

# F.B.I. Ends Inquiry On Socialist Group

NYTimes

SEP 15 1976

By NICHOLAS M. HORROCK

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14 — Attorney General Edward H. Levi has ordered the Federal Bureau of Investigation to end its 38-year inquiry into the Socialist Workers Party, Department of Justice and party representatives said today.

His action brings to an end a case that amassed 8,000,000 file entries and saw the bureau commit numerous illegal burglaries, 92 in one six-year period, and hundreds of acts of harassment under the Counter-Intelligence Program.

Despite nearly four decades of intense investigation and harassment, the bureau has not brought criminal charges against any member of the party or its youth affiliate, the Young Socialist Alliance, since 1940, when 18 members were tried and convicted of violations of the Smith Act. The act was later declared unconstitutional.

Mr. Levi ended the investigation by an order issued to the bureau late Friday, according to Robert Havel, a spokesman for the Justice Department. Mr. Havel said that the Attorney General had taken the action on the recommendation of two internal review committees that reported that the party's activities did not justify F.B.I. scrutiny under government security investigation guidelines issued earlier this year.

On Monday, the Attorney General noti-

Continued on Page 14, Column 3

732 - II  
THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1976

## F.B.I. Told to End 38-Year Inquiry Into the Socialist Workers Party

Continued From Page 1

fied Federal District Judge Thomas P. Griesa in New York of his action. Judge Griesa is presiding over a two-year-old damage suit filed by the Socialists against the Federal Government, the F.B.I. and officials of the Nixon Administration. The party was notified at the same time.

Peter Camejo, the Socialist Workers candidate for President and long a party official, called the decision "an historic victory for Democratic rights for all Americans." He said that it was the "first step in bringing to a halt a Government program for political spying and harassment."

Mr. Camejo said that the decision "removes the last barrier to the release of files the F.B.I. has maintained in its investigation."

He said that the Socialist Party was "demanding the Government immediately remove all informants from our party and our campaign committees."

### Wants Names of Informers

"We are also insisting the Government turn over to us the names and files on all informants, past and present," he said.

The Socialist case was a major vehicle for disclosing secret and often illegal F.B.I. investigative and harassment techniques. Only last month, it was disclosed that the bureau had used 316 regular paid informers against the party since 1960 and had "an army of some 1,300 free-floating informers who spy on the activities of members and a wide variety of groups," according to a court document.

The party membership has never exceeded 2,500 persons, according to a party spokesman. According to Cathy Perkus, a spokesman for the party, there are 66 informers in place now, and the party wants them removed, publicly identified and their files turned over to it.

Several party officials, including Mr. Camejo, feared that Mr. Levi was halting the investigation as the first step in attempting to negotiate a settlement of the lawsuit. Mr. Camejo said that the case was going "full speed ahead," and that the party was asking a \$40 million settlement in addition to the other demands.

Mr. Havel said that Mr. Levi's action was entirely separate from the Government's conduct of the civil lawsuit. He said that under guidelines covering how and when the bureau could conduct inter-

nal security investigations was a requirement that each on-going case be periodically reviewed.

He said that two internal review committees had studied that question and concluded that the activities of the party and of the Young Socialists did not justify investigation by the bureau.

"We think this is an admission that the F.B.I. was wrong for 38 years in spying on our party," Mr. Camejo said. However, the guidelines covering F.B.I. internal security investigations were adopted only this year. Before that, it was unclear on what grounds the bureau opened and maintained many of its security investigations.

The origin of the Socialist Workers Party case is equally unclear, but it was apparently begun because of the party's connection with the Fourth International, a worldwide group following the tenets of Leon Trotsky.

In the following years, its members were put under surveillance, wiretapped, burglarized, driven from their employment, physically threatened and orally abused by bureau agents. There is no count of how many times the homes or offices of the party were illegally entered by bureau agents, but at least 92 illegal entries were made at two party offices in New York between 1960 and 1966.

### A Target of Cointelpro

In 1961, the Socialists were made a target of Cointelpro, an organized F.B.I. system of harassing groups it did not approve of. Under the program, the bureau wrote anonymous letters, hoping to harass or frighten party members; planted damaging stories in the news media, and committed other acts to confuse or harm them.

In most instances, the victims did not know that the bureau was involved.

As late as last month, it was disclosed that a paid F.B.I. informer in Denver, Colo., had stolen documents from a party headquarters there. Court documents indicated that the bureau had knowingly accepted the stolen documents.

Mr. Levi's order last Friday appeared to overrule an internal decision at the bureau last month that it would continue to investigate the party. Clarence M. Kelley, director of the bureau, announced at mid-month that the case would be transferred from the intelligence division to the general crimes division within the bureau, but continued as an active inquiry.