

F.B.I. Checking of Radicals Went on Beyond Deadline

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By JOHN M. CREWDSON
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WASHINGTON, Oct. 5—The Federal Bureau of Investigation continued to employ at least one of the techniques that characterized a controversial counterintelligence operation for at least two and a half years after April, 1971, the date the bureau gave for formally terminating the program, according to previously classified documents made public today.

The documents, obtained through a lawsuit against the

bureau by the Socialist Workers party, which made them available, show that F.B.I. agents visited some 30 party members or associates from April, 1971, to December, 1973, to tell them of the bureau's knowledge of their political affiliations and to seek information about their activities.

In four related instances described in the F.B.I. documents, agents telephoned members of the party or its youth affiliate, the Young Socialist Alliance, and utilized what the documents termed "a jury-duty pretext" to gain information about their marital status, employment, place of birth and the like.

First Documentary Proof

The bureau practice of "interviewing or contacting members" of radical political organizations was mentioned in a report on the controversial program, called Cointelpro, that was released by the Justice Department last November. It was one of a dozen activities making up the Cointelpro effort.

Cointelpro, an F.B.I. acronym for "counterintelligence program," included at least 12 efforts aimed at disrupting the activities of right and left-wing domestic political organizations from 1956 to 1971, when the operation was formally terminated by J. Edgar Hoover, the late F.B.I. director.

The Socialist Workers party and some individuals, including some former F.B.I. informants,

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CHECK OF RADICALS BY F.B.I. DESCRIBED

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have previously alleged that the F.B.I. continued many of the counterintelligence operations of Cointelpro after the 1971 cut-off date, but the bureau documents released today are the first evidence made public to support the assertion.

Some of the 28 persons approached directly by the F.B.I. about their socialist affiliation, the documents show, voluntarily provided information about themselves and their activities. Others declined to be interviewed.

In each case a record was made of the visit, and the resulting F.B.I. files contained such information as the observations that one woman, who spoke freely, had "chain-smoked" a certain brand of cigarettes, and that a more recalcitrant young man "was wearing, at the time of contact, a T-shirt on which appeared the words, 'vote Socialist party.'"

Some of the reports of interviews were uncaptioned, and others were headed "security matter." None gave any indication that the subjects were suspected of involvement in violent or otherwise criminal activities, or had been questioned for any reason other than their political affiliation.

In response to a government interrogatory issued in connection with its lawsuit, which is seeking \$27-million in damages for alleged official "harassment" by the F.B.I., the party has asserted that it is a legal, nonviolent organization that seeks to elect its candidates to public office.

The Justice Department's report on Cointelpro contained few specific details of its elements, and so most of what is now known about the 15-year program has been made public as a result of the party suit, the only such action filed thus far by a group that was a Cointelpro target.

The latest group of documents also detailed a plan in 1965 by the F.B.I.'s Detroit field office to send a fictitious letter, purporting to be from a student at Wayne State University there, to the Democratic State Central Committee in Michigan alleging that a campus Democratic club had been infiltrated by the Young Socialist Alliance.

Bogus Letter Approved

Officials of F.B.I. headquarters here, the documents showed, approved the proposal to mail the bogus letter, along with several clippings from the campus newspaper regarding the matter, to the central committee and six other state and local Democratic party organizations.

Also in 1965, the documents show, the Cleveland F.B.I. office undertook another Cointelpro operation that it said had led to the discharge of a public school music teacher there because she was married to Rod

Holt, an Ohio official of the Socialist Workers Party.

The Cleveland F.B.I. office said in a message to F.B.I. headquarters that while neither Mrs. Holt nor her husband was affiliated with the Communist party, the Socialist Workers party and its youth group were "a form of Communist organizations" thus the Cleveland agents said they wished to take action against Mrs. Holt "since Communist" oriented teachers are in such a critical position of influence.

F.B.I. officials here authorized the Cleveland office to inform Cleveland school officials, "on a strictly confidential basis" of Mr. Holt's political connections. Four months later the Cleveland office reported back that "as a direct result" of its action, the Board of Education had not renewed Mrs. Holt's teaching contract.

Poem Used in Scheme

In 1963 the documents further show F.B.I. agents in Milwaukee asked the bureau's headquarters for permission to disseminate a "poem" deriding a local Communist party organizer to party followers there.

The Milwaukee agents pointed out that a Socialist Workers official in the area was "well known for his ability to write poetry," and they expressed the hope that Communist Party members who received the F.B.I. poem would believe that the Socialist Workers poet had written it.

The proposed dogger ran, "there was an old radical name [deleted] who swapped his soapbox for a bed. He lives in the past, drinks beer to the last. And from militant action has fled."

The target of the "poem," the agents pointed out, was "an excessive beer drinker who now snubs party work." The F.B.I. headquarters approved the use of the verse, and asked that it be informed "of any tangible results."

The Milwaukee office replied later that "the poem has apparently met with some success," and that Communist officials in Wisconsin had concluded that the mailing of the verse was an effort by the Socialist Workers to create dissension in their ranks.