

The Central Intelligence Agency's Surveillance of the New Left

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Abstract

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) collected information on American New Left organizations and activists in the 1960s and 1970s. Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC, conducted by the Office of Security, and Operation MHCHAOS were the means for the CIA to carry out its domestic missions of monitoring and surveillance of the New Left. The Office of Security sought to protect against New Leftists demonstrating against visiting college recruiters and protesting at the CIA's headquarters. Operation MHCHAOS collected information on American leftists who traveled abroad for the stated purpose of uncovering evidence of foreign subversion from governments hostile to the United States. No foreign subversion or credible threat to the CIA was uncovered yet information was collected on around 300,000 New Left activists and on a thousand organizations, which was distributed, to other intelligence agencies. Many materials for these programs are classified. Information was found in the reports from executive and congressional investigations in 1975-1976, the compilation of CIA internal memos titled *Family Jewels* which were declassified in 2007, and the 2011 monograph defending Operation MHCHAOS by its participant Frank Rafalko. All this proved that the CIA spied on the New Left for intelligence on its organizations and agendas.

Keywords: CIA, MHCHAOS, MERRIMAC, RESISTANCE,

1 Introduction

Even though the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was founded to conduct foreign intelligence exclusively, it has been used domestically to repress left-wing dissent within the United States through the counterespionage program Operation MHCHAOS and the Office of Security's Project MERRIMAC and Project RESISTANCE. Revelations of Operation MHCHAOS first became public in December 1974 when *New York Times* journalist Seymour Hersh reported that "the [CIA], directly violating its charter, conducted a massive, illegal domestic intelligence operation during the Nixon Administration against the [anti-war] movement and other dissident groups" and held files on "at least 10,000 American citizens" (Hersh, 1974). While the CIA's domestic information collection programs were intensified during Richard Nixon's Administration, they began during Lyndon Johnson's Administration. The programs of the CIA against the New Left and the allegations of its domestic activities were first investigated by Gerald Ford Administration's Commission on CIA Activities within the United States headed by and named after Vice President Nelson Rockefeller in 1975 (Rockefeller, 1975, iii). Later that year, the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations was established by Idaho Senator Frank Church (thus colloquially called the Church Committee) to investigate the federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies (Church, 1976, 681). What the Rockefeller Commission and Church Committee uncovered, and what was written in declassified CIA documents and the account of former CIA counterintelligence agent Frank Rafalko, was that through the 1960s and early 1970s, the CIA opened files on tens of thousands of American citizens based on their leftist political beliefs, collected information on 300,000 more, and sought information on around a thousand left-wing organizations mainly of the anti-war and civil rights movements (Rockefeller, 1975, 130; *Family Jewels*, 2007, 601-603, 29-30; Rafalko, 2011, 24 and 29). Although the CIA's programs have been somewhat revealed, they have more or less escaped historical analysis.

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Major studies into the CIA's history have mostly ignored its domestic programs in the 1960s and 1970s with only superficial analysis on Operation MHCHAOS. Tom Mangold mentioned Operation MHCHAOS in *Cold Warrior*, his biography of the CIA's counterintelligence chief James Angleton in which Mangold analyzed Angleton's role and work in Cold War intelligence (Mangold, 1991, 9). Mangold's investigation of Operation MHCHAOS went only as far as Congressional oversight was concerned with little attention given to the CIA's domestic activities. This may have been because Angleton had little involvement in Operation MHCHAOS beyond ensuring its existence under the coordination of Richard Ober (Mangold, 1991, 309; Church, 1976, 690). Operation MHCHAOS was brought up by Mangold only when CIA employees or Congressional investigators (Mangold, 1991, 312-317) questioned its illegality. Little to no information on Operation MHCHAOS' activities were given. Mangold had no information on Project MERRIMAC and Project RESISTANCE. This was probably because they were considered matters of internal security as opposed to counterespionage. Operation MHCHAOS was somewhat investigated by Tim Weiner, a reporter on American intelligence agencies, who produced a history of the CIA in 2007, *Legacy of Ashes*, which analyzed the sixty years of the agency's existence (Weiner, 2007, XIII-XVII). While most of Weiner's text focused on the CIA's foreign operations, he also investigated their occasional domestic operations. Weiner's analysis of the CIA's activities against the New Left was essentially a brief summary of Operation MHCHAOS. With little specifics or inquiry into the workings of Operation MHCHAOS, Weiner stated the CIA's mission, ordered by President Johnson, was to determine if the New Left had been subverted by foreign communists and he gave little scrutiny to the seven years of domestic espionage beyond what was initially reported by Hersh (Weiner, 2007, 285-287). Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC, also CIA operations against the New Left, were not addressed by Weiner. Nor did he cite the Rockefeller Commission or Church Committee reports which provided the most information on the CIA's domestic activities. Weiner also did not have access to *Family Jewels* which was declassified the same year Weiner's analysis was published. Thus, there were further resources available to make a deeper investigation into the CIA's domestic operations. Both Mangold and Weiner gave sparse information on Operation MHCHAOS and wrote nothing on Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC which each require more historical research.

The CIA's domestic operations against the New Left amounted to political repression as the CIA investigated New Left activists and organizations and supplied the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) with collected information. Although illegal, the CIA's domestic activities were not entirely unreasonable. Its mission was to protect the CIA's internal security against threats of violence from the New Left and to determine if any New Left organizations or individuals had been subverted or supported by foreign governments in opposition to the United States (Church, 1976, 721; *Family Jewels*, 2007, 601). According to the Church Committee, it was based on this suspicion that President Johnson requested the CIA to begin what became Operation MHCHAOS (Church, 1976, 697). The Church Committee went on to state that the Nixon Administration expanded the CIA's domestic activities in Nixon's first term, although they ended in his second term (Church, 1976, 723 and 725). Although there was some validity to the CIA's fear, the belief in communist subversion and the need to protect against demonstrators became a pretext for the CIA's intelligence operations against New Leftists who were targeted even when evidence of foreign influence was continuously not obtained. Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC, conducted by the CIA's Office of Security, and Operation MHCHAOS were the means for the CIA to carry out its missions which amounted to the monitoring and surveillance of the New Left.

2. Office of Security: Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC

The Office of Security was responsible for protecting the internal interests of the CIA and the United States from New Left protesters. Demonstrations against the government included an indictment of the CIA which carried out the United States' foreign policy. According to former CIA agent John Stockwell, the CIA was responsible for supporting dictatorial governments or subverting governments with opposing interests, staging "assassination[s], meddlesome covert wars, and the compulsive recruitment of foreign officials to commit treason on [the United States'] behalf" in order to maintain hegemony over non-aligned countries to counter the Soviet Union (Stockwell, 1979, 21-22). Although Stockwell wrote this in 1979, he affirmed what many within the New Left knew of the CIA's activities based off of contemporary sources going as far back as when the CIA began in 1947. The sociologists and former anti-war activists Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan stated in their analysis of the anti-war movement that protests were organized against CIA recruiters on colleges and universities, which assisted the CIA through research (Zaroulis and Sullivan, 1984, 105). The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), in particular, was responsible for organizing protests at numerous universities against CIA recruitment with 174 universities experiencing anti-CIA protests in 1966 (Sale, 1973, 300-301, 305). The Columbia University chapter, for example, organized 200 people to

demonstrate against CIA recruiters in the fall of 1966 (Cunningham, 2004, 44). The Church Committee wrote that in "1968, the CIA recruiting office at the University of Michigan was destroyed by a bomb" (Church, 1976, 721). The CIA's presences on college campuses, its attempts to recruit more into its ranks and the support these educational institutions gave to the CIA were anathema to the ideologies of the New Left who saw world peace threatened by CIA activity. CIA facilities in Washington DC were targets of demonstrations as well. Demonstrations in Washington DC intensified through the later 1960s and by 1970, "peace rallies were drawing hundreds of thousands of people" with many targeting the Pentagon and other military and government institutions (Zinn, 2003, 486). There were certainly protests at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia near Washington DC. The Church Committee reported that the CIA was very concerned with "threats posed by domestic disorder" and "dissident groups in the Washington metropolitan area" (Church, 1976, 723). The CIA sought to monitor and counteract these threats to its recruiters at college campuses as well as to protect its headquarters. However, these objectives expanded into large investigative programs against New Leftists that challenged United States policies and so the CIA collected information that was dispersed to other intelligence agencies. Due to the fear of New Left opposition to the CIA, the Office of Security was tasked to address these threats, which took the form of Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC.

Project RESISTANCE was initiated to protect CIA recruiters on college campuses, but it ultimately allowed the CIA to monitor and collect information on New Left targets beyond what was needed for self-protection. The CIA began Project RESISTANCE in February 1967 to, in the words of the Rockefeller Commission's report, "render assistance to Agency recruiters" by contacting local police and "college and university officials to determine the general level of dissident activity on each campus" (Rockefeller, 1975, 151). This was to provide extra security for a recruiter visiting a particular campus after it was determined that a threat existed and to avoid confrontations with protesters (Rockefeller, 1975, 151-152). In regard to Project RESISTANCE, the Rockefeller Commission failed to further investigate the CIA's domestic programs. The Church Committee made a deeper inquiry that revealed more than that the CIA was simply trying to protect recruiters. In December 1967, Project RESISTANCE was expanded to study campus dissent on a larger basis by examining the support, aims, attitudes, and causes of the New Left campus groups with the Targets Analysis Branch created in May 1968 to process collected information (Church, 1976, 721-722). At some undefined point, Project RESISTANCE was expanded further "to include analyses of protest activities in Washington and other centers of protest" (Church, 1976, 723). Although Project RESISTANCE was created to protect the CIA's campus recruiters, the program was used to track protest activity.

The CIA, through Project RESISTANCE, gained information on its targets for several years before the program was terminated. Project RESISTANCE gained information on targets through press clippings and from "confidential sources" within the police and college administrations and was criticized by one of the programs analysts for gaining information that was publicly available (Church, 1976, 722). Beginning in 1971, the Director of the Office of Security limited procedures for collecting information by banning recruitment of new infiltrators while still allowing unsolicited information to be received (Church, 1976, 722-723). Unsolicited information came when CIA agents expected their infiltrators to convey information that was not relevant to their specific questions but would nonetheless be useful. The Rockefeller Commission stated that Project RESISTANCE was terminated in 1970 (Rockefeller, 1975, 152). However, the Church Committee found instead that the program was actually discontinued in June 1973 (Church, 1976, 723). No reason was given by the Church Committee as to why its date was different than the date determined by the Rockefeller Commission. The CIA and its Office of Security terminated the program most likely because demonstrations on college campuses were declining in the early 1970s and/or because of internal opposition to Project RESISTANCE. Given the expansion of Project RESISTANCE, the protection of the CIA's recruiters was more like an alleged reason than a primary objective.

The primary objective of Project RESISTANCE was simply to spy on New Left targets on college campuses for various departments of the government. Ultimately, the Church Committee found that the program had around "600-700 files" on targets and "indexed an estimated 12,000 to 16,000 names" and that "the in depth analysis of political organizations and their leaders went beyond indications of specific threats to the CIA" (Church, 1976, 723 and 728). The CIA's Office of Security had an obligation to protect its recruiters, however, the task of collecting domestic information and working with local police forces and college campus administrators lawfully should have been conducted by the FBI who would then coordinate its gained information with the CIA. Not only did the FBI already have massive, ongoing counterintelligence programs to investigate, infiltrate, and neutralize New Left individuals and groups, but the Church Committee found that the Target Analysis Branch within Project RESISTANCE coordinated directly with the FBI (Churchill and Ward, 1990, 165-177; Church, 1976, 723).

The FBI, as an agency founded for domestic investigations, had better resources to gain much greater information to give to the CIA which itself was forbidden to have domestic programs. Any impact Project RESISTANCE had on the New Left organizations beyond confirming their suspicions that the imperialist United States was spying on them is largely unknown due to the unavailability of CIA sources. The Church Committee noted that information collected by Project RESISTANCE was shared throughout the CIA (Church, 1976, 682). In this case, the information that was gained probably assisted other agencies' investigations. Other than monitoring, there was no evidence of any arrests or overt action made against any New Leftist based on the information collected by Project RESISTANCE. The data and the files opened by Project RESISTANCE regarding college campus New Left targets may have been comprised of public knowledge, yet it was still information and intelligence that was desired, collected, and then provided for the FBI while token action was taken to protect CIA recruiters as the program called for.

The other program operated by the CIA's Office of Security was Project MERRIMAC, which monitored and infiltrated New Left organizations within the Washington DC metropolitan area. In 2007, a Freedom of Information Act requested by the National Security Archive was approved which led to the public release of CIA documents, notes, memos, and letters spanning twenty-five years which were compiled in 1973 by Director of Central Intelligence William Colby that, in his words, "conflict with the provisions of the National Security Act of 1947" and were "a possible potential threat or embarrassment to the Agency" (Blanton, 2007; *Family Jewels*, 2007, 2). Given the high amount of redacted text in the declassified copy, it raised questions on how much illegal activity the CIA was still hiding. However, *Family Jewels*, as the compilation is informally named, did neatly summarize Project MERRIMAC: from February 1967 to November 1971, [redacted text]² an Office of Security proprietary, recruited and handled several Agents for the purpose of covertly monitoring dissident groups in the Washington area considered to be potential threats to Agency personnel and installations. One of these Agents so successfully penetrated one dissident group that she was turned over to the FBI for handling. In addition, during this period, the Office of Security field offices were tasked with collecting available intelligence on dissident groups. All such information was included in a periodic report distributed to appropriate parts of the Agency and to certain outside Government agencies.³(*Family Jewels*, 2007, 26)

This is what the CIA did as part of Project MERRIMAC, however, the reasoning is not found within *Family Jewels*. What little is known of Project MERRIMAC, such as the initial purpose, came from government oversight investigations.

Project MERRIMAC began as way to learn of upcoming demonstrations in the Washington DC area but quickly expanded to be a method to spy on the New Left. The Rockefeller Commission and the Church Committee provided the most available material on Project MERRIMAC's operation. The Rockefeller Commission wrote in its findings that the CIA wanted "timely advance notice of impending demonstrations" (Rockefeller, 1975, 152-153).⁴ The Church Committee found that this advance notice protected CIA facilities and allowed it to "collect other intelligence about the groups and their members" (Church, 1976, 723). Project MERRIMAC immediately began recruiting "assets" to monitor and infiltrate New Left groups and, by April 1967, had begun operations against the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Washington Peace Center, the Women's Strike for Peace, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) (Rockefeller, 1975, 152-153).⁵ To be an asset recruited by the CIA would mean that successful recruits could not have prior relationship with either anything remotely connected with the New Left or, to a significantly less degree, the CIA. Agents were funded to travel to major east coast cities to attend various demonstrations and conferences with instructions to appear interested and offer financial support to the particular organizations meeting (Rockefeller, 1975, 153).

² Presumably "MERRIMAC" is redacted given the immediate context of the quote, however it is odd that "MERRIMAC" would be excised in the text considering that that paragraph is headlined as "Project MERRIMAC."

³ Many of the *Family Jewels* documents have to do with the Office of Security, while Project MERRIMAC is given a brief description, there is no available statement on Project RESISTANCE. It is probable that redacted portions include more on both the Office of Security's Projects.

⁴ Like with Project RESISTANCE, the Rockefeller Commission does not label this particular program as Project MERRIMAC though the descriptions and analysis given is congruent with the Church Committee which cites the same pages.

⁵ The Congress of Racial Equality, founded in 1942, was not a New Left organization.

They had to report on speakers and the meetings content as well as the particular organizations funding and membership, take public and private photographs of New Left meetings and attendees (including their licenses plates), gather names, and gauge attitudes (Rockefeller, 1975, 153-154). What began as a way to be forewarned regarding future protests against the CIA in Washington DC was quickly used to collect information on the New Left.

With Project MERRIMAC, the CIA was able to spy on the New Left through placing infiltrators into targeted organizations. The Rockefeller Commission wrote that reports from agents were not limited to knowledge on demonstrations as the scope of information the CIA wanted or needed continued to increase rapidly within the first few months (Rockefeller, 1975, 153). The Church Committee found that by August 1968, ten groups were targeted by the program for such coverage as the Rockefeller Commission listed the various left-wing, anti-war, and civil rights groups' names (Church, 1976, 725; Rockefeller, 1975, 154). While numerous left and New Left organizations were listed as being infiltrated, the number of people targeted due to their association was classified along with the number of files that were opened. The Rockefeller Commission concluded its report on Project MERRIMAC with the statement that "the maximum number of agents employed at any one time appears to have been twelve" (Rockefeller, 1975, 155). This number did not include all the hired infiltrators who have already left or had yet to join at this one time. The Rockefeller Commission, as well as the Church Committee, failed to provide the total number of hired agents. Even with twelve agents, the potential access to information could be great depending on how well the infiltrators performed. Like Project RESISTANCE, collected information from Project MERRIMAC was "made available" to the FBI and other departments of the CIA (Church, 1976, 725). The Rockefeller Commission noted, along with the Church Committee, that Operation MHCHAOS regularly received information due to constant requests made to the Office of Security (Rockefeller, 1975, 154; Church, 1976, 725). Even with a small number of infiltrators, the CIA gained an unknown amount of information on New Left groups, perhaps more than were listed, which it handed over to the rest of the government. Without further sources, especially from the CIA, it is not known how many infiltrators in New Left organizations contributed to Project MERRIMAC.

Despite the program's expansion, Project MERRIMAC was short-lived and the exact date for its termination was disputed. Project MERRIMAC ceased reports from its agents in late 1969 (Church, 1976, 725). There are two possibilities given as to why the program was discontinued that are stated separately by the Rockefeller Commission and the Church Committee. The former claimed that "by the later part of 1968, the Washington Metropolitan Police Department had developed its own capability to collect information on dissident groups in the area," while the latter claimed that internal discontent, as expressed by Colby in 1973, over the CIA's domestic activity led to the termination (Rockefeller, 1975, 154; Church, 1976, 725). While the Church Committee referred generally to Colby's review of CIA activities, his compilation of *Family Jewels* and the inclusion of Project MERRIMAC highlighted the internal dissent over the programs validity. As with Project RESISTANCE, this was a function that could be better handled by domestic agencies which gave credence to the Rockefeller Commission's reason for Project MERRIMAC's termination. There is disagreement regarding when exactly the Office of Security discontinued the program. The *Family Jewels* memo which discussed Project MERRIMAC claimed that it ended in November 1971, while the Rockefeller Commission stated that the program lasted until December 1968 (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 26). Both were contradicted by the Church Committee who found that Project MERRIMAC was discontinued in September 1970 (Church, 1976, 725). Given the sources, it is difficult to determine how large the operation was in Project MERRIMAC's two to five years. That it occurred at all was a violation of the CIA's founding charter. The Office of Security had some justification with Project RESISTANCE to provide adequate protection to its employees. But, infiltrating domestic organizations to protect its own premises is not legally justifiable when the entire United States government has other agencies that exist, such as the police, to protect property. In the end, Project MERRIMAC was a thinly-veiled excuse to gain more information on New Left targets. Yet, the Office of Security's programs against New Leftists pale in comparison to Operation MHCHAOS.

3 Operation MHCHAOS

Established in 1967, Operation MHCHAOS was intended to determine if foreign communist governments actively supported or subverted any New Left organizations. The Rockefeller Commission reported that Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms created Operation MHCHAOS in August 1967 to respond to "Presidential requests to determine the extent of foreign influence on domestic dissidence" (Rockefeller, 1975, 130).

Although it was cited in the Church Committee Report, Helms testified to the Rockefeller Commission that President Lyndon Johnson constantly made general requests of him and the CIA to investigate foreign connections of anyone among the New Left. Helms stated that Johnson's requests were of a general nature and that establishing Operation MHCHAOS was "an effort to...improve the Agency's performance in this general field" (Church, 1976, 689). Creating Operation MHCHAOS was the means for the CIA to adequately respond to Johnson's concern that the New Left was too powerful to not be supported by foreign governments. A memo in the CIA's *Family Jewels* described Operation MHCHAOS as a "worldwide program for clandestine collection abroad of information on foreign efforts to support/encourage/exploit/manipulate domestic U.S. extremism" with special attention paid to the Soviet Union, North Vietnam, Cuba, China, and the Arab independence movements. The memo, and the CIA by extent, maintained that because Operation MHCHAOS spied on American citizens when they went abroad, that this did not constitute a domestic program since the act took place outside of the United States (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 601). Operation MHCHAOS's mission, according to the Church Committee, was to "expand [the] CIA's own collection of relevant information...from other government agencies," process and retain all available information, and give the available information "to the White House" and "other high level offices and interested agencies" (Church, 1976, 693). Main sources of information came from the FBI as well as the CIA's field stations while Operation MHCHAOS was situated in the CIA headquarters. The FBI provided Operation MHCHAOS with the communications, contacts, and foreign travel records of targeted individuals which helped the CIA with background information that would "develop leads and to understand the significance of reports directly relating to foreign contacts (Church, 1976, 693-694). CIA field stations monitored targeted individuals who traveled through foreign countries. Field stations responded to specific inquiries from Operation MHCHAOS and sent back their findings for it to be analyzed for communist subversion.

Operation MHCHAOS gathered whatever information was available for its targets who traveled abroad. To gather information in other countries, the CIA field stations worked with friendly "foreign intelligence services covering their own dissidents" (Church, 1976, 694-695). For American targets traveling to hostile foreign countries such as Cuba or North Vietnam, former CIA analyst for Operation MHCHAOS Frank Rafalko stated in his defense of the program that it did not investigate unfriendly intelligence networks because it would have been "time consuming" to find an intelligence officer to "assess and develop" for the necessary information (Rafalko, 2011, 20). Instead, Operation MHCHAOS focused on meetings which New Leftists held abroad and collected "every piece, every scrap of information that could have an impact or bearing" on whether any New Left targets had been compromised by foreign governments (Rafalko, 2011, 21). The Rockefeller Commission found that Operation MHCHAOS targeted over a thousand groups and mentioned specifically the Spring Mobilization Committee, the Women's Liberation Movement, the SNCC, the Black Panther Party (BPP), the Youth International Party, and twelve more anti-war, communist, student, and civil rights-type organizations (Rockefeller, 1975, 143-144). Operation MHCHAOS was claimed to not be a domestic program by the CIA. However, surveillance on American citizens by the United States government without a warrant was questionable at best, regardless if the targeted Americans were inside of outside of the country. Furthermore, Operation MHCHAOS received information from the FBI on New Left targets and gave all its own collected information to other government agencies. Despite questions of the CIA's domestic authority, foreign communist support is not impossible given the inherent sense of international unity that was characteristic of the New Left. And so Operation MHCHAOS's existence was not completely without just cause, even if it was used to collect as much information as the CIA wanted on New Left targets.

In 1968 and 1969, Operation MHCHAOS was expanded by the Nixon Administration which led to the CIA to escalate the program in three ways. The Church Committee found that a survey produced in November 1967 by the CIA for President Johnson found no evidence of foreign subversion into the peace movement (Church, 1976, 691-692). Due to the significant increase in demonstrations, riots, assassinations, civil unrest, and general violence that characterized 1968, concerns that foreign support did exist for the New Left continued unabated. The Rockefeller Commission wrote that in mid 1968, Operation MHCHAOS was given greater demand to cover New Left groups and activists abroad along with greater restrictions on disseminating information while the program itself was finally consolidated and named (Rockefeller, 1975, 134). The incoming Presidential Administration of Richard Nixon in 1969 saw a further demand for Operation MHCHAOS. Nixon White House official Tom Huston reviewed the CIA's progress and, in a memorandum obtained by the Church Committee, expressed the Nixon Administration's concern that the CIA's capabilities in its investigation into the New Left was "inadequate" (Church, 1976, 699). By the end of 1969, Operation MHCHAOS gained access to three other CIA programs: the Domestic Contract Service (DCS)

Which was a domestic collection program already launched by the CIA at an undetermined date, Project 2 which recruited agents into the CIA to infiltrate New Left groups, and the National Security Agency's (NSA) collected intelligence (Church, 1976, 701-705). Access to these three programs granted Operation MHCHAOS greater ability to gather information on the New Left.

DCS, Project 2, and coordination with the NSA provided the CIA with broader espionage techniques. A *Family Jewels* memorandum from the DCS Director James Murphy stated that the program gathered records of phone calls without actual content of the conversation and collected other information on foreign involvement in "US dissident groups" through a "passive manner" (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 184-185). The DCS was not within Operation MHCHAOS, rather it supplied domestic information regarding foreign contact from targets within the United States to Operation MHCHAOS as the Church Committee claimed that "over 200 reports and other items were supplied by DCS to CHAOS between 1969 and 1973" (Church, 1976, 701-702). Operation MHCHAOS also began recruiting infiltrators. The Rockefeller Commission found that the CIA began plans for infiltrating New Left organizations in February 1968, however, "Project 1" as it was called was rejected by Helms who recognized the illegality of the proposal (Rockefeller, 1975, 137). "Project 2," introduced in 1969 and implemented in 1970, had the provision that no agent "was to be directed to acquire information concerning domestic dissident activities...only if such information was acquired incidentally" would it be given to Operation MHCHAOS and the FBI (Rockefeller, 1975, 138). The Church Committee found that hired agents would be placed in American universities for six months where they would build their "radical credentials" among New Left organizations (Church, 1976, 703). In this time, reports to the CIA included information on groups within the United States, which went to Operation MHCHAOS along with the rest of what these agents, learned (Church, 1976, 704, 713-714). The Rockefeller Commission reported that Project 2 was renewed annually until 1974 and produced a total of twenty-three agents. Some became activists within their targeted organizations and one became an advisor to a Congressional campaign while they reported the details to the CIA (Rockefeller, 1975, 138-139). While neither Project 2 nor the DCS were a part of Operation MHCHAOS, all information was passed along between them. The Church Committee vaguely stated that "when [MH]CHAOS was in full scale operation," presumably in 1969, information gained from the NSA's domestic surveillance programs began to be given to the CIA who reciprocated with its gained information (Church, 1976, 705). 1968 and 1969 saw the sharp rise in demonstrations and riots, any potential source for the New Left's ability to organize and carry out its objectives had to be investigated even as no evidence was uncovered regarding foreign communist subversion of the New Left. As the Nixon Administration demanded, Operation MHCHAOS was expanded and given more resources to gather more information for its mission.

The early to mid 1970s saw a decline in the activities of Operation MHCHAOS as it amassed a backlog of information in its computerized index system that lacked evidence of foreign communist subversion. Collected information was stored in a computerized indexing system codenamed HYDRA which stored intelligence on 300,000 Americans who earned their index based solely on having briefly met any of the 13,000 New Left activists who had files on themselves maintained by Operation MHCHAOS. Of these 13,000 New Left activists, between 7,200 and 7,500 were Americans (Rockefeller, 1975, 143; Church, 1976, 695 and 709). Operation MHCHAOS's intelligence was distributed to the President, Secretary of State, the Attorney General and the FBI, "and similar officials" as the Church Committee vaguely stated (Church, 1976, 698). These were made in formalized reports, such as "Restless Youth" which was conducted with the FBI and NSA, or the thirty-four special reports to high level officials from Operation MHCHAOS Director Richard Ober (Church, 1976, 696-697 and 698). Operation MHCHAOS distributed its intelligence to the FBI more than any other federal agency. The Church Committee found that 5,000 reports, "4,400 memoranda, and some 1,000 cable disseminations" were sent from Operation MHCHAOS to the FBI in the program's seven years of operation (Church, 1976, 716). But all the information that Operation MHCHAOS collected and distributed was useless to the stated mission as there was never any definitive proof found of foreign influence or subversion into any New Left groups. This finding has been confirmed in numerous studies done by the CIA, in the reviews by the Rockefeller Commission and the Church Committee, and by Rafalko (Rockefeller, 1975, 135 and 145; Church, 1976, 693 and 699-700; Rafalko, 132, 153, 174). The inability of Operation MHCHAOS to prove that foreign communists subverted the New Left was only one of the reasons that the programs ended. Operation MHCHAOS' activity receded with the American War in Vietnam protests that propelled the New Left. As the United States gradually pulled out of Vietnam and the draft slowly ended, the New Left receded and ended.

Former CIA analyst Rafalko stated that with the decline of the New Left, Operation MHCHAOS switched to collecting information on terrorism in 1973 in response to the Munich Massacre during the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich (Rafalko, 2011, 191). While the New Left was in decline, the Weather Underground was still active and continued to commit terrorist acts that would give justification for Operation MHCHAOS to continue to broadly investigate whichever leftist group it pleased. Operation MHCHAOS slowed down by 1972 as the incoming Director of Central Intelligence, William Colby, viewed the program as one of the "'questionable' activities by the Agency" and despite the change in direction towards investigating terrorism, the CIA terminated Operation MHCHAOS on March 15, 1974. The future policy was set that "when information was uncovered as a byproduct of foreign intelligence activity indicating that a United States citizen abroad was suspect for security or counterintelligence reasons, the information was to be reported to the FBI" (Rockefeller, 1975, 148). This left open a window for continued CIA investigations into domestic activist organizations due to the vagueness of how information can be gained as a byproduct. Nonetheless, the federal government already had more than enough agencies to monitor New Left groups or other dissenting organizations. 1974 saw the conclusion of Operation MHCHAOS's seven years of monitoring American New Left targets domestically and internationally that proved no communist or foreign support for any New Leftist, but provided the federal government with plenty of information on the New Left.

While specific CIA documents regarding information it collected was either classified, declassified and redacted, or was otherwise unavailable, *Family Jewels* and Rafalko did provide examples of some intelligence gained on the New Left from Operation MHCHAOS. *Family Jewels* contained seventeen reports that demonstrated the CIA, probably through Operation MHCHAOS, and the Secret Service monitored organizations that were planning to protest the 1972 Democratic and Republican National Conventions in Miami, Florida and San Diego, California because of the possibility that hostile foreign governments were supporting demonstrations (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 556-591). Among these reports included the activities and plans of a member of the San Diego Convention Coalition who attended the World Assembly for Peace and Independence of the Peoples of Indochina along with other American participants. Also targeted was anti-war activist John Lennon who, as a British national, was funding travel expenses for the group Project Yes which attended the World Peace Assembly and was protesting the party conventions (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 562-564). Rafalko provided the most specific information. Although he lacked concrete evidence and proper citations for most of his claims, his experience working in Operation MHCHAOS and investigating the BPP gave him some credibility when he reported intimate details of Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver who was exiled from the United States after 1968 and, through the 1970s, represented the BPP abroad while living in Cuba, Algeria, and France (Rafalko, 2011, 98-131). Rafalko also received briefings and listed some CIA documents in his bibliography (though his texts lacked citation) on New Left activists from the targeted organizations abroad and their meetings with officials from "communist" countries geopolitically arrayed against the United States (Rafalko, 2011, 132-190). Due to the scarcity in sources from the CIA on Operation MHCHAOS, Rafalko provided much of the available information on what the CIA specifically found when investigating the New Left.

There was only one instance of foreign communist support revealed by the CIA and Rafalko who exaggerated it. The closest Rafalko ever came to finding convincing evidence of foreign subversion into the New Left was Cuba's Venceremos Brigade which, in 1970, brought around 1,300 American college students to Cuba to experience the revolution and take what they learned back to the United States (Rafalko, 2011, 164-169). Rafalko interpreted the Venceremos Brigade to be a radical terrorist training program for an eventual revolution in the United States. However, participants Sandra Levinson and Carol Brightman, in their introduction to a published collection of Brigade members' writings, wrote that the purpose of the program was to teach American students of collectivized agricultural systems and Cuba's socialist government which anti-communists in the United States, such as Senator William Eastland, assumed were subversive means to teach terrorist tactics to the New Left (Levinson and Brightman, 1971, 13-32). The available excerpts from diaries, letters, poems, essays, pictures, and interviews indicated that the Venceremos Brigade was more like a summer camp program for Americans to experience an unindustrialized country instead of training courses for revolutionary vanguards in the United States. All that Rafalko's findings indicated were displays of solidarity between socialist governments and New Left ideals. Given his view that the Black Panthers were "low-life street thugs who were more egocentric and money hungry than interested in having solidarity" and his animosity towards the un-American New Left, his personal view had the potential to cloud his judgment (Rafalko, 2011, 130, 145-155).

If the information he gave was accurate, then it was definitive proof, despite his views and beliefs, that the New Left had not been subverted or supported by foreign governments to undermine the United States. More available information from the CIA would go a long way to understanding New Left targets movements abroad and what Operation MHCHAOS's learned while monitoring them.

4 Conclusion

Operation MHCHAOS and the Office of Security's Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC were instruments for the CIA to collect information on the New Left. Given the New Left's declared solidarity for international revolutionaries and opponents to imperialism around the world, it is understandable that those within the United States government during the Cold War, who held the Manichean for-or-against-America attitude, would hold so fast to the possibility of foreign communist support for the New Left. Violent acts were committed against the CIA's college campus recruiters by New Left demonstrators. Knowledge of upcoming demonstrations at its headquarters could possibly help the CIA deter any potential violent incident. Regardless of the arguable validity in the justifications for these programs, the CIA operated as the effective espionage unit it was to collect broad amounts of information on its targets. "Foreign support" had a very broad interpretation, the Church Committee stated that "mere expression of sympathy and approval conveyed to an American group would constitute a 'foreign link'" to the CIA and that "expressions of common concern, contact at conferences, or encouragement came necessarily to include a substantial segment of the more militant protest groups in America" (Church, 1976, 709). The Church Committee was more lenient on Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC. Its criticism was laid on the excessive security the CIA placed in protecting its sources and for running its own investigations into how domestic issues would threaten its operations (Church, 1976, 727-728). The Office of Security was criticized for the amount of gathered information on political organizations beyond the threats to the CIA and resulted in the CIA "performing essentially internal security functions" (Church, 1976, 728). The CIA was aware of these criticisms. *Family Jewels* contained numerous documents about the CIA's Management Advisory Group which investigated Operation MHCHAOS and demonstrated the internal discontent about the programs (*Family Jewels*, 2007, 443-446). Internal debate over the programs was also reflected in Colby who began reviewing questionable CIA practices. Much of the *Family Jewels* are criticisms directed to the Office of Security.

Project RESISTANCE cannot be found in the publicly released and censored version of *Family Jewels* and it is odd that in its nearly 700 pages of documents, Project RESISTANCE was not included. It is probable that relevant content was redacted, however given that its existence was confirmed by Congressional and executive investigations would make it an oddly integral part of the CIA's "questionable" activities to omit. Perhaps the most general details within internal CIA memoranda contradicted the public record of Project RESISTANCE. However, Project MERRIMAC was present and its inclusion in *Family Jewels* indicated that those in the CIA, especially Colby, were aware of these programs and cautious to its existence. Rafalko, with his bias towards defending Operation MHCHAOS, wrote that the potential for foreign governments to subvert any of the New Left justified the investigation which resulted in discovering minimal financial support, no combat training, significant propaganda and moral support, and "no formal alliances" beyond "a common antipathy for the United States and its anti-Communist foreign policy" (Rafalko, 2011, 203-207).⁶ Activist and former SDS President Todd Gitlin wrote that the fear of foreign subversion of the New Left was a commonly repeated claim within the government from the Johnson Administration as well as through Congress (Gitlin, 1987, 263-264). It was never proven, however the information collected along with intelligence from the Office of Security was disbursed to other agencies in the federal government - especially the FBI whose counterintelligence programs were leading the campaign to bring down the New Left. Despite not arresting anyone or directly influencing any New Left organizations, the CIA used the notions of internal threats and foreign subversion as pretexts for launching domestic programs to investigate the New Left and gain information for the rest of the federal government.

⁶Rafalko often used fallacies, omitted evidence, and demonstrated cognitive dissonance in his arguments. One example is his criticisms of the Rockefeller Commission, the Church Committee, and the Pike Committee in which he used ad-homonym attacks against the members without introducing and then refuting specific points of the reports (89-97).

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