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FEDERAL RESPONSE TO RADICALISM IN THE 1960S



Organized alphabetically by organization, this collection covers a wide range of viewpoints on political, social, cultural, and economic issues. It sheds light on internal organization, personnel, and activities of some of the most prominent American radical groups and their movements to change American government and society.

Date Range: 1956-1971

Content: 87,391 images

Source Library: Federal Bureau of Investigation Library

Detailed Description:

This product illuminates the enduring conflict in American history between the need of society to protect basic freedoms and the equally legitimate need to protect itself from genuine threats to its security and existence.

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COINTELPRO: The Counterintelligence Program of the FBI

The FBI Counterintelligence Program file contains details of the bureau's attempts to "expose, disrupt, and neutralize" groups that J. Edgar Hoover perceived as threatening to national security. The material in this file, spanning COINTELPRO's existence from 1956 to 1971, is especially valuable for the view it offers of the U.S. political climate in the 1960s. The file is organized in sections that reflect the bureau's interests, among them the Communist Party of the USA, Black nationalist "hate" groups, White "hate" groups, the Socialist Workers Party, and Cuban groups supporting Fidel Castro.

FBI File on Abbie Hoffman

Abbie Hoffman's energetic activism earned him a reputation as an agitator and an effective voice for America's counter culture of the 1960s. He attracted the attention of the FBI through his disruptive and dramatic demonstration at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. He was associated with most major radical groups of the 60s, including the Black Panthers, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), and the Youth International Party (YIP), which Hoffman cofounded in 1968.

FBI File on the Black Panther Party, North Carolina

Documents in this file, spanning the years from 1968 to 1976, are mainly surveillance reports and investigative and legal memoranda, but also include Black Panther Party publications, transcriptions of speeches by black militant spokespersons, digests of FBI phone intercepts at party headquarters and some of the party's internal records and correspondence.

FBI File on Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers

This FBI file reveals details regarding the investigation of labor organizer Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers as a subversive group. The records included here are roughly chronological in organization. Scholars of 20th century U.S. history, labor history, Mexican/Chicano studies, and social history will find this collection an invaluable resource.

FBI File on the Fire Bombing and Shooting at Kent State University

On May 4, 1970, the killing of students by the National Guard at Kent State University shocked the nation. This file, which documents the FBI's five-year investigation of the shooting and the earlier fire bombing of an ROTC building, includes interviews with students and guardsmen, medical reports, maps, contemporary news accounts, and other reports.

FBI Files on Malcolm X

Malcolm X, one of the black militant movement's most controversial figures, joined the Black Muslims while serving a prison sentence and, on his release in 1952, became a minister in Elijah Mohammed's Nation of Islam. Later breaking with his group, he converted to orthodox Islam and founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity. The FBI opened a file on Malcolm X in 1953 and continued surveillance until his assassination in 1965.

FBI File: MIBURN (Mississippi Burning)

In the summer of 1964, civil rights advocates Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Earl Chaney were working in rural Mississippi and were abducted and killed by local Ku Klux Klan members. Their murders were among the first to be tried under the new Civil Rights Act. This file includes bureau letters, memoranda and prosecuting reports on the case.

FBI File on Muslim Mosque, Inc.

Founded by Malcolm X after his break with the Nation of Islam, Muslim Mosque, Inc. was a politically-oriented movement affiliated with the orthodox Islamic religion. The file contains memoranda by Special Agents in Charge and supporting documentation.

FBI File on the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU)

Organized by Malcolm X after his break with the Nation of Islam, the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) was under surveillance from its establishment until it dissolved in the 1960s. This file contains memoranda by FBI agents with supporting documentation.

FBI File on the Students for a Democratic Society and the Weatherman Underground Organization

This is one of the few collections on Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and its spin-off, the Weatherman Underground Organization, between 1962 and 1977. Strong in descriptions of antiwar rallies and SDS-produced materials, the file is particularly useful for its detailed coverage of the SDS-led protests at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. Both J. Edgar Hoover and President Johnson came to view the SDS as a key fomenter of anti-Vietnam sentiment. When the Weathermen, the SDS "Action Faction," broke away, the FBI's investigations could finally focus on the concrete problem of terrorist bombings. The file ends with the 1977 capture of Peter Clapp, one of the last "wanted" Weathermen.

FBI File on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was organized in 1960 to encourage voter registration for blacks in the Deep South. Under Stokely Carmichael, the group pushed for economic enfranchisement and advocated black supremacy.

The FBI maintained a file on the SNCC because Communists were believed to be infiltrating its leadership. This file comprises reports from nineteen cities, including Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco. Each section is in chronological order, spanning 1964 to 1973. The file contains addresses, membership, and information on groups believed to associate with the SNCC.

FBI Investigation File on Communist Infiltration of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference

This file documents the FBI's investigation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which was organized in 1957 in Atlanta, with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as president.