

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'Deep Throat' Mark Felt:  
FBI point man for Cointelpro

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 69/NO. 24 JUNE 27, 2005

## Garment workers in Florida expose war profiteering

BY ERIC SIMPSON

OAKLAND PARK, Florida—For workers at Point Blank Body Armor's unionized factory here, there is not much controversy surrounding the sale of what the U.S. military has labeled as faulty protective equipment. Most oppose what they describe as company profiteering that has resulted in production of thousands of bulletproof vests sent to GIs in Iraq and Afghanistan that

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## Mass protests spark crisis for Bolivian government

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In an effort to defuse protests that have threatened his fragile governing coalition, Bolivian president Carlos Mesa announced plans June 3 for elections to an assembly to re-write the country's constitution. Thousands of workers, peasants, and youth have joined demonstrations that have paralyzed the country's capital since mid-May. Their central demand is the nationalization of Bolivia's vast oil and natural gas reserves.

Three days later, while more than

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## Utah miners' union fight prominent at Colorado event

Ten UMWA District 22 locals at Ludlow massacre commemoration

BY AURORA NIELSEN  
AND KATHERINE BENNETT

LUDLOW, Colorado—"In 1914, coal bosses took advantage of immigrant miners," said Bob Butero, director of Region 4 of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). That's how Butero opened the program before a crowd of 500 gathered here June 5 for the rededication of the monument to the Ludlow massacre.

"I'd be lying if I said that doesn't go on today," he continued. "At the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, underground coal miners were making between \$5 and \$7 an hour and facing unsafe conditions. When they began fighting for something better, the company fired them. In 1914 in Ludlow, miners went on strike for better working conditions and faced Rockefeller family greed."

This year's commemoration featured the unveiling of the restored Ludlow monument dedicated to 20 coal miners and their families killed by the Colorado

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Militant photos by Tamar Rosenfeld  
Above: UMWA Region 4 director Bob Butero opens June 5 rededication of monument to miners massacred in 1914 by National Guard and company thugs in Ludlow, Colorado. Seated, left, is UMWA president Cecil Roberts. Right: Some of 500 people who attended; Co-Op miner Raymundo Silva is in foreground.

## Pittsburgh SWP campaign opposes candidate loyalty oath

BY TONY LANCASTER

PITTSBURGH—Jay Ressler, an underground coal miner who is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Pittsburgh, and his supporters campaigned June 4 in East Liberty, a working-class neighborhood here.

"The SWP presents a working-class alternative to the Democrats, Republicans, and all other capitalist parties,"

Ressler said. "We are campaigning not only to explain to tens of thousands what my party stands and fights for, but also to oppose the demand by the state of Pennsylvania that candidates for public office sign a loyalty oath."

The oath, based on a McCarthy-

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## Court reschedules hearing for June 14 in 'defamation' suit by Utah mine bosses

BY PAUL MAILHOT

SALT LAKE CITY—Federal Judge Dee Benson rescheduled for June 14 the hearing on motions by three newspapers to dismiss a harassment lawsuit filed by C.W. Mining Company. The hearing had been set for June 7, but was postponed after Carl Kingston, attorney for the coal bosses, asked the court to reschedule citing the death of a relative.

Attorneys for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Deseret Morning News*, and the *Militant* are pressing for an early hearing to argue their case for throwing out the coal bosses' suit, which alleges that their coverage of the Co-Op miners' union organizing struggle is "defamatory."

C.W. Mining, which owns the Co-Op mine, and the company-allied International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU) have sued nearly 100

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## Socialists in Seattle fight for election rights

BY CONNIE ALLEN

SEATTLE—The campaign of Chris Hoeppner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle, is filing for exemption from the requirement to publicly disclose the names of its financial contributors and vendors.

The Seattle Ethics and Election Commission (SEEC) denied such an exemption to the Socialist Workers campaign in 1997. The city of Seattle is the only place in the United States where such an SWP exemption has been denied since the party won a victory on this issue on the national level. Since the late 1970s, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has extended a disclosure exemption covering the party's national campaign

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"One of capitalism's infrequent long winters has begun. Accompanied by imperialism's accelerating drive toward war, it's going to be a long, hot winter."  
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Today's sharpening interimperialist conflicts are fueled both by the opening stages of a world depression—what will be decades of economic, financial, and social convulsions and class battles—and by the most far-reaching shift in Washington's military policy and organization since the late 1930s, when the U.S. rulers prepared to join the expanding Asian and European wars, transforming them into World War II.

Class-struggle-minded working people must face this historic turning point for imperialism, this cataclysmic crisis for "the West" and for "Christendom." And draw satisfaction and enjoyment from being "in their face" as we chart a revolutionary course to confront it.

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# After GM, Ford bonds are degraded to 'junk,' GM to lay off 25,000

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Two of capitalism's leading credit agencies reduced the debt rating of General Motors and its financial division, General Motors Acceptance Corp. (GMAC), to junk bond status in May.

GM top executive Rick Wagoner gave the company's response to the continued bad financial news at the June 7 annual stockholders meeting: he announced plans to cut 25,000 jobs from the company's U.S. manufacturing plants by 2008, and insisted that autoworkers accept reductions in health-care benefits. The loss of jobs represents about 20 percent of GM's workforce in the United States.

Fitch Ratings announced the move on May 24. Three weeks earlier a similar junk rating was given by Standard & Poor's (S&P) for both GM and Ford Motor Co., calling into question the viability of some \$450

billion worth of bonds issued by the two auto giants.

S&P further declared that GM's consolidated debt of \$292 billion doesn't even rate among the highest quality of junk. Moody's Investors Service followed suit, downgrading GM's bond rating to a level approaching junk status.

These developments "could send a tsunami through the corporate bond market," noted the *Wall Street Journal*. GM is the world's third-largest corporate borrower and one of the biggest issuers of corporate debt.

The dire financial straits of the auto giants are a reflection of the worldwide crisis of overproduction in the manufacture and sale of automobiles. Competition has intensified and profit rates have declined.

In May, sales fell 8 percent for the top five automakers—GM, Ford Motor, DaimlerChrysler, Toyota, and



The General Motors Pontiac assembly plant parking lot in Orion Township, Michigan, holds some of the company's overstock of 1.2 million cars. GM announced June 7 it plans to shut down U.S. plants and lay off 25,000 production workers by 2008.

Honda. GM's sales were down 12.6 percent and Ford's more than 10 percent compared to last year. GM has a stockpile of some 1.2 million unsold vehicles.

The auto bosses are seeking to resolve their crisis by weakening the unions, eliminating jobs, and pressing for concessions on benefits and wages from the workforce.

General Motors, the world's biggest automaker, no longer relies primarily on selling cars to generate its revenue. In 2004, 80 percent of GM's earnings came from the operations of its GMAC financial division. This involved not only offering loans to purchase automobiles, but various other consumer credit operations, insurance plans, and mortgage financing.

## NStar power workers in Boston approve contract, end strike

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—Ending a 16-day strike, members of Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA) Local 369 voted May 31 by a margin of 1,277 to 189 to ratify a new four-year contract with NStar, a gas and electric company that services 1.4 million customers in eastern Massachusetts.

"The strike was absolutely worth it," explained Jim McLaughlin, a 15-year NStar veteran who works as a meter

reader. "The company was looking to take back a lot of stuff that people who came before us fought to get for us, and I thought it was important to fight for them, and for our future."

The company agreed to add 150 new positions, many in maintenance. This was one of the union's principal demands.

A popular chant on the picket line—"Hey, hey, Tom May. How many dogs have you killed today?"—illustrated

the demand for more maintenance workers. It referred to several recent incidents in which dogs were shocked by "stray voltage" from walking near power lines that had not been well maintained. May is the company's central executive officer. Pickets also carried dog leashes—with no dog on the end—to further illustrate the point.

Workers also won a 3 percent wage increase over each of the four years of the agreement. Health coverage was extended to domestic partners for the first time.

The new agreement includes some of NStar's concession demands. The company introduced a four-day work schedule for some of the power line-men and now has the authority to assign them to work on weekend days; a second tier was added to the pension plan, lowering retirement benefits for new hires; and the health care co-pay

for workers was raised from 15 percent to 20 percent.

"Everybody came together. That was the good part. We got to know a lot of people on the picket lines and we'll all stick together a little more now," explained Dave Alfonso a 30-year veteran in the industry.

UWUA Local 369 represents utility workers that work in the company's electrical division. The United Steelworkers (USW) represents about 300 workers at NStar that work in the gas division.

At the beginning of the strike, USW members honored the picket lines. Eventually, with the consent of the UWUA leadership, they returned to work.

The Steelworker's contract at NStar expires in 10 months.

Sarah Ullman and Laura Garza contributed to this article.

## THE MILITANT

### Defend free speech, freedom of the press

*The 'Militant' offers weekly coverage of the miners' fight for UMWA representation in Western coal and broad support being won in response to the coal bosses' harassment lawsuit aimed at intimidating union fighters and silencing working-class papers like the 'Militant.' Don't miss a single issue!*



February 2004 rally in Huntington, Utah, backing Co-Op miners' union fight.

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# Point Blank profiteering

Continued from front page

were recalled earlier this year. The U.S. Marines returned about 5,000 of these vests after the media reported they had failed government tests.

Many workers point to the company's use of inferior textiles in producing the ballistic laminate that stops bullets and shrapnel as a source of quality defects.

"The company changed suppliers of ballistic material in order to save money," Carlos Briceño said in a June 3 interview. A member of UNITE HERE Local 25-70, which organizes the 200 workers at the Oakland Park plant, Briceño has worked in the fabric cutting department for several years.

Maira Calderón, another worker, shared his assessment. The company used higher quality ballistic materials in the past, she pointed out. "Now they buy from a different manufacturer and the quality isn't the same," she said. "They were looking for a better price. Now the material is softer. You have to use more plies, and it is not as good." Calderón works as an inspector and serves on the union local's health and safety committee.

The observations of these two workers are backed up by an interview ballistics expert James MacKiewicz gave to the *Marine Corps Times* in April. MacKiewicz tests the vests for the armed forces. He noted a decline in test results in 2003. "It shouldn't have happened," he stated, "because it was a known system for four years and the results were very high" during previous tests on earlier lots of vests. "To get results that low was very concerning—it was odd to us." (For further coverage of related reports by *Defense News* and *Marine Corps Times*, see "Florida garment workers denounce war profiteering" in the June 13 *Militant*.)

Almost three years ago, the company fired Briceño for supporting the union, falsely charging him with stealing scraps of camouflage fabric. Workers fought back, however, and won his reinstatement.

Briceño was the second unionist fired during the organizing effort, which began in the summer of 2002 because of low wages and bad working conditions. Workers said the company rationed employees' water consumption in order to cut down on restroom use, sometimes going for days without providing water coolers during the hot south Florida summer. Isma Sadius was the first to be fired. Sadius was also arrested for "breach of the peace" after presenting a petition to management asking the company to recognize the union. At a large union meeting after Briceño's dismissal, workers decided, "If you touch one, you touch us all." Rather than wait for the company to pick off union militants one by one, workers voted to strike if the company fired one more unionist. When the bosses took that action by firing UNITE supporter Midho Cadet a few days later, for allegedly spending "too much time" in the restroom, workers walked out.

After six months of effective picketing and outreach work, the strikers won their jobs back and the reinstatement of the three fired union militants, paving the way for union recognition and a contract one year later. Both Briceño and Calderón helped lead the daily picketing during the strike.

"For the company, quality doesn't

matter, profits do," Briceño told the *Militant*.

Discussing the possible repercussions of the recalled vests, Calderón said, "If the company loses business and lays off workers because of this, our union will have to fight to protect our jobs."

Sewer Daisy Monejón pointed to the company's constant speed-up campaign as a reason for the quality problems. "It's not the quantity but the quality that matters—lives are at stake," she said. "My nephew is in the army, stationed in Germany. He has two Point Blank bulletproof vests."

Another sewer pointed to a similar shortcut ordered by bosses in order to do the job faster. While normally the stitch that holds the pile of ballistic fabric together has been tacked at both ends, this worker said, a manager recently told him this was no longer necessary. Failure to carry out this operation could make it easier for the stitch to loosen and the fabric to bunch up, making the vest less effective in stopping bullets.

"It's the union that cares about the workers here and about the lives of the soldiers who wear the vests we make,"

## Angelica laundry workers fight for contract, union

BY MAGGIE TROWE

PAWTUCKET, Rhode Island—"We would like to have a union, if everyone could stick together to win it," Dora Agueda told *Militant* reporters June 4 outside an industrial laundry here owned by Angelica Textile Services.

"It's really hot in there, and dirty!" another worker told the *Militant*. Workers said that loading and unloading, washing, drying, and folding hospital linens is heavy work.

Accidents are also common in this industry. In early May, for example, two workers suffered serious burns when a hot-water tank exploded at Modern Tech Cleaners, a commercial laundry plant in the South Bronx, New York.

Angelica is the largest commercial laundry in the United States serving hospitals and nursing homes. Out of the company's 35 facilities 25 are unionized by UNITE HERE.

*Militant* reporters discussed with

## Phase 2 of 'New International' sales campaign to last through August 22

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

Supporters of *New International* are launching the second leg of the campaign to sell issues 12 and 13 of the Marxist magazine by stepping up weekly campaigning. They are discussing plans to sell 3,350 copies of these issues through the end of the August 7-15 world youth festival in Caracas, Venezuela.

In the first 10 weeks of the campaign, which began March 26, nearly 1,860 copies of *New International* and the Spanish-language *Nueva Internacional* have been sold. During most of this period these sales were carried out as part of the successful *Militant* subscription campaign. Partisans of the magazine in most areas have already sold more than half of their quotas, some substantially more. In most areas, however, there has been a slowdown in sales over the last two weeks.

The international goal includes a quota of 3,000 to be sold in local ar-



Militant/Steve Wolf

Workers at Point Blank Body Armor in Oakland Park, Florida, celebrate on Feb. 10, 2004, the first anniversary of their union-organizing victory.

said Barbara Bowman, another sewing machine operator in the plant. "It's us, the union, who have resisted the company's attempts to speed up production by arguing that workers must have the time and training to do a quality job."

Occius Jean-Gilles, another union member, said he opposes the U.S. occupation of Iraq. "It is a crime," he said. "America is not supposed to go around

the world killing people—it is supposed to aid other countries. But the soldiers' life is like every other life. Life is good for everyone and should be protected. Workers at Point Blank do not do bad work—it is the bosses' responsibility."

Eric Simpson is a sewing machine operator at Point Blank's Oakland Park plant and a member of UNITE HERE Local 25-70.

workers at Pawtucket recent one-day walkouts by unionized Angelica workers in Batavia, New York, and Wichita Falls, Texas.

Workers at these two laundries walked out in May to protest the company stalling in contract negotiations with their union. At the Texas plant the company retaliated with a one-day lockout when the workers returned to the job.

At the Batavia plant, the bosses are reportedly firing workers without allowing them to use the union grievance process. A UNITE HERE spokesperson reported that since the contract expired seven workers have been fired and rebuffed from filing grievances. The management at the New York plant docked the Memorial Day pay of the workers who had walked out, saying they did not work a full week and so they forfeited the holiday pay.

The city of New York contracts out a

substantial portion of municipal hospital laundry to be cleaned by Angelica.

Workers at seven unionized plants in New York, California, and Texas were set to strike May 5, but did not walk out after union negotiators reported an improvement in the talks.

Inside workers at the Pawtucket plant are not organized, but the truck drivers are members of the Teamsters union, a driver told the *Militant*. Many of the workers, who receive \$8.30 an hour, are originally from the country of Cape Verde in West Africa. UNITE HERE is trying to extend unionization to all Angelica facilities.



Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	120	129	108%
Edinburgh	50	38	76%
UK total	170	167	98%
CANADA	120	96	80%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	50	42	84%
Christchurch	20	14	70%
N.Z. total	70	56	80%
SWEDEN	40	28	70%
UNITED STATES			
Washington	86	70	81%
Miami	97	76	78%
Seattle	113	84	74%
Twin Cities	121	89	74%
New York	287	196	68%
Pittsburgh	100	52	68%
Los Angeles	200	135	68%
Chicago	108	72	67%
Atlanta	115	74	64%
Houston	105	66	63%
Birmingham	112	62	55%
San Francisco	228	124	54%
Des Moines	105	55	52%
Newark	117	57	52%
Philadelphia	112	58	44%
Boston	120	53	44%
Price, UT	61	25	41%
Salt Lake City	15	2	13%
pathfinderpress.com		115	
U.S. total	2202	1465	67%
AUSTRALIA	50	31	62%
ICELAND	32	16	50%
Int'l totals	2684	1859	69%

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# Ludlow anniversary

Continued from front page

National Guard and coal company thugs on April 20, 1914. The statue of a coal miner, his wife, and child were badly vandalized in May 2003. The UMWA spearheaded an effort for two years to repair the life-size statues.

Mike Dalpiaz, UMWA international vice president from District 22, recognized the different labor groups in attendance and singled out the Co-Op miners present. Dalpiaz noted that 10 UMWA locals from the region were present. He told the crowd he was looking forward to “mentioning another local number, that of the Co-Op miners. We will continue to fight until we get the Co-Op miners as a bona fide local of the UMWA.” This got loud applause. Many in the crowd were at last year’s commemoration where another delegation of Co-Op miners were honored guests and told the story of their struggle.

## Largest gathering in years

It was the biggest gathering for a Ludlow commemoration event in many years. Many union locals from UMWA District 22 participated, including locals at the McKinley and Black Mesa mines on the Navajo Nation. About half of those present were coal miners, UMWA retirees, and their family members.

Also attending were members the United Food and Commercial Workers, Communication Workers of America, United Transportation Union, United Steelworkers, and other trade unions in Colorado. The Colorado state AFL-CIO sent a bus filled mostly with union members from Denver.

A delegation from Utah included Co-Op miners Bill Estrada, Raymundo Silva, and Alyson Kennedy, as well as Bob Fivecoat, a member of UMWA Local 9958, made up of retired miners. These miners were warmly welcomed at the weekend events. Driving nine hours from Utah, they had arrived on June 4 to attend a Saturday night dinner and dance sponsored by the UMWA. That morning the UMWA held a meeting of its International Executive Board in Trinidad, Colorado. This was the first time the union’s top leadership body has met in UMWA District 22, which covers all the union’s western locals.

“I was very affected by the Ludlow story—how the company kicked the miners out of their houses and how they had to live in tents,” said Co-Op miner Raymundo Silva. “I told the people about Co-Op and they told me that’s how it was at Ludlow. The company back then didn’t care, no respect to the miners—just like Co-Op.”

## Co-Op miners set up photo display

The Co-Op miners delegation set up a large photo display of their more than 20-month-long battle to win UMWA representation. The display featured photos from the beginning of their fight on Sept. 23, 2003, when 75 miners were fired by C.W. Mining, which owns this mine near Huntington, Utah. The miners turned their firings into a strike that lasted almost 10 months. They set up picket lines and reached out for solidarity from working people throughout the country, and even received support from unions abroad. They spoke before many UMWA locals in District 22—in Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming—who were among their strongest backers. As a result of their tenacious fight, in July 2004, the National Labor Relations Board brokered

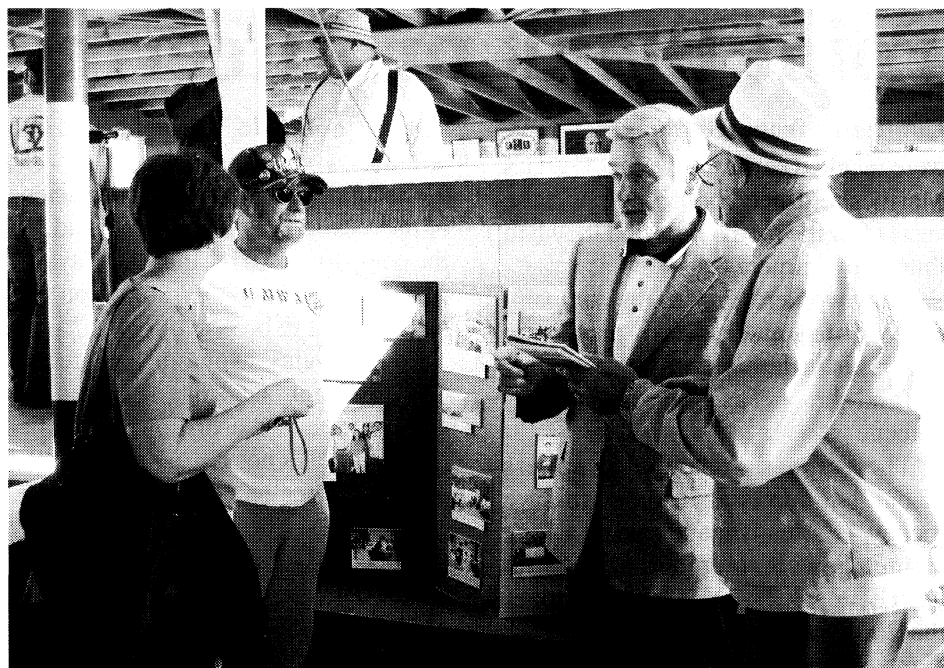
a deal between the company and the union forcing C.W. Mining to offer all of the fired miners their jobs back. In the weeks leading up to a union representation election last December, however, the company fired all of the UMWA supporters from the mine.

“We still have not heard from the NLRB on the second firing or the results of the union election,” Co-Op miner Bill Estrada told workers and others who came by the Co-Op display. “But we are not sitting around waiting, we are picketing again at the mine.” On June 3, the day before they left for Ludlow, seven Co-Op miners set up another picket line at the Co-Op mine demanding recognition of the UMWA.

“After an announcement by Roy Fernandez, a UMWA organizer from New Mexico, about our arrival at the International Executive Board dinner, many union leaders came by our table to talk about our renewed picketing in front of the mine,” Estrada said. “We were encouraged to keep up the fight by officers of union locals in Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado.”

## Restoration of Ludlow monument

The UMWA originally erected the Ludlow monument in 1918 in memory of the victims of the massacre, many of whom were miners of Italian or Greek origin. In 1913, the miners at Colorado Fuel and Iron company, owned by John D. Rockefeller, struck, demanding



Militant/Tamar Rosenfeld

From left: Co-Op miner Alyson Kennedy, retired miner Bob Fivecoat, UMWA president Cecil Roberts, and another retiree by Co-Op miners’ display at June 5 Ludlow event.

union recognition, higher wages, and an eight-hour workday. At the time of their struggle, the fatality rate in Colorado mines was sky high with scores of miners dying every year.

“They didn’t just die here at Ludlow,” said UMWA President Cecil Roberts, the featured speaker at the event. “They are martyrs and heroes and they will not be forgotten.”

Other speakers included John Griswold, the sculptor who restored the statues in his California studios; Steve Adams, president of the Colorado AFL-CIO; James Green, professor of history and labor studies at the University of

Massachusetts; Colorado state representative Buffie Mcfaden; and UMWA secretary treasurer Dan Kane.

The evening before the event, a public program was held at Colorado State University at Pueblo, featuring various groups and individuals from universities, historical societies, and conservatories who came together to help the UMWA restore the Ludlow monument. The more than 70 people who attended that meeting discussed the ongoing struggle to preserve monuments to labor history in the United States and efforts to have the Ludlow site designated as a national historic landmark.

# Hearing date changed in mine bosses’ suit

Continued from front page

unions, individuals, and newspapers. The mine owners and the IAUWU claim that statements by Co-Op miners published by the *Militant* and other papers describing low pay, poor working conditions, and lack of job safety in the mine, and documenting the workers’ support for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), are defamations that have been knowingly repeated with malice toward the company. Anyone who has publicized them—supporters of the miners or the media, for example—should be held liable for damages, the coal bosses argue.

Judge Benson has set a separate hearing for August 1 on motions to dismiss the same harassment lawsuit filed by numerous other defendants—including the UMWA and several of its officers, 16 Co-Op miners who have backed the UMWA, the Utah state AFL-CIO, the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Workers Local 8-286, and Utah Jobs With Justice.

“Attorneys for the company don’t want a ruling against them on the *Militant* and other papers’ motions to dismiss this lawsuit before the UMWA and the miners’ motions to dismiss the case are heard on August 1,” said Norton Sandler, who is helping to coordinate the *Militant’s* defense effort. “We on the other hand want a quick ruling, because every day this outrageous case goes on is a drain on us and every other defendant.

“This lawsuit was intended from the beginning to divert the miners and the UMWA from the fight to organize underground miners at Co-Op, and to tie up their supporters and the newspapers in the courts, so the story of the miners doesn’t get out,” Sandler said. “This is what makes this lawsuit one of the most important labor cases, and freedom of

the press cases, being fought in the courts today.”

The effort of the *Militant* and other defendants to rally supporters of labor rights and freedom of the press against the coal-boss suit is getting increasingly broader support. This week endorsements came in from Don Seaquist, president of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, in St. Paul, Minnesota; and Thomas Samek, recording secretary of UMWA Local 6290, in Rices Landing, Pennsylvania.

“I support the free speech and freedom of the press rights of the *Militant* and individuals who have spoken out and written about the Co-Op workers,” reads a statement to the Militant Fighting Fund sent by Martie Voland, assistant manager of the New England Joint Board of the UNITE HERE union. “The attempt to chill free speech and harass and intimidate supporters of the miners... should not be tolerated.”

The fund was set up last year to help the *Militant* and Socialist Workers Party defend themselves against this lawsuit. The SWP is also charged with defamation on the false claim that the party owns and controls the *Militant*.

Also signing on as an endorser of the Militant Fighting Fund is Chuck Turner, of the Boston city council.

“The lawsuit against the *Militant* for informing regularly on the struggle of the Utah miners from Co-Op is nothing but another attempt from the Bosses to intimidate our brothers and deter them from defending their right to organize and to fight for better working conditions,” wrote Henry Cooper, host of the popular radio program “Proyecto Latinoamericano” in the Houston/Galveston area in Texas. “It is an outrage to let this happen without raising our voices in solidarity.”

Cooper was joined by Duane Bradley,

general manager of KPFT in Houston, in endorsing the Militant Fighting Fund.

Others from Texas adding their names to the defense of the freedom-of-the-press rights of the *Militant* include: Tom Kleven, professor of law in Houston; Dr. Ron Terry; Raúl Salinas, a long-time Native American activist from Austin; and Ray Hill, a well-known advocate for the rights of prisoners and gays.

Support is also building from labor and civil rights figures internationally who recognize the importance of this case. “I support the free speech and freedom of the press rights of the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party,” wrote Gordon Flett, shop steward for Local 2000 of the Communications, Energy & Paperworkers Union in Vancouver, Canada. “Please list me as an endorser of the Militant Fighting Fund.”

In New Zealand, Pauline Tangiora, a well-known Maori elder involved in the struggles of indigenous peoples, as well as peace and environmental issues, endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund.

Many of those endorsing the *Militant* defense campaign are also sending in financial contributions. Efrain Colón, of the Hispanic American Committee in Cleveland, sent in \$40 with his statement of support. Eddie Carthan, former mayor of Tchula, Mississippi, and now pastor of the Good Samaritan Ecumenical Church there, contributed \$50 along with his enthusiastic endorsement.

Another endorsement from the U.S. South came from John Zippert, co-publisher of the *Greene County Democrat* weekly in Eutaw, Alabama.

Materials to help win support for the Militant Fighting Fund are being updated weekly and can be found on [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com), the *Militant’s* website.



**How pious can they get?**—*Le Monde* of Paris reported that the U.S. State Dept. donated



Harry Ring

\$6.9 million to the United Nations fund for victims of torture. We wondered if any relief went to the Iraqi prisoner who was photographed naked, on hands and knees, and being led by a U.S. soldier with a leash.

**Keeps getting safer**—"Tuc-

son-based Raytheon Missile Systems will build a second version of a nonlethal 'directed energy' weapon designed to disperse enemy combatants or rioting crowds with a painful beam of radio waves."—*Arizona Daily Star*.

**UK imperialism seeks comeback**—For the first time since the 1950s, there will be a Rolls-Royce agency in Bombay, India. The luxury limos were the vogue there for nearly a century, with royal maharajahs using some for tiger hunts. The current buyers are expected to be maharajahs on industrial payrolls. The cars cost a bit under \$465,000. At

the close of WWII, popular resistance drove out British imperialism. But capitalism survived. There have been some modest economic gains, but harsh, massive poverty endures. The average income is estimated at \$540 a year.

**Stunning problems (That's a pun)**—Taser International is still struggling to cook up a report on its ailing stock performance last year. Meanwhile, Amnesty International released a report documenting 103 deaths by the "safe" high voltage stun guns. Also, aspirin was needed with the disclosure that an Omaha doctor is participating in a federally

funded study of Taser safety. Meanwhile, he's also a paid Taser consultant.

**They need wheel barrows?**—Terry Semel, top dog at Yahoo, took home a record wage package last year of \$145 million. Reporting this, the *Los Angeles Times* pointed to the steady growth of the gulf between employees and CEOs.

**From the wealth you produce**—The *Los Angeles Times* quotes Brandon Rees, an AFL-CIO researcher: "The average CEO made 42 times the average worker's pay in 1980. That increased to 85 times in 1990

and is now over 300 times."

**Blotted blitz**—Last month, West Bank Palestinians were subjected to a U.S. propaganda blitz. For three weeks, smiling children were on TV, radio, and billboards. The message? The claim that the U.S. had brought better water, health care, and schools. Initially, Washington had hoped to utilize Palestinian entertainers and athletes. No takers. If anything, this was an insult. In historic Bethlehem, huge cement slabs are positioned to thwart Palestinian job-hunters. On one slab, a graffiti proclaims: "American money. Israeli apartheid."

## SWP files for exemption in Seattle

Continued from front page committee, and committees supporting Socialist Workers candidates.

"The decisions earlier this year by the SEEC and Washington Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) to grant exemptions to the Freedom Socialist Party candidates provide a good opportunity to fight to reverse the 1997 denial by the city of Seattle," said Hoeppner. The SEEC's recent ruling came in the aftermath of two federal court decisions last year overturning the commission's denial of exemption to FSP candidates in 2003. "Our goal is to protect the privacy of contributors and vendors of the campaign," the SWP candidate said.

Hoeppner noted that the party's fight for the exemption is part of its decades-long support for the right of workers, farmers, and their organizations to engage in political activity, including elections, free from government and

right-wing harassment. The communist movement has opposed every measure by the capitalist rulers and their hired thugs to assert a monopoly over the right to organize, the ability to carry out political action, and the possibility to be heard by the working population. The SWP has run candidates for office since its founding in 1938 and has fielded candidates for U.S. president and vice president in every election since 1948.

The 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act and similar local laws require lists of contributors and vendors be provided to government bodies and made available to the public—with names, addresses, occupations, and amounts donated. The result is a convenient "enemies list" for government agencies, employers, and right-wing groups and individuals.

The FEC granted the Socialist Workers campaign an exemption from such disclosures in 1979 on the basis of the threat to First Amendment rights to free association posed by publicizing such information. That exemption has been renewed every six years. It is currently in force until 2008.

In 1997, the SEEC denied a request by the Seattle Socialist Workers campaign for a disclosure exemption. It based its ruling on the claim that the

"liberal climate" in Seattle makes this exemption unnecessary. After a public fight to reverse the SEEC decision, an agreement was reached in which the campaign was not required to disclose names and addresses of contributors. But the SEEC ruling stood.

"That 1997 ruling remains a danger to freedom of association and privacy," Hoeppner said, "and for this reason we will campaign to reverse it."

Hoeppner, who just launched his campaign, is taking the party's platform to working people throughout the city. On May 20 the socialist candidate joined Alaska Airline workers at a picket line here protesting firings of 472 ramp workers and baggage handlers. The next evening Hoeppner met with cannery workers employed by Snokist in Yakima, Washington, who recently won union representation and a contract after a seven-month strike. They discussed the importance of organizing trade unions and strengthening them to resist the bosses' assaults on wages and working conditions.

Supporters of the SWP mayoral campaign are organizing to gather 3,000 signatures between June 18 and July 2 to place Hoeppner's name on the ballot. This is part of a national effort to gain ballot status for SWP candidates, who



Militant/David Rosenfeld

Chris Hoeppner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle.

present a working-class alternative to the Democrats, Republicans, and other capitalist parties.

Supporters of the socialist campaign are appealing for contributions and messages of support for the fight for the disclosure exemption. Jim Lobsenz, a prominent Seattle civil liberties attorney, is representing the Socialist Workers campaign. Some \$1,600 in contributions has been raised so far. The Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF) is aiding the effort. Contributions, which are tax deductible, should be sent to: PRDF, P.O. Box 761, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10007, earmarked Seattle disclosure fight.

## 'New International'

Continued from page 3

to get these political tools into the hands of workers, farmers, and youth was provided by Becky Ellis in St. Paul, Minnesota. She wrote that partisans of *New International* attended a June 5 rally against proposed cuts by the University of Minnesota regents to the General College, which makes it possible for many working-class, Black, and Latino students to enter the university who otherwise would be shut out. Among those campaigning were Jacob Perasso and Rebecca Williamson, Socialist Workers Party candidates in St. Paul for mayor and school board, respectively.

Ellis reported that a student just out of high school stopped by the literature table to discuss the political and economic reasons behind such cutbacks and what can be done about them. The student decided to buy both *New International* 12 and 13 along with a *Militant* subscription.

"Several students who are actively building the world youth festival in the Twin Cities have purchased these two issues of *New International* and attend weekly classes on them at the socialist campaign headquarters," Ellis wrote. "Lively sessions are attended by two students at a local community college, a recent art school graduate, and a couple of workers originally from El Salvador, along with socialist workers and young socialists."

## —25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO—



June 27, 1980

NEW ORLEANS, La.—On the heels of the historic organizing victory at the huge Newport News shipyard in Virginia, the United Steelworkers union has begun organizing efforts in Avondale Shipyards in southern Louisiana.

Steelworkers leafleted the gates May 23 with summaries of the Newport News contract and a cover letter urging workers to fill out union cards and mail them in.

Avondale Shipyards is a notorious union-busting outfit. With about 9,000 employees, it is the largest private employer in Louisiana.

Since Newport News came under union contract, Avondale is the largest non-union shipyard in the country.



June 27, 1955

In face of heavy assaults from the police and injunction-happy judges, striking hotel workers in the Miami area are holding firm.

The day after municipal elections in Miami Beach, police made mass arrests on the few picket lines which hadn't yet been banned by injunctions. The charge was loitering without visible means of support. Thirty-one members of AFL Hotel Workers Union Local 255 were held on \$100 bail each.

All Dade County labor unions have united behind the AFL Hotel Workers in their fight against government-by-injunction. Another result of the strike has been the formation in Washington, D.C., of a joint AFL-CIO committee to aid the strike and consider the problems of organizing Southern labor.



June 28, 1930

The National Unemployment Convention is to meet July 4th and 5th in Chicago. If it is animated by a sense of responsible and militant leadership and effective policies of class struggle—if it is not satisfied with noise but embarks on serious organization and action, this convention can become a protest centre for the mobilization of the millions of unemployed.

Demand recognition and credits to the Soviet Union.

Demand the enactment of social insurance, unemployment insurance, and old-age pensions to compel the capitalists to bear the charges for the breakdown of the system.

Demand the six-hour day and five-day week. Organize a united front of the unemployed and employed.

# 'Deep Throat' was FBI point man for Cointelpro

## New hero of liberals, Stalinists led secret police assault on political freedom

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Liberal politicians and pundits, Stalinists, and others in the middle-class left have found a new hero lately: Mark Felt. The man who was no. 2 in the FBI, an admirer of J. Edgar Hoover, and in charge of much of the government's Cointelpro operations of infiltration, harassment, and disruption during the Cold War said in an interview published May 31 in *Vanity Fair*, "I'm the guy they used to call Deep Throat." Felt thus admitted publicly for the first time he had ratted on the White House in 1972, giving *Washington Post* reporters inside dope on the role of the Nixon administra-

### AS I SEE IT

tion in the Watergate scandal, which helped force President Richard Nixon to resign.

"I think he did the right thing," said former president William Clinton, speaking about Felt's action on CNN's Larry King Live television show.

An editorial in the June 4 *People's Weekly World*, the newspaper expressing the views of the Communist Party USA, was much more exuberant, hailing Felt for "blowing the lid off Richard Nixon's Watergate crimes." It concluded: "The Bush White House is simply determined to seek out and destroy any information or source that challenges its drive for power. That is the reason defenders of freedom of the press are standing behind reporters, as well as government and corporate whistleblowers, who expose wrongdoing in high places."

Such portrayals of Felt as a supposed

defender of democratic rights could not be further from the truth.

#### Felt's real record

Felt began his career in the FBI's domestic spy section during World War II, snooping on opponents of the war that the bureau labeled spies or saboteurs. Starting in 1954 Felt served in a half dozen FBI field offices, where among other things he oversaw background checks of workers at the Hanford plutonium plant near Richmond, Washington. In 1962 he was brought back to FBI headquarters and put in charge of training.

As a loyalist to FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, Felt rose rapidly, holding positions as assistant to top FBI officials. In 1972 he finally became no. 2 man at the government's domestic secret police.

Felt was convicted with fellow agent Edward Miller in 1980 for having authorized no less than nine black-bag jobs at the homes of several residents of New York and New Jersey. These individuals' crime was that of being relatives or acquaintances of suspected members of the Weather Underground. The FBI charged that members of the group planted bombs at the Capitol, the Pentagon, and the State Department.

Though their convictions carried a maximum 10-years sentence in prison, Felt and Miller received only a slap on the wrist, ordered to pay fines of \$5,000 and \$3,500, respectively. Both



This cartoon appeared in the May 1, 1981, *Militant*, along with article below on Reagan's pardon of Felt and another FBI crook.

were pardoned by President Ronald Reagan in 1981 (see article below).

#### White House—FBI turf war

Turf war, not noble ideals motivated Felt to rat on the Nixon administration. Felt had already proven to be uncooperative with the White House. In 1971 he refused an Oval Office directive to conduct wiretaps to find the source of

leaks about the administration's national security strategy.

In 1972 the White House was embarrassed by the disclosure of a memo by a lobbyist for the telecommunications giant ITT. It said the Justice Department would drop an investigation of the conglomerate in exchange for the company's \$400,000 contribution to Nixon's reelection campaign. Hoover assigned investigation of the memo to Felt. When the administration attempted to get the bureau to declare the memo a forgery Felt refused.

Hoover died six weeks before the break-in at the Democratic National Committee's offices at the Watergate building. Felt was an honorary pall bearer at Hoover's funeral. Nixon bypassed Hoover's no. 2 man, however, and appointed Patrick Gray, whom he trusted, as acting director. Felt did not want Nixon to meddle in the FBI's investigation of Watergate.

Nonetheless Nixon appeared at Felt's trial as a defense witness. Felt and Miller defended

themselves by arguing that the break-in and wiretaps they authorized were justified in the interests of national security. Nixon testified for the defense that presidents since Franklin D. Roosevelt had authorized such "black-bag jobs." Nixon even contributed money to Felt's legal defense fund.

Other witnesses for the defense

Continued on page 7

## How Reagan pardoned FBI crooks

The article below is reprinted from the May 1, 1981, *Militant*.

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

"I certainly owe the Gipper one," said Edward Miller when he heard the news.

"I feel very excited and just so pleased that I can hardly contain myself," commented W. Mark Felt.

What was the big news? The two ex-FBI burglars had just heard about their presidential pardons.

Last November jury members, after listening to seven weeks of testimony, found them guilty of authorizing illegal break-ins into the homes of friends and relatives of the Weathermen in the early 1970s.

The two, both former high-ranking officials in the FBI, admitted to the jury that they had authorized the burglaries. They insisted, however, that they were justified on grounds of "national security."

The jury said no. Constitutional rights are constitutional rights. The two were fined \$8,500 for breaking the law.

Ronald Reagan didn't agree and he used his executive privilege to get them off the hook.

According to acting White House press secretary Larry Speakes, Reagan "clearly felt...that the decision of the jury and the decision of the court was not correct."

John Nields, the former Justice Department attorney who lead the case against Felt and Miller, said he was shocked by the pardon.

"Whoever is responsible for the pardons," he said, "did not read the record of the trial and did not know the facts on the case."

Nields said the trial was held to establish "the central proposition of democracy: that the government is second to the people and its powers are limited by the Constitution."

"The jury and the court collectively affirmed this proposition," he said.

But "the executive branch pardoning the executive branch for violating the rights of the people strike at the heart of this proposition."

In his opinion, Nields added, "the pardons, done in secret, are trivial in comparison with the jury verdict, which was done in a court of law."

He said they "send out a terrible signal—that the government can violate the Constitution and then forgive itself."

Felt and Miler got the signal too. "This is going to be the biggest shot in the arm for the intelligence community for a long time," crowed Felt.

Miller called the pardons "a very fine thing for the present FBI" because they would erase any reluctance that agents might have to "do their job 100 percent."

Lock up the spoons!

### FOR FURTHER READING

#### Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

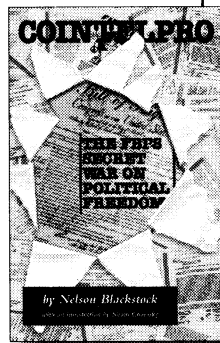
by Nelson Blackstock

Describes the decades-long covert counterintelligence program—code-named Cointelpro—directed against socialists and activists in the Black and anti-Vietnam War movements. The operations revealed in the documents cited in this book—many of them photographically reproduced—provide an unprecedented look at the methods used by the FBI, CIA, military intelligence, and other U.S. police agencies. \$16

#### FBI on Trial: The Victory

in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying

The 1987 victory in the 14-year SWP legal battle against the FBI, CIA, and other government spy agencies "increases the space for politics, expands the de facto use of the Bill of Rights, increases the confidence of working people that you can be political and hold the deepest convictions against the government and it's your right to do so and act upon them."—From the introduction. \$18.95



#### The 50-year Domestic Contra Operation

In New International magazine, no. 6:

by Larry Siegle

The fight against attacks on democratic rights and political freedoms by the FBI, CIA, and other U.S. government police agencies. Charts the history of this from Roosevelt's pre-World War II assault on unionists, Blacks, and others who resisted the war, through the witch-hunt of the '50s and FBI disruption campaigns of the '60s and '70s, to today. \$15

#### Workers Rights vs. the Secret Police

by Larry Siegle

How, since the inception of the modern revolutionary workers movement in 1848, the ruling classes have responded with police spies, agents provocateurs, and political frame-ups. \$5

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# Bolivian gov't in crisis

Continued from front page

80,000 protesters surrounded the presidential palace, Mesa offered his resignation to Congress in a televised address. Congress had turned down a similar "offer" in March.

Prior to this announcement, Mesa had set a date of October 16 for both the election of a constituent assembly and for a nationwide referendum on demands by wealthy businessmen and landowners for greater autonomy in the eastern and southern provinces, which contain most of the oil and gas reserves. Prominent protest leaders dismissed the move and continued to call for mobilizations in the streets.

"The country is the subject of pressures and tensions that can make it explode," Mesa said in the June 3 decree. The day before the *Financial Times* warned that "Bolivia is caught in a dangerous 'power vacuum' in which the conventional institutions of

government are failing to function."

The protests began when the Bolivian Congress narrowly approved a bill that raised taxes on foreign energy monopolies from 10 percent to 32 percent, in addition to existing royalties of 18 percent. It was passed partly as a concession to protests that have included demands ranging from a 50 percent tax increase to nationalization of the country's oil and gas.

Mesa has opposed the 50 percent increase, calling it "suicidal" because it would discourage foreign investment. After the 32 percent tax was approved, Repsol YPF announced that it would suspend a "significant" investment project in Bolivia, reported Reuters. Repsol, the largest oil company in Spain, has major operations in Bolivia. The company planned to spend \$850 million to exploit Bolivia's energy resources between 2005 and 2009.

Organizations such as the Bolivian



Bolivia's indigenous peoples march May 30 from El Alto to the capital city, La Paz, to demand nationalization of the country's oil and natural gas resources.

Workers Federation (COB) and the Federation of Neighborhood Committees of El Alto are demanding nationalization of the gas and oil industries. "We are going to talk it over with the other leaders, but I don't think the protests will be called off because na-

tionalization of oil and gas is not the [president's] message, and that was the focus for us," said Abel Mamani, a leader of the protests in El Alto.

Evo Morales, leader of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), called Mesa's proposal "another show" to demobilize the protests, according to Reuters. The MAS, one of the main opposition parties in parliament and a force in the protests, has called for a 50 percent tax on the energy monopolies instead of nationalization.

Organizations of Bolivia's indigenous peoples are playing a central role in the protests. In response to the president's decree, thousands of Indians marched through La Paz shouting, "Mesa go home, power for the people," reported Reuters. Indigenous organizations have also demanded a rewriting of the constitution with the aim of extending their rights. Aymara- and Quechua-speaking Indians make up just over half of the country's 8 million people but are substantially underrepresented in government.

While the election of an assembly to rewrite the constitution is scheduled for October 16, wealthy businessmen and landowners in the eastern province of Santa Cruz have unilaterally set a date for a referendum on greater autonomy for August. They fear that the vote on a new constitution could undercut their chances for autonomy, which is aimed at maintaining the capitalist class's hold on the country's energy resources.

## Mark Felt: an FBI point man for Cointelpro

Continued from page 6

included attorneys general Herbert Brownell, Nicholas Katzenbach, Ramsey Clark, John Mitchell, and Richard Kleindienst.

A year prior to his trial, Felt published *The FBI Pyramid from the Inside*. In this memoir, Felt adamantly defended Hoover, denounced criticisms of the FBI under Hoover's tenure, and said the Freedom of Information Act of 1974 only served to interfere with the government and helped "criminals."

### SWP suit against FBI

The government's assertion of its right to conduct the kind of operations Felt oversaw was at the heart of a landmark suit filed by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against the FBI and other government agencies in 1973. The trial opened April 2, 1981, shortly after Reagan pardoned Felt and Miller. While court proceedings lasted for three months, the case went on for years. A broad public political fight in support for this lawsuit was a major factor in the final victory and set a lasting example of how to defend workers' rights and political freedoms.

On Aug. 25, 1986, Judge Thomas Griesa ruled for the plaintiffs, finding the FBI guilty of violations of the constitutional rights of the SWP and YSA and of their members and supporters.

Griesa's ruling detailed several of the FBI's 57 disruption operations. These included poison-pen letters, malicious articles planted in the press, instances of victimization, covert attempts to get SWP members fired from their jobs, and efforts to disrupt collaboration between the party and Black rights and anti-Vietnam War groups.

Griesa concluded that these government operations were illegal and a violation of the Bill of Rights. He ruled that appeals to "national security"—by the president or anyone else—cannot be used as an excuse to violate the Constitution. "The FBI exceeded any reasonable definition of its mandate and had no discretion to do so," he said.

Based on these findings, Griesa ordered the government to pay the SWP and YSA \$264,000 in damages. (The record of this fight is contained in *FBI*

on Trial; see ad on page 6.)

This decision codified significant advances in political rights, which the ruling class is now trying to reverse.

The stakes today in the fight against the government's assault on democratic rights and political freedoms are clearly presented in "Their Transformation and Ours," the SWP National Committee's draft political resolution that will be discussed and voted on at the party's June 9–11 convention in Oberlin, Ohio. The document is published in issue no. 12 of the Marxist magazine *New International* (see front-page ad). It describes the measures the rulers are taking as they prepare to "respond to the resistance the capitalists know will inevitably deepen inside the United States as the consequences of their economic course bear down on workers, farmers, and other working people."

These measures "range from increased federal centralization of 'surveillance' of 'suspected terrorists' both at home and abroad, to a de facto national identity card system in the guise of Social Security numbers; from om-

nipresent 'security' controls at airports, in office buildings, and elsewhere, to appeals to report 'suspicious' packages in public places or behavior that's 'out of the ordinary' in your apartment building, neighborhood, or on the streets; from curtailment of habeas corpus and even Fifth Amendment protections of the accused and spying on individuals' library use, book purchases, and bank accounts; to stepped-up targeting of foreign-born residents."

The decks are being cleared of restraints placed on the secret police as a result of what the working-class movement accomplished in the 1960s and '70s. "The FBI's domestic 'counterterrorism' work is once again being rapidly expanded," the resolution explains.

The praise of Felt by liberals and Stalinists as an honorable cop aids the rulers' drive against political freedoms today. The modern-day pardon of Felt as a "hero" is, as Felt commented about his pardon by Reagan nearly 25 years ago, a "shot in the arm for the intelligence community."

## Emmett Till's body exhumed for autopsy

BY ARRIN HAWKINS

Fifty years after his murder in Mississippi, Emmett Till's body was exhumed from his grave in a suburban Chicago cemetery June 1. The casket was transported to the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office for an autopsy—the first to be performed in this case. The results together with other forensic tests are not expected to be completed until the fall.

Outrage over the brutal lynching of Till helped spark the civil rights movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation in the United States.

Last year the FBI reopened an investigation into the case when a documentary brought to light new evidence about Till's murder. No one was ever convicted for the crime.

Fourteen-year-old Till was kidnapped and lynched in 1955 while visiting relatives in Mississippi. He together with his cousin had gone

into a local store on August 24 in the town of Money. Till whistled at a young white woman behind the counter, Carolyn Bryant, who ran the store with her husband Roy.

Four days later Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam dragged Till out of bed in the middle of the night from the home of his uncle, Moses Wright. He was taken away and then severely beaten, tortured, and lynched. Almost all of his teeth were knocked out, and the right side of his head beaten in. The killers tied a 75-lb cotton gin fan around Till's neck to weigh down his body and threw him into the Tallahatchie River. Three days later his severely bloated body was found.

State authorities in Mississippi were complicit in shielding the murderers. Money sheriff H.C. Strider and the prosecutor, Gerald Chatham, declared at the time that there was little evidence against Bryant and Milam and that the

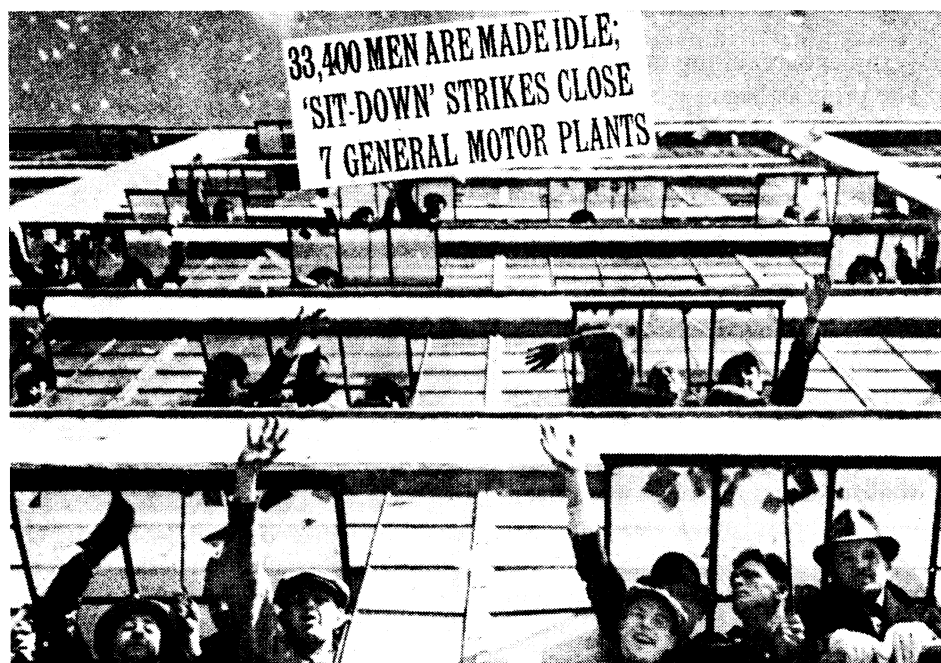
case was "circumstantial" because the disfigured and mutilated body could not be formally identified as that of Emmett Till. Milam and Bryant admitted to taking Till from his uncle's home the night of August 28, but said they had let him go unharmed. Both were acquitted by an all-white jury in a trial lasting just one hour. Carolyn Bryant, who is still living, was never tried as an accomplice in Till's murder.

Reporting on the case, the *Militant* noted in its Sept. 26, 1955, issue that Carolyn Bryant "accompanied the lynchers in the middle of the night to the cabin of Moses Wright," and "identified him as 'the one.'" When the case went to trial she could not be "found."

Keith Beauchamp, whose documentary on the case helped spur the new investigation, believes as many as five of those involved in the murder are still alive.

# How a proletarian party turns to trade union work

Below is an excerpt from Notebook of an Agitator, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for June. James P. Cannon, the author, was a founding leader of the U.S. Communist Party after the October 1917 revolution in Russia. He was expelled from the CP in 1928 for opposing the growing Stalinization of the party and joining the international fight led by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky to continue implementing V.I. Lenin's political course. In 1936 the revolutionary socialists entered the Socialist Party to join with revolutionary-minded workers and youth streaming into the SP at the time. Two years later they founded the Socialist Workers Party out of the SP's working-class left wing. Cannon wrote the article below in December 1936 for the San Francisco-based Labor Action. Copyright © 1958 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Sit-down strikes by auto workers at General Motors built the union in the 1930s. Militant strikes also created openings for rapid recruitment to the revolutionary party.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Not the least of the reasons for the renewed vitality and firm, healthy growth of the socialist movement in California, is the newly developed activity of many of its members in trade unions and the increased attention the party as a whole is devoting to this field.

The turn toward trade-union work means the turn toward new life for the Socialist Party in the West. It means reconstructing the organization on a proletarian foundation. And that is what is needed first of all, if we are to be a real force in the class struggle and not a mere club of well-meaning people which never offends anybody, and which nobody ever thinks of taking seriously.

It takes a fighting organization to make a revolution, and the place to build it is inside, not outside, the broad labor movement. That means, primarily, the trade unions. We still have a long way to go to complete this necessary transformation of the party. What has been done so far—and it is all to the good—is, after all, merely dabbling. We will not really get down to business until we devote nine-tenths of our time and attention to trade-union work.

The trade unions are the elementary and basic organizations of the workers

and the main medium through which the socialist idea can penetrate the masses and thus become a real force. The masses do not come to the party; the party must go to the masses. The militant activist who carries the banner into the mass organization and takes his place on the firing line in their struggle is the true representative of resurgent socialism.

And it is not enough by any means to have a few “specialists” attending to this function while the others occupy the cheering section in the grandstand. Nothing is more absurd and futile than such a party. Auxiliary organizations can and should be formed to enlist the support of sympathizers and fellow-travelers. But the party of the proletariat, to my notion, should be conceived as an organization of activists with the bulk of its members—everyone eligible, in fact—rooted in the trade unions and other mass organizations of the workers.

At this point we always come to the old moth-eaten and utterly ridiculous contrast of theory and practice. There is neither sense nor profit in such a debate, for the theory of Marxism, as Engels explained many times, is a guide to action. Let muddleheads argue which comes first and which is more important. As an all-round nuisance and futilitarian the misnamed “Marxist” who mulls over theory in a vacuum is tied by the vulgar activist who is “all motion and no direction. Effective revolutionists unite theory with practice in all their activity.

The purposeful activism of the educated socialists must be directed primarily into the trade unions precisely because they are the immediate connecting link with a broader circle of workers and therefore the most fruitful field of activity. When the socialist idea is carried into the workers’ mass organizations by the militant activists, and takes root there, a profound influence is exerted upon these organizations. They become more aware of their class interest and their historic mission, and grow in militancy and solidarity and effectiveness in their struggle against the exploiters.

At the same time, the party gains strength from the live mass contact, finds a constant corrective for tactical errors under the impact of the class struggle and steadily draws new proletarian recruits into its ranks. In the trade-union struggle the party tests and corrects itself in action. It hardens and grows up to the level of its historic task as the workers’ vanguard in the coming revolution.

The trail-blazing work of the socialist activists in the California unions has opened a path for the party as a whole. There can be no doubt that the near future holds great successes for the party if it follows that path.

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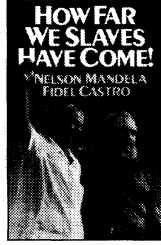
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# Back challenge to loyalty oath

Working people and other supporters of political rights have a stake in backing the Socialist Workers Party campaign's challenge of the loyalty oath imposed on candidates for public office in Pennsylvania. The socialists, running Jay Ressler for mayor of Pittsburgh, are presenting a working-class alternative to the capitalist parties. They are also campaigning against the requirement that candidates sign a sworn statement that they are not "subversive"—defined as anyone advocating "any act intended to overthrow" the U.S. or Pennsylvania government "by force or violence."

Loyalty oaths are an unconstitutional attack on political rights. They have always been used to target the labor movement. The reinstitution of such a measure in Pennsylvania today is not some archaic throwback to the past. It is part of the efforts by the wealthy rulers—under the banner of "homeland security"—to gain acceptance for stepped-up FBI spying and harassment, government interference in union affairs, and other attacks on working people who resist the bosses' offensive or oppose government policies.

Such reactionary measures were first instituted in the late 1930s as the U.S. rulers launched an antilabor offensive at home and prepared to enter the second world imperialist war. The Roosevelt administration established the first loyalty program, with a government board investigating organizations labeled "disloyal" or "subversive." The 1939 Hatch Act, which continues in effect, prohibits federal employment of members of any political organization that "advocates the overthrow of our constitutional form of government."

Loyalty oaths were institutionalized by the Truman administration as part of the post-World War II antilabor drive—especially through the Taft-Hartley "Slave Labor" Act of 1947—that was the domestic counterpart of the Cold War abroad.

The bosses used loyalty programs, the Attorney General's list of "subversive" organizations, and other such witch-hunting measures to try to isolate union militants and housebreak the labor movement. An example was the case of James Kutcher, a legless World War II veteran fired in 1948 from his job as a clerk for the Veterans Administration for "disloyalty," because of his membership in the Socialist Workers Party. Kutcher won his job back after an eight-year fight that won broad support among unions, veterans organizations, and civil liberties groups.

Today the U.S. government—in the name of "fighting terrorism"—is taking steps in anticipation of the coming working-class resistance to the economic crisis and bosses' assaults. These steps range from stepped-up FBI spying and disruption operations to "security" controls at airports and office buildings, the curtailment of the rights of the accused, targeting of foreign-born residents, and probes to establish a national identity card. They are aimed at reversing what the ruling class had to retreat on in the 1960s and '70s under the pressure of the struggle for Black freedom and the movement against the Vietnam War.

Join with supporters of the SWP campaign in Pennsylvania in opposing the loyalty oath! Taking on this witch-hunting measure will strike a blow for political rights and the interests of working people.

# Loyalty oath

Continued from front page

era law passed in 1951, has recently been re-incorporated into the papers that candidates must sign when filing nominating petitions to get on the ballot. Candidates must swear, "I am not a subversive person as defined in the 'Pennsylvania Loyalty Act.'"

According to this law, a "subversive" is "any person who commits...advocates, abets, advises or teaches, by any means...the overthrow, destruction or alteration of the constitutional form of government of the United States or of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania...by force or violence, or who is knowingly a member of a subversive organization."

Such laws have their origins in steps to clamp down on militant workers and the entire labor movement. The first of these programs started in the late 1930s at the direction of President Roosevelt, as Washington prepared to enter World War II. A commission on loyalty and security was established and the attorney general investigated groups to determine if they were fascist, communist, or otherwise "subversive."

In March 1947, President Harry Truman promulgated Executive Order 9835, which established the Employee Loyalty Program for civilian employees in the government's executive branch. A section of that order prohibited government employment of members of "subversive" groups. That provision led to what became known as the "Attorney General's list" of proscribed organizations. Beginning in September 1948, the SWP was included on this list, along with the Communist Party and other groups. The list remained in use until 1974, when it was abolished.

In late spring and summer of 1947 Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act with huge bipartisan votes. Among other antilabor provisions, this legislation required union officers to sign an affidavit swearing they were not members of the Communist Party and did not support any organization advocating overthrow of the government by force or any other "unconstitutional" means. The main leaders of the two union federations at the time—the AFL and CIO—buckled under pressure to abide by these and other anti-union provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Ressler pointed out to those he met campaigning on the streets of East Liberty that the Pennsylvania loyalty oath is not a throwback to the past. "The ruling class is trying to reverse most of the concessions on democratic rights it made to the labor movement in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the Black struggle and the movement against the Vietnam War because it is getting ready to fight working people resisting the bosses' assaults on our wages, benefits, and job conditions," he said. "Workers need these rights to defend our interests, just as the ruling billionaires need to take them away to defend their interests. That's why we are launching a public fight against the loyalty oath and may initiate a legal challenge to it as well."

Ressler is replacing Brian Taylor, who the SWP had previously announced as its mayoral candidate. "This was necessary to meet all the requirements to get on the ballot, which will make it easier to fight the loyalty oath," said Taylor, who is now campaign director here. Supporters of the socialist campaign will be petitioning the last two weeks of June to collect 2,000 signatures—double the city requirement—to place Ressler on the ballot, Taylor said.

While campaigning June 4, Ressler shook hands with shoppers on Penn Avenue and spoke with participants in a nearby peace vigil. "There was a lot of interest when we pointed out, using the *Militant*, how garment workers in Florida were exposing the profiteering of the bosses who sold faulty body armor to the U.S. military," Ressler said.

Many people responded positively when Ressler explained that the SWP campaign supports workers' struggles to organize unions and mobilize union power to resist the bosses' assaults. "We also expose the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent the nations oppressed by imperialism from developing nuclear power and other sources of energy they need to expand electrification—a requirement for economic and social advances," he said.

"And we are getting a hearing when we say we need to build a revolutionary movement that will lead a fight by working people and their allies to take power out of the hands of the billionaire ruling class, establish a workers and farmers government, and join the worldwide struggle for socialism," Ressler noted.

## 10,000 protest in Tonga for right to electricity

BY TERRY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Some 10,000 people, nearly 10 percent of the country's population, marched on the Royal Palace in the capital of Tonga, Nuku'alofa, May 26 to demonstrate against high power prices.

"The driving force behind the march was discontent by the public over the high cost of electricity," reported the *Matangi* news service, and against the Shoreline company's monopoly control over the nation's electricity supply.

Manoa Vai, 40, told the *New Zealand Herald* that "we only use one light bulb at home, and we never make ice. We don't like the way the royal family have abused their power."

A petition read to the crowd was not only a protest against Shoreline, but also called for the king "to surrender power to the people" and "to become a ceremonial figurehead."

The monarchy rules the island nation with near absolute power. Only nine of the country's 30 members of parliament are popularly elected. The king and the holders of 33 noble titles choose the other 21 members. The march was organized by the "Demo" group of opposition politicians, and joined by church



May 26 march of 10,000 in Pacific island of Tonga

leaders, including Tonga's Catholic bishop.

The imperialist rulers of Australia and especially New Zealand have long regarded Tonga as part of their special sphere of influence. A 2003 New Zealand government report raised concerns about growing instability in the island kingdom. At a time of unrest in other parts of the Pacific, the report said, "the stability in Tonga has had a certain appeal—but it is a stability that covers over deep cracks."

## LETTERS

### Message to Tricontinental

I want to thank the *Militant* for printing the letter "Separating Myth From Reality on the Causes and Outcome of World War II" in the May 23 issue.

For a similar analysis I would recommend Ernesto Che Guevara's "Message to the Tricontinental." This was written in the fall of 1966 and published in Havana in the spring of 1967 after Che had left to participate in the Bolivian campaign.

It states, in part: "Twenty-one years have elapsed since the end of the last world conflagration and various publications in every

language are celebrating the event, symbolized by the defeat of Japan. A climate of optimism is apparent in many sectors of the different camps into which the world is divided. Twenty-one years without a world war in these days of maximum confrontations of violent clashes and abrupt turns appear to be a very high number. All of us declare our readiness to fight for this peace. But without analyzing its practical results (poverty, degradation, constantly increasing exploitation of enormous sectors of humanity), it is appropriate to ask whether the peace is real."

The complete message is available in *Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla* and in *Che Guevara Speaks*, both published by Pathfinder Press.

Edwin Fruit  
Des Moines, Iowa

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