

N.A.A.C.P. CHECKED 25 YEARS BY F.B.I.

No Illegal Activities Found
—Women's Movement Also
Monitored by Bureau

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WASHINGTON, April 28 — The Federal Bureau of Investigation spent 25 years monitoring the "wholly lawful political activity" of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the ground that it was conducting a search for Communist infiltration, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence disclosed today.

The committee also said that the bureau had infiltrated the feminist movement and made targets of such groups as the Christian Front and Christian Mobilizers of Rev. Charles E. Coughlin and the conservative American Christian Action Council, led by the Rev. Carl D. McIntyre.

Army domestic intelligence operations opened files on numerous groups seeking peaceful change, including the John Birch Society, the Young Americans for Freedom, the National Organization of Women, the National Urban League, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Business Executives to End War in Vietnam and the N.A.A.C.P.

In its 341-page report on domestic intelligence activities, the Senate committee cited these as demonstrations that

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"large numbers of law abiding Americans and lawful domestic groups have been subjected to extensive intelligence investigation and surveillance."

The committee said it had found the domestic intelligence activity, including operations by the F.B.I., the Central Intelligence Agency, the Army and the Internal Revenue Service, had been "overbroad" because of the "absence of precise standards for intelligence investigations."

It traced the erosion of these standards from 1924, when Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone limited the F.B.I. to criminal matters, through 1976. Mr. Stone's standard was that the bureau "is not concerned with political or other opinions of individuals." "It is concerned" he said, "only with their conduct and then only such conduct as is forbidden by the laws of the United States."

But the committee found the scope of domestic intelligence investigations consistently widened in the decades after the 1930's . . . and were permitted under criteria which more nearly resembled political or social [standards] than standards for government action.

People came under investigation, the report said, for being suspected "rightists" or "espousing the line of revolutionary movements." Others got attention as "rabble rousers" or because they were "agitators" or "black nationalists."

The report said Presidents, Congress and the agencies themselves were guilty of creating these vague standards. President Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, wanted the F.B.I. to watch "subversives" and gather intelligence on "potential" espionage and sabotage, with no clear definition of these terms.

Inquiry Began in 1941

It was under Mr. Roosevelt that in 1941 the bureau opened the N.A.A.C.P. investigation. It was begun, the committee report said, "as an investigation of protests by 15 black mess attendants about racial discrimination in the Navy." Ostensibly the investigation was to determine if there had been Communist infiltration of the black group.

In the first year of the investigation the bureau agents reported that the N.A.A.C.P. had

a "strong tendency" to "steer clear of Communist activities," the committee said, yet the investigation continued for a quarter of a century.

The bureau infiltrated the association with informants and gathered extensive reports on its membership, headquarters and activities.

In 1956, for instance, the bureau prepared a report on a leadership conference on civil rights the N.A.A.C.P. sponsored and described the plans for a delegation from the conference to visit Senators Paul H. Douglas, Wayne Morse, Herbert H. Lehman, Hubert H. Humphrey and John W. Bricker. The report however, the committee found.

Since targets were described in such vague terms, hundreds of thousands of Americans have ended up in domestic intelligence files, the report said.

Army's Files Cited

The Army, the committee said, maintained intelligence files on 100,000 Americans, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker, Julian S. Bond, Joan Baez, Dr. Benjamin Spock, the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Senator Adlai E. Stevenson 3d and Representative Abner Mikva.

All those in the Army's files, the report said, got there "simply because of their participation in political protests or their association with those who engaged in such political activity."

As an indication of how extensive domestic intelligence activities have been, the committee reported that the F.B.I. maintains some 500,000 domestic intelligence files in its Washington headquarters and as others in its field offices. From 1955 to 1975 the bureau investigated 740,000 "subversive matters" and 190,000 "extremist matters."

The C.I.A., in its Operation Chaos against domestic dissidents from 1967 to 1973, amassed an "index" file on 300,000 Americans and full dossiers on 7,200 Americans and more than 100 organizations.

The I.R.S. amassed files based upon political criteria from 1969 to 1973 on 11,000 individuals and groups and later computerized 465,000 names for general intelligence purposes.

The vast list of suspects in this net grew more quickly because of the "vacuum cleaner" techniques of surveillance that poured names of Americans into the files with no clear indica-

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Senator Robert C. Byrd, Democrat of West Virginia, gesturing to Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa, during meeting of the Senate Rules Committee yesterday. At center is Senator James B. Allen, Democrat of Alabama.

tion of why they should be there, the report said. The C.I.A., it said, illegally opened some 250,000 first-class letters from 1953 to 1973, producing a "computerized index of nearly one and one-half million names."

The F.B.I. also opened 130,000 letters in eight projects from 1940 to 1966, but its results were not known.

The National Security Agency conducted wholesale scannings of cable traffic leaving and entering the United States as well as certain overseas telephone calls which further filled the files.

Neither one's station in life nor sex, age or political coloration seemed to assure protection against coming under the scrutiny of one of the intelligence agencies.

The "women's liberation

movement" was infiltrated by the F.B.I. in several cities, including Kansas City, New York and Baltimore.

The informants who attended the meetings, the report said, "collected material about the movement's policies, leaders and individual members."

Every Woman Named

"One report included the name of every woman who attended meetings, and another stated that each woman at a meeting had described 'how she felt oppressed, sexually or otherwise'" the committee report said. "Another report concluded that the movement's purpose was to 'free women from the humdrum existence of being only a wife and mother,' but still recommended that the investigation should continue."

The agencies, particularly the F.B.I., were responsive to suc-

cessive political administrations and willingly conducted domestic intelligence investigations on people the Presidents designated, the report said.

Mr. Roosevelt had the bureau put in its files for scrutiny the names of persons who sent telegrams to the White House opposing his defense policy and who supported Col. Charles Lindbergh, then a strong critic of United States foreign policy.

The F.B.I. gave President Truman reports on a former aide to Mr. Roosevelt who was allegedly trying to influence job appointments. President Eisenhower received political reports on Bernard Baruch, Eleanor Roosevelt and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

The Kennedy Administration had the F.B.I. wiretap a Congressional staff member, three Agriculture Department officials, a lobbyist and a Wash-

ington law firm. Also ordered were taps on newsmen with major publications, the report said. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy received F.B.I. reports on a secret "bug" placed on a hotel room occupied by a Congressman.

Dr. King's Rooms Bugged

The bug was placed in the wall of a New York hotel room where Howard D. Cooley, Democrat of North Carolina, who was then chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, was to meet foreign officials. The bug procured for Mr. Kennedy, clearly political information on the forces for and against pending sugar legislation in Congress and the information that one foreign official planned to take two congressional secretaries to Bermuda for "reasons other than business," according to the report.

In many cases the investigations and techniques used, the report also said, were only thinly disguised as being for national or domestic security purposes. The committee found records of a meeting at the F.B.I. on Dr. King at which "avenues of approach aimed at neutralizing King as an effective Negro leader" were discussed. Subsequently, F.B.I. field offices were ordered to continue to gather information on Dr. King "in order that we may consider using this information at an opportune time in a counterintelligence move to discredit him."

Some two weeks later the bureau placed the first of 15

bugs on various hotel rooms Dr. King occupied around the country. These ultimately produced 20 reels of tapes on his personal conversations and activities.

The material was later used to make a tape recording that the bureau sent to Mrs. King to try to discredit and frighten the black leader.

If power or prominence were no protection against attention from the intelligence agencies, obscurity did not help much, either, the report indicated.

The F.B.I. opened an investigation and used informants to report on a 1969 meeting of the Northern Virginia Citizens Concerned About the ABM at a high school auditorium near Washington. The bureau, the report said, got on the case because the meeting had been mentioned in a Communist newspaper. The meeting, a discussion of the merits of the anti-ballistic-missile defense system, was attended by several Department of Defense officials but no particularly prominent persons. Of all victims of domestic intelligence who were targets of the F.B.I.'s counterintelligence program, or Cointelpro, against radicals, the report

said:

"The tactics used against Americans often risked, and sometimes caused, serious emotional, economic or physical damage. Actions were taken which were designed to break up marriages, terminate funding or employment and encourage gang warfare between violent rival groups," the report said.

Illegal Acts Noted

"Due process of law forbids the use of such covert tactics, whether the victims are innocent law-abiding citizens or members of groups suspected of involvement in violence," the committee noted.

Unlike general domestic intelligence investigations, Cointelpro's activities were designed to harass members of the Communist and Socialist Worker's Parties as well as various black nationalist groups and the Ku Klux Klan.

"In Cointelpro the bureau secretly took the law into its own hands, going beyond collection of intelligence and beyond its law enforcement function to act outside the legal process altogether," the report said.

The acts of disruption ranged from fomenting trouble between the Black Panther Party and Us Inc., a rival black group in San Diego, to trying to get state liquor board investigators to raid a campaign party of an antiwar candidate.

Since the bureau remained anonymous in most of its Cointelpro actions, the victim was never quite sure what had happened.

The "vacuum cleaner" approach to investigations provided the grist for the mills of Cointelpro. Since the bureau collected and stored enormous amounts of personal information on its targets, it had the detail to make anonymous letters about marital infidelity sound plausible.

The report contained no total figures on how many persons have been maligned or injured by domestic intelligence investigations or Cointelpro. The committee recommended that the department of Justice notify all victims of Cointelpro that they had been victims of the program. Attorney General Edward H. Levi announced several weeks ago that the department would be contacting some of the victims.

The committee reported that the F.B.I. still maintains a half million files on domestic intelligence cases and that the files of the Department of the Army have not been destroyed.