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Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair

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GRADED AS DUPE, NOT COMMIE

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

On a college campus near you, the CIA may well be paying for some student who's made a secret deal to work for the government in return for financial support. These indentured spooklets are already undercover, observing and possibly relaying manifestations of disloyalty to their masters in Washington. David Price told the whole saga in his piece in our recent issue, "The CIA's University Spies".

There's a tradition here, and CounterPuncher Robert Hilliard of Cambridge, Mass., describes it to us in a letter.

"In the early 1950s, during the heyday of McCarthyism, I was teaching an evening course in English Literature at New York's Brooklyn College. Readings included such works as Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*, Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, Shaw's *Major Barbara* and a Shakespeare play. The paranoia of the time resulted in many people, including government officials, considering any controversial or non-conformist literature as subversive.

"One of the students in the class always appeared in a suit and tie, not necessarily unusual because a number of the students came directly from their work places. That he appeared to be in his late 20s was also not unusual, inasmuch as many of the students were in their 30s and even 40s.

"At the end of the semester he came to me and said, 'Mr. Hilliard, I want you to know I'm not going to report you.'

'Report me for what?'

'Well, I don't think you're really a communist, just a dupe.'

'I don't understand', I said, really not understanding.

'As you may know, there are a lot of us hired by the House Committee on Un-American Activities to sit in classrooms

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Is This Really an "Insurgency" to Shake Up the Unions?

BY JOANN WYPIJEWSKI

The day nears for the 50th national convention of the AFL-CIO, opening in Chicago on July 25. The meeting is being heralded as a possibly fateful encounter, in which forces of enlightenment and reaction will wrestle over the future of organized labor.

It would be pleasant to set forth the impending showdown in Chicago as one in which the self-styled "insurgents" have a convincing plan for regenerating a labor movement, a plan made credible and compelling by their own past achievements. God knows, organized labor needs shaking up. The cliché is true: unions are in crisis. But an honesty equal to the crisis is not forthcoming.

Ten years ago, upon assuming leadership, Sweeney called on unions to organize but never forced a debate on what kind of unions workers were being organized into. Were they accountable to their members? Did they even know their members? As a minority force, could they collectively break with their fiefdom orientation and advance the interests of the broader working class?

Would they purge themselves of corruption, sexism, racism and arrogance? Would they adjust their leaderships and practices to organize blacks, immigrants, women and anyone in the growing unregulated economy?

Could they develop a disciplined, independent political strategy, not simply to elect politicians but to challenge the corporate state and leverage power?

Would they confront their own failings in order to act globally, to cooperate locally, to revive the strike as a weapon, to reverse an ugly course of sacrificing workers for

short-term gain, to stop fleecing workers for a leader's enrichment or manipulating them for a leader's pride?

Would they help workers have real power on the job, in society, in the union?

Whether reputed progressives or outright scoundrels the mutineers present no model of thoroughgoing positive change. If, together, they succeed in splitting the federation, they will be no closer to throwing down the challenge implicit in the questions that could not be asked ten years ago. Those are movement questions, and whatever emerges from the institutional coup or counter-coup about to be joined should not be confused with a labor movement.

Who are the swashbucklers who have claimed the spotlight so far? They are six union officials with little in common but their sex and race, hatred of some of the federation staff and leadership, and size of their memberships or egos. Representing five unions with about a third of the federation's members, they have banded together under a program whose only live demands (because the only ones they uniformly agree on) are more power for themselves in an Executive Committee of select larger unions and a 50 percent rebate on the dues their unions pay to belong to the federation. Three of their executive councils have authorized these men to pull their unions out of the AFL-CIO whenever they see fit.

On June 15, the six held a press conference in Washington to announce a new name for themselves, the Change to Win Coalition, which may become a parallel federation in the event of an exodus in Chicago, and in any case throws up the institutional (Labor continued on page 4)

(DUPES continued from page 1)

throughout the country and report our professors in order to help the Committee weed out communist teachers. But I'm not going to mention you in my report. I just want you to know so you can be more careful in what you teach in the future.'

"As a colleague said to me the other day, 'we're not, in 2005, moving towards another McCarthy era and fascism – we're already there'."

Thank you, Robert. Mind you, here, at *CounterPunch*, we don't think we're under the fascist jackboot yet; but then, we're incorrigible optimists.

THE LUCKIEST MARTYR

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN
AND JEFFREY ST CLAIR

Is there ever anyone luckier than Judy Miller! All last year she was pilloried as the prime saleslady for the imaginary WMDs that offered the prime pretext for the invasion of Iraq. Although it refused to denounce her by name, the *New York Times* publicly castigated itself for poor reporting, and Miller's career seemed to be at an end.

But then came a glimmer of hope. With unexpected zeal, special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald was pressing his investigation of who exactly outed Valerie Plame as a CIA officer. Plame is the wife of Joe Wilson, who

had incurred the displeasure of the Bush White House by discrediting the phony Nigerian yellowcake story, part of their vast propaganda operation to sell the Iraq attack to Congress and the American people.

Fitzgerald was threatening journalists with prison time unless they disclosed their sources. It wasn't long before some journalists informed the zealous Fitzgerald that they had been released from confidentiality by their sources. Indeed, Scooter Libby, Cheney's chief of staff, declared publicly that any journalist who had talked to him was free to discuss such conversations with Fitzgerald. *The Washington Post's* Walter Pincus and Glenn Kessler testified forthwith before the federal grand jury, as did Tim Russert of NBC. The general assumption is that Robert Novak, who'd outed Plame in his column in July 2003, was subpoenaed by Fitzgerald and duly testified.

How Miller's heart must have leaped. Here was the glorious prospect of her instant conversion from pariah, only one rung up from Jayson Blair, to martyr to free speech, only one rung below John Peter Zenger. She and Matt Cooper of *Time* magazine declined to testify or furnish their notes. The cases commenced their climb up through the federal courts, until the U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the ruling of the federal appeals court in favor of Fitzgerald. *Time* magazine roared its dedication to free speech, while simultaneously declaring it had to obey the law of the land. Against Cooper's proclaimed wishes, *Time* handed over Cooper's notes to Fitzgerald. The *New York Times* said it would not comply.

But Fitzgerald was not to be appeased by only Cooper's notes. By now he wanted to grill the two journalists on the stand. The issue was not just the matter of the identity of the White House source, but that handy standby of all federal prosecutors, perjury. Ask Martha Stewart. It was her misleading declarations to federal investigators that put her in prison.

Cooper bid a manly adieu to his family, packed his toothbrush, and made himself ready for incarceration at least as far as October, when the grand jury's term expires. Then came the dramatic release from confidentiality by Cooper's source. Cooper went off to court, embraced Judy Miller in a fine display of solidarity, and then told the judge he would comply with Fitzgerald's subpoena.

Miller, of course, was publicly adamant. But there seems to be no reason why she should not have echoed Cooper's statement

to Judge Thomas Hogan. Fitzgerald has publicly declared that not only does he know the identity of Miller's source, but also that this source has released Miller from confidentiality.

But Miller was not to be balked of the martyrdom that will blot out her fake stories on Iraq's WMDs and convert her into the heroine of the Fourth Estate, with lucrative lecture fees and book sales for the rest of the decade. Never, she told the judge, would she reveal the Name that could not be named.

There are curious questions hanging over Miller's determined march towards her prison cell.

Miller never actually wrote a story in the *New York Times* about Plame being in the CIA. So why has Fitzgerald been so eager to have her testify? The answer may lie in a paragraph buried in one *Washington Post* story: "Sources close to the investigation say there is evidence in some instances that some reporters may have told government officials – not the other way around – that Wilson was married to Plame, a CIA employee."

We could conjecture that when Fitzgerald interviewed White House political adviser Karl Rove and Cheney's chief of staff, Scooter Libby, one or other or both had said that they learned Plame was married to Wilson and in the CIA from Miller, who – again this is surmise – might well have learned this from one of her other sources, whether Perle or Chalabi or someone in the intelligence world.

After all, this is Miller's style of reporting. Learn something from one source, then bounce it off another, and then put together a story citing two sources. In the case of the WMDs, Chalabi would give her a "defector" who would duly impart his fantasies about Saddam's arsenal. She would relay the defector's story to "a high intelligence source" who would confirm it.

We applaud prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald's gallant bid to grill Miller about the techniques and veracity of her reporting. Here, after all, is a journalist with blood on her hands, who played a major role (rivaled perhaps only by the *New Yorker's* Jeffrey Goldberg) in selling a war with one fabrication after another, eagerly offered to the public by the *New York Times*.

Footnote: The item on Judy Miller ran on our website, but we know that many print-bound CounterPunchers take a keen interest in Miller, and we wouldn't want them to miss this chapter in her long and mostly shameless career.

Editors
ALEXANDER COCKBURN
JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

Business
BECKY GRANT

Design
DEBORAH THOMAS

Counselor
BEN SONNENBERG

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CounterPunch

PO Box 228

Petrolia, CA 95558

1-800-840-3683 (phone)

counterpunch@counterpunch.org

www.counterpunch.org