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Agents working for the CIA were instructed to infiltrate and monitor at least 17 Washington area activist groups—ranging from the Black Panthers to the Washington Ethical Society—during 1967 and 1968, according to the Rockefeller Commission report released yesterday.

Washington became the focus of nationwide CIA surveillance of antiwar and black political groups during those years, when protest demonstrations and disruptions were growing in size and intensity, the commission reported.

The domestic spying started after requests from President Johnson for information on possible foreign links to domestic dissident groups and because of the CIA's own fear that political dissidents might harm the agency's personnel or property here.

The Rockefeller commission concluded that the surveillance of dissidents was not covered by the CIA's legal mandate to conduct intelligence activities outside the United States and to protect itself, and therefore was illegal.

"The agency's infiltration of dissident groups in the Washington area," the report said, "went far beyond the steps necessary to protect the agency's own facilities, personnel and operations, and therefore exceeded the CIA's statutory authority."

The information gathered here by agents who were called "assets" in CIA parlance was turned over to "Operation CHAOS," the CIA's program of monitoring dissident groups around the country. In all, Operation CHAOS put the names of 300,000 Americans on a computerized index and developed 7,200 separate "personality files on citizens of the United States," according to the report.

As many as a dozen agents working for the CIA were involved at any one time in the infiltration and surveillance of dissident groups in the Washington area, according to the Rockefeller Commission.

The agents were directed to report the names of speakers at the meetings they attended, the substance of the speeches and any threatening remarks made toward U.S. government leaders.

They also were told to make evaluations of attitudes, trends and possible developments with the organizations. They were allowed to make "modest" contributions to meetings if necessary, but were under orders to stay out of leadership activities, according to the commission report.

The number of organizations designated for infiltration or monitoring by the

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agents apparently grew from four in April, 1967 — the Women's Strike for Peace, the Washington Peace Center, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Congress of Racial Equality — to 17 by the end of 1968, when the entire program was turned over to the Washington metropolitan police department.

CIA officials told the Rockefeller commission that financing for the entire surveillance effort never was completely received and some organizations never were monitored.

The agents used to infiltrate and monitor local groups were all volunteers, CIA officials testified, and primarily were a collection of unemployed housewives and manual laborers who were paid less than \$100-a-month for their efforts. None of these agents were named in the Rockefeller report.

Nor was there any indication of which organizations actually were monitored, except for the organizers of the Mayday demonstration, which definitely were.

A spokesman for the Rockefeller Commission said yesterday that he could not add any information to what was contained in the report. "I can't say anything," said Peter Clapper. "It's a rather difficult position to be in. I guess I was hired as a lightning rod."

Although the bulk of the CIA's program of surveillance here was relinquished to the D.C. police at the end of 1968, the commission said the CIA's CHAOS operation continued to receive information on dissident groups from the police department's own infiltration program and from the FBI until 1972.

In April, 1971, according to the commission report, the CIA recruited another agent to infiltrate the Mayday antiwar protest organization here. The recruitment, the commission said, was in contradiction to an order issued earlier by then director of the CIA Richard Helms to avoid such domestic surveillance.

The agent had instructions, according to the commission, to "get as close as possible" to the Mayday leaders, infiltrate any secret groups working behind the scenes in planning the demonstration and pass on any

## Directors of CIA Since 1947

Since its formation in 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency has been headed by:

- Rear Adm. Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, 1947 to 1950.
- Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, 1950 to 1953.
- Allen W. Dulles, 1953 to 1961.
- John A. McCone, 1961 to 1966.
- Richard M. Helms, 1966 to 1973.
- James R. Schlesinger, 1973 (two months).
- William E. Colby, 1973 to present.

plans for violence against government building or foreign embassies.

The agent met two or three times weekly with a member of the CIA's CHAOS operation here to pass on information. Some of these reports eventually were given to the FBI by the chief of operation of CHAOS, the Rockefeller Commission said.

The commission noted that the Mayday infiltration was contrary to Helm's guidelines for the operation of CHAOS, and that Helms was not aware of it.

Rennie Davis, who was the chief organizer of the Mayday antiwar protest, said yesterday in a telephone interview from Denver that he and others of the demonstration's organizers had been infiltrated by government agents.

"We did identify quite a few," said Davis, "maybe 20 to 25 agents that I had some knowledge of from 1969 to 1971."

Davis said his group ran credit checks on suspected agents that revealed which ones had received income from government or police agencies. The group then would have a picture of the suspected agent published in underground newspapers.

Although no agent ever was definitely linked to the CIA, Davis said "I often felt, by intuition, we were dealing with CIA people. Every once in a while you'd run into an individual who seemed more sophisticated, like he was playing in a bigger ball park."

"When they (suspected agents) were confronted," said Davis, "it was often a very personal, traumatic experience. Sometimes they would break down and cry. There were human lives at

stake and real human beings involved."

"You know when somebody's looking when the phones make funny noises, when the mails are five days late," said Nancy Ramsey, a former member of the Women Strike for Peace. "You begin to feel a little paranoid. Now we see everything we thought was true."

During the two years that the most intensive surveillance efforts were under way here the list of organizations, including local groups, was expanded as reports were received of incidents where CIA recruiters were harassed or threatened on college campuses around the country and after the bombing of a CIA recruiting office in Ann Arbor, Mich., in 1968. There is no indication in the commission report that the harassment or bombing were in any way connected with the surveillance of any particular Washington area group.

In September, 1967, the National Mobilization Committee to End the War here was placed on the list of organizations to be monitored. In mid-August of 1968 the following Washington area organizations also were added:

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, School of Afro-American Thought, Washington Ethical Society, American Humanist Association, Black Panthers, War Resisters' League, Black United Front, Washington Mobilization for Peace, Washington Urban League, Black Muslims and Niggers, Inc.

Edward Erickson, who was local religious leader for the Washington Ethical Society when the CIA was to have monitored his group in 1968 said he had heard a rumor at that time that the CIA had an undercover

agent watching the society's activities, which included counseling draft resisters. "My response," Erickson said, "was that as long as he pays his dues and is a good member, let him listen."

A former member of the Black Panther Party who spoke as a party member here at the 1971 Mayday rally recalled yesterday that the group always had operated on the assumption that their organization had been infiltrated by some government agency.

"We always figured it was the CIA because of our relationship with other struggles around the world," said the former Panther, who asked not to be named. The Panthers, he said, had been constantly plagued by disension whose source was difficult to pinpoint. "Like they said in that report," he said, "their fuction was to create chaos."

Local black activist groups came under increasing scrutiny by the CIA here in 1968, the year of the rioting following Martin Luther King's assassination and a period of frequent protests over the relative lack of political power for blacks in Washington.

*Contributing to this story were Washington Post Staff Writers Eugene L. Meyer, Judy Luce Mann and Joseph Novitski.*