

History 315

Re: Outline of Garrow, FBI/King (Chpts. 2,3, 4)

Chpt. 2

Garrow looks at the original reason for the FBI's interest in Dr. King.

He dismisses the criticism theory. Related to King's comments about the ineffectiveness (implied sympathy w/ local police) of FBI in dealing with the white violence of the early civil rights protests, etc. Especially cited here were remarks King made during the Albany, Ga., protests by the SCLC

Garrow contrasts this explanation w/ the "Solo" accounts from the Childs brothers who were FBI informants and directed FBI attention to Stanley Levinson and Jack O'Dell. Implication here is that both were CP members. Levinson was a highly placed asset in the American Communist Party even though he may never have been a formal card-carrier. Also that FBI had a right to be interested in their influence on King.

[Point: That Hoover always believed that the CP would use or was using $\frac{1}{2}$ black civil rights groups for their nefarious purposes. Vide: his marathon probe of the NAACP. This was going on since 1945 and was still going on in the 1960s. Hoover could not believe that blacks were intelligent enough to organize around their own grievances. This was a function of his own deep-seated racism.

Garrow makes point that all indicators pointed to fact that Levinson had left the party in 1955. All FBI intelligence on S.L. supported this view. Levinson was a sincere friend of King and a bone fide supporter of the civil rights movement.

The A.G. Bobby Kennedy agrees to a telephone tap on King based on the FBI's connection of King with Levinson and then O'Dell. Kennedy's were not certain about King. Also political anxiety that Hoover might hurt the Kennedy's and frustrate the Kennedy civil rights bill by leaking to Press or Congress about the Levinson/King connection.

History 315

page two

Re: Outline from Garrow, BBI/King

Chpt. 3 "They're Out to Break Me"

This deals with the shift in FBI interest in King and the SCLC. Or what Garrow denotes as phase two of the Hoover vendetta.

From telephone/wire taps to "bugging" These were never authorized by the Attorney General Kennedy. The use of the bugs to pick up "dirt" on King. Especially the Willard Hotel. King as sexual athlete. Hoover and the Bureau took it upon themselves to drive King out of the movement because Hoover did not approve of his politics or his morality, etc.

Points: William Sullivan's plan to replace King w/ an BBI sanctioned race leader. Sullivan had in mind Sam Pierce, Jr.

IRS audits to uncover financial double-dealing by the SCLC leadership, especially King. Search for his hidden backaccounts in Switzerland. (How many FBI man-hours spent on this will-o-the-wisp?)

Trying to deny honors--from Marquette University. Deny him an audience with the Pope.

A trash cover on the Atlanta office of the SCLC. Looking for personal weaknesses among his SCLC staff in Atlanta--to recruit an informant inside the office. Sending a forged letter to SCLC members alerting them to an IRS audit of the movement's finances. Trying to stir up the animosities between Roy Wilkins and King.

The invitation to suicide drafted by William Sullivan and sending tapes of the Willard Hotel to Coretta King or to King Hqers. in Atlanta.

Hoover/LBJ and the MFDP-- Bugging King provided the Bureau w/ good quality intelligence on the planning and activities of the civil rights movement in general

All the alleged reasons for surveillance on King because of the so-called security threat was really just a cover for the FBI to continue to dig up "dirt" on King and gain good domestic political intelligence on the actions of the civil rights movement in general.

Jay Kennedy and the CIA's interest in King. Do you find this eery?

What was all the talk about Chi-Coms and the Peking Communists interest in the civil rightst movement. CIA interest prompted by the Vietnam War and paranoidal delusion about the Black protest movement turning into a domestic Viet Cong-- or Maolist Movement? Best illustration of Cold War paranoia inside the CIA.

Show the record on file on King surveillance

*CIA/Kennedy
Sullivan's*

History 315

Re: King's Antiwar Speech/ Context of Last Year

Failure in Chicago to move Dailey and the City to take action on jobs, housing, etc.

King's message and appeal ~~in~~ among the northern black youth in the ghettos was falling on deaf ears. He was either ignored or mocked by the more militant blacks and ghetto dwellers.

Die Lawd

King's concentration on the northern racial issues and his public anti war views were losing support among other black leaders like Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the Urban League, Bayard Rustin, Andrew Young.

Many once sympathetic whites were affiling away. The immediate result was the dwindling funds coming into the SCLC treasury.

Blacks were angered because he was attacking LBJ's war in Asia and LBJ was the architect of the Great Society programs including the war on poverty. Black leaders were critical because King's attention to the war and the situation among blacks in the north was detracting time, funds, attention, away from the SCLC movement in the South.

A 1967 Harris Poll revealed that 73% of Americans disagreed w/ his stand on the war. 60% believed that his stand on the war was hurting the civil rights movement, Only 25% of the black respondents supported his anti-Vietnam position.

*Raymond
Farrar*
By the summer of 1967 King was physically exhausted, confused about the future, and profoundly depressed. He felt he had nothing more to say. He was expected to have solutions to institutional racism in the North and to the problems of the poor and he had none. He was burn't out.

To compound his sense of personal defeat and agonizing over the future there came the summer race riots or rebellions in Detroit, Newark, Phila., New York. For King nonviolence was a message that was fast losing its appeal.

Relations between Dr. King and Coretta--- Mrs. King was a widow long before King was killed. Their marriage was on the rocks. King was quilt-ridden about his human failings and betrayals of his wife.

And all along the war in Vietnam was widening and showed no signs of spiraling down.

History 315

Re: Notes from Garrow, Chpt. 6 "The Radical Challenge of Dr. King"

This chapt. deals w/ the last year of King's life. Garrow says that during these 12 months King represented a far greater political threat to the reigning American government than he ever had before.

Martin Luther King was in the Movement from 1955 to 1968. He did not make the movement the movement made him. It transformed him from a reformer(civil rights reformer--praying and marching,etc)into a radical who wanted to transform the Civil Rights Movement into a radical restructuring of American society by coercion. Not force and violence on his part. But by disobedience and disruption. Why? And was Hoover/FBI right in keeping on his case? Was he that threat to the dominant political culture with its established norms and values?

Poor People's Campaign--Was this the first of a new King. Did he see clearly that in the US the issues of class(economic/political)were more important and more entrenched and difficult to deal with than the issue of RACE?

Mention Wm. J. Wilson's The Truly Disadvantaged. Shows a rather prophetic King.

The last part of the chapt. shows a human Martin Luther King. It does a service in terms of reminding ourselves that perhaps we have idolized the man,; or the dangers of idolizing any of our great men. Garrow touches on the complex man and illuminates around the edges his personal and public struggles.

The too often smoothed-off, respectable national hero" whose birthday is celebrated as a national holiday might blunt his message. Turn him into an icon or an Uncle Tom. . . . When in fact King was the militant of the century.

No US