

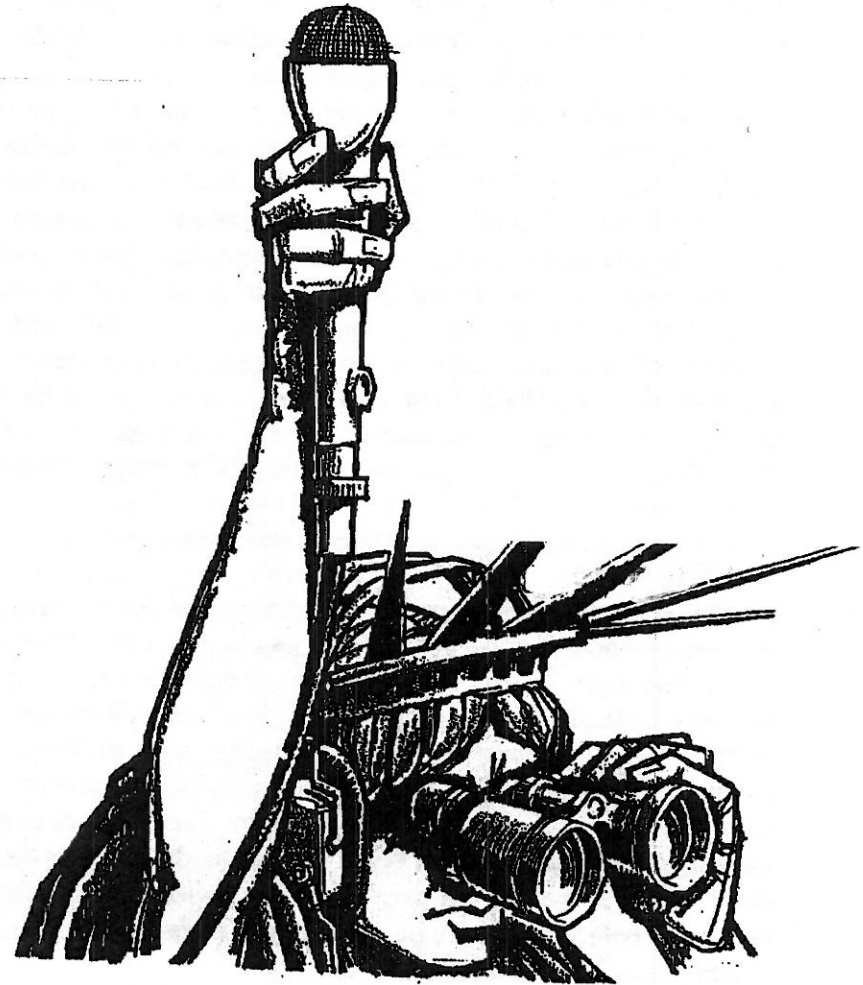


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**How COINTELPRO Helped Destroy  
the Movements of the 1960s**

**AND**

**THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY  
AND ITS ANNIHILATION BY COINTELPRO**

**Two key essays on government sabotage and destruction of  
past revolutionary movements. As well as follow up essays on  
group discipline and security for today's activists.**

The outrage expressed during the 1960's over the Vietnam war and racism at home and through U.S. policies abroad quickly manifested itself into organized resistance and in some cases outright rebellion. More and more people were beginning to see the American dream for what it was and demanded basic human rights for all as opposed to the current system based on exploitation, pressure on the empire began to build. Never in the history of the United States had the beast felt so threatened. The Capitalist elite and its government lackeys were not content to just sit back and watch their empire be ripped apart, quite to the contrary they unleashed the all their power and resources upon those that stood in the face of oppression, as you will read mostly in violation of their own laws. In the end many popular movements were crushed, with the help from agent provocateurs most by their own hands. If one thing is to be learned out of the struggles of the 60's is that when threatened the U.S. government will do anything to crush dissent.

With police brutality and institutional racism in the form of The Prison Industrial Complex running rampant and unchecked, U.S. imperialism in the form of the war in Iraq, Columbia, and Afghanistan plundering the global commons, environmental catastrophes due to corporate greed waiting around every corner, and the gap between the rich and the poor larger then ever before, once again the people are beginning to rise up and take a stand. For many the writing is on the wall and the struggle is in their hearts, our numbers will swell as time goes on. The struggle will not be won overnight though, and we would be wise to study and learn from the struggles and mistakes made by our fallen comrades. They have much to teach us. The beast will not be driven from the land with out a fight. If we are not careful we will suffer the same fate as those that came before us. There have already been far to many martyrs. The stakes are to high, Failure is not an option.

## **How COINTELPRO Helped Destroy the Movements of the 1960s**

Since COINTELPRO was used mainly against the progressive movements of the 1960s, its impact can be grasped only in the context of the momentous social upheaval which shook the country during those years.

All across the United States, Black communities came alive with

**PAGE 1**

During the 1980's the Latin American Support Committee in Fresno, who worked to end U.S. intervention in Central America, was repeatedly harassed by government agents. Undercover agents attempted to disrupt meetings by polarizing members about the use of violence and encouraging the group to raise money for weapons which were needed by Central American revolutionaries. Agents approached individual members and asked them to engage in illegal and violent activities. The local police and the FBI spent years investigating and harassing LASC without uncovering any illegal activities.

A few years ago, the Fresno Police Department and the CSUF police conspired to violate anti-sweatshop activists rights by infiltrating United Students Against Sweatshops. A police agent attended the group's meetings and monitored email messages of anti-sweatshop activists. The distorted information that this agent passed on to her superiors to justify her job greatly exaggerated the extent of a planned demonstration at a local mall. This mis-information resulted in the police's use of riot clad officers, a police helicopter, and over one hundred officers to arrest 19 peaceful protestors at the Fashion Fair mall. The presence of the informant was discovered during the course of criminal proceedings of the Gap 19. All charges against the anti-sweatshop activists were later dismissed.

Apathy or disassociation doesn't make anyone less responsible. Power only gains strength when left unchallenged. It's the ability to use our voice that can make the difference. Its using our voice that will make the difference.

Anarchist Prisoner of War Jeffrey "Free" Luers

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been termed "snitch jacketing" whereby legit activists get branded infiltrators. Instances have included police agents obviously dressed as agents approaching members of organizations in an effort to make those members to sow discord.

D) Be extremely careful about communications. Emails can be forged. Voices on phone messages can be imitated. Handwriting and drawing styles can be forged. With today's technology even videos can be doctored (though this would require a high level of skill and access to some very expensive equipment. Something the CIA, NSA, or FBI is more likely to have access to then local or county law enforcement). Always confirm the source of information, whether it is a threat or a tip.

## LOCAL PEACE GROUP INFILTRATED BY GOVERNMENT AGENT

Link: <http://www.peacefresno.org>

by Mike Rhodes, October 4, 2003

Peace Fresno was infiltrated by an agent working for the Fresno Sheriff's Department. Aaron Kilner, known by Peace Fresno activists as Aaron Stokes, attended several Peace Fresno meetings. Peace Fresno activist Nicholas DeGraff remembers him taking voluminous notes and several members say they saw him at peace vigils held at Shaw and Blackstone. He was also on the bus local anti-globalization activists took to attend the WTO ministerial-level conference on Agricultural Science and Technology demonstration in Sacramento in June 2003.

Aaron Kilner died in a motorcycle accident on August 30, 2003. In his obituary in The Fresno Bee he was identified as a member of the Fresno County Sheriff's department. The obituary went on to say that he was "assigned to the anti-terrorist team." Local activists believe that this "anti-terrorist team" is, in fact, the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) that has recently been formed in this area. When members of Peace Fresno saw the picture and read of Kilner's association with law enforcement they began piecing the story together.

The infiltration by law enforcement of progressive community groups in Fresno and throughout the country has long been used to disrupt legitimate political work. This disruption occurs by sowing seeds of mistrust among members, agents often promote discord within the group, and sometimes encourage illegal or violent actions. Agent provocateurs have been know to instigate violence at demonstrations,

renewed political struggle. Most major cities experienced sustained, disciplined Black protest and massive ghetto uprisings. Black activists galvanized multi-racial rebellion among GIs, welfare mothers, students, and prisoners.

College campuses and high schools erupted in militant protest against the Vietnam War. A predominantly white New Left, inspired by the Black movement, fought for an end to U.S. intervention abroad and a more humane and cooperative way of life at home. By the late 1960s, deep-rooted resistance had revived among Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. A second wave of broad-based struggle for women's liberation had also emerged, along with significant efforts by lesbians, gay men, and disabled people.

Millions of people in the United States began to reject the dominant ideology and culture. Thousands challenged basic U.S. political and economic institutions. For a brief moment, "the crucial mixture of people's confidence in the government and lack of confidence in themselves which allows the government to govern, the ruling class to rule...threatened to break down."

By the mid-1970s, this upheaval had largely subsided. Important progressive activity persisted, mainly on a local level, and much continued to be learned and won, but the massive, militant Black and New Left movements were gone. The sense of infinite possibility and of our collective power to shape the future had been lost. Progressive momentum dissipated. Radicals found themselves on the defensive as right-wing extremists gained major government positions and defined the contours of accepted political debate.

Many factors besides COINTELPRO contributed to this change. Important progress was made toward achieving movement goals such as Black civil rights, an end to the Vietnam War, and university reform. The mass media, owned by big business and cowed by government and right-wing attack, helped to bury radical activism by ceasing to cover it. Television, popular magazines, and daily papers stereotyped Blacks as hardened criminals and welfare chiselers or as the supposedly affluent beneficiaries of reverse "discrimination." White youth were portrayed first as hedonistic hippies and mindless terrorists, later as an apolitical, self-indulgent "me generation." Both were scapegoated as threats to "decent, hard-working Middle America."

During the severe economic recession of the early- to mid- 1970s, former



student activists began entering the job market, some taking on responsibility for children. Many were scared by brutal government and right-wing attacks culminating in the murder of rank-and-file activists as well as prominent leaders. Some were strung out on the hard drugs that had become increasingly available in Black and Latin communities and among white youth. Others were disillusioned by mistreatment in movements ravaged by the very social sicknesses they sought to eradicate, including racism, sexism, homophobia, class bias and competition.

Limited by their upbringing, social position, and isolation from older radical traditions, 1960s activists were unable to make the connections and changes required to build movements strong enough to survive and eventually win structural change in the United States. Middle-class students did not sufficiently ally with working and poor people. Too few white activists accepted third world leadership of multi-racial alliances. Too many men refused to practice genuine gender equality.

Originally motivated by goals of quick reforms, 1960s activists were ill-prepared for the long-term struggles in which they found themselves. Overly dependent on media-oriented superstars and one-shot dramatic actions, they failed to develop stable organizations, accountable leadership, and strategic perspective. Creatures of the culture they so despised, they often lacked the patience to sustain tedious grassroots work and painstaking analysis of actual social conditions. They found it hard to accept the slow, uneven pace of personal and political change.

This combination of circumstances, however, did not by itself guarantee political collapse. The achievements of the 1960s movements could have inspired optimism and provided a sense of the power to win other important struggles. The rightward shift of the major media could have enabled alternative newspapers, magazines, theater, film, and video to attract a broader audience and stable funding. The economic downturn of the early 1970s could have united Black militants, New Leftists, and workers in common struggle. Police brutality and government collusion in drug trafficking could have been exposed in ways that undermined support for the authorities and broadened the movements' backing.

By the close of the decade, many of the movements' internal weaknesses were starting to be addressed. Black-led multi-racial alliances, such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign and the Black Panthers' Rainbow Coalition, were forming. The movements' class base was broadening through Black "revolutionary unions" in auto and other

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movements' effectiveness. Some may be tempted to even be pessimistic about the

mistake to increase its effectiveness.

If each of us takes on the responsibility of educating those who slip up, we can dramatically improve movement security. Once people recognize lying, gossiping, bragging, and indirect-bragging as the damaging character-flaws that they are, they will soon end. When we develop a culture where all breaches of security result in an immediate reprimand, all sincere activists will quickly get with the program.

## **DEALING WITH CHRONIC SECURITY PROBLEMS**

So what do we do with activists who repeatedly violate security precautions even after multiple educational sessions? It's unfortunate, but the best thing to do with these people is cut them loose and kick them out of our meetings, base camps, and organizations. With law enforcement budgets on the increase and with courts handing down long sentences for political crimes, the stakes are too high to allow chronic security-offenders to work among us.

### **IN REVIEW**

A) Assume that somewhere in your organization, there is an infiltrator (AKA provocateur) or someone with loose lips. And by infiltrator, I generally mean backward elements - right-wingers, members of the press only interested in sensationalistic exposes, informants (whether paid or unpaid), in addition to law enforcement. Loose lips means someone who may have all the right intentions, but hangs out with a bad crowd - i.e. people who know people sympathetic to a target of a campaign, someone who has close friends or family in law enforcement, etc.

B) Don't be paranoid about infiltration. Fear of infiltration is just as powerful a tool as infiltration itself, as it erodes trust among activists. Follow precautions within reason. Be careful to gather verifiable proof that someone is an infiltrator of any sort. If someone is an asshole, but you have no proof of that, regard them as an asshole and deal with them as such. There's no need to over dramatize an already sketchy situation by spreading rumors and making unproven claims.

C) Related to b: Be wary that authorities know that the stresses of activism can be channeled into finger-pointing that leads to what has

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accessories after the fact). An activist who brags also sets a horrible example to other activists.

**Indirect-Bragging:** Indirect-braggers are people who make a big production on how they want to remain anonymous, avoid protests, and stay "underground." They might not come out and say that they do illegal direct action, but they make sure everyone within ear-shot knows they are up to something. They are no better than braggers, but they try to be more sophisticated about it by pretending to maintain "security." However, if they were serious about security, they would just make up a good excuse as to why they are not as active, or why they can't make it to the protest (that kind of lying is acceptable).

## EDUCATE TO LIBERATE

With what we now know about security, it is easy to spot those activists who compromise our movement's security. So what do we do with people who exhibit these behaviors? Do we excommunicate them from our movement? Actually, no--at least, not for a first offense.

The unfortunate truth is there are numerous security-ignorant people in the movement and others who have possibly been raised in a "scene" that thrives on bragging and gossiping. It doesn't mean these people are bad, but it does mean they need to be educated. Even seasoned activists can make mistakes when there is a general lack of security consciousness in our groups. And that's where those of you who are reading this can help. We must NEVER let a breach in security occur without acting to correct it. If an acquaintance of yours is bragging about doing an action or spreading security-compromising gossip, it is your responsibility to explain to her or him why that sort of talk violates security and is inappropriate.

You should strive to educate this person in a manner that encourages him to listen and to change his/her behavior. It should be done without damaging their pride. You should be humble and sincerely interested in helping them to become a better person and a more effective activists. Do not maintain a "holier than-thou" attitude. This attitude will inevitably raise their defenses and prevent them from absorbing or using any of the advice you offer. Remember, the goal of educating people is to change their behavior, not boost your ego by showing them how much more security-conscious you are.

If possible the educational session be done in private, so the person does not have to contend with the humiliation of a public reprimand. The

industries, King's increasing focus on economic issues, the New Left's spread to community colleges, and the return of working-class GIs radicalized by their experience in Vietnam. At the same time, the women's movement was confronting the deep sexism which permeated 1960s activism, along with its corollaries: homophobia, sexual violence, militarism, competitiveness, and top-down decision-making.

While the problems of the 1960s movements were enormous, their strengths might have enabled them to overcome their weaknesses had the upsurge not been stifled before activists could learn from their mistakes. Much of the movements' inability to transcend their initial limitations and overcome adversity can be traced to COINTELPRO.

It was through COINTELPRO that the public image of Blacks and New Leftists was distorted to legitimize their arrest and imprisonment and scapegoat them as the cause of working people's problems. The FBI and police instigated violence and fabricated movement horrors. Dissidents were deliberately "criminalized" through false charges, frame-ups, and offensive, bogus leaflets and other materials published in their name. (Specific examples of these and other COINTELPRO operations are presented on pages 41-65.)

COINTELPRO enabled the FBI and police to exacerbate the movements' internal stresses until beleaguered activists turned on one another. Whites were pitted against Blacks, Blacks against Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, students against workers, workers against people on welfare, men against women, religious activists against atheists, Christians against Jews, Jews against Muslims. "Anonymous" accusations of infidelity ripped couples apart. Backers of women's and gay liberation were attacked as "dykes" or "faggots." Money was repeatedly stolen and precious equipment sabotaged to intensify pressure and sow suspicion and mistrust.

Otherwise manageable disagreements were inflamed by COINTELPRO until they erupted into hostile splits that shattered alliances, tore groups apart, and drove dedicated activists out of the movement. Government documents implicate the FBI and police in the bitter break-up of such pivotal groups as the Black Panther Party, SDS, and the Liberation News Service, and in the collapse of repeated efforts to form long-term coalitions across racial, class, and regional lines. While genuine political issues were often involved in these disputes, the outcome could have been different if government agencies had not covertly intervened to subvert compromise and fuel hostility and competition.

Finally, it was COINTELPRO that enabled the FBI and police to eliminate the leaders of mass movements without undermining the image of the United States as a democracy, complete with free speech and the rule of law. Charismatic orators and dynamic organizers were covertly attacked and "neutralized" before their skills could be transferred to others and stable structures established to carry on their work. Malcolm X was killed in a "factional dispute" which the FBI took credit for having "developed" in the Nation of Islam. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the target of an elaborate FBI plot to drive him to suicide and replace him "in his role of the leadership of the Negro people" with conservative Black lawyer Samuel Pierce (later named to Reagan's cabinet). Many have come to view King's eventual assassination (and Malcolm's as well) as itself a domestic covert operation.

Other prominent radicals faced similar attack when they began to develop broad followings and express anti-capitalist ideas. Some were portrayed as crooks, thugs, philanderers, or government agents, while others were physically threatened or assaulted until they abandoned their work. Still others were murdered under phony pretexts, such as "shootouts" in which the only shots were fired by the police.

To help bring down a major target, the FBI often combined these approaches in strategic sequence. Take the case of the "underground press," a network of some 400 radical weeklies and several national news services, which once boasted a combined readership of close to 30 million. In the late 1960s, government agents raided the offices of alternative newspapers across the country in purported pursuit of drugs and fugitives. In the process, they destroyed typewriters, cameras, printing presses, layout equipment, business records, and research files, and roughed up and jailed staffers on bogus charges. Meanwhile, the FBI was persuading record companies to withdraw lucrative advertising and arranging for printers, suppliers, and distributors to drop underground press accounts. With their already shaky operations in disarray, the papers and news services were easy targets for a final phase of COINTELPRO disruption. Forged correspondence, anonymous accusations, and infiltrators' manipulation provoked a flurry of wild charges and counter-charges that played a major role in bringing many of these promising endeavors to a premature end.

A similar pattern can be discerned from the history of the Black Panther Party. Brutal government attacks initially elicited broad support for this new, militant, highly visible national organization and its popular ten-

But when activists who do not share the same serious consequences knows who did an illegal direct action, they are far more likely to talk after being harassed and intimidated by the authorities, because they are not the ones who will go to jail. Even those people who are trustworthy can often be tricked by the authorities into revealing damaging and incriminating information. So it is safest for all cell members to keep their involvement in the group amongst themselves. The fewer people who know, the less evidence there is to bust them.

## **SECURITY VIOLATING BEHAVIOURS**

In an attempts to impress others, activists may behave in ways that compromise security. Some people do this frequently - they are habitually gossiping and bragging. Some activists say inappropriate things only when they consume alcohol. Many activists make occasional breeches of security because there was a momentary temptation to say something or hint at something that shouldn't have been said or implied. In most every situation, the desire to be accepted is the root cause.

Those people who tend to be the greatest security risks are those activists who have low self-esteem and strongly desire the approval of their peers. Certainly it is natural to seek friendship and recognition for our efforts, but it is imperative that we keep these selfish desires in-check so we do not jeopardize the safety of other activists or ourselves. People who place their desire for friendship over the importance of the cause can do serious damage to our security.

The following are examples of security-violating behaviors:

**Lying:** To impress others, liars claim to have done illegal actions. Such lies not only compromise the person's security—as cops will not take what is said as a lie—but also hinders movement solidarity and trust.

**Gossiping:** Some weak characters think they can win are privy to special information. These gossips will tell others about who did what action or, if they don't know who did it, guess at who they think did what actions or just spread rumors about who did it. This sort of talk is very damaging. People need to remember that rumors are all that are needed to instigate a grand jury.

**Bragging:** Some people who partake in illegal direct action might be tempted to brag about it to their friends. If someone did such a thing, it would not only jeopardize the bragger's security, but also that of the other people involved with the action (as they may be suspected by association), as well as the people who he told (they can become



Speak about a specific individual's involvement (past, present or future) with illegal activities. These are unacceptable topics of discussion regardless of whether it is rumor, speculation or personal knowledge. Please note: no one is claiming it is wrong to speak about direct action in general terms. It is perfectly legal, secure and desirable that people speak out in support of mokeywrenching and all forms of resistance. The danger lies in linking individual activists to specific actions or groups.

### THREE EXCEPTIONS

There are only three times that it is acceptable to speak about this information. The first situation would be if you were planning an action with other members of your small group (your "cell" or "affinity group"). However, you would never discuss these things over the Internet (email), phone line, through the mail, or in an activist's home or car, as these places and forms of communication are frequently monitored. The only people who should hear this discussion would include those who are actively partaking in the action. Anyone who is not involved does not need to know and, therefore, should not know.

The second exception occurs after an activist has been arrested and brought to trial. If she is found guilty, this activist can freely speak of the actions for which she was convicted. However, she must never give information that would help the authorities determine who else participated in illegal activities.

The third exception is for anonymous letters and interview with the media. This must be done very carefully and without compromising security. Advice on secure communication techniques can be found in other publications.

Those are the only situations when it is appropriate to speak about your own or someone else's involvement or intent to commit illegal direct action.

### SECURITY MEASURES

Veteran activists only allow a select few to know about their involvement with direct action groups. And those few consist of the cell members who they do the actions with **AND NO ONE ELSE!**

The reason for these security precautions is quite obvious: if people don't know anything, they can't talk about it. It also means that only the people who know the secret can also face jail time if the secret gets out.

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point socialist program for Black self-determination. But the FBI's repressive onslaught severely weakened the Party, making it vulnerable to sophisticated FBI psychological warfare which so discredited and shattered it that few people today have any notion of the power and potential that the Panthers once represented.

What proved most devastating in all of this was the effective manipulation of the victims of COINTELPRO into blaming themselves. Since the FBI and police operated covertly, the horrors they engineered appeared to emanate from within the movements. Activists' trust in one another and in their collective power was subverted, and the hopes of a generation died, leaving a legacy of cynicism and despair which continues to haunt us today.

\*\* End of text from cdp:pn.publiceye \*\*

/\*\* pn.publiceye: 23.6 \*\*/

\*\* Written 6:50 pm Jan 24, 1991 by nlglc in cdp:pn.publiceye \*\*

### Black Panther Party Program: What We Want-adopted 1966

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the CAPITALISTS of our Black Community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.
8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black

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colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

\*\* End of text from cdp:pn.publiceye \*\* /\*\* pn.publiceye: 23.7 \*\*/ \*\*  
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## **THE DANGER WE FACE Domestic Covert Action**

### **Remains a Serious Threat Today**

The public exposure of COINTELPRO and other government abuses elicited a flurry of apparent reform in the 1970s. President Nixon resigned in the face of impeachment. His Attorney General, other top aides, and many of the "plumbers" were prosecuted and imprisoned for brief periods. The CIA's director and counter-intelligence chief were ousted, and the CIA and the Army were again directed to cease covert operations against domestic targets.

The FBI had formally shut down COINTELPRO a few weeks after it was uncovered. As part of the general face-lift, the Bureau publicly apologized for COINTELPRO, and municipal governments began to disband the local police "red squads" that had served as the FBI's main accomplices. A new Attorney General notified several hundred activists that they had been victims of COINTELPRO and issued guidelines limiting future operations. Top FBI officials were indicted for ordering the burglary of activists' offices and homes; two were convicted, and several others retired or resigned. The Bureau's egomaniacal, crudely racist and sexist founder, J. Edgar Hoover, died in 1972. After two interim directors failed to stem the tide of criticism, a prestigious federal judge, William Webster, was appointed by President Carter to clean house and build a "new FBI."

Behind this public hoopla, however, the Bureau's war at home continued unabated. Domestic covert action did not end when it was exposed in the 1970s. It has persisted throughout the 1980s and become a permanent feature of U.S. government.

\*\* End of text from cdp:pn.publiceye \*\* /\*\* pn.publiceye: 23.8 \*\*/ \*\*  
Written 6:52 pm Jan 24, 1991 by nlglc in cdp:pn.publiceye \*\*

## **Domestic Covert Action Did Not End in the 1970s**

Director Webster's highly touted reforms did not create a "new FBI." They served mainly to modernize the existing Bureau and to make it

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human tactics. The advice herein also applies to anyone who is associated with groups that practice civil disobedience, especially since membership often overlaps and gossip travels freely between groups. Even if you have never picked up a monkey wrench or been arrested for civil disobedience, even if you think you have nothing to hide, these guidelines will enhance your personal safety as well as the movement's overall effectiveness. Surveillance has been set up on all sections of political movements in the past. Governments in the western industrialized world have targeted groups that have advocated sabotage and groups that have not, movements that have been militant and movements that have been markedly pacifist. The government's security machinery serves political and economic objectives, and there are over 250 political prisoners in Canada and the US that can testify to this from firsthand experience. By adoption a security culture, we can defeat various counterintelligence operations that would otherwise disrupt both mainstream organizing and underground resistance.

## **SO WHAT IS A SECURITY CULTURE?**

It's a culture where the people know their rights and, more importantly, assert them. Those who belong to a security culture also know what behavior compromises security and they are quick to educate those people who, out of ignorance, forgetfulness, or personal weakness, partake in insecure behavior. This security consciousness becomes a culture when the group as a whole makes security violations socially and morally unacceptable in the group.

## **WHAT NOT TO SAY**

To begin with, there are certain things that are inappropriate to discuss. These things include:

- your involvement or someone else's involvement with an underground group
- someone else's desire to get involved with such a group
- asking others if they are a member of an underground group
- your participation or someone else's participating in any action that was illegal
- someone else's advocacy for such actions
- your plans or someone else's plans for a future action

Can you see a pattern? What all of these are stating is this: it is wrong to

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problems. A knowledge of the strategies and tactics of your adversaries will strengthen your movement. Cover yourself; it's a tough world out there.

## Suggested Readings

Caignon, Denise and Gail Groves. *Her Wits About Her: Self Defense Success Stories by Women*. New York, 1987.

Churchill, Ward and Jim Vander Wall. *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*. Boston: South End Press, 1988.

Donner, Frank J. *The Age of Surveillance*. New York: Random House, 1981.

Gelbspan, Ross. *Break-ins, Death Threats and the FBI: The Covert War Against the Central America Movement*. Boston: South End Press, 1991.

Glick, Brian. *War at Home: Covert Action Against US Activists and What We can Do About It*. Boston: South End Press, 1989.

## Security Culture: What is it, Why we need it and How to Implement it

from <http://security.tao.ca/personal/culture.shtml>

Luddites; liberationists; abolitionists; union organizers; revolutionaries... From large uprisings challenging the entire political structure, to isolated environmental and social struggles, people have constantly worked to create a better world. To government the response has always been to jail activists and revolutionaries using the courts and the police forces at hand.

As direct action movements become more effective, government surveillance and harassment will increase. To minimize the destructiveness of this political repression, it is imperative that we create a security culture within our movement.

This pamphlet is essential reading for anyone who is associated with groups that advocate and/or utilize sabotage, theft, arson and more

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even more dangerous. In place of the backbiting competition with other law enforcement and intelligence agencies which had previously impeded coordination of domestic counter-insurgency, Webster promoted inter-agency cooperation. Adopting the mantle of an "equal opportunity employer," his FBI hired women and people of color to more effectively penetrate a broader range of political targets. By cultivating a low-visibility image and discreetly avoiding public attack on prominent liberals, Webster gradually restored the Bureau's respectability and won over a number of its former critics.

State and local police similarly upgraded their repressive capabilities in the 1970s while learning to present a more friendly public face. The "red squads" that had harassed 1960s activists were quietly resurrected under other names. Paramilitary SWAT teams and tactical squads were formed, along with highly politicized "community relations" and "beat rep" programs featuring conspicuous Black, Latin, and female officers. Generous federal funding and sophisticated technology became available through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, while FBI-led "joint anti-terrorist task forces" introduced a new level of inter-agency coordination.

Meanwhile, the CIA continued to use university professors, journalists, labor leaders, publishing houses, cultural organizations, and philanthropic fronts to mold U.S. public opinion.[f-41] At the same time, Army Special Forces and other elite military units began to train local police for counter-insurgency and to intensify their own preparations, following the guidelines of the secret Pentagon contingency plans, "Garden Plot" and "Cable Splicer." They drew increasingly on manuals based on the British colonial experience in Kenya and Northern Ireland, which teach the essential methodology of COINTELPRO under the rubric of "low-intensity warfare," and stress early intervention to neutralize potential opposition before it can take hold.

While domestic covert operations were scaled down once the 1960s upsurge had subsided (thanks in part to the success of COINTELPRO), they did not stop. In its April 27, 1971 directives disbanding COINTELPRO, the FBI provided for future covert action to continue "with tight procedures to ensure absolute security." The results are apparent in the record of 1970s covert operations which have so far come to light:

The Native American Movement: 1970s FBI attacks on resurgent Native American resistance have been well documented by Ward Churchill and

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sources. In 1973, the Bureau led a paramilitary invasion of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota as American Indian Movement (AIM) activists gathered there for symbolic protests at Wounded Knee, the site of an earlier U.S. massacre of Native Americans. The FBI directed the entire 71-day siege, deploying federal marshals, U.S. Army personnel, Bureau of Indian Affairs police, local GOONs (Guardians of the Oglala Nation, an armed tribal vigilante force), and a vast array of heavy weaponry.

In the following years, the FBI and its allies waged all-out war on AIM and the Native people. From 1973-76, they killed 69 residents of the tiny Pine Ridge reservation, a rate of political murder comparable to the first years of the Pinochet regime in Chile. To justify such a reign of terror and undercut public protest against it, the Bureau launched a complementary program of psychological warfare.

Central to this effort was a carefully orchestrated campaign to reinforce the already deeply ingrained myth of the "Indian savage." In one operation, the FBI fabricated reports that AIM "Dog Soldiers" planned widespread "sniping at tourists" and "burning of farmers" in South Dakota. The son of liberal U.S. Senator (and Arab-American activist) James Abourezk, was named as a "gunrunner," and the Bureau issued a nationwide alert picked up by media across the country.

To the same end, FBI undercover operatives framed AIM members Paul "Skyhorse" Durant and Richard "Mohawk" Billings for the brutal murder of a Los Angeles taxi driver. A bogus AIM note taking credit for the killing was found pinned to a signpost near the murder site, along with a bundle of hair said to be the victim's "scalp." Newspaper headlines screamed of "ritual murder" by "radical Indians." By the time the defendants were finally cleared of the spurious charges, many of AIM's main financial backers had been scared away and its work among a major urban concentration of Native people was in ruin.

In March 1975, a central perpetrator of this hoax, AIM's national security chief Doug Durham, was unmasked as an undercover operative for the FBI. As AIM's liaison with the Wounded Knee Legal Defense/Offense Committee during the trials of Dennis Banks and other Native American leaders, Durham had routinely participated in confidential strategy sessions. He confessed to stealing organizational funds during his two years with AIM, and to setting up the arrest of AIM militants for actions he had organized. It was Durham who authored the AIM documents that the FBI consistently cited to

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perspective and mystique.

- Don't let agents threaten you or talk you into having a short, personal conversation without your lawyer. Don't let them intimidate or trick you into talking. If the FBI wants to empanel a Grand Jury, a private talk with you will not change the strategy of the FBI. Don't try to outwit the FBI; your arrogance could get you or others in serious trouble.
- FBI agents sometimes try to trick you into giving information "to help a friend." Don't fall for it; meet with the agents in the presence of your attorney and then you can help your friend.
- Lying to the FBI is a criminal act. The best way to avoid criminal charges is to say nothing.
- Any information you give the FBI can and will be used against you.
- Write for your government files under the Freedom of Information Act and keep writing to the agencies until they give you all the documents filed under your name.
- Don't let the agents intimidate you. What if they do know where you live or work and what you do? We have a constitutional right to lawful dissent. You are not required to speak with the FBI. They intend to frighten you; don't let them.
- Do not overlook the fact that government agencies sometimes share information within the government and with the private sector, particularly right-wing organizations. This has been documented.

## Remember

If you feel you are being spied on, your phones tapped, or that you are being followed, the best overall advice is to trust your instincts. If you feel something is wrong, trust the feeling. Your instincts are usually right. Most of us recall the times when we "felt something was wrong" or we "knew better but did it anyway."

Talk to colleagues and make yourself as secure as you can. Experts claim that people who resist get away from attackers more often than those who do not. The same logic applies to keeping outsiders out of your business; it is a more subtle form of attack.

Trust your instincts and resist when possible. One of the biggest blocks to resistance is the failure to recognize that we are under attack. None of this advice is intended to frighten but to create an awareness of the

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- them makes them uncomfortable. If you are covertly being followed, have a friend covertly photograph them.
- If you are being followed, get the license plate number and state. Try to get a description of the driver and the car as well as passengers. Notice anything different about the car.
- If you are followed or feel threatened, call a friend; don't "tough it out" alone. "They" are trying to frighten you. It is frightening to have someone threatening your freedom.
- Debrief yourself immediately after each incident. Write details down: time, date, occasion, incident, characteristics of the person(s), impressions, anything odd about the situation.
- Keep a "Weirdo" file with detailed notes about unsettling situations and see if a pattern emerges.

### Break-Ins

- Check with knowledgeable people in your area about alarm systems, dogs, surveillance cameras, motion sensitive lights, dead bolt locks, and traditional security measures to protect against break-ins.

### Visits From the FBI

- Don't talk to the FBI or any government investigator without your attorney present. Get the names and addresses of the agents and tell them you will have your attorney contact them to set up a meeting. If you have an attorney, give her or him the name and phone number. Under any circumstance, get the agents' names and addresses. Information gleaned from a conversation can be used against you and your co-workers. The agents' report of even an innocuous conversation could "put words in your mouth" that you never uttered or your words could be distorted or made up if you don't have your attorney present.
- Call the National Lawyers Guild, American Civil Liberties Union, or other sympathetic legal organizations if you need assistance locating a reliable attorney in your area.
- The FBI rarely sets up interviews with counsel present. Often when the demand is made to have the interview with counsel, the FBI loses overt interest.
- Don't invite agents into your home. Speak with the agents outside. Once inside, they glean information about your

demonstrate the group's supposed violent tendencies.

Prompted by Durham's revelations, the Senate Intelligence Committee announced on June 23, 1975 that it would hold public hearings on FBI operations against AIM. Three days later, armed FBI agents assaulted an AIM house on the Pine Ridge reservation. When the smoke cleared, AIM activist Joe Stuntz Killright and two FBI agents lay dead. The media, barred from the scene "to preserve the evidence," broadcast the Bureau's false accounts of a bloody "Indian ambush," and the congressional hearings were quietly cancelled.

The FBI was then free to crush AIM and clear out the last pockets of resistance at Pine Ridge. It launched what the Chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission described as "a full-scale military-type invasion of the reservation"[f-46> complete with M-16s, Huey helicopters, tracking dogs, and armored personnel carriers. Eventually AIM leader Leonard Peltier was tried for the agents' deaths before a right-wing judge who met secretly with the FBI. AIM member Anna Mae Aquash was found murdered after FBI agents threatened to kill her unless she helped them to frame Peltier. Peltier's conviction, based on perjured testimony and falsified FBI ballistics evidence, was upheld on appeal. (The panel of federal judges included William Webster until the very day of his official appointment as Director of the FBI.) Despite mounting evidence of impropriety in Peltier's trial, and Amnesty International's call for a review of his case, the Native American leader remains in maximum security prison.

**The Black Movement:** Government covert action against Black activists also continued in the 1970s. Targets ranged from community-based groups to the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika and the surviving remnants of the Black Panther Party.

In Mississippi, federal and state agents attempted to discredit and disrupt the United League of Marshall County, a broad-based grassroots civil rights group struggling to stop Klan violence. In California, a notorious paid operative for the FBI, Darthard Perry, code-named "Othello," infiltrated and disrupted local Black groups and took personal credit for the fire that razed the Watts Writers Workshop's multi-million dollar cultural center in Los Angeles in 1973. The Los Angeles Police Department later admitted infiltrating at least seven 1970s community groups, including the Black-led Coalition Against Police Abuse.

In the mid-1970s, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

(ATF) conspired with the Wilmington, North Carolina police to frame nine local civil rights workers and the Rev. Ben Chavis, field organizer for the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ. Chavis had been sent to North Carolina to help Black communities respond to escalating racist violence against school desegregation. Instead of arresting Klansmen, the ATF and police coerced three young Black prisoners into falsely accusing Chavis and the others of burning white-owned property. Although all three prisoners later admitted they had lied in response to official threats and bribes, the FBI found no impropriety. The courts repeatedly refused to reopen the case and the Wilmington Ten served many years in prison before pressure from international religious and human rights groups won their release.

As the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) began to build autonomous Black economic and political institutions in the deep South, the Bureau repeatedly disrupted its meetings and blocked its attempts to buy land. On August 18, 1971, four months after the supposed end of COINTELPRO, the FBI and police launched an armed pre-dawn assault on national RNA offices in Jackson, Mississippi. Carrying a warrant for a fugitive who had been brought to RNA Headquarters by FBI informer Thomas Spells, the attackers concentrated their fire where the informer's floor plan indicated that RNA President Imari Obadele slept. Though Obadele was away at the time of the raid, the Bureau had him arrested and imprisoned on charges of conspiracy to assault a government agent.

The COINTELPRO-triggered collapse of the Black Panthers' organization and support in the winter of 1971 left them defenseless as the government moved to prevent them from regrouping. On August 21, 1971, national Party officer George Jackson, world-renowned author of the political autobiography [Soledad Brother,] was murdered by San Quentin prison authorities on the pretext of an attempted jailbreak. In July 1972, Southern California Panther leader Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt was successfully framed for a senseless \$70 robbery-murder committed while he was hundreds of miles away in Oakland, California, attending Black Panther meetings for which the FBI managed to "lose" all of its surveillance records. Documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act later revealed that at least two FBI agents had infiltrated Pratt's defense committee. They also indicated that the state's main witness, Julio Butler, was a paid informer who had worked in the Party under the direction of the FBI and the Los Angeles Police

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fingerprint it. If not, give them a copy because you may wish to have your own expert examine it.

## Automobiles

- Keep your automobile clean so you can see if there is an addition or loss.
- Put no bumper stickers on your car which identify you as an organizer. Make your car look ordinary.
- Put your literature in the trunk or in a closed box.
- Keep your car locked at all times.

## Police

- Report any incidents to the local police and ask for protection if you feel it is warranted.
- Report threats or harassment to your local police. Demand that they take a report and protect you if that is necessary. Talk to the press and report the police response as well as the incident(s).
- Report thefts of materials from your office or home to the police; these are criminal acts.

## Under Surveillance?

- Brief your membership on known or suspected surveillance. Be scrupulous with documentation. Do not dismiss complaints as paranoia without careful investigation. The opposition can and frequently does have informants join organizations to learn about methods and strategy.
- Discuss incidents with colleagues, family, and membership. Call the press if you have information about surveillance or harassment. Discussion makes the secret dirty work of the intelligence agencies and private spies easier to spot.
- If you wish to have a private conversation, leave your home or office and take a walk or go somewhere very public and notice who can hear you.
- If you know a secret, keep it to yourself. As the World War II poster warned: loose lips sink ships.
- Photograph the person(s) following you or have a friend do so. Use caution. If someone is overtly following you or surveilling you, she or he is trying to frighten you. Openly photographing

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## Telephone

- Do not list your address with your phone number in the directories. Consider having yourself unlisted.
- If you receive threatening calls on your answering machine, immediately remove and save the tape.
- Never respond to a query over the telephone from an unknown person—lottery tickets, fabulous prizes, jury questionnaires, etc. notwithstanding. Ask for a telephone number and call the party back considerably later or the following day. Check the phone book to see if the phone number they gave you is legitimate. Check it out. Do the same if a reporter calls.
- Never say anything you don't want to hear repeated where there is any possibility of being recorded or overheard. Don't say anything on the phone you don't want to hear in open court.
- Don't talk in code on the telephone. If you are being tapped and the transcript is used against you in court, the coded conversation can be alleged to mean anything by government code "experts."
- Don't gossip about sensitive people or projects on the telephone. All information that can make an outsider "in the know" about you and your projects is valuable and makes everyone vulnerable.
- Keep a pad and pen next to the telephone. Jot down details of threatening or suspicious calls immediately. Note the time, date and keep a file.
- Don't waste time worrying about phone taps or imagining that strange clicks or hums or other noises indicate a phone tap. Many taps are virtually impossible to detect. Trust your instincts. If you think your phone is tapped, act accordingly.

## Mail

- Get a mail box through the United States Post Office or a private concern. Be aware that the Post Office will give your street address to inquirers under certain circumstances.
- If you receive a threatening letter, handle it as little as possible. Put both the letter and the envelope in a plastic bag or file folder. Give the original to the police only if they agree to

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Department. For many years, FBI Director Webster publicly denied that Pratt had ever been a COINTELPRO target, despite the documentary proof in his own agency's records.

Also targeted well into the 1970s were former Panthers assigned to form an underground to defend against armed government attack on the Party. It was they who had regrouped as the Black Liberation Army (BLA) when the Party was destroyed. FBI files show that, within a month of the close of COINTELPRO, further Bureau operations against the BLA were mapped out in secret meetings convened by presidential aide John Ehrlichman and attended by President Nixon and Attorney General Mitchell. In the following years, many former Panther leaders were murdered by the police in supposed "shoot-outs" with the BLA. Others, such as Sundiata Acoli, Assata Shakur, Dhoruba Al-Mujahid Bin Wahad (formerly Richard Moore), and the New York 3 (Herman Bell, Anthony "Jalil" Bottom, and Albert "Nuh" Washington) were sentenced to long prison terms after rigged trials.

In the case of the New York 3, FBI ballistics reports withheld during their mid-1970s trials show that bullets from an alleged murder weapon did not match those found at the site of the killings for which they are still serving life terms. The star witness against them has publicly recanted his testimony, swearing that he lied after being tortured by police (who repeatedly jammed an electric cattleprod into his testicles) and secretly threatened by the prosecutor and judge. The same judge later dismissed petitions to reopen the case, refusing to hold any hearing or to disqualify himself, even though his misconduct is a major issue. As the NY3 continued to press for a new trial, their evidence was ignored by the news media while their former prosecutor's one-sided, racist "docudrama" on the case, (Badge of the Assassin,) aired on national television.

## THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY AND ITS ANNIHILATION BY COINTELPRO

The Black Panther Party arose out of the ashes of oppression like a Phoenix during the turbulent Civil Rights era. The party emerged at a time when Black people in the United States of America were fighting

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Luther King Jr., was not working and many Black Americans were ready to stage a revolutionary war to gain the human and civil rights denied them for hundreds of years.

Huey Percy Newton and Bobby Seale formed the BPP in 1966. "It was an organization of Black and poor persons embracing a common ideology identified by its proponents as 'revolutionary intercommunalism.'"(WAR AGAINST THE PANTHERS: A STUDY OF REPRESSION IN AMERICA, Newton, Huey Percy)

The goal of the BPP was to link Black and other oppressed people who had been historically denied equal opportunities in employment, education, housing, and their civil rights. The BPP based its goal on a ten point program established by the party members.

The ten points of the party platform were:

- 1) Freedom; the power to determine the destiny of the Black and oppressed communities.
- 2) Full Employment; give every person employment or guaranteed income.
- 3) End to robbery of Black communities; the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules as promised to ex-slaves during the reconstruction period following the emancipation of slavery.
- 4) Decent housing fit for the shelter of human beings; the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people can build.
- 5) Education for the people; that teaches the true history of Blacks and their role in present day society.
- 6) Free health care; health facilities which will develop preventive medical programs.
- 7) End to police brutality and murder of Black people and other people of color and oppressed people.
- 8) End to all wars of aggression; the various conflicts which exist stem directly from the United States ruling circle.
- 9) Freedom for all political prisoners; trials by juries that represent our peers.
- 10) Land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and community control of modern industry.

These ten points gave the members the cohesive base on which a strong Black community could be built. Of course, this ideology was never realized because of the destruction of the BPP and its members by the FBI. COINTELPRO systematically destroyed the power structure

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## **VOICE**

- Never leave the only copy of a document or list behind; take a minute to duplicate an important document and keep the duplicate in a safe place off-site.
- Keep mailing and donor lists and personal phone books out of sight. Always maintain a duplicate at a different location; update it frequently.
- Know your printer if you are about to publish and know your mailing house if you contract for distribution. The loss of camera-ready copy or a change in text could feel like a disaster.
- Back up and store important computer disks off-site. Sensitive data and membership lists should be kept under lock and key. Do not leave sensitive files on the hard disk; use floppies, back them up, and store the disks in secure spots. Use an encryption program to protect your data.
- Know the background of anyone you are trusting to work on any part of a project that is sensitive. Projects have been bungled because an untrustworthy person has purposefully intervened or inadvertently screwed up.
- Don't hire a stranger as a messenger. Your message might not arrive or could arrive after being duplicated for an unintended party.
- Sweeps for electronic surveillance are only effective for the time they are being done, and are only effective as they are being done if you are sure of the person(s) doing the sweep. Sweeps tend to be expensive because one must sweep a large area to be effective. Many experts contend that the most sophisticated federal government and private agency taps cannot be detected.
- Keep a camera handy at all times.

## **Trash**

- What you consider trash could be a real treasure to someone looking for information about you or your projects. Don't throw information out in your trash. Garbology has become a tactic because it is so useful.
- Keep a "Burn file" in a secure place and occasionally burn it or use a shredder. Make sure you shredder creates confetti because strips can easily be reconstructed with a little patience.

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BPP demanded almost thirty years ago. Although the system underhandedly demonized the leaders of the BPP and its platform, today the true story is unfolding.

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# Common Sense Security

from <http://www.publiceye.org/eyes/comsense.html>

by Sheila O'Donnell

As our movements have become stronger and more sophisticated, the techniques of the state, corporations, and right-wing groups have also become more sophisticated. We have seen government agents, corporate security and right-wing intelligence networks share information as well as an ideology. For instance, the FBI's COINTELPRO operations targeted dissidents in America in the 1960s and 1970s. Caution and common sense security measures in the face of the concerted efforts to stop us are therefore both prudent and necessary.

Spend a few minutes to assess your work from a security point of view: understand your vulnerabilities; assess your allies and your adversaries as objectively as possible; do not underestimate the opposition. Try to assess your organizational and personal strengths and weaknesses. Do not take chances. Plan for the worst; work and hope for the best.

Here are some specific suggestions for protecting yourself and your projects:

of the BPP; for example, fabricated letters were sent to different factions causing dissension. This effort was designed to divide key leaders such as Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton. For instance, when Cleaver went into exile in Algeria leaving Newton to run the party on his own, the FBI used the opportunity to "disrupt the BPP by promoting internal dissension."

The FBI also used "Black Propaganda" operations. This refers to fabricating and distributing publications targeted at party members and used to discredit them publicly among their peers. Such propaganda presented cartoon caricatures depicting BPP members acting negatively toward each other. The FBI's goal was to get different factions to fight amongst themselves.

This ploy worked well for the FBI. Because of its "Black Propaganda", the FBI can take credit for the murders of Los Angeles Panther leaders John Huggins and Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter who were killed by unidentified gunmen in UCLA's Campbell Hall on January 17, 1969. Police infiltrators were at least partly responsible for the murders.

Another tactic used to discredit the BPP and other Black revolutionary organizations was to use infiltrators and provocateurs to engage in illegal activities which could cause Party members to be arrested for felonious crimes. These agents provocateurs were also assigned the task of spreading dis-information.

The fabrication of information was yet another tactic used by the FBI. This included the intimidation of witnesses and coercion. For example, the Bureau concocted a threatening letter to jurors, during the "Chicago Eight" conspiracy trial in efforts to obtain convictions.

The murkiest of all maneuvers has been the implication of assassinations by the FBI of selected political leaders and Black revolutionaries. Of course, Congressional investigators have shied away from delving too deeply to uncover evidence on this tactic.

David Hilliard, a key party leader in the Oakland Ca. chapter of the BPP, has said that the BPP rose to the top of the political most wanted list. He has also said that "The BPP were regularly demonized by then governor, Ronald Reagan. This caused a stigma to be placed upon the BPP as Pied Pipers of cultural and social revolution characterizing us as the essence of violence, chaos, and evil."

Hoover took this mode of thought a step further, referring to the BPP as "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country." Hoover believed the leaders and representatives of the BPP were trying to warp

them to overthrow the government and take part in revolution. Hoover instructed local field offices in cities across America to "submit imaginative and hard-hitting counterintelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP."

Actions taken by COINTELPRO operatives resulted in the imprisonment of several key Party members. The objectives of COINTELPRO were advanced by indictments of Party members whose imprisonment left the Party leaderless and unable to operate effectively in the Black community.

Today, because of COINTELPRO, Elmer Gerard (Geronimo) Ji Jaga is a political prisoner, serving a life sentence in the California penal system for the murder of Caroline Olsen. The FBI wanted Ji Jaga "neutralized," a goal they accomplished through COINTELPRO techniques. The Los Angeles FBI office designated Ji Jaga a "Key Black Extremist", gave his file "Priority I" status, and placed it in the National Security Index, though there was never any evidence given to validate the acute threat to national security associated with a top SI rating.

*Editors note Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt was freed in 1997 after spending 27 years in prison when it came out the prosecutors withheld evidence that proved that Geronimo could not have been the killer.*

After the deaths of Carter and Huggins, Ji Jaga became the leader of the L.A. chapter. Carter had left an audio tape stating that Ji Jaga was to lead the BPP in L.A. in the event of his death. Ji Jaga was chosen by Carter because he had extensive military training in light weapons and irregular warfare tactics. Carter believed that Ji Jaga could successively train party members to defend themselves in the event of urban warfare.

Ji Jaga's so called threat to the national security of the United States caused the FBI to stage an all out war against him. The neutralization process encompassed every trick in their book. When the FBI ordered a raid against the L.A. headquarters, they were assisted by Melvin "Cotton" Smith, an infiltrator who had rose to number three man in the LA-BPP. Smith Provided the FBI with detailed floor plans of the headquarters. During a similar raid, conducted a few days earlier in Chicago, Fred Hampton, the leader of the BPP in that state, was murdered. Although there was no known evidence linking the two raids, it is noted that Fred Hampton was in L.A. two days before he was killed.

The raid on the L.A. office was successfully defended by Ji Jaga and

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arrested. A jury later found all Panthers who had participated in the shoot-out innocent of any major crimes.

Fred Hampton had been a promising leader of the BPP. A high school leader and NAACP activist, he was a highly respected speaker for the BPP in a Chicago Illinois suburb. In 1967, when Hampton was only nineteen-years-old, the Bureau opened a file on him that expanded to twelve volumes over the next two years.

In exchange for a monthly stipend and the dropping of federal charges against him, an informant, William O'Neal, agreed to infiltrate the Chicago BPP as a counterintelligence operative. He would later become Chief of Security in the BPP and Hampton's personal bodyguard. O'Neal provided a detailed floor plan of Fred Hampton's apartment where the police assassinated him. A wire tap was placed on Hampton's mother's phone in February of 1968. By May of that same year, the young Panther's name would be placed on the "Agitator Index" and he would be designated a "key militant leader for Bureau reporting purposes."

The similarities between the L.A. and Chicago raids were undeniable. The goal was to exterminate key leaders as quickly and as secretly as possible. Thus, both raids were conducted in the early hours of the morning; floor plans were given to the police detailing the positions of the Panthers; and, both Party offices were infiltrated by informants.

The Black Panther Party was attempting to create a system whereby the oppressed people of America, namely African Americans and other people of color, could control their own destiny. The BPP not only had a concrete platform, they also had put that platform in place, while doing positive things for the community. Survival programs such as the Free Food Program, Free Medical Research Health Clinics and the Intercommunal Youth Band gave the community participants a sense of pride in themselves, while showing them how to sustain themselves. In his book of essays To Die For The People, Huey Newton eloquently stated that "All these programs satisfy the deep needs of the community."

The far reaching effect of COINTELPRO is that the revolutionary forces that once existed have gone underground or disappeared. Today, in 1995, the conditions that gave birth to the BPP in the sixties, have worsened; and the present political climate in this country will give rise to another revolutionary force that will demand the same rights that the

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