

#2317

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY France

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SUBJECT Communists at Rockefeller Colloquium

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SOURCE

- two UK scientists who are ardent Communist sympathizers if not Party members. They were J D Bernal from London and Mrs W A Wooster from Cambridge. Bernal was one of the 20 invited members and Mrs Wooster attended with her husband who had been invited. While I was in Paris the Rosenbergs were executed and the riots broke out in East Berlin. Those events led to some interesting conversations with Mrs Wooster.
- J D Bernal is a well-known and competent crystallographer. He did not enter into any discussions of a political nature. My information about his politics comes from having seen his book Marx and Science. It seems to me to be the work of a man who has completely accepted Marxism. For example, Bernal states in his book, "In capitalist countries the scientists are now directly controlled by governments or by monopolies and often in a peculiarly unpleasant way." The falsity of this is self evident. A good review of this book by S A Goudsmit appears in the June issue of Physics Today. Bernal was described by friends as a non-conformist who would be the first to desert the Red ship if he was under its control.
- Mrs Wooster attended with her husband and not in a scientific capacity although I believe she is a physicist. She is the most militant Communist I have ever met. Unlike Bernal she was eager to express her views. She spent most of her time baiting another US representative and me. The topics of her baiting were the Negro situation in the US and the execution of the Rosenbergs. My US associate, being from the south, effectively counteracted her charges of racial discrimination by admitting that the south has been at fault but is now doing much to improve the situation. It was evident that those people listening were impressed by his frankness and with the description he gave of the improving situation in the US. With regard to the Rosenberg case we did not fare so well. The majority of the people in Europe seem to dislike capital punishment. Paris was plastered with posters defending the Rosenbergs and Mrs Wooster was quick to jump on this. The only argument we used was that the majority of the people in the US have complete faith in our judicial system even if not everyone is in favor of capital punishment. This had a good effect on most of those present. On the subject of the Berlin riots Mrs Wooster still tried to follow the Party line and insisted that the riots were instigated by Western saboteurs.

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tirades were less coherent on this and she misquoted many of the facts in the case. This was pointed out to her rather sharply by Prof. Moche of Freiberg University. Mrs. Wooster made such a pest of herself by taking every opportunity to bait us that she made a very poor impression on almost everyone. On the other hand, our attitude of frankness seemed to impress everyone favorably.

4. One thing that I noticed and was somewhat ashamed of was that many of the scientists I met were displeased about the difficulty of obtaining visitor visas to the US. Two cases were mentioned often. Those of Professor Mogat and Professor Lecompte. Mogat, a very competent chemist, was a linguist for OSS during World War II (I think his specialty was Russian). It was supposed that his application for a visa was rejected because of the contacts and capabilities which made him useful during World War II. Professor Lecompte, an expert on infrared spectroscopy and a staunch conservative Catholic, either was refused a visa or it was held up for some reason and arrived too late. Many of his friends were bitter about this and Lecompte was very disappointed since he had long wanted to visit the US. Such incidents as these are hurting our prestige in French scientific circles.

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