SCRIPPS HOWARD

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Army feared King, secretly

Spying on blacks started 75 years ago

By Stephen G. Tompkins
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The intelligence branch of the United States Army spied on the family of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for three generations.

Top secret, often illegal, intrusions into the lives of black Americans began more than 75 years ago and often focused on black churches in the South and their ministers.

The spying was born of a conviction by top Army intelligence officers that black Americans were ripe for subversion — first by agents of the German Kaiser, then by Communists, later by the Japanese and eventually by those opposed to the Vietnam War.

At first, the Army used a reporting network of private citizens that included church members, black businessmen such as Memphis's Robert R. Church Jr., and black educators like the Hampton Institute's Roscoe C. Simmons. It later employed cadres of infiltrators, wiretaps and aerial photography by U2 spy planes.

As the civil rights movement merged with anti-war protests in the late 1960s, some Army units began supplying sniper rifles and other weapons of war to civilian police departments. Army Intelligence began planning for what some officers believed would soon be armed rebellion.

By March 1968, King was preparing to lead a march in Memphis in support of striking sanitation workers and another march a few weeks later that would swamp Washington with people demanding less attention to Vietnam and more resources for America's poor.

By then the Army's intelligence system was keenly focused on King and desperately searching for a way to stop him.

AL APPEAL

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watched him

25 YEARS LATER:

Domestic Spying

U.S. Army spies shadowed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. the day he died in Memphis. They watched him closely through most of the 1960s, but stepped up their observation of him in early 1968 because of fears that his planned "Poor People's Campaign" on Washington would lead to widespread violence.

On April 4, 1968, King was killed by a sniper's bullet at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis.

In the 25 years since, investigators have focused on the role the FBI and other police agencies played in King's life. Few have paid attention to the Army's activities.

Some of the Army's spying against anti-war and civil rights groups became public knowledge in 1971 congressional hearings. But key intelligence officers avoided testifying, leaving the full story untold.

The Commercial Appeal's 16-month investigation of the Army's secret spy war with black citizens provides a first-time look inside the Army's largest-ever espionage operation within the United States.

Much of the story was pieced together from a trail of memos, memoirs, diaries and meeting notes scattered around the country in military archives, the Library of Congress, presidential libraries and private collections. Some of the documents are still classified. Other pieces came from interviews with nearly 200 participants, including the recollections of several dozen Army agents still living in this country and in Mexico.

This newspaper's investigation uncovered no hard evidence that Army Intelligence played any role in King's assassination, although Army agents were in Memphis the day he was killed.

But the review of thousands of

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King

government documents and interviews with people involved in the spying revealed that by early 1968 Army Intelligence regarded King as a major threat to national security.

A threat

Army Intelligence opened its file on King in 1947 with a photograph showing him and other Morehouse College students leaving a meeting of Mrs. Dorothy Lilley's Intercollegiate Council. She was a suspected Communist, according to the file on King kept by the 111th Military Intelligence Group at Fort McPherson in Atlanta.

Reports on King's activities were added periodically through the 1950s, but comments in his intelligence file indicate Army officers at first considered him more of a phenomenon than a threat.

Army spies pegged King as a Communist tool in the fall of 1957 when he spoke at the 25th anniversary of the integrated Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tenn. Army Intelligence had watched the school for years.

A Sept. 6, 1940, report from Maj. G. R. Carpenter, assistant chief of staff for intelligence for the Sixth Corps Area in Chicago, said the school's executive director, Myles Horton, and Rev. Claude Williams of Memphis, a New York native known for his "Communistic activities," were working together to teach "a course of instruction to develop Negro organizers in the southern cotton states."

King's visit was given extra weight because of an FBI report received the previous July of his Baltimore meeting with Stanley D. Levison, a New York millionaire who had been under bureau surveillance as a Communist fund-raiser since June 9, 1952. Levison and King formed a long friendship and business relationship.

The suspicion with which top Army officers viewed blacks had its genesis in simple ignorance but gained credence because of real and perceived links between black civil rights activists and Communists and other subversives.

From the Civil War through Vietnam, Army officers were almost exclusively white and lived on military posts where contact with ordinary black Americans was virtually nonexistent. As late as 1967, only 3.49 percent of the Army's 143,517 officers were black. Few Army commanders understood that lynchings, denial of basic human rights and economic repression were at the root of black unrest.

Successive generations of Army leaders saw black Americans in the same light as Maj. R. M. Howell, assistant chief of staff for intelligence at Fort McPherson in Atlanta.

"Communism has chosen the Southern Negro as the American group most likely to respond to its revolutionary appeal," Howell told the War Department in a Dec. 5, 1932, intelligence report.

"Anti-communism" became a

"Communism has chosen the Southern Negro as the American group most likely to respond to its revolutionary appeal."

— Maj. R. M. Howell

"secular religion" for most Army officers after World War I, according to Dr. Christopher Pyle, a former Army intelligence school instructor who blew the whistle in 1970 on the Army's domestic spying on anti-war groups.

"Anyone who appeared soft on communism" soon found his career in limbo, Pyle, now a professor at Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass., told The Commercial Appeal.

As King gained prominence as a civil rights leader, intelligence officers also came to believe he was a man who sparked violence wherever he went, his nonviolent philosophy notwithstanding.

For example, an agent of the 113th Intelligence Detachment overheard King at a January 1963 dinner at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago telling "two black men and a pretty white woman that Project C was ready to go," according to the surveillance report the agent filed.

A followup report dated Jan. 24 describes Project C as "plans for massive disruption of public and private enterprise in Birmingham."

Three months later, King entered Birmingham. Television screens filled with pictures of marching black elementary school children being herded into police wagons while their parents were bombarded with high-powered water guns as they left the 16th Street Baptist Church. Riots broke out and Ku Klux Klansmen patroled the night streets with shotguns.

On May 12, the White House ordered Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Earle Wheeler to send 3,000 men from Fort Benning, Ga., to Birmingham. Maj. Gen. Charles Billingslea, commander of the Army's 2nd Division, had asked for help in Birmingham because "I may have a full-scale revolt on my hands down here."

Portions of the monthlong Birmingham disturbances were recorded by U2 spy planes taking off from the supersecret "Site 98" outside Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. Over the next seven years, at least 26 other such domestic spy flights by U2s and at least two involving the more advanced SR71 were requested by Army commanders and flown by the Air Force, according to classified documents reviewed by The Commercial Appeal.

These expensive spy flights illustrate Army commanders' growing fear of domestic upheaval as King's influence grew.

When King turned against the

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war in mid-1965, it merely made him that much more dangerous to some Army officers.

"To career officers, these (King's and other black militant) attacks were tantamount to giving aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war," Pyle said in an interview. "Since the enemy was a Communist government, suspicions of an international conspiracy were confirmed."

Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough, the Army's top spy, became convinced that either the Chinese or Soviets, through Cuba, bankrolled King and other black radicals.

Yarborough's evidence came from Lt. Gen. Marcelino Garcia Barragan, the Mexican minister of national defense.

Through a trusted aide, Garcia gave Army Intelligence a report on June 29, 1967, that said Mexican Army Intelligence had discovered militant black Americans receiving combat training and secret funding from the Havana-based Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS), financed by Communist China's military intelligence agency.

The report said, "American Negroes (were) sighted (with) automatic weapons/unarmed combat training/drilling evident" at an urban guerrilla training camp near Chiapas in southern Mexico.

OLAS's aim was to "commence guerrilla wars throughout the hemisphere to destabilize United States-backed governments . . . and (OLAS) has pledged its support to the Negro liberation movement."

Stokely Carmichael, co-chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and a leader of the black power movement, was among a number of black Americans associated with the OLAS.

And Carmichael increasingly was seen in King's company.

Army Security Agency microphones recorded Carmichael trying to warn King that he was making powerful enemies during this exchange in King's Ebenezer Baptist Church office in Atlanta in early 1967:

Carmichael: You making a lot of new enemies. Not sure (unintelligible) Birmingham as dangerous as people you're pissing off. The man don't care you call ghettos concentration camps, but when you tell him his war machine is nothing but hired killers, you got trouble.

King: I told you in Los Angeles I can do nothing else.

In speech after speech the year before he died, King tied the growing disillusionment of inner-city and rural Southern blacks to the country's preoccupation with Vietnam.

On April 4, 1967, he told 3,000 people at New York's Riverside Church:

"A few years ago, it seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor, both black and white, through the poverty program.

"And then came the buildup in Vietnam, and I watched this program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor, so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube . . .

"Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now."

The speech shook the world. Life magazine called it "a demagogic slander that sounded like a script for Radio Hanoi."

Dispatches from the 525th Military Intelligence Group (MIG) in Vietnam reported that "Negro troops are unsettled" by articles on King's speech in Pacific Stars & Stripes and their hometown newspapers.

Maj. Gen. Joseph A. McChristian, Army chief of intelligence in Vietnam, sent Yarborough a top secret April 14 dispatch that

"treasonous propaganda from "a group calling itself Blacks Against Negative Dying (BAND) is being mailed to Negro troops telling them they are killing the wrong enemy."

The dispatch also included reports of two instances of enlisted soldiers shooting their officers. McChristian also said three black soldiers near Ankhe had offered a $200 pool for the execution of a white captain with the First Cavalry Division.

Desperate men

To many, King's shift in direction served as a lens to focus the nation's compassion and sense of justice on resolving its inner conflicts.

But Yarborough and other intelligence officers heard only the voice of an enemy who was gaining ground.

By summer 1967, the ground was shaking.

"Tank crews blast away at entrenched snipers with 50-caliber machineguns" was not a headline from Vietnam but from Detroit, where 43 people died and $45 million in property was destroyed. Rioters burned and plundered 100 other American cities during that long, hot summer.

Detroit was particularly significant to Army leaders, not just for the bloodshed and damage but the results of a secret survey.

After the riot, 496 black males arrested for firing rifles and shotguns at Army troops were herded into a warehouse north of Detroit. They were interviewed by agents of the Army's Psychological Operations Group, dressed as civilians, in conjunction with the Behavior Research Institute of Detroit.

The arrested men were asked dozens of questions, but the responses 363 of them gave to the question "Who is your favorite Negro leader?" stunned Army Intelligence.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was the clear favorite — 178 of the men named him. Men considered more radical, such as Carmichael and Malcolm X, came in a distant second and fourth.

Army Intelligence leaders repeatedly used this survey to signify the danger King represented to national security.

King really scared top Army commanders on Dec. 4, 1967, when he announced his intent to lead a poor people's march on Washington the next spring to focus public attention on "total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty."

King's call for a "Poor People's Campaign" came on the heels of the nation's worst summer of violence in three years and an October anti-war protest in which 200,000 demonstrators had besieged the Pentagon as alarmed Army brass watched from the roof.

Civilian authority's responses to these upheavals had shaken the faith of Army leaders in the government's stability. Top officers believed the years of violence and protest had weakened the nation's social and political foundations.

The escalating war in Vietnam, meanwhile, had stretched the Army's ability to keep peace at home, safeguard Europe from the Soviets and fight in Southeast Asia, secret documents show.

Now King, in a December press conference, promised "the worst chaos, hatred and violence any nation has ever encountered" if America did not heed his demands for change.

Memos obtained by The Commercial Appeal reveal Army leaders were increasingly frustrated with top civilian Pentagon officials who ignored warnings that black unrest was Communist-inspired, damaging morale in Vietnam and leading to armed revolt at home.

By December 1967, some officers felt desperate. Among them were Yarborough, who had been named assistant chief of staff for intelligence in 1966, and Maj. Gen. William Blakefield, chief of U.S. Army Intelligence Command, who reported to Yarborough.

"The Army was over a barrel," Yarborough said in an interview at his home in Southern Pines, N.C.

"Blacks were using the uncertainty of the Vietnam period and taking advantage of it," Yarborough said. "They were attacking the weak point in the line, which is tactically a good idea, but you couldn't do it without arousing animosity of all kinds.

"You couldn't expect people to be rational and look at this in a cool way," he said. "We were trying to fight a war at the same time where the home base was being eroded."

Army officers "take an oath to protect the country against all enemies, foreign and domestic," Yarborough said. "You see people breaking windows and throwing Molotov cocktails, snipers shooting policemen, people who are outwardly trying to shut the government down and announce that is what they are going to do, you have a feeling that this is perhaps a domestic enemy."

Blakefield told Army historians in 1975: "There was a fear among high-ranking Army officers that the long-term judgment of historians might be that the Army, in the late 1960s, failed to protect the people of this country, as they had in other times of crisis."

To stop that "enemy," Yarborough and Blakefield used the resources of the largest domestic spy network ever assembled in a free country.

The messiah

Though many black leaders spoke out against the Vietnam War, Army Intelligence focused on King, whom Yarborough described as "the messiah for his people, his own personal qualities notwithstanding."

King wasn't the first black leader, nor the first in his family, to be targeted for surveillance by the Army's spy agencies.

In September 1917, the War Department's Military Intelligence Division (MID) opened a file on King's maternal grandfather, Rev. A. D. Williams.

As pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Williams played a key role in Atlanta's black community. He was the Atlanta NAACP's first president in 1910 and an officer in the National Baptist Convention, the largest black religious organization of the time.

During World War I, Military Intelligence targeted black ministers and others as troublemakers or friends, depending on whether they worked as MID in-

formants. Memphis businessman Robert R. Church Jr. supplied MID Maj. Walter H. Loving with names of prominent blacks in each major Southern city, intelligence files show.

One of the first items in Williams's intelligence file was a top-secret telegram sent to the Army's Southern Department headquarters in Atlanta. The telegram said in part:

"It behooves us to find out all we possibly can about this colored preacher."

Later, a memo in Williams's file labeled him a "radical Negro agitator" for leading a campaign to create a black high school.

His NAACP involvement also earned him the attention of Army intelligence officers, who believed the civil rights group was "an agitative pro-Soviet organization for propagandizing the Negroes," according to a 1926 report by Lt. Col. Walter O. Boswell, Army Intelligence executive officer at the War Department.

King's father, M. L. King Sr., eventually succeeded Williams as pastor at Ebenezer — and inherited his own Army watchers, Army Intelligence records show.

King Sr.'s participation in the National Negro Congress tarred him with the Communist brush as well.

Col. Walter A. Buck, assistant chief of staff for intelligence, Third Army, at Fort McPherson in Atlanta said in a March 1947 report to the War Department that the NNC "serves as the staff unit of the Communist Party among Negroes."

The NNC's "program includes the ultimate founding of a Negro state in the South after the revolutionary overthrow of white landlords and capitalists," Buck said.

Of the three large black organizations active at the start of World War II — the NAACP, the National Urban League and the NNC — the National Negro Congress was considered the most activist and radical. Communist Party supporters gradually took it over, according to most histories, and a split with anti-war Stalinists at the start of WWII led to the group's decline.

Mere association with King's Ebenezer Baptist could put a person in Army Intelligence dossiers. For example, Army Intelligence files contain surveillance reports on Lillian D. Watkins, the church's financial secretary, and Felton Sims, the custodian. The only apparent justification was their employment by M. L. King Sr.

Army agents also watched an office two blocks from Ebenezer, which an April 1947 report from Third Army headquarters described as "the Auburn Avenue Branch (Negro) headquarters of the Communist Party of Georgia." Surveillance reports show local Communist head Dr. Ellwood Grant Boddie, a black dentist, visited Ebenezer regularly.

Not a clue

Despite the years of watching the King family, top Army officers were rattled by the prospect of Martin Luther King Jr. leading a horde into the nation's capital again.

An intelligence analysis distributed during a Dec. 12, 1967, conference at the Pentagon described King's plans for the march on Washington as "a devastating civil disturbance whose sole purpose is to shut down the United States government."

The analysis described King as "a Negro who repeatedly has preached the message of Hanoi and Peking."

Some of the Army's best officers attended that meeting to discuss "target city priorities" in light of "King's plans to ignite violence and mayhem" throughout the United States in April, according to a report on the conference.

But the meeting broke up in frustration, one participant said.

"Looking back, I remember nobody had any answers," he said. "We had all these West Point geniuses who could lead divisions. But when it came to stopping Dr. King, they didn't have a clue."

Nevertheless, Army Intelli-

"A few years ago, it seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor, both black and white, through the poverty program.

"And then came the buildup in Vietnam, . . . and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor . . .

"Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now."

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

gence intensified its surveillance of King and covertly dispatched Green Beret teams to make street maps, identify landing zones for riot troops and scout sniper sites in 39 potential racially explosive cities, including Memphis.

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The 20th Special Forces Group, headquartered in Alabama, seemed perfect for these scouting missions in the South. The 20th SFG was a National Guard unit, part-time warriors who lived and worked in many of the communities where black unrest was centered.

Green Berets from the 20th often spied on King and other black Americans during the 1960s, military records and interviews show.

Some Vietnam Special Forces veterans — particularly those who had worked in murky clandestine operations with the CIA, the Special Operations Group (SOG) or the top secret Detachment B-57 — were "dumped" into the 20th "for safe-keeping," according to a former major with Army counterintelligence.

"They couldn't let a lot of these crazy guys back into the states because they couldn't forget their training," he said. "Birmingham (20th SFG headquarters) became Saigon. The rural South was in-country and at times things got out of hand."

Many members of the 20th SFG during the '60s still live in the South, some under new identities. Some of them spoke to The Commercial Appeal only if their names were not used or locations revealed.

A former 20th Special Forces sergeant from Detachment B-6, Company B, who was stationed in Columbus, Miss., said the unit's undercover missions "didn't peek into windows, if that's what you mean."

"But a lot of us knew guys who knew things. You know, Klan

File photo

Floyd McKissick (left) of the Congress of Racial Equality, King and Stokely Carmichael take up James Meredith's march on U.S. 51 near Hernando, Miss., on June 7, 1966, the day after Meredith was wounded by gunfire. Meredith was the first black admitted to Ole Miss.

guys who hated niggers, so we'd ask them about where nigger troublemakers might meet, and we'd go there and then file a report. It wasn't any big deal."

But it became a big deal.

In return for paramilitary training at a farm in Cullman, Ala., Klansmen soon became the 20th's intelligence network, whose information was passed to the Pentagon.

Bill Wilkinson, chief of the Klan's Invisible Empire branch in 1983, told United Press International (UPI) that the group no longer had a training camp at Cullman.

"And they're not paramilitary. We called them 'Klan Special Forces,' " he said.

Tinderbox

While Army commanders chewed on the King problem, another one came to a head: The sinkhole of Vietnam had sapped the military's pool of available, experienced manpower.

A grim group of Army generals received that secret news on Feb. 8, 1968, in a bugproof conference room at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla., headquarters of the U.S. Strike Command, responsible for the defense of the continental United States.

Two secrets in particular chilled the combat veterans: Gen. William C. Westmoreland, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam and a close West Point classmate of Yarborough's, badly needed reinforcements despite a publicly optimistic report he had given President Johnson just a few weeks before.

Yet there weren't enough troops left in the United States to control a nationwide outbreak of protests, let alone the armed revolt many officers expected.

"We knew the whole country was a tinderbox," said Ralph M. Stein, a Pace University law professor who in 1968 was the top Army Intelligence analyst in the Counterintelligence Analysis Bureau at the Pentagon.

"Once we recognized the magnitude of actual civil disturbances, based on our worst possible scenarios, we didn't have enough combat-type troops to react to widespread riots," Stein said.

"At one point, we even considered pulling troops out of Vietnam or withdrawing units from the Seventh Army (in Europe)."

U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command

Army Intelligence agents conduct radio surveillance in 1968. Surveillance was conducted in Memphis the day King was killed.

Upon his return from the MacDill meeting, Yarborough told a top aide: "I can't believe what sorry shape we're in."

Shadowing King

But Yarborough and other intelligence officers had little time to bemoan their situation.

King was busy building momentum for his poor people's march and trying to maintain a bridge between moderate civil rights forces like the NAACP and his own Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the increasingly militant Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee of Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown.

King did not have an easy task, as illustrated by a recording made Feb. 7, 1968, by Army Security Agency buggers.

Army undercover agents had followed Carmichael and King to the Pitts Motor Hotel in northwest Washington, where the two activists met in Brown's room. Carmichael had recently returned from Hanoi.

Brown and Carmichael argued against turning the other cheek in the upcoming Washington march.

Brown: We stop the fuckers here. Right here.

Carmichael: No more Uncle Tom, dammit. This let-them-shit-on-you shit ... ain't working. You know it and so does everybody.

King: Is killing and burning (unintelligible) in your own

Courtesy Mississippi Valley Collection

On March 28, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. marched in support of striking Memphis sanitation workers. The march turned violent, and Bernard Lee (right) had to clear the way for King and Rev. Ralph Abernathy. King was assassinated a week later.

city."

people's streets your answer?

Carmichael: It's time. We can't wait anymore, and the people (unintelligible) us are tired of waiting.

King: Nobody is as tired (of waiting) as me.

Carmichael: Then let's shut the honkies down. They bring the Army, we fight the fuckers with ours. We got guns. Marching for peace — shit, you seen it. What's it got us?

An hour after that exchange, Army agents listened to King tell 600 people at Vermont Avenue Baptist Church:

"We seek to say to the nation in our campaign that if you don't straighten up, then you're writing your own obituary."

Intelligence officers and other high-ranking government officials found it hard to mesh such rhetoric with King's avowed nonviolence.

In a Feb. 14 memo to President Johnson, White House aide Larry Temple called King's philosophy "criminal disobedience" and urged the president to "publicly unmask this type of conduct for what it really is."

On Feb. 15 at Fort Holabird, Md., Blakefield met with three of Yarborough's top aides — Herbert Taylor, special assistant to the Army's top spy; Dayton Cassidy of the Counterintelligence Analysis Branch; and Frederick H. Gaston Jr., Army Intelligence Systems Analysis Group.

A still classified memo of the meeting said Blakefield wanted a "systematic analysis of King's plans, manpower and weapons we might see in the streets" of Washington in April.

On Feb. 19, King went to Miami to drum up support for the "Poor People's Campaign." Armed with a new $230,000 Ford Foundation grant, he told a group of black ministers that American capitalism must be reorganized.

Rev. Samuel Billy Kyles of Memphis, who was in the audience, later that afternoon told King about 1,300 Memphis sanitation workers who were striking against the city for refusing to recognize their union. Kyles, joining Rev. James Lawson, asked King to come to Memphis to support the strikers.

A Feb. 22 report in King's Army Intelligence file states: "Indications from reliable source are MLK will be in Memphis to support union striking

Armed camp

While Army Intelligence scrambled to develop hard information that could be used to counter King's Washington plans, others made their own preparations for what many feared would be another summer of violence.

Detroit Mayor Jerome P. Cavanagh, who saw his city become a war zone in July 1967, asked the city's Common Council to authorize a $9 million bond issue to buy machineguns, M-1 carbines, gas masks, flak vests, 50,000 rounds of ammunition, infrared sniper scopes, tear gas guns and grenades, 50 new scout cars, eight armored vehicles, a helicopter and spotter plane.

Mayors and police officials in other cities such as Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Miami, Chicago and Newark also began buying high-powered rifles, machineguns, armored vehicles and tear gas grenades.

In Memphis, new Fire and Police Commissioner Frank C. Holloman began outfitting five new anti-sniper squads with 30.06 rifles with scopes, the civilian version of the rifle used by Army sniper teams.

While big city officials were making these public moves, some Army units secretly took matters in their own hands.

In February 1968, the 113th Military Intelligence Group (MIG) at Fort Sheridan, Ill., outside Chicago, began supplying the "Legion of Justice" terrorist group with tear gas, Mace, electronic surveillance equipment and money to harass anti-war groups.

Led by Chicago lawyer S. Thomas Sutton, who recruited Chicago police intelligence officers, the Legion used wiretaps supplied by 113th agents to break into and bug the offices of anti-war groups.

In Baltimore, the Inspectional Services Division of the city police received secret funding from the 109th MIG to spy on area black radicals.

In Washington, the Metro Police received $120,000 in 1967 and $150,000 in 1968 from Army Intelligence. Undercover police intelligence officers met regularly with 116th MIG agents. They maintained an index card file of 21,000 suspected black and anti-war radicals.

Teams of police and Army Intelligence officers followed and photographed King during a prayer march in Arlington Cemetery on Feb. 6, 1968, and his sermon the following day at Vermont Avenue Baptist Church. The officers later used the pictures for dart practice.

While these Army Intelligence units secretly worked with civilian police departments, other Army officers supplied automatic weapons and even rocket launchers to the black market, where they often ended up in the hands of militants, white and black.

Stolen or missing Army weapons had been sold to extremists and rioters as far back as 1940, according to Army records.

In May 1963, a carload of white men using Army-issue 45-caliber pistols with Army bullets shot up and firebombed the farm of Hartman Turnbow, who had dared to be the first black in Holmes County, Miss., to register to vote in the 20th Century.

The pistols had been "misplaced" from an Alabama armory and sold to Ku Klux Klansmen from Greenwood, Miss., by an Army National Guard sergeant, an Army officer familiar with the case said. The weapons were never officially recorded as lost, the officer said.

The Defense Supply Agency between 1958-63 supplied riot shotguns, M-1 rifles with bayonets and Army radios to police and highway patrol units in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. But the practice was discontinued in 1964 because "these weapons are finding their way into the hands of undesirables or extremists," an October 1963 Army Provost Marshal report said.

Many weapons turned up "lost" during training exercises in the United States and Mexico, according to a classified Justice Department file reviewed by The Commercial Appeal.

During a 1967 training exercise at Camp Shelby, Miss., involving Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana National Guard troops, soldiers of the 20th Special Forces Group lost "70 M-16 rifles and assorted .45 pistols and ammunition," a report in the file says. An undetermined number of M-72 light anti-tank weapon rockets also were "lost during

the exercises," the report added.

The Justice Department file was put together in preparation for the trial of Maj. Gen. Carl C. Turner, provost marshal of the Army. Turner, the Army's top law enforcement officer, pleaded guilty in 1971 to selling firearms illegally to the Kansas City and Chicago police departments.

Turner also tried in February 1968 to secretly sell machineguns and sniper rifles to Memphis's assistant police chief Henry E. Lux at a Sacramento conference on civil disturbances sponsored by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Lux turned down the offer.

The Army had always battled theft of its weapons, but now powerful tools of death were turning up in the hands of growing numbers of people fighting the government.

Destiny nears

In public appearances around the country, King continued to hammer away at the "terrible, tragic, unjust war taking place in Vietnam" and to drum up interest in his "Poor People's Campaign."

King's rallying cry came against the backdrop of Westmoreland's request for still more troops in Vietnam and the 1968 presidential primaries. Anti-war candidate Eugene McCarthy won a startling 42 percent of the vote in New Hampshire's primary. Sen. Robert Kennedy took the cue to get into the race, promising to end the war and heal the nation.

And the war was going badly. The Tet Offensive had shattered Westmoreland's forecast of impending victory. More than 40,000 soldiers had deserted in 1967, and drug use among Army troops in Vietnam had gotten so bad that the 135th Military Intelligence Group in Saigon concluded in February 1968 that "we are approaching the stage where in some maneuver battalions whole squads are infested (with drugs)."

Meanwhile, the Army had finished its intelligence outlines on 124 cities with the potential for violence that summer. The outlines included maps with all "sensitive areas" marked, landing zones, secret storage sites for riot gear and weapons, and files on all civic leaders and known troublemakers.

Details of those plans were kept secret from civilian law enforcement agencies for fear of leaks. Still, at least the Army felt better prepared for King.

But before Washington came Memphis.

At 11:06 a.m. on March 28, King linked arms with Rev. Ralph Abernathy, his trusted colleague in the SCLC, and Bishop B. Julian Smith of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and led a march in support of Memphis's striking sanitation workers.

The peaceful demonstration soon turned violent, leaving a 17-year-old dead, 60 injured and 120 in police custody.

Later, in his eighth-floor room at the Rivermont Hotel, King warned Memphis's black leaders that he would not participate in another march unless it was better organized.

An FBI report on the Memphis violence condemned King.

"This clearly demonstrates that acts of so-called nonviolence advocated by King cannot be controlled. The same thing could happen in his planned massive civil disobedience for Washington in April."

In Washington the day after the march, Sen. Robert Byrd (D-Va.) said, "The nation was given a preview of what may be in store for this city by the outrageous and despicable riot that Martin Luther King helped bring about in Memphis . . ."

King flew to Atlanta that day, but promised to return to Memphis the following week to lead another march.

On March 31, the president of the United States became a casualty of Vietnam — Johnson announced he would not seek reelection.

On April 3, King returned to Memphis. Army agents from the 111th Military Intelligence Group shadowed his movements and monitored radio traffic from a sedan crammed with electronic equipment.

Eight Green Beret soldiers from an "Operation Detachment Alpha 184 Team" were also in Memphis carrying out an unknown mission. Such "A-teams" usually contained 12 members.

On April 4, at 6:01 p.m., a bullet from a 30.06 rifle equipped with a scope struck King down on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel.

The man whose fingerprints were found on that type gun — James Earl Ray — pleaded guilty to King's murder and is serving a 99-year prison sentence. Ray bought the rifle from a sporting goods store in Birmingham, FBI investigators said.

On Oct. 3, Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark sent a report to the White House. The predicted summer of violence that was to have begun with King's April 22 demonstrations in Washington never happened, the report said.

Rioting had broken out in several cities as news of King's assassination spread, but "there was a clear and significant decline in the number and severity of riots and disorders this summer," Clark said.

HOW THEY SPIED

U.S. Army domestic spying operations, 1968:

■ 304 intelligence offices across the continental United States, divided into six regional military intelligence groups (MIGs), plus the 116th MIG that operated exclusively in metropolitan Washington.

■ Fiscal 1968 budget for all MIGs — $14.4 million, up 26 percent from the previous year, plus $300,000 for surveillance equipment.

■ All offices connected by a state-of-the-art ASR 35 communications system, described as "an automatic sending/receiving teletype with a voice/data capability."

■ Another super-secret MIG, the 902nd, controlled directly by Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough, assistant chief of staff for intelligence.

■ The 902nd commanded by Vietnam veteran Col. John W. Downie from offices in Falls Church, Va.

■ Classified intelligence files reviewed by The Commercial Appeal reveal the 902nd spied on politicians, activists and celebrities.

■ The eight MIGs employed 798 Army officers, 1,573 enlisted men and 1,532 civilians, including 67 black undercover agents. Of the total, 1,576 were directly involved in intelligence-gathering activities. About 260 of these spies were civilians.

■ Army Intelligence maintained "subversive/national security" dossiers on 80,731 Americans and 211,243 organizations.

■ It had access to the Defense Central Index of Investigation's (DCII) 19 million personnel dossiers; more than 2.2 million files at the FBI, Secret Service, Civil Service Commission, Passport Office and CIA; criminal files at most large police departments; credit bureau, school registration and airline reservation records; and the "Special Service Staff" files, a covert group of Internal Revenue Service agents that maintained tax dossiers on 8,585 individuals and 2,873 organizations.

■ At Fort Holabird, Md., headquarters of the Army Intelligence Command, the giant U.S. Army Investigative Records Repository (USAIRR) contained 6.2 million personal and 208,972 subject files in orange folders.

■ Beginning in early 1967, a $2 million computerized filing and retrieval system (the Randtriever I) was installed. It was necessary because the previous year, the repository processed 338,613 new cases and handled another 676,628 requests for dossiers by various federal agencies.

■ Army Intelligence published green-and-white glossy paperback "mug bugs" on black radicals containing photographs, family history, political philosophy, personal finances and surveillance data to permit intelligence personnel and Army commanders in riot areas to identify the "dissident elements" within a community.

■ Intelligence units also assigned to the U.S. Strike Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida and the Continental Army Command (CONARC), under the direction of intelligence chief Brig. Gen. H. L. Ash.

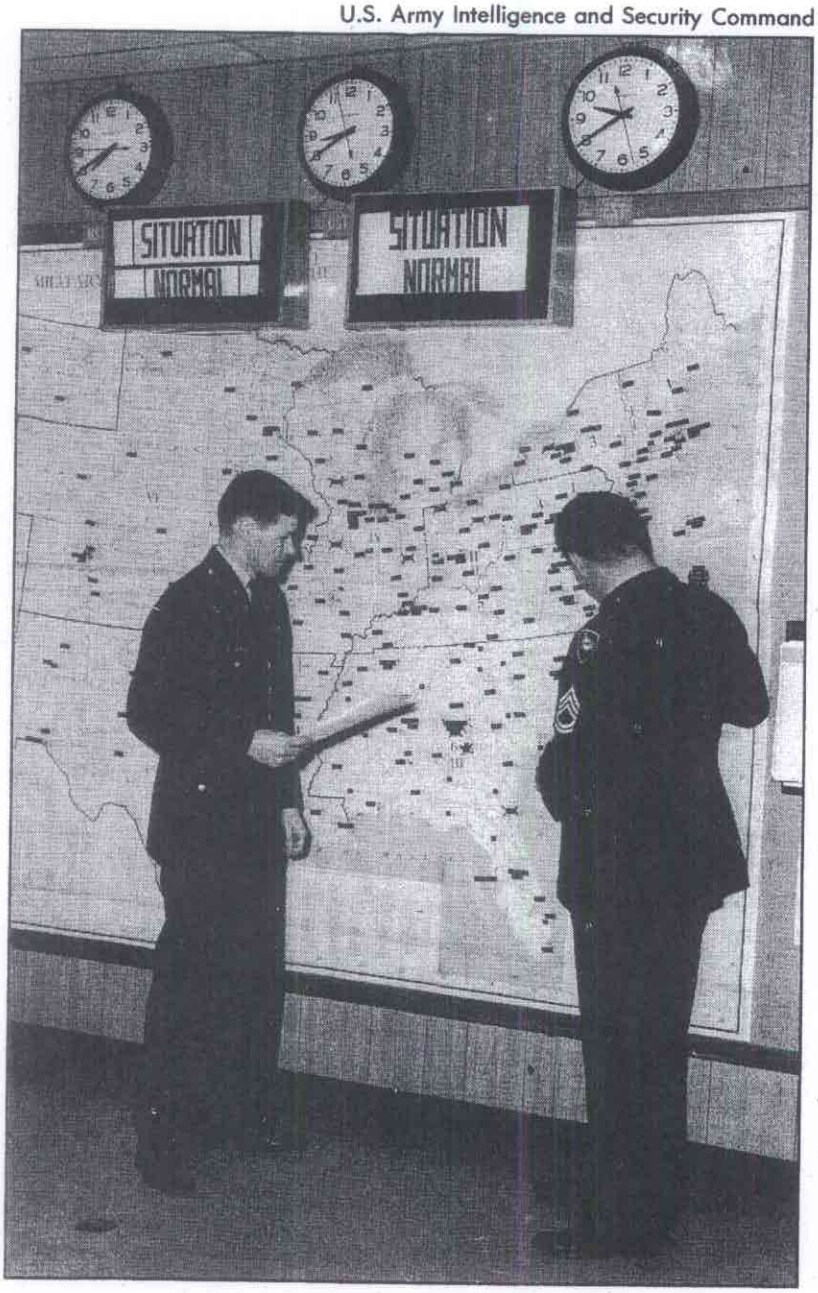
■ These commands maintained their own files on black subversives, as did individual intelligence units attached to the 5th Mechanized Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colo., and the 18th Airborne Corps headquartered at Fort Bragg, N.C.

■ The Army Security Agency (ASA) employed expert wiretappers, buggers and safe-crackers. In unmarked Volkswagen minibuses equipped with radio direction finders, ASA agents cruised streets searching for clandestine radio transmissions that might reveal the start of civil disturbances.

■ Air Force reconnaissance aircraft like the RF 101 sent aerial photos to the Army's Imagery Interpretation Center at Fort Holabird, while Army helicopters followed the paths of marchers or suspected armed radicals.

■ All pertinent information collected on subversives and radicals was channeled to Yarborough's staff, specifically the Counterintelligence Analysis Bureau (CIAB), secretly headquartered in a red brick warehouse at 1430 S. Eads St. in Arlington, Va.

U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command



All Army Intelligence operations in the continental United States were coordinated out of the U.S. Army Intelligence Command operations room at Fort Holabird, Md., pictured here in 1968.

Top spy feared current below surface unrest

By Stephen G. Tompkins

The Commercial Appeal

Army spying on civilians expanded in the '60s because the FBI and local police forces proved unreliable, according to the man who was the Army's top spy in 1966-68.

But Lt. Gen. William Pelham Yarborough, who became Army assistant chief of staff for intelligence in December 1966, also was motivated by a deeper concern that anarchy and treason lay behind the anti-war and civil rights movements.

In a two-hour interview at his North Carolina home, Yarborough defended Army Intelligence's role in spying on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other Americans and said he never authorized anything illegal.

"If it was completely illegal or un-American, we would have turned in our suits," he said.

It had been illegal since 1958 for the Army to spy on American citizens at home, but Yarborough said the FBI, which was responsible for counterintelligence inside the United States, needed help as civil unrest spread.

"The FBI was inundated and unable to function," he said. "Their resources were overloaded and they were especially lacking in black counterintelligence people."

But military records and interviews with former staff members show Yarborough was convinced that Army Intelligence was engaged in a war with Communists for the minds of Americans.

"This is a war of ideology and persuasion," he told Gen. William C. Westmoreland in a February 1968 letter about the protests that had begun sweeping the country.

Westmoreland, who commanded U.S. forces in Vietnam from 1965-68, was a West Point classmate, 1936, as was Gen. Creighton Abrams, who commanded U.S. forces in Vietnam after Westmoreland.

Yarborough told Westmoreland, "... the minions of Mao Tse-tung and Ho Chi Minh are leading us around by our noses ... even to the degree of having us try to convince ourselves that we can't win and that Ho's cause is more just and valid than our own."

Yarborough's career clearly prepared him for this war.

The son of Col. Leroy W. Yarborough, an Army Intelligence officer who served in the Far East from 1918-22, William Yarborough served as an Airborne regimental commander during World War II; deputy director of the Army assistance operations in Cambodia, 1956-57; and commander of the 66th Military Intelligence Group in Stuttgart, Germany, 1958-59, where he worked with legendary spymasters Roger Hilsman and Ed Lansdale.

From 1961-65, he commanded the John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare at Fort Bragg, N.C. — the Green Berets school. While there, he argued that his elite Special Forces commandoes and Army Intelligence could "mutually support" one another in "counterinsurgency

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Yarborough Special Collection/Boston College

Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough (right) greets Gen. Harold Johnson outside the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg, N.C. Johnson later would be Army chief of staff and Yarborough his assistant chief of staff for intelligence.

operations both foreign and domestic," according to letters he wrote to Maj. Gen. Garrison B. Coverdale, commander of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center at Fort Holabird, Md.

During Yarborough's tenure as assistant chief of staff for intelligence, Army Intelligence made frequent use of Green Beret troops in domestic spying.

An officer who served under Yarborough at Fort Bragg described him as "an expert at counterinsurgency."

One of Yarborough's top aides at Army Intelligence described him as "a very able guy, much more able than his successor, but he had a rag on about radicals and subversion. He was always saying that we knew how to deal with subversion in other countries but not at home."

Yarborough's opinion of anti-war protesters comes across clearly in this excerpt from an interview conducted by two Army historians shortly after his retirement in 1975.

The general described "the burning of Washington, the siege of the Pentagon" during an October 1967 anti-war march on the Pentagon.

"What some people don't remember was the terror that all this struck into the hearts of the people that thought the empire was coming apart at the seams."

Yarborough said he stood on the Pentagon roof:

"It looked like a castle where the Huns had gathered around; as far as the eye could reach, there they were, shaking their bony fists. There were American Nazis. There were Communists. There were hippies. . . .

"I can assure you it was a sight to make you stop to think," he said.

Army Chief of Staff Harold Johnson and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara also were on the roof, Yarborough remembered.

"As we looked at this great horde below us, waving their battering rams, so to speak . . . the Secretary of Defense turned to the Chief of Staff of the Army and said, 'Johnny, what are we going to do about this?'

"Johnny said, 'I'm damned if I know.' "

Yarborough knew: He doubled his intelligence-gathering efforts against King and his supporters.

"We had some reason to feel outside influences were aiding and abetting those who had a legitimate right (to protest) inside the U.S., and this became the reason to try and invoke more sophisticated means to find out who was doing what," Yarborough told The Commercial Appeal.

Records show he liked to quote Phillip Abbot Luce's *A Road to Revolution: Communist Guerilla Warfare in the U.S.A.* to his staff, particularly the section that said Communists "have obviously decided that urban negro ghettos hold the key to guerrilla activities that can create enough anarchy to constitute a revolution."

"To dig it out," Yarborough said, " a jettisoning of certain civil rights must take place. One has to resort occasionally to curfews, to search and seizure, to mail monitoring, to telephone tapping, in order to get to that vast (guerrilla) underground."

Yet, Yarborough told The Commercial Appeal, "We were not totalitarians. We were not trying to do our fellow Americans in. We were trying to help the agencies of the government keep law and order so that rational solutions could be reached.

"I couldn't imagine my own country being in an insurgent situation, but the earmarks were there."

In 1917, spy target was black America

By Stephen G. Tompkins

The Commercial Appeal

Lt. Col Ralph Van Deman created the Army's black spy network in 1917.

He continued to influence spying on American citizens until his death in 1952, The Commercial Appeal's review of intelligence files shows.

The spy system that would question the loyalties of black Americans for generations began May 3, 1917. That day, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker ordered Van Deman to crank up the department's sleepy Military Intelligence Division.

After declaring war on Germany, the United States needed an internal security network, and the Army would provide it. The Secret Service and the Justice Department's infant Bureau of Investigation were too small or inexperienced to handle the large counterespionage task.

Van Deman immediately set out to define which groups posed a serious threat to the country's security.

In a June 2, 1917, memo to Baker, he said the United States faced four principal domestic enemies: the International Workers of the World (IWW), a forerunner of the AFL-CIO bitterly opposed to the war; opponents of the draft; Socialists and "Negro Unrest."

Racial unrest and violence disgusted Van Deman, according to letters he wrote to his family while stationed in the Philippines in 1906.

His letters made special note of a riot by black soldiers in Brownsville, Texas, that left two white townspeople dead, plus riots in Atlanta in which two whites and 10 blacks were killed and five times that many were wounded, raped or tortured.

Similar violence erupted in 1917, and at MID, Van Deman was receiving reports of growing black militancy.

On July 24, a letter arrived from a group calling itself "The Black Nation": "The Germans has not done us any harm, and they cannot treat us any meaner than you all has. Beware when you train 50,000 or 60,000 of the negro race."

In early July, race riots in East St. Louis, Ill., had resulted in the deaths of 39 blacks and nine whites and the callout of the Illinois National Guard to restore order. On July 30, in Waco, Texas, 20 black soldiers of the 24th Infantry clashed with local authorities, leaving one black soldier dead and several whites wounded.

On Aug. 2, Van Deman, then 52, walked into a small conference room in the Hooe Building in Washington and shared these reports with 10 MID staff members.

He told them to launch an immediate, comprehensive intelligence effort targeting black America.

In a memo to Baker nine days later, Van Deman declared that "German influence" was "at the bottom of Negro unrest."

He also predicted imminent "violence of a serious nature" among the nation's black population. On Aug. 23, black soldiers in Houston rioted, leaving 17 black troopers and white citizens dead.

Baker's special assistant, Emmett Scott, wrote Van Deman that black troops' anger over mistreatment had caused the violence.

But Van Deman ignored the explanation, as he would later efforts to dissuade him from his conviction that black dissent stemmed from foreign-backed subversion.

He turned his attention to the black church after receiving a memo Aug. 28 from Maj. Walter H. Loving, a black soldier on his staff.

Rev. Charles H. Williams, field secretary of the National Council of Churches, had told Loving no one was more influential in the black community than its ministers.

Ralph Van Deman

There is no known record of Van Deman's response, though he later told Maj. Fuller Potter, second in command of MID's Counterintelligence Police in New York: "The black church will always be a target of our enemies."

Van Deman, therefore, made the black church MID's target.

MID records show a constant concern over the loyalty of black churchgoers and leaders despite large public demonstrations of patriotism like the National Baptist Convention meeting that Army spies photographed on Oct. 24, 1918.

Van Deman's agents watched families that entertained troops, followed soldiers' girlfriends to determine their loyalty, watched hotels and listened to Sunday sermons in black churches.

Van Deman also widened his investigation, establishing MID branch offices in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, New Orleans, San Francisco and Los Angeles, laying the foundation for creation of 304 intelligence offices in the 1960s.

Van Deman and Loving began recruiting informers within the black community.

Robert R. Moton, Booker T. Washington's successor at Tuskegee Institute, came aboard, as did Dr. C. V. Roman of Nashville, who sent Loving a list of potential black informants and troublemakers in the Mid-South.

Loving wrote Van Deman on Nov. 23, 1917, that "Mr. Robert R. Church of Memphis, Tenn., who is one of the wealthiest men of the race, . . . has put me in touch with one prominent colored man in each of the largest Southern cities."

Loving also tried to tell Van Deman that not all black dissent arose from German influence. In a Dec. 2, 1917, letter, Loving sent Van Deman a clip from The Commercial Appeal about Ligon Scott, a black man burned at the stake by a mob after being accused of assaulting a Dyersburg, Tenn., woman.

"Is there not some way by which we may assure the colored people of that section that the government will take steps to bring to justice the perpetrators of this awful crime?" Loving asked.

But Van Deman wanted proof of subversion, not moral judgments.

He hired Joel E. Spingarn, the white board chairman of the NAACP, and made him a major in MID in May 1918.

Spingarn and black agent Lt. T. Montgomery Gregory ran a small unit of undercover agents, according to intelligence documents.

The documents show Spingarn, who remained NAACP chairman during his tenure at MID, used his post to obtain critical information for MID, such as a list of the organization's 32,000 members.

The NAACP gives an annual award named for Spingarn.

Opening private mail became second nature. During World War I, MID opened 100,000 pieces of mail a week and surreptitiously subscribed to more than 60 black publications.

Despite these efforts, Van Deman could not convince his superiors of a German-orchestrated black subversive movement.

But Luther Witzke helped change that in February 1918. Witzke, a German naval lieutenant, spy and saboteur, gave Van Deman proof that blacks were the country's Achilles heel.

Witzke and German spy Kurt A. Jahnke had been responsible for three bombings in the United States in 1916 and 1917 that killed at least 16 and caused millions of dollars in damage to military installations.

But in 1918, Witzke, Jahnke

AP

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (right) and longtime aide Clyde A. Tolson arrive at the Supreme Court in July 1942.

and six other German agents were preparing to launch their most ambitious project from a base in Mexico.

"There is something terrible going to happen on the other side of the border when I get there," Witzke told Col. Paul Bernardo Altendorf, a 40-year-old native of Poland who served in the Mexican Army and helped MID spy on Germans in Mexico.

Altendorf helped Witzke cross the border at Nogales, Ariz., where Witzke was arrested.

His luggage, snatched from the Bowman Hotel on the Mexican side, contained coded messages and cipher tables, which Van Deman's cryptographers soon broke.

Those messages and other information developed through interrogating Witzke and others uncovered plans to begin a revolution in America.

Luther Witzke

Mines, factories, railroads, bridges, and telegraph and telephone systems were targeted for simultaneous explosions. Weapons and explosives had been smuggled into designated sites by truck and submarine, according to court-martial records and MID documents.

Black British agent William Gleaves, who Witzke thought was on his side, testified at Witzke's court-martial at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, on Aug. 16, 1918:

"I were to go and see the colored soldiers and the colored population . . . and explain what we were going to carry out, that we were going to carry out a revolution."

Gleaves said Witzke intended to bribe black soldiers not to interfere when white officers ordered them to suppress strikers that Witzke would organize to shut down vital industries.

Witzke confirmed that radical blacks had received weapons and that German agents "have hidden our explosives under colored homes and floorboards of colored churches."

This information hit the War Department and White House like German artillery.

Van Deman, sitting in his new seven-story headquarters at 15th and M Streets NW, immediately cabled MID offices nationwide to "make all efforts to uncover Negro subversion. . . . Weapons and explosives supplied by German agents are in this country."

Van Deman was given a free hand to eliminate the threat.

Army Intelligence historian John P. Finnegan said Van Deman's emphasis on domestic spying helped the nation avoid serious social, industrial and political disruption during World War I.

"The calmness of the American home front during World War I owed something to the fact that a good deal of time and effort was spent by many people, including the members of the Military Intelligence Division, in making sure it stayed quiet."

Yet, Finnegan said, Van Deman's belief that foreign subversion inspired dissent "helped create an atmosphere of repression and conformity which inevitably led to the excesses of the Red Scare after the war."

Those excesses extended beyond labor unions and Bolsheviks to include black Americans. Although the home front stayed quiet and black soldiers and their families proved their loyalty, Army spying against blacks not only continued, but accelerated in the years between the world wars.

After his retirement in September 1929, Van Deman set up a private security firm in San Diego, from which he operated a right-wing intelligence network, investigating Communists and black radicals.

He regularly shared information from his 85,000 files with Army intelligence officers who traveled from The Presidio in San Francisco to meet with him.

Van Deman's influence also extended beyond the Army.

In 1918, he introduced Clyde A. Tolson, a Baker aide, to a young Justice Department clerk: John Edgar Hoover, who in 1924 became head of the Bureau of Investigation, later the FBI.

Tolson left the War Department in 1928 to join the FBI. He became Hoover's No. 2 man by 1947, which he remained until Hoover's death in 1972.

Many Hoover scholars believe Tolson and his boss were lovers. Whatever their relationship, Tolson for 40 years would keep close contact with Army Intelligence, The Commercial Appeal's review of intelligence files shows.

Those intelligence documents provide clues to Hoover's unusual level of cooperation with Army Intelligence.

The FBI director, obsessed with turf and power, was no fan of the Office of Naval Intelligence, the oldest government espionage organization in the United States, or of the Central Intelligence Agency, with which he battled for control of spying inside the United States.

But Hoover and Van Deman, often through Tolson, regularly shared information on their dual obsessions — Negro and Communist agitators. Hoover continued to share information with the Army's intelligence branch long after Van Deman's retirement.

Spying linked Carmichael to Chinese, Cuba

By Stephen G. Tompkins
The Commercial Appeal

In early May 1967, Army Intelligence microphones hidden in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee offices in Atlanta recorded SNCC co-chairman Stokely Carmichael discussing an armed revolt by black Americans.

CARMICHAEL: We'd learn a lot from studying (Che) Guevara's tactics. But baby, we gotta have the guns and stuff to do the damage. The man don't understand till you aim at his head. (Argentine-born Guevara was Cuban strongman Fidel Castro's top lieutenant and wrote an influential book on guerrilla warfare.)

SNCC EMPLOYEE GEORGE WARE: Yeah, well, where you gonna get it?

CARMICHAEL: South, south of here.

On May 5, Carmichael distributed a secret report to SNCC members. Army Intelligence obtained a copy of the seven-page document, titled "Report from the Chairman." It said in part:

"Around the world and particularly in the Third World, we are looked to as the organization inside the United States who is ready to lay the foundation for a revolution. . . . We must then be prepared to wage a fight against this country inside the country."

Army Intelligence, already alarmed by growing militancy among anti-war and civil rights groups, saw the report and the taped conversation as evidence of Carmichael's willingness to turn to violence and possible foreign influence.

Later evidence would hurt not only Carmichael but Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as well. Army agents photographed and bugged King and Carmichael in meetings, and Carmichael often quoted King.

After King's famous anti-war speech at New York's Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, Carmichael encouraged a black audience in St. Petersburg, Fla., on April 18 to support King's stance on Vietnam, "and when they ask you, tell them, 'Yeah, yeah, we agree with Dr. King. We not gonna fight your filthy wars for you anymore.' "

But the most damaging piece of secret information came from Mexican Army Intelligence.

Mexican agents uncovered in May 1967 a plot led by Javier Fuentes Gutierrez, head of the Mexican Communist Party, to establish a "socialist regime" within Mexico.

Gutierrez and his cohorts were financed by Hsinhua, the Chinese Communist Press Agency, which Mexican Intelligence discovered was a front for the Chinese Ministry of State Security, China's CIA.

Gutierrez's followers already had dynamited a Mexican Army truck and were seeking rifles and mortars from arms dealers.

But more important to U.S. Army Intelligence, the Mexicans revealed Gutierrez also was a top organizer of the Havana-based Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) — another group that received secret Chinese funding.

OLAS not only helped finance Gutierrez's activities but had set up a secret terrorist training camp in the jungles of Chiapas in southern Mexico.

Black Americans had been spied training at the camp.

On July 19, Mexican troops raided the Chiapas camp and snatched a large cache of automatic rifles, grenades and machineguns.

According to still classified Army Intelligence files, the AK-47 rifles eventually were traced from gunrunner Kenneth G. Burnstine of Miami to gun dealer Mitchell Livingston WerBell of Atlanta, a former OSS agent who ran his own paramilitary training camp on a 60-acre farm in Powder Springs, Ga.

WerBell supplied military weapons to anybody with the cash to pay for them. WerBell also had key contacts throughout the Caribbean.

Carmichael was photographed talking to one of those contacts — Marti Tellez — in the Havana Libre Hotel on July 27. Tellez, a former Haitian army captain, flew contraband for Burnstine's Miami-based Florida Atlantic Airlines.

A Cuban agent working for the CIA took the picture, and a report on the meeting was forwarded to Army Intelligence.

Carmichael was in Havana to attend meetings of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity.

"These (OLAS) are radical Communist revolutionaries who advocate militant and coordinated guerrilla warfare throughout the Americas," according to an analysis of the meeting based on CIA reports.

The analysis had been handed to Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough, Army assistant chief of staff for intelligence, at his regular Thursday meeting at CIA headquarters on Aug. 10.

On Aug. 2, five days after meeting with Tellez, Carmichael said he would lead an armed revolt against his homeland.

"We are organizing urban guerrillas in the United States according to the tactics inspired by Guevara of creating two or three more Vietnams to bring the collapse of capitalism and imperialism," Carmichael said.

Carmichael then threatened President Lyndon Johnson, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

"We are not waiting for them to kill us. We will kill first and we will settle the score," Carmichael said. "We must make vengeance against the leaders of the United States. We don't know if our people are ready yet, but our list is ready.

"We have no alternative but to use aggressive armed violence," Carmichael said.

On Oct. 10, Army Intelligence sent a report to Army Chief of Staff Harold Johnson that Carmichael and his SNCC colleagues were calling for "Negroes to arm themselves in preparation for guerrilla warfare . . ."

"They seek to destroy the present American economic, political and social systems in a SNCC-defined attempt to gain freedom for the Negro."

In January 1968, as King was drumming up support for his planned march on Washington, Carmichael was in Hanoi, the capital of North Vietnam. In February, he met with King in Washington. King was killed two months later in Memphis.

In March 1975, Burnstine was convicted by Florida authorities of masterminding a $50 million-a-year cocaine drug smuggling operation in Latin America and Mexico.

A year later, his World War II-era airplane, a P51 Mustang, blew up while he was competing in an air show.

In 1974, WerBell was subpoenaed to testify before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. The committee was looking into financier Robert Vesco's efforts to sell and manufacture automatic weapons in the Caribbean.

WerBell invoked the Fifth Amendment to every question asked by subcommittee investigator Philip R. Manuel.

WerBell died of a heart attack in 1983. Testimony in a Los Angeles courtroom later that year said WerBell had been poisoned.