

# Planner of Red 'Trial' Here Says Verdict Is 'Predictable'

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Last Nov. 7, the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, a Washington college student named Michael O'Connor walked up to the Soviet Embassy and rang the doorbell.

When a member of the Embassy staff responded, O'Connor, a member of the conservative Young Americans for Freedom, handed him a "summons" accusing international communism of crimes against humanity. According to O'Connor, the official read it over quickly, handed it back

without comment and closed the door.

The incident was the prelude to a "trial" of world communism, which will be staged here Feb. 19 through 21 by a group called the Court of World Public Opinion.

The group, founded here last fall by YAF and the Twin Circle National Catholic Press, a publishing house, will appoint a "tribunal" of international jurists to render a verdict. Leading anti-Communists will participate as prosecutors and witnesses.

The coordinator of the proj-

ect is Lee Edwards, a Washington public relations man who has worked for a number of Republican office-seekers, including Richard Nixon and Barry Goldwater.

In an interview yesterday, Edwards said the mock trial is "not a right-wing affair." He said "We plan to raise the issue in a calm, reasonable way, without extremism," adding that the John Birch Society has not applied as a sponsor and would be turned down if it did.

Edwards said he is sure the tribunal will keep an open mind on the arguments it hears.

"The verdict may be presumed to be fairly predictable," he said, "but it hasn't been written yet."

He said that if Communist nations ignore the trial, as expected, a defense counsel will be appointed and will be allowed to call witnesses.

"We intend to be scrupulously fair," he said. "A major aim is to give young people facts about world communism. We know that if we try to run a kangaroo court or star chamber, they wouldn't pay attention."

The event will be held in Georgetown University's Hall of Nations. A GU spokesman said this implies no endorsement by the University, which has a policy of making its facilities available as a forum for all varieties of public discussion.

Issues likely to be considered, said Edwards, include the recent Moscow trial of Soviet writers, the alleged suppression of religious groups in Communist nations and "the absence of a free labor movement in the so-called workers' paradise."

Prosecution witnesses will include Stefan T. Possony, a prominent anti-Communist writer, and Dr. Herminio Portell-Vila, former Cuban diplomat. According to Edwards, Portell Vila once taught history to Fidel Castro at the University of Havana, and flunked him.