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MOVEMENT SPIES ON FBI

Early this week RESIST received from an anonymous source a packet of materials identified as xerox copies of files removed by the Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI on March 8 from the Media, Pa. office of the FBI. (See Newsletter #51 for the group's statement of responsibility.) A covering letter from the Commission explained that the files were removed to determine the nature and extent of surveillance and intimidation carried on by the FBI, particularly against groups and individuals working for a more just and peaceful society. The Commission was also concerned with the extent of illegal practices used by the FBI in obtaining information, such as eavesdropping, entrapment, and the use of provocateurs and informers.

RESIST acknowledges receipt of the documents and makes them public to our readers because we believe that the information contained therein constitutes a basic violation of the civil rights both of individuals and of groups working for social change. Reprinted here in the Newsletter are three of the documents which we felt would be of special interest to our readers.

We feel that these documents stand as evidence of the kind of all-pervasive surveillance that both individuals and movement groups are now undergoing.

Some of the Bureau memos include intelligence reports on college students indicating the close cooperation given Federal Investigators by both local police forces and University administrations. Others were summaries of various movement meetings, including names, addresses, and phone numbers of people attending - all evidence of a vast network of paid informers.

Two items are indications of the cooperation given the FBI by bank officials who willingly release bank account records to the Bureau in violation of Federal law. Similarly, Bell Telephone Company turns over the names and numbers of new telephone subscribers upon demand by the FBI. The FBI then considers information from such corporations "confidential" and directs that it "not be made public without issuance of a subpoena directed to officers in the security department of Bell Telephone."

The Bureau has instructed that "students, teachers, and scientists who were in the USSR at least one month who have not previously been investigated should be selected for investigation." The purpose of conducting such investigations of these individuals is to identify them and "determine whether any of them have been approached for recruitment by the Soviet Intelligence Services." This memo also makes clear that the FBI is aware of the risks: "Utmost care must be exercised in conducting these investigations to prevent any embarrass-ment to the Bureau and possibly jeopardize the Bureau's program in countering Soviet Intelligence Services recruitment of students."

Cont'd on p. 2. . . .
The Bureau is especially interested in the activities of minority groups around the country. Many of the memos we received were intelligence reports on black student movements. One file suggests that black student groups "organized to project the demands of black students, which are not presently under investigation, are to be subjects of discreet, pre-licensure inquiries. Limited to established sources and carefully conducted to avoid criticism, to determine the aims, ends, purposes, activities, leadership, key activitites, and extremist-interest or influence in these groups." The Bureau apparently feels that disruption on campus makes it mandatory that the FBI utilize to its capacity its intelligence gathering apparatus. Most damning, the FBI feels it has the right to keep lists of every black student enrolled at various universities around the country, apparently with the cooperation of the school officials themselves.

The FOOTSTAFF and steering committee spent many hours meeting to discuss the legal and ethical implications of releasing this material. It was decided to send the information to reporters around the country who have previously demonstrated courage in discussing domestic political repression. We feel that it is very important that these documents be made as public as possible as they reflect the extent to which we all are under surveillance. We have removed names and other identifying facts from most of the documents, both in the Newsletter and in the packets sent out to the press. We realise that we run the risk of increasing paranoia among people in the movement by making the identities of these individuals known. However, we believe that the information is not specific enough to reveal the identities of those who have been spied upon would expose them to increased harassment, if nothing else, by unfriendly neighbors. Since we felt that we had not been able to contact all the people mentioned in these reports, we felt that we did not have the right to include their names in the document.
names. To take on this burden of publicity should be their choice, not ours.

Several East Coast newspapers have run articles on the files, including the Washington Post (March 24), The New York Times (March 24 and 25), the Boston Globe (March 25), and the Harvard Crimson. Although we were excited that these files were getting the publicity their contents demand, we also felt that the need for guidelines in the use of such material was demonstrated by the way in which the newspapers handled the articles. The Washington Post deleted the names of all whites under surveillance, but seemed to feel no similar compunction when dealing with black individuals and movement groups. We feel that this racism is inexcusable. These documents reveal a state police apparatus that will stop at nothing in gathering intelligence reports on a cross section of American citizens. In essence, the government would have the American people sign a blank check in the name of "National Security".

BOB HOPE UPSTAGED BY GI MOVEMENT

On March 13 and 14 a cast of big name performers put on a show for soldiers at Ft. Bragg in North Carolina which gave the GI movement its widest publicity to date. The cast of this "Anti Bob Hope Show" included Jane Fonda, Don Sutherland, Peter Boyle (star of "Joe"), Gary Goodrow (from the Committee in San Francisco), folk singer Barbara Dane (a frequent entertainer at GI coffee houses), Dick Gregory, and Swamp Dog, with an entourage of musicians. The show was directed by Alan Myerson (director of the Committee). Material was written especially for the show by many people including Fred Gardner (founder of the first GI coffee house), Barbara Garson (author of "MacBird"), and Jules Feiffer.

The show was sponsored by the United States Servicemen's Fund, a tax-exempt organization which has sponsored most of the GI newspapers and coffee houses in the United States and other parts of the world. USSF applied for permission to perform the show at Fort Bragg so that everyone on the base could see it free of charge. The Pentagon referred this request to the commanding general at Fort Bragg who denied permission. The Bob Hope Show and other USO entertainments are customarily performed in this fashion on U.S. military bases all over the world. The Pentagon normally provides free room and board and transportation for the casts in these entertainments. Moreover, a little known fact is that every member of the cast of every USO show must receive Army security clearance as must the scripts of these shows. The local municipal auditorium was also denied to the USSF show. As a result the show was performed at the Haymarket Square coffee house, one of fifteen such places supported by USSF.

Haymarket Square has a capacity of five hundred persons and the show was performed three times for wildly enthusiastic GI audiences.

In a few weeks the show will be available on a commercially released record. Sometime this summer there will also be a feature length film of the show as performed in North Carolina. Unlike the Bob Hope Show and other USO shows none of the writers, performers, directors, producers and others associated with the show were paid anything for their efforts and they have all relinquished any financial interest in the show. Therefore, all the profits from the film and the record will go to USSF. USSF has filed suit in Federal Court to compel the Army to give its shows the same access to soldiers as is enjoyed by USO shows. Whether the suit is won or lost USSF would like to continue making entertainment of this type available to servicemen as it has done in the past. However, the costs of doing a live show with this many performers are extremely high. USSF could get soldiers to pay enough to meet all of the unavoidable expenses; but, this would be contrary to the basic intention of the show. Therefore, future live shows will be infrequent and subject to the flow of contributions as well as the priority needs of the newspapers and coffee houses supported by USSF.

USSF, was in large founded by people who had been active in RESIST. Their interest grew out of RESIST's growing awareness of the financial needs of the GI movement during 1968. It was felt that a tax-exempt organization concentrating on the charitable and educational needs of servicemen and servicewomen would be able to uncover significant sources of funds which would not be available to an organization like RESIST. Thus far this has been the case.

In the years since RESIST and USSF were founded the GI movement has grown at an astronomical rate. GI's are probably the most unanimously anti-war constituency in the United States. They are also one of the most articulate, well-informed and militant anti-war groups. Last spring simultaneous demonstrations occurred on Armed Forces Day at over thirty bases in the United States. This spring GI groups at an even larger number of bases are making more extensive plans to participate in many ways in the anti-war activities planned for the coming two and one-half months.

RECENT FUNDING GRANTS

The Kudzu, a Jackson, Miss. underground newspaper, requested $320 to pay back bills to their printer. The Kudzu was one of fifteen groups whose requests RESIST postponed until next month because we had no money to grant. Local organizing projects often cannot support themselves locally. They depend on us, or ultimately on you, to continue their programs. Please help.