foreign policy, and that for the same reason I was working for democratic rights at home—the two are indistinguishable in their meaning for the quality of life to which we aspire. I cannot see how that constitutes betrayal.

Yet all this is perhaps too abstract to describe how I feel. My parents were immigrants. I'm grateful for the life we have enjoyed here, which is all the more reason why I've taken seriously what our rights mean. I've traveled abroad, appreciated what I saw, but could never imagine myself living anywhere else but in the U.S.; nor would I have wanted to raise my children elsewhere – not out of any chauvinism, but out of the deep roots we've planted here in this short time.

Over the past years I have traveled extensively throughout the United States, spent time in varied communities, befriended people from all walks of life, and have listened to and tried to learn from and respect the many points of view I encountered, even when at odds with my own – all of which has deepened my knowledge, my feeling and loyalty to our society and made me all the more determined that our institutions reflect and respect this broad diversity of needs, rather than any one narrow and self-satisfied portion. This is my home, I've never thought of any other country possibly being one.

The government's narrative presented my life and convictions in a different way, and became especially creative in trying to make something out of nothing during the 1990s up to the time of the FBI sting. The false image of a conspiracy was projected as the reason behind the increased frequency of Theresa and myself getting together with Jim Clark following Lothar's arrest in 1992. I had lost touch with Jim until we accidentally bumped into each other at a rally on the mall in the early 1980s (protesting, as I recall, U.S. support of the contras in Nicaragua). Thereafter, we would see him once or twice a year on social occasions, without any discussion of the GDR, covert activity or anything of the sort. This changed, however, after Jim read a newspaper article which led him to believe that Lothar had been arrested. Since it was through me that he first became acquainted with East Germans, he thought it possible that I stayed in touch, and, not knowing where else to turn, called me. It was at this point that the three of us discussed the GDR for the first time; though we did not go into any detail about the past; rather, we talked about our concern for an old friend. None of us had any idea at that time why he had been arrested, nor what he was doing after 1990 – subsequently we discovered his arrest was for actions he took in the newly reunified Germany. I did not know, until after my arrest, the details of the charges against him. Thereafter I would meet Jim for an occasional drink after work, though we would let each other know if we had heard anything new about Lothar's case. Jim was always worried that he might be under suspicion because of past actions (which he never described to us) and it was for this reason that we were circumspect and used guarded language on the phone. I respected his wishes, and acted accordingly but did not share a similar concern myself because what I had never committed any act that I feared might be judged illegal. We certainly were not, at any time, discussing any plans for future covert activity, either alone or together, contrary to the prosecution's claims.

The year 1992 was the last time I saw Lothar, visiting him in Germany after his release from prison to see how he was feeling and to offer our moral and financial support. Obviously, having already been arrested and still facing trial after his release (he was eventually sentenced to the seven months already served), Lothar had no plans or intention to continue his old activities. I indicated an interest in staying in touch as a friend, but in fact I neither saw nor talked with him again. Jim suggested that the three of us get together in 1995 when, by coincidence, I was in Germany the same time they had planned to meet. This was not for purposes of conspiracy, but simply a chance for the three of us to have a beer

together for the first time and, at least on my part, it was also a chance to be more normal, less secretive about us knowing each other. Jim, however, discovering he was being followed, was concerned about being seen with Lothar, and so he called me to cancel our planned evening.

From the late 1980s onward my professional work was increasingly centered on global labor issues, helping initiate and co-edit a short-lived magazine, and engaging in responsible work for the International Union of Food and Allied Workers (headquartered in Geneva). That meant working with local unionists organizing to defend their interests and providing links to analogous efforts by workers in other countries. The best way to achieve social justice and a decent standard of living is, I found, in making such connections, which is always possible for there is, despite differences from country to country, a common desire by people to be treated with dignity and respect, as human beings rather than as disposable property. While the wage gap between different countries is sometimes enormous, the desire for security and a better life for children is universal; and workplace issues over safety, hours, pace of work, technology, present identical concerns. My work also involved finding ways to support workers engaged in industrial disputes or organizing at a transnational corporation, but in the midst of these campaigns we would seek ways to lay the groundwork of permanent organization as the most powerful means to redress the imbalance of power between mobile capital and immobile labor, redress it so the workers can expand their options rather than have to choose between imposed and unacceptable choices.

In the course of this I found that the priorities of my work matched the personal priorities I had developed during the past years I have been describing. My tenure in international labor work corresponded with the ending of the Cold War and, with it, the easing of many of the divisions that have hampered working-class movements in recent history. It has also been marked by a new aggressiveness toward labor by business, and often government, as the global economy has almost made a religion of reliance on market mechanisms to the exclusion of popular and democratic intervention to solve economic problems – an approach that guarantees an increase in inequality. Taken together it has made the overcoming of disunity more needed and more possible than before; and in evaluating an organization what becomes important is its representativeness – its willingness and ability to act in concert with others, rather than its program or political orientation. This doesn't mean that ideas, that the sweeping issues of domestic and foreign policy are irrelevant to working people, but rather differences on these issues are narrower than in the past and can (and should) be discussed without any disruption of unity in action. It was in this spirit that I acted on my job these past years – along with an emphasis that labor's fate depends on obtaining and using basic rights in all countries around the world – human rights, labor rights, women's rights.

I should add that whenever I have held a responsible union position, I have acted in accordance with union policy, without any hidden agenda. This didn't mean that I ceased to have opinions, nor to express them to others, but it did mean that the policy I implemented was that of affiliates and members. Fundamental changes, in any event, can only come about in unions when members see the need and make the demand themselves, not by it being imposed by an "enlightened" leadership – a point of equal merit when we look on society at large. This was easier for me as I found a broad congruence between my own outlook and those with whom I have worked in labor, both on the specific union program and on the critical importance of human rights. I am not pretending that members shared my socialist ideas or deep-rooted criticism of U.S. foreign policy, only that those beliefs of mine did not conflict with the priorities and work of the unions I represented. This last point I raise to emphasize that I was working for the labor movement and not attempting to use it as some sort of grounds for espionage. It seems evident that the FBI doesn't disagree on that score, for there was never even an accusation that I used my work-related travel to try and "recruit" others for some nefarious schemes.

But all this while, the FBI was intensively investigating my then-wife, and though they found absolutely no evidence of illegal activity, they did discover that she was still hoping to find a way to function politically in a secretive manner, along the lines she had discussed in the past. No proof of espionage could be found because there was none to be found – and this not for lack of opportunity because, as mentioned above, she could have at this time tried to get a classified document to Lothar if she desired, but didn't because the idea wouldn't have occurred to either one of them. Meanwhile Theresa was wrestling with depression and other personal issues and, unknown to me, maintaining a private relationship with Lothar. All this combined to increase the differences between the two of us and how we saw our political engagement, as she sought a way to better define herself as a person to validate her political ideas.

Theresa was not of one mind as to what to do, however, and she was questioning herself frequently in the years after 1992. It was in this context that she read Ronnie Kasrils' memoir, *Armed and Dangerous*, and sent him her much maligned letter. The reason she wrote to Kasrils bore no resemblance to the motivation ascribed to her by the prosecution, but rather was a step on her part to break away from the past. *Armed and Dangerous*, while documenting the underground struggle against apartheid, also made clear that the basis for the success of the ANC was broad open political struggle. Theresa read this and saw in it the possibility of her own shift from an "underground" to a more open way of life and political expression.

The occasion of the letter she used to collect her thoughts on a whole host of issues that she felt had been posed by the collapse of the Eastern European governments and the Soviet Union, summing up reflections that had occupied her over a number of years. This included the thesis she had been considering while

studying procurement law, on the whole issue that a principal reason for the failure of socialism was the absence of separation of powers and rule of law. She sent the letter using a false name and false address out of a by now ingrained habit of secrecy (which she maintained in the letter, as there was not the least hint that she worked at the Pentagon or in any job with access to classified information). With the letter, and a kind of liberating feeling she had upon its completion, she also took steps in the opposite direction toward being more open in her politics – giving, for example, copies of what she wrote to friends to elicit comments in a discussion group. In addition, at this time, she joined and became openly active in the Committees of Correspondence (another strange step for someone planning to be a spy), a newly-formed organization made up in large part by people who left the Communist Party, not abandoning their socialist viewpoint, but in recognition that such a goal can only be won by being firmly committed to democratic practices in their internal organization, in their relations to others and in their vision of the future. At this time Theresa was also beginning to confront some of the issues in relationship with Lothar.

It was at this point that the FBI began their undercover operation to entrap her. Though I have no proof, I do not believe that it was coincidental that they should act at a time when Theresa was considering leaving her job and moving away from keeping her activity secret. Since in their lengthy investigation in Germany and the U.S. the government had found nothing to charge us with, they had the choice of tricking her into doing something illegal, or face having spent their millions of dollars in vain. The entrapment was not a simple affair; after all she was not pre-disposed to do something which despite opportunities she had not done, and so they made a conscious decision to take advantage of her psychological vulnerabilities. This was not incidental to the undercover operation, but rather stood at its core, and the claim of a psychological disorder wasn't something that was just raised in her defense, for it was accurately diagnosed in the behavioral profile developed by the FBI in preparation for their sting. It is not surprising that they would have a good grasp of the issues she was struggling with, for listening to all of our phone calls, including those made to her therapist, sneaking into and searching our house, downloading our computer, interviewing some of her co-workers, routinely following her, having a bug in our bedroom, all meant that they had a fairly intimate portrayal of her.

Shortly before the entrapment was launched, Theresa suffered from a major depression, an extremely difficult time for her and our whole family. In the course of this period she raised private matters that we had to come to grips with in our marriage. It was a moment of weakness for her, but it was also a time when she felt that she obtained a real diagnosis of her problems and began to receive appropriate treatment and medication that over time might have proved of significant help (which may also explain why the FBI launched their sting when they did). Cynical as the FBI's use of her problems to find a way to jail her, it is symptomatic both of prosecutorial overreach and an attitude, unstated but practiced, that psychological problems are, in essence, symptoms of moral

weakness rather than being a real illness (it's reminiscent of the mindset that condemned Senator Eagleton for seeking treatment for depression, a "crime" which disqualified him for running for vice president, the clear implication being that it is better to suffer than seek a cure – after all, it's all in the mind anyway). It was this attitude which led the government to attack Theresa's character during the trial, place on record every false act, every mistake she ever committed, all in order to create the image of a moral monster. That portrayal was as unreal as the espionage charge, ignoring every selfless or loving act she ever did – but showing someone in a half-light, it's easy to paint an unflattering picture of any of us. More pertinently, the very aspects of her personality the government was attacking were all related to the illness she was struggling to overcome, the illness the government had exploited.

They were successful – Theresa finally, for the one and only time in her life, passed classified documents to someone (whom she believed) represented a foreign government – the ANC government of South Africa. She did not do this to betray the U.S.; she did it in the hope that she could be of help to them in building their new society, something she keenly felt as she saw numerous instances of real hostility behind the official words of friendship toward the new government. This, at least, was her motive for aiding the FBI agent who represented himself as having been sent by Kasrils. But the decision to hand over documents was hardly something she plotted and planned to do. Rather, in the time between her first two meetings with the FBI agent she tried to write a paper analyzing U.S. policy in the region, but she found herself unable to concentrate and get it done, and so, fearing showing up empty-handed, she grabbed some documents from her office – not particularly relevant documents, not ones she had read or studied – simply to have something to bring to the meeting. What she was afraid of was being rejected, of being told that she had no contribution of substance to make.

But she was also uncomfortable with what she was doing, feeling that she had made one step out of a lifestyle built on secrecy, and uncertain if she was doing the right thing, personally or politically, by continuing. The more ambivalent she felt, the more she felt herself inexorably drawn into the whole process – so passing on the documents was a way to relieve the pressure on herself and to buy time to make some personal decisions. Shortly thereafter, when her boss at the Pentagon was forced to resign, Theresa quit her job; a step she took as impulsively as when she had earlier taken documents out of her office. And though she left the Pentagon out of legitimate anger over the resignation, it was also a step to get out from under any feelings of obligation to the undercover agent. More significantly, she was trying to concentrate on family issues, and while thereafter she made some halfhearted efforts to find work, in fact she was mainly spending time with our children and on fixing up our home. She certainly didn't quit in order to improve her ability to "spy" – it's not common practice for civil servants to quit without notice, with no other offer in hand, so as to get a better job.

As for me, I was not “aiding and abetting.” Theresa would often simply act, almost as if she were someone else, then come to me, elated, depressed, or conflicted about what she had done. We continued to have differences over how to express our politics, which reflected itself in differences over whether she should stay in touch with the supposed South African. However, unlike with the GDR in the late 1980s, she was herself unsure of what the right thing to do was, and if not for fear of seeming to fail in the eyes of the agent (and by extension, in her mind, Kasrils), I’m convinced she would not have continued. As it was she took one action, handing over the documents, quit her job, and the rest was just talk. For me, during this time, far more significant than any political question, I thought that the course of action she was taking was self-destructive, and I did not want to abandon her as she was struggling to find herself. And I felt that if she could overcome herself, the emotional hurdle posed by what turned out to be the FBI’s very sophisticated manipulation of her psyche, she would have made a long stride toward overcoming the psychological problems from which she was suffering.

My concern about what all this secret activity meant for Theresa’s well being was the point I tried to make with the undercover agent the one time I met him. Our memories on that certainly diverge, but unfortunately there is no tape recording because that was the only time during this lengthy investigation that their equipment broke down. Despite that, they did not seek to try and get me on tape again, even though six months elapsed from the time of the equipment failure to the time of my arrest. Essentially what I was doing in our brief talk was trying to let him know my concerns by raising criticisms of what we had done with the GDR. The most damning bit of evidence from that encounter was my signature on a card for a false passport, but the agent neglected to tell the jury that shortly thereafter he received a letter from Theresa saying that I wasn’t sending the passport photos he requested because I did not want a false passport. I had told him that at our meeting, but did not insist, because I had no intention of talking about the whole South African scheme, but only wanted to let him know how worried I was about Theresa. How to respond to his offer was something I wanted to discuss with Theresa as part of our on-going talks on how to extricate her from the situation.

But the business about the passport is just a detail and details can be made incriminating merely by being mentioned, so that even explaining them away makes one look guilty. Several times the prosecution repeated the false charge, without any evidence, that I had photocopied the classified documents; though if I had my fingerprints should have been all over the originals and the copies, which wasn’t the case. Throughout the trial, the government relied heavily (and very selectively) on the tapes of Theresa’s talks with the undercover agent, for these are filled with damaging remarks about herself and about me. The problem is, as they must have been at least somewhat aware based on their behavioral profile, that what she said could not be conclusive of anything, for what she claimed in

many instances was either untrue or wildly exaggerated. And that was simply because she was desperate to gain the agent's acceptance so that maybe by this relationship she could accomplish something positive with her life and in that way find it easier to accept herself. But the government was never interested in ascertaining the truth; they were only interested in an arrest and conviction.

And they were successful, they got Theresa to do something she hadn't done before, and being unemployed was in no position to do again, and though no classified material ever reached foreign hands, no demonstrable damage ever done to national security – even through the very narrow prism of the FBI – we are in jail and, unless successful in our appeal, likely to be so for a very long time. I'll let others conclude with what justice.

With that I, so to speak, rest my case. Once again, I apologize if this has too much of a tone of special pleading, but the charges at the trial made such a travesty of our lives that I would feel ashamed to pass it over in silence. But in trying to rebut their distortions I fear I may have fallen into an analogous error, for it makes what in reality was a small portion of my life into its principal feature. Yet neither my politics nor day-to-day existence can be collapsed into the narrow box of contacts with the GDR and the various events which flowed from it. And the distortion goes further, for it seems to make political engagement the sum and content of my being, which is far from the truth. In here is nothing about grilling in the back yard or reading a story aloud, enjoying serious theater or an old western, about the pleasure of walking through a crowded street or a quiet park. Family and friends, love and intimacy, anger and pain are also absent from this account, as from the trial, but not from my life. My two children are far more important to me than anything else this world has to offer, yet they have no place in this narrative. These things and thousands of others impossible to list or define, comprise my being, in a way that no dry rendition of events and opinions can ever tell, and certainly something neither police nor prosecutor, with all their wire taps, hidden cameras, and undercover agents could ever conceivably know or begin to understand.

This sense of having been treated by the prosecution as an object devoid of the common attributes of humanity is something I share in common with the other people whom I've met over the past year in jail. It is almost a necessary complement to a policy that in the name of a free country sends more and more people to prison for longer and longer sentences; a task made immeasurably easier if those jailed are viewed as beneath contempt. One need only get to know people here to recognize the lie behind that contempt; for whatever people have done, the concern for family and friends, for life and living is as real and alive in jail as outside. The inexcusable brutality that too often manifests itself in our society cannot be eliminated by a government which adopts the same way of treating others – as objects not people – that it condemns in those it incarcerates.

The notion of treating people with respect, even those with whom we differ, is basic to my outlook and perhaps is the point where politics and daily life, which I distinguished above, intersect. Our values are expressed not alone in the whole panoply of activities that comprise social action; but rather in how we conduct our lives, in our treatment of others, as we best express our individuality through our identification and cooperation, not subjugation, of others. Our rights we hold not by virtue of a grant by government authority, but by virtue of our common humanity, and they lose their meaning if they are used by some to deny them to others. In contemporary society the exercise of these rights often necessitates political struggle and confrontation, but only as a step in the path of changing a system capable of turning people into non-people, that values people only for what they are worth, into one in which we are all valued alone for who we are.

And this leads me to reassert my socialist convictions, for socialism can, I believe, make real what is implicit in society – our mutual interdependence. From the food we put on the table to the music we listen to on CD players, the things we buy and use, that we need and enjoy, pass through many hands as they are produced, each one of which is essential to the process of creation. Children learn from parents, friends, teachers, books, television, the images surrounding life; each individual is molded by unimaginably different strands of life, but these linkages are often denied by the needs of the capitalist system where a hierarchy hidden by the discipline of the market imposes its own order on society, leading to the connected phenomena of social atomization and conformism. Socialism in contrast means that the natural set of relationships between people become the guiding principles of society, allowing our uniqueness to flourish without denying our commonality. It does not mean the domination of all aspects of life by big government, denial of civil liberties, enforced sameness, absence of privacy or individuality. Rather it seeks to end the dominion of private power and wealth over government and society; it means making democracy practically relevant to issues of the economy and community; making government itself less domineering over our lives by making it co-extensive with social life.

These are the ideas which have motivated me over the years, with whatever failures and mistakes I have made along the way. The meaning of my belief in our mutual dependence has been brought home to me since my arrest in the selflessness of those who have helped, family, friends, our attorneys, not always from shared ideas but from shared sense of being. The pages above simply state how I have seen what I have done; and if I am to be judged, that is what should be judged upon. I hope at least that those who know me will recognize me in these words, and know too that the values that have guided me in the past will continue to do so in the future.

In solidarity,

Kurt Stand