LEFT IN THE MIDWEST

St. Louis Progressive Activism in the 1960s and 1970s

Edited by Amanda L. Izzo and Benjamin Looker

Surveillance and Subversion of Student Activists, 1967–1970

Standoff in St. Louis

Nina Gilden Seavey

Prologue

I COME TO WRITE THIS essay in a manner that is unique for a university professor. This chapter is at once personal in its motivation and narrative style, and yet professionally guided in its rigor. Perhaps this is fitting. I am not your typical academic. Rather, I am a documentarian with an academic title: Research Professor of History and Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University. As such, I don't come to the practice of history in the same way as most historians—that is, by engaging in scholarly debate about the interpretation and reinterpretation of ideas and events filtered through an ongoing historiographic context. Rather, I engage history as both a storytelling mechanism and as a means of expressing larger truths about the human experience. I like to think of this study and presentation of history as *accessible*, intended to spark the interest and imaginations of all with whom I come into contact, whether through my films, podcasts, or writings.[1]

With that approach in mind, let me embark you, as readers, onto the journey of this chapter with a simple story. As I said, this is personal: my father, Louis Gilden, was a civil rights attorney in St. Louis during the 1960s and 1970s (Fig. 5.1). He had a client, a twenty-two-year-old student named Howard Mechanic. Mechanic was arrested and indicted on federal charges stemming from his involvement in a riot in which an Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) building was burned to the ground on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis on the night of May 4, 1970. For his involvement in this protest, Mechanic was charged under Section 231 of the Civil Obedience Act of 1968.[2] He was not charged in the burning of the federal building itself, but rather, was alleged to have thrown a cherry bomb (an exploding firework) at a policeman during the riot. The police

This article originally appeared as Chapter 5 of *Left in the Midwest: St. Louis Activism in the 1960s and 1970s*, edited by Amanda L. Izzo and Benjamin Looker (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2022), and was made OA by permission of the University of Missouri Press.

officer was not injured. Mechanic denied having ever thrown the cherry bomb. At trial, Mechanic was found guilty. He was sentenced to five years in federal penitentiary and levied a fine of $10,000. Appeals to higher courts were denied and on May 26, 1972, when he failed to appear to serve his sentence, a warrant was issued for his arrest. Mechanic was officially a federal fugitive.

Figure 5.1 The chapter author with her father, civil rights attorney Louis Gilden, in 1980. The whereabouts of Gilden's vanished client, Howard Mechanic, became a much-discussed mystery in the Gilden household. *Author's personal collection*

While Mechanic's life on the run for the next twenty-eight years as he fled his wrongful conviction is an interesting story unto itself, what motivated my research was my father's sense that there was something else that was at play that affected, either directly or indirectly, Mechanic's trial.[3] Simply put, there was too much about Mechanic's indictment and conviction that didn't add up.

The riot at Washington University was but one of hundreds of outpourings on college campuses in the wake of the murders of four students at Kent State University on May 4, 1970. In the hours and days that followed, four million students protested, buildings were burned, and many students were arrested.[4] When my father made inquiries to his legal colleagues across the nation, he could not find other students outside of St. Louis who were being brought up on similar federal charges. This was worrisome and puzzling to him.

The evidence presented at trial was scant. The prosecution called nineteen witnesses. Only one, Donald "Dick" Bird, swore under oath that he had seen Mechanic propel a firecracker in the direction of the policeman. And that assertion varied over time in its details from one statement to another.[5] In spite of the lack of corroboration for Bird's testimony from any of the other eighteen prosecution witnesses, the government pursued its case with a vengeance. And they were successful. What had been planned as a two-week trial ended in four days. The jury deliberated for just under an hour before rendering the guilty verdict. Howard, feeling himself the victim of an unjust conviction and assuming the worst from the rest of the criminal justice system, fled even before the US Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal.[6]

The fact of Howard's flight created a story of mythic proportions in my family. Frequently my father would ask, "Whatever happened to Howard Mechanic?" and we would spend many dinner hours speculating as to his whereabouts and his fate. But what nagged at my father—and then me—was how peculiar it was that the conviction on these never-before-levied charges had been successful in the first place.

Howard wasn't the only student charged with a federal crime at Washington University in the wake of the ROTC burning.[7] He was simply the only one who fled. Howard's disappearance for nearly three decades kept his and the others' inexplicable convictions more present than they might otherwise have been. Once the acquittals had been issued or the sentences served, the cases' resonance would most probably have faded, except for the gnawing fact of Howard's long absence. Always in search of an historical narrative that reflects on a larger truth, a decade ago I decided to explore my father's hunch that something didn't quite add up about what was set into motion on the night of May 4, 1970, in St. Louis, Missouri.

To uncover that truth, I needed more information about the government's activities in St. Louis, and in the lives of these students, before and after the Kent State murders. I started small, requesting FBI files on Howard Mechanic, my father, and several other leaders in antiwar and civil rights activities in St. Louis under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). I also began to collect files from former students, many of whom had previously requested their own files in the late 1970s and 1980s and who were willing to share them with me. The more files I garnered, the more the avenues for inquiry opened and my FOIA requests increased. In the documents garnered early in my research, I began to see patterns in the activities of federal

agents and their confidential informants. I found numerous reports about students who were consistently under surveillance as targets of the FBI's secret long-standing neutralization and subversion plan: COINTELPRO. And I discovered evidence of government collaborations against students by the Department of Justice, the FBI in Washington, DC, and the Bureau office in St. Louis as early as 1967.

The more information I found, the more FOIA requests I made—until I had accumulated 358 official inquiries. The government denied or obfuscated on all of them. Upon advice of my attorney, we combined these FOIA requests into a single lawsuit, *Seavey v. Department of Justice et al.,* which included as defendants the FBI, the CIA, and the National Archives. In two separate judgments handed down in May and July 2017, Judge Gladys Kessler ruled on both the access and speed with which the government would be required to respond to my requests. And she was unequivocal about the importance of this work:

> The basic purpose of the Freedom of Information Act [is] to open agency action to the light of public scrutiny. At this present difficult time in our country's history, it is important as never before, that the American public be as educated as possible as to what "our Government is up to."[8]

Now, thousands of documents were released each month over a three-year period, yielding a total of 150,000 records. Many of these documents had not been part of other congressional, journalistic, or historical inquiries into COINTELPRO, so they have added to the canon of information shaping what we know about the program. What I came to learn was that, indeed, my father's intuition was correct. There was much more at play than he, Mechanic, and the other defendants and their attorneys could possibly have imagined at the time. Unbeknownst to the small band of protestors at Washington University, St. Louis had become a proving ground for the government's assault on the antiwar and civil rights movements. That insight about the role that St. Louis played as a crucible for the nation is the focus of this chapter. But before we get to what these documents contain, it will be instructive to provide some background and context so that the meaning and import of this discovery can be more fully understood and appreciated.

PART ONE
The FBI and the Roots of the War on the New Left

The Battleground

On May 10, 1968, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover did something extraordinary. He wrote a memo to all Special Agents in Charge (SAC) of Bureau offices nationwide that, on the face of it, resembled so many others. During his thirty-seven-year reign, the Director would, from his desk at the Seat of Government, issue thousands of memoranda—official and unofficial missives that acted as his tentacles controlling the broad expanse of the Bureau. Some dispatches were personal notes of congratulation upon a marriage or the birth of a child, others were critical notes of censure citing even the smallest infraction that intended to humiliate the recipient, and still others were meticulous directives in ongoing investigations, as if the Director himself were on the ground supervising the daily activities of his agents. Hoover's hold on the ten-thousand-man agency was absolute, tight, and unforgiving. This memo, while couched in the bureaucratese of which Hoover was the master, was most notable for its lack of specificity, its broad-brush call to action, and its uncharacteristic vagary as to the expansiveness of its tactics. On May 10, 1968, J. Edgar Hoover called for a full-scale assault on America's youth. It was called COINTELPRO New Left. The Director's words were unambiguous as to their intent:

> Effective immediately, the Bureau is instituting a Counterintelligence Program directed against the New Left Movement and its Key Activists. All offices are instructed to immediately open an active control file, captioned as above, and assign responsibility for this program to an experienced and imaginative Special Agent who is well versed in investigation of the New Left and its membership.
>
> The purpose of this program is to expose, disrupt, and neutralize the activities of the various New Left organizations, their leadership and adherents. . . . The devious maneuvers and duplicity of these activists must be exposed to public scrutiny through the cooperation of reliable news media sources, both locally and at the Seat of Government. We must frustrate every effort of these groups and individuals to consolidate their forces or to recruit new or youthful adherents. In every instance, consideration should be given to

> disrupting the organized activity of these groups and no opportunity should be missed to capitalize upon organizational and personal conflicts of their leadership.[9]

The Counterintelligence Program, COINTELPRO for short, was Hoover's fifteen-year effort to subvert those he identified as America's enemies. The program's absolute secrecy guaranteed its long duration, and Hoover's control over the day-to-day strategy and tactics of its execution defined its potency as a weapon against its targets. In this new, expanded, phase of the program Hoover was clear about the priority the initiative was being assigned in the conduct of an agent's duties: "Law and order is mandatory for any civilized society to survive. Therefore, you must approach this new endeavor with a forward look, enthusiasm, and interest in order to accomplish our responsibilities. The importance of this new endeavor cannot and will not be overlooked."[10] If local SACs had any doubt as to their personal accountability for neutralizing this somewhat ill-defined target, Hoover's final admonishment made it clear that they, themselves, would be monitored and held responsible for significant tangible results on a mission where nothing less than America's institutions and ideals were at stake. His was a tall yet ambiguous order. But without a doubt, no man in the FBI wanted to find out what the dark side of Hoover's implied threat looked like should the director perceive a misstep in his work. In St. Louis, SAC Joseph Gamble and, later, his successor, SAC J. Wallace LaPrade, would find energetic and imaginative approaches for executing this new front-line offensive.

Between 1968 and 1971, Hoover used the latitude afforded to him from the full cloak of secrecy inherent to COINTELPRO to codify and press his expectations of agents assigned to New Left activities. In numerous subsequent memoranda, Hoover's presence hovered as field agents scurried to meet his ever-growing demand for intelligence, analysis, and subversion of the "depraved nature and moral looseness" of America's youth movement.[11] The most detailed directive came from Hoover on July 5, 1968, in which he outlined twelve "suggestions to be utilized by all offices." Some of the proposed actions included the use of targeted propaganda as he instructed agents to prepare anonymous defamatory leaflets for distribution on college campuses. The leaflets were to be illustrated with photos of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) leaders using the "most obnoxious pictures" or, in others, with defamatory cartoons. Hoover observed, "ridicule is one of

the most potent weapons we have against [the New Left]."[12] Other instructions suggested the authoring of anonymous "poison pen" letters describing the depravity of New Left adherents to be sent to university administrators, wealthy donors, members of legislatures, and parents of the students.[13] Moreover, the use of "cooperative press contacts" to write articles and editorials minimizing the size and effect of New Left activities was strongly encouraged.[14]

But perhaps the most forceful of Hoover's instructions was directed towards fomenting discord and paranoia among New Left leaders and their followers.[15] Hoover perceived abundant possibilities in this arena, but success would be reliant upon effective and active instigators of such divisions. Therefore, the recruitment of confidential informants (CIs) to garner additional relevant intelligence and to spearhead the execution of surveillance and subversion activities was critical. The philosophical and tactical underpinning for the use of these informants was to "enhance paranoia. . . and further serve to get the point across that there is an FBI agent behind every mailbox."[16] In order to engender this level of induced mistrust, the universe of agents and their surrogates needed to be greatly expanded to infiltrate the daily lives of New Left activists endlessly and insidiously. One memo articulates a key tactic for the recruitment of these CIs, noting that "the use of marijuana and other narcotics is widespread among members of the New Left" and that agents should be on heightened alert for opportunities to encourage local authorities to arrest students on drug charges."[17] Consequently, a favored and effective method for encouraging students to turn on one another was the promise of forgiving or lessening criminal charges in return for active cooperation.[18] The ubiquity of marijuana and other drug use on college campuses provided ample opportunities for a steady stream of foot soldiers dragooned into Hoover's war of subterfuge.

New Left Domestic Counterintelligence in Context

So as not to overstate the significance of Hoover's May 10, 1968, memorandum, a brief history of the COINTELPRO will help to frame the program more rightly as "evolutionary" rather than "revolutionary." There had been active domestic counterintelligence programs since the mid-1950s. Initially, COINTELPRO was focused on the Communist Party of the USA (1956) and the Socialist Worker's Party (1961); it then progressed into the infiltration of the Ku Klux Klan (1964), expanded into the Black Nationalist

movement (1967), until it finally landed on the New Left (1968). Hoover considered all these groups a threat to national security, and once each was so identified, he afforded himself great latitude in determining how to eliminate that threat.

What defined COINTELPRO was threefold: its iron-clad secrecy, its avoidance of any accountability within the federal government, and participants' total lack of introspection as to the legal and ethical implications of the tactics they employed. COINTELPRO was a tightly guarded secret even among Bureau personnel within field offices.[19] Many agents had no notion of the program's operations, even in small offices. In Washington, DC, COINTELPRO went undisclosed to Congress, the Department of Justice, and the President of the United States for decades.[20] Indeed, it was not until 1975—three years after Hoover's death—that key aspects of the program were finally revealed. That year, Congress launched its first major investigation into the program, conducted by the Senate Select Committee to Study Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (known more familiarly as the Church Committee, named for the committee's chairman, Idaho Democrat Frank Church). During COINTELPRO's productive years, evidence of domestic intelligence gathering was well-known by many government officials, but Hoover made certain that the sources and methods that yielded those results remained both secret and without independent oversight. Therefore, even as COINTELPRO was monitored with a cool military precision from the Seat of Government, the program was frequently without tether in its ambition and tactics in the field. When William C. Sullivan, Hoover's Director of Domestic Intelligence and the man considered the main architect of COINTELPRO, was deposed in 1975 by the Church Committee, he succinctly framed the contours of the program:

> This is a rough, tough, dirty business and dangerous. It was dangerous at times. No holds were barred. The issue of the law or ethics was secondary to the ill-gotten gains. Never once did I hear anybody, including myself, raise the question: "Is this course of action which we have agreed upon lawful? Is it legal? Is it ethical or moral?" We never gave any thought to this realm of reasoning, because we were just naturally pragmatists. The one thing we were concerned about was this: "Will this course of action work, will it get us what we want?" We did what we were expected to do.[21]

COINTELPRO's long, successful history of fighting America's domestic "enemies" led Hoover to the May 10, 1968, memorandum inaugurating COINTELPRO New Left. In one critical sense, however, this effort represented an entirely new phase in the program. Unlike previous FBI targeting of groups framed as domestic threats, COINTELPRO New Left was not so much focused on an organization as it was an assault on an ideology. There were literally and figuratively card-carrying members of the CPUSA, the SWP, the KKK and the Black Panthers. These were organizations that had named leaders, organizational headquarters, and chapters throughout the country. But the New Left had few such formal identifiers. There were organizations such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), but the followers of New Left ideology expanded far beyond that sometimes rag-tag organization. Instead, Hoover's understanding of the "New Left" was an amorphous mix of countercultural, frequently long-haired young people with a variety of liberal ideas on politics, sex, drugs, and other life-style choices. These were primarily students on college campuses who, in the Hooverian world view, were being surreptitiously guided by outside communist forces hellbent on undermining the very fabric of American society. As he noted:

> The Bureau has been very closely following the activities of the New Left and the Key Activists and is highly concerned that the anarchistic activities of a few can paralyze institutions of learning, inductions centers, cripple traffic, and tie the arms of law enforcement officials all to the detriment of our society. The organizations and activists who spout revolution and unlawfully challenge society to obtain their demands must not only be contained but must be neutralized.[22]

With the notion of the "New Left" hard to characterize other than a vague sense that an FBI man was supposed to know an adherent if he saw one, the targets of this neutralization effort needed to be made more identifiable. Who exactly was this New Left enemy? On May 28, 1968, just two weeks after Hoover's initial missive, the SAC of the FBI's New York field office offered the embraced answer to this question: such a figure could be identified by an "aversion to work," a "Jewish liberal background," and "anti-establishment dress and ideology."[23] While not a severely delimiting factor, such characterizations offered some general focus—and perhaps a rationale—for the FBI's plan of attack.

In the Company of the FBI

Before coming to understand the scope and breadth of the Bureau's assault on the New Left specifically in St. Louis, it is important to provide even more context, as the FBI was not the only agency of surveillance and subversion on college campuses. To surveil college students nationwide the Department of the Army created Operation Garden Plot, the Central Intelligence Agency launched Operation Chaos, the National Security Agency hosted Operations Shamrock and Minaret, and the Internal Revenue Service formed Operation Leprechaun. These named operations, as well as others in the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Secret Service, and many other federal agencies, were involved in the collection and dissemination of intelligence on student activists around the nation. In addition, local law enforcement, in this case the St. Louis County Police, had their own police intelligence units that prowled meetings, demonstrations, and other informal gatherings of civil rights and antiwar agitators.[24] Indeed, the coverage of the many quotidian activities of progressives was so extensive that America's most trusted newsman, Walter Cronkite, reported that "There were so many agencies involved in the surveillance of antiwar activities that, at times, spies would trail spies."[25]

While Cronkite's remark might seem tongue-in-cheek, it was an apt characterization of the expansion of the intelligence infrastructure in defense, foreign, and domestic agencies of the government, each one contributing its own unique expertise and area of specialization. For example, from 1967 to 1973 the CIA's Operation Chaos amassed some ten thousand files on individuals and over one hundred domestic groups, within a computerized index system known as Hydra.[26] Because the CIA had particular interest in Americans' relationships with foreign adversaries, the agency surveilled US mail flowing to and from countries of interest (also known as "covert mail coverage") in Operation HTLINGUAL.[27] The most direct interaction the CIA had with students on college campuses was found in Project Resistance, a program devoted to collecting background information on student groups the CIA believed posed threats to their facilities and personnel at home and abroad. In 1968, information collected from Project Resistance was merged with intelligence from the FBI, and was then collated at the CIA's Targets Analysis Branch, all resulting in detailed Situation Reports and a comprehensive calendar of demonstrations and meetings.[28]

The most influential FBI partner, however, was the Department of the Army, specifically Military Intelligence—and, most specifically in the case

of St. Louis, Military Intelligence Unit 113 (MI-113). MI-113 was part of a nation-wide effort to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence on antiwar activities that came under the umbrella of Operation Garden Plot. The Army's efforts under this program from 1965 to 1970 were particularly fruitful, resulting in twenty-five million index cards on individuals (this number comprised one-eighth of the American population at the time), eight million personality dossiers, 760,000 reports on organizations, and provision, on average, of 12,000 daily responses to information requests. Spearheading the Army's efforts were 1,000 plain-clothed military agents who collected domestic intelligence and fed it to the FBI, other military branches, local police, and a variety of federal agencies such as the Secret Service, the US Passport Office, and the Civil Service Commission.[29] MI-113, which included both Missouri and Illinois, was considered the Army's lead domestic intelligence unit, having successfully handled operations during Chicago's 1968 Democratic National Convention. It proved, therefore, to be a powerful partner to the FBI in St. Louis.

One particular asset not afforded to the FBI, from which the CIA and MI-113 benefited greatly, was the ability to operate undercover. CIA and MI agents grew their hair long, wore "hippie clothing and beads," and attempted, as best they could, to fit in with the crowds of students surrounding them. In the case of the Army, many of the undercover agents were of essentially the same age, having only recently been drafted or volunteered for service, so blending in was less of an acting challenge. Hoover, on the other hand, expressly forbade his agents to adopt the demeanor and dress of the students, relying instead on a developed network of confidential informants that allowed penetration into the lives of the targets.[30]

Despite the differing approaches to intelligence gathering, all the agencies worked closely with one another to share, compare, and provide analysis. Most documents received through *Seavey v. Department of Justice* indicate this extensive collaboration among intelligence agencies. As was the norm nationwide, the St. Louis Bureau office provided near daily carbon copies of their intelligence reports to many federal agencies but most frequently to MI-113 and the CIA. And these agencies reciprocated. Of course, such efficient and thorough collaboration among agencies meant that the accumulated information gathered about New Left adherents was staggering. By the end of COINTELPRO, the FBI possessed 6.5 million investigative files and 58 million index cards that filled three floors of the FBI building and 7,500 six-drawer filing cabinets.[31] Given the acquisition and flow of

information and analysis derived from the two interagency methods of operation—one undercover and one penetrative through the use of confidential informants—Walter Cronkite's reporting on the extent of government surveillance of civil rights and student activists proves more accurate than hyperbolic. The efforts of the St. Louis office of the FBI were well-positioned at the epicenter of this multi-pronged approach to intelligence gathering and subversion that led the midwestern city to a place of particularity in the history of dissent—one that devolved poorly to those caught in the middle of the tug-of-war between social activism and the government's law-and-order imperatives.

PART TWO
Government Surveillance and Subversion in St. Louis: A Midwestern Saga

St. Louis: The Unexpected Battleground in the War against the New Left

When J. Edgar Hoover's trusted lieutenant, Cartha DeLoach, wrote a book-length apologia defending his former boss nearly twenty-five years after the director's death, he cited one incident that, above all others, represented a defining moment in the FBI leader's search for the consummate New Left poster child. The opportunity presented itself on August 24, 1967, during a speech delivered by then–Washington University student body president, Devereaux (Dev) Kennedy, at a conference at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California. DeLoach reported on the scene as it played out in Southern California that day: "The New Left leaders of these nationwide demonstrations and riots were quite explicit in telling their followers and the general public their alarming intentions. Devereaux Kennedy, student body president at Washington University, made his desires clear:

> I want student power to demand "revolutionary reforms" that can't be met within the logic of the existing American system. I'm going to say loudly and explicitly what I mean by revolution. What I mean by revolution is overthrowing the American government, and American imperialism. . . . This is going to come about by black rebellion in our cities being joined by some white people. They have access to money, and they can give people guns, which I think they should do. They can

> engage in acts of terrorism and sabotage outside the ghetto . . . and they can blow things up, and I think they should.[32]

Kennedy's articulation of the goals and tactics of the New Left in an influential public forum—advocating the mixing of races in a unified armed assault on the status quo—was just the kind of apocalyptic scenario that gave Hoover ammunition to expand what were already penetrative COINTELPRO actions against specific organizations and to target them more broadly towards the nation's eighteen- to twenty-two-year-old college students.

Years later, reflecting upon his noteworthy speech, Kennedy recalled: "I remember there was a lot of loose talk about 'revolution this' and 'revolution that.' But understand that I had no idea how controversial it would be at the time because I wasn't looking up to see all the people who were recording this and listening to it. So, I had no idea that that was that controversial."[33] At least in Kennedy's current recollection, his talk of revolution didn't imply the same imminent threat of violence for him that it did for the FBI informants and conservative press who attended the conference. No matter what his actual intentions, Kennedy's speech allowed Hoover to draw the battle lines for his war on the New Left.

Soon enough, Kennedy and his fellow students at Washington University in St. Louis found themselves in the FBI's crosshairs. Within days of Kennedy's Santa Barbara appearance, a report was solicited from the St. Louis Police Intelligence Unit on his activities. Undercover local law enforcement sent back a detailed report quoting a statement Kennedy had made on September 19, 1967, asserting that he was a "revolutionary but had not preached the overthrow of the government, but if the revolution came, he would 'gladly join in.'"[34] The St. Louis FBI office quickly responded by making Kennedy a target of investigation.[35] His name was added to the Security Index and a "Main File" was opened on him.[36] Now, thorough investigations of Kennedy would be conducted that would come to ensnare others in his orbit; the names and activities of all of Kennedy's known contacts came under the microscope of the FBI's St. Louis field office.

Kennedy's speech was seen by Hoover as a manifesto for other students across the US, and his words became enshrined in the FBI's iron-clad institutional memory. They were frequently quoted in memoranda as the rationale for more aggressive surveillance and infiltration of all those with a New Left ideology. In short, Dev Kennedy's comments, and others like them,

became the rallying cry in Hoover's world of suspicion about the motives, tactics, and intents of America's counterculture. That Kennedy's words were recalled with such clarity and precision by DeLoach over two decades after he had uttered them is evidence of the indelible imprint that the unwitting Washington University student-body president had made on those in the FBI's Seat of Government. Within the year, they provided both a motivation and a rationale for Hoover's May 10, 1968, memorandum and its detailed follow-up instructions.[37]

Even in spite of Kennedy's inflammatory speech and the FBI spotlight that it unwittingly focused on St. Louis—and on Washington University in particular—it may seem anomalous that students from this frequently ignored "fly-over state" should find themselves elevated onto the national stage. If anything, Washington University in St. Louis seemed, in the mid- to late 1960s, a relatively quiescent and insular place to go to school. The main campus sits at the intersection of University City and Clayton, the first suburbs just over the line separating St. Louis City from St. Louis County. The long promenade of crisscrossed brick pathways was surrounded by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century academic buildings, all modeled on the august courtyard configurations of Oxford and Cambridge. The administration's aspiration to turn the institution from a commuter college of the pre–World War II era into a world-class university by focusing heavily on its science and engineering departments ultimately paid off, earning Washington University the moniker of the "Harvard of the Midwest."

Dissent of the kind that Kennedy was espousing was rare on campus.[38] Indeed, his role as student-body president resulted not from broad student support for his views but instead from an astute political calculation that the student body was so apathetic to issues and governance that his candidacy wouldn't meet much of a challenge. Indeed, he later reflected, he "won in a landslide . . . because there was really no opposition."[39] So, nothing in this midwestern academic enclave offered a whiff, at the time, of significant activist dissent. But given the political and cultural make-up of Missouri, the WU student protests that did occur came to take on a distinct and outsized meaning.

St. Louis: The Fertile Terrain of Conservatism

Missouri's reputation as a socially and politically conservative state pales in comparison to the iconic images of racism and repression from the Deep South: the blasting of Bull Connor's water hoses on protestors and

the unleashing of attack dogs on women and children in Birmingham, the beatings of the Freedom Riders in Mississippi, and the grisly work of lynch mobs in Louisiana. These kinds of vivid images don't exist in our collective historical memory of St. Louis. Yet the seeming absence of these more violent acts does not make the border state of Missouri immune to the reactionary impulse that gave rise to these notorious incidents just a few hundred miles to the south. Two examples of Missouri's activist hard-line conservative political core include the city leaders' backlash against the 1963 protest against discriminatory hiring practices at the Jefferson Bank and Trust Co. in St. Louis and Missouri congressman Richard Ichord's use of his chairmanship of the Committee on Internal Security (previously known as the House Un-American Activities Committee) to unmask SDS members as "extremists bearing the banners of communism, anarchism, and nihilism."[40] Historian Walter Johnson locates St. Louis as a bastion of conservatism in the immediate postwar era, when the literal construction of the city codified segregation. "[The] 1947 *Comprehensive City Plan* provided a beginner's guide to building a racist city—incising and intensifying existing differences of race and class in the physical form of the built environment," Johnson notes. Local activists dubbed 1950s and 1960s urban-renewal clearances of Black neighborhoods as "Black removal by white approval." These planning initiatives cemented the bifurcation between the city's haves and have-nots.[41]

It was within this context that St. Louis and its surrounding communities constructed their own particularized version of radical conservatism, one that differed from its counterparts in the Deep South but was no less punishing. Built on the foundations of segregation, the city was home to a deep pool of conservatives from which St. Louis chose its judges and elected its representatives to Jefferson City and Washington, DC. The people who built the city's economic fortunes in the war industries likewise were conservatives.[42] They initially focused their antagonism on civil rights activists and then later turned to antiwar protestors. Students at Washington University, many of whom arrived from afar to attend this now world-class university, were unprepared for the ferocious midwestern border-state rules of engagement.

The discord that grew between the counterculture students at Washington University and surrounding conservative communities crept in slowly and sat there, festering. Such was the case when, on February 14, 1968, a group of seventy-five students and faculty fixed their sights on

a Dow Industries recruiter visiting the WU campus. Dow was a primary manufacturer of napalm, the incendiary defoliant dropped in bombs, that caused severe burns and asphyxiation among civilians and military personnel who came in contact with it. The company frequently recruited on the WU campus, given the university's renowned engineering and science programs. On that day, activists sang songs, chanted, and presented the recruiter with a petition signed by three hundred individuals who were opposed to his presence on the campus. The crowd was ultimately so disruptive to the recruiter's efforts that he was forced to terminate the day's scheduled interviews at 10:40 a.m. and was hastily escorted from campus to ensure his safety.[43] From the protestors' perspective, this "action" was an effective encounter but not a directly combative one—a way of expressing their anger about the war but not one that would invite police intervention.

While these kinds of targeted protests against war-industry representatives were not uncommon on many campuses, what made them more significant at Washington University was the direct connection between the recruitment efforts and the vested economic interests of the university. The Board of Trustees at Washington University was dominated by CEOs and chairmen of companies directly involved in supplying materials to support the war in Vietnam, and many of those companies were headquartered in St. Louis. For example, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Charles Allen Thomas, was the Chairman of the Board of Monsanto Corporation, maker of another controversial Vietnam-era defoliant, Agent Orange. Also represented on the Board were Harold Eugene Thayer, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Mallinckrodt Chemical Works, which, like Dow Chemical, produced napalm; John Olin, President of Olin Industries, an enterprise formed from the combination of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company and Mathieson Chemical, which manufactured armaments and ammunition for the Vietnam conflict; Sanford McDonnell, Chairman and CEO of McDonnell-Douglas Corporation, the largest supplier of US military planes during the war; and Clark Clifford, former Secretary of Defense during the Johnson Administration, under whom America's involvement in the Vietnam conflict had significantly escalated.

Taken as a whole, this commitment to government contracts and contacts within the Department of Defense and war-related industries had been a

significant factor in transforming Washington University from the small commuter college it had been in the 1950s to the powerhouse in higher education which it had become by the late 1960s. Therefore, understanding the significance of the Dow Chemical recruiter's February 1968 flight from campus requires an appreciation of the high-level, vested interests of Washington University leaders and of the institution itself. The students themselves may or may not have recognized the broader context of their actions. "It's as if those protests were in the middle of a military base and they [the students] thought of those protests as being in the middle of their campus where they went to school. And instead, from the standpoint of the FBI or even the administration of Wash. U., it looks as if they're there right in the middle of some sort of strategically essential asset."[44] The threat of interruption to the school's defense-industry relationships was therefore unacceptable—a position echoed by the conservative community surrounding the university—and this context helps to explain the larger drama that later played out on the campus.

The most visible symbol of the war-related presence on campus was the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Washington University hosted both the Air Force and Army ROTC, offering college credit for programs that acted as a pathway into the ranks of the officer corps. The WU ROTC programs were housed in Quonset huts situated on the edge of campus (Fig. 5.2). These were simply made, oblong, tin structures in which junior officer candidates would take courses in military science and strategy. In the open spaces nearby, cadets received their outdoor training, such as marching in formation and other physical-education exercises. The two Quonset huts became a magnet for dissent as they provided the campus's most consistently accessible and visible representation of the Vietnam War.[45]

Prior to late 1968, most of the anti-ROTC activities on campus were confined to small protests that included taunting the cadets while they marched in formation or mounting guerrilla theater pieces intended to mock the ROTC exercises.[46] The tenor of these ridiculing, but harmless, protests changed when, at 4:00 a.m. on December 3, 1968, a WU security guard witnessed Michael Siskind (Fig. 5.3), a WU senior, and another unnamed individual place a Molotov cocktail on the window ledge of the Army ROTC building. Siskind's accomplice escaped arrest by quickly departing before the security worker arrived from the perch from which he had been

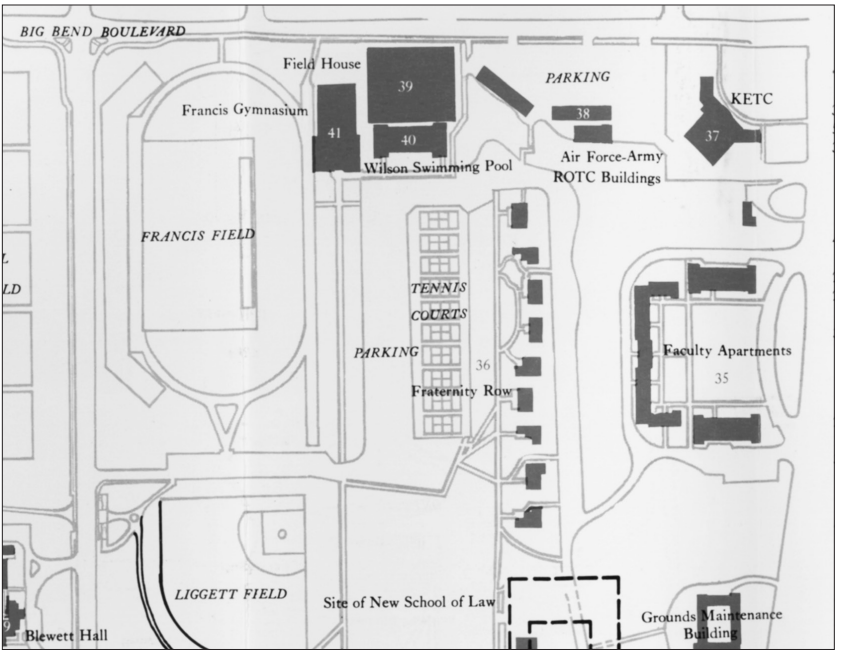

Figure 5.2 Detail from a 1966 Washington University campus map, with the western edge at the top. The ROTC buildings are near the top right, close to the intersection of Big Bend Boulevard and Millbrook Boulevard (now Forest Park Parkway). *From the Publications–Student Union Collection, Department of Special Collections, Washington University in St. Louis*

standing guard, leaving Siskind standing alone with the still-intact incendiary device in hand.

Within days of his arrest, Siskind admitted to having made the weapon, noting that he had intended to set fire to the interior of the ROTC building to "wake up the people."[47] While pleading guilty to his own involvement, Siskind steadfastly refused to identify his accomplice, a fact that continued to frustrate the St. Louis FBI and local federal prosecutors long after his conviction.

At the time of his arrest, Siskind was found to have an SDS membership card in his wallet, signed by Terry Koch, leader of the Washington University chapter of the national leftist student organization. This small but significant detail provided the prosecution team with a novel idea intended to make an example of Siskind as a warning for other

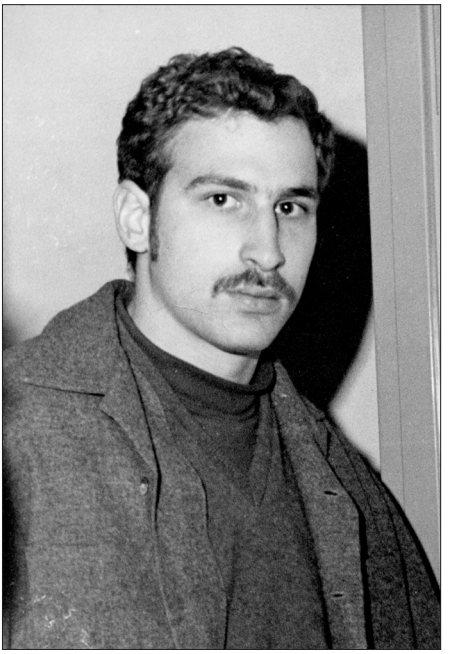

Figure 5.3 Michael Siskind as pictured in the *Globe-Democrat* on December 5, 1968. "W.U. Student in Bomb Case Carried SDS Card," ran the accompanying headline as Siskind became the first student activist in the US charged with sabotage. *Photo by Ralph Hyer for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

"card-carrying revolutionaries." Normally, such an aborted attempt by a first-time offender would be prosecuted as attempted arson by the county prosecutor, potentially resulting in little more than a slap on the wrist. With this arrest coming just months after Hoover's May 10 COINTELPRO New Left call to action, the St. Louis FBI field office seized on Siskind's plight as an opportunity. Local agents and the US Attorney for Eastern Missouri, Veryl Riddle, took a far more aggressive prosecutorial stance, levying charges under the Federal Sabotage Statute—a crime that carried a maximum penalty of thirty years in prison and a $10,000 fine. In a documented conversation with Riddle, St. Louis FBI Special Agent Spurgeon J. Peterson articulated the potential this crime presented when he noted that the New Left across the US was "responsible for 20 similar events" and that prosecuting Siskind for breaking a federal law would "do much to curtail future acts of anarchy against the U.S."[48] Writing from Washington, DC, Assistant Attorney General J. Walter Yeagley initially cautioned Riddle that the evidence to support a sabotage conviction was weak, especially since the incendiary device had not gone off and intent to harm would be difficult to prove.[49] But in spite of those initial misgivings,

Yeagley, too, eventually seized the unique opportunity that Siskind's circumstance presented. He noted:

> This case may have far-reaching ramifications in view of the number of ROTC facilities which have already been the objects of violence and the probability that additional violence of this type can be expected in the future. Moreover, this is the first case to be brought under the revised [sabotage] statue, and the resulting case law could have a substantial effect on future cases under the sabotage statues.[50]

The prosecutors' problem, however, remained unchanged. Evidence in the case was thin. Instead of yielding to that reality, Yeagley spurred the FBI to widen its inquiries to include the development of peripheral and circumstantial evidence to bolster the sabotage charge and to ensure its wider impact on student activism. He directed the FBI to "undertake an immediate intensive investigation to develop evidence of any pre-act or post-act statements made by [Siskind's name redacted] or other activities on his part which would tend to establish his specific intent."[51] Evidence produced didn't need to be specific to the crime, but rather could be used to corroborate an impulse to engage in or justify such a crime. That legal construct seemed sufficient for the federal and local prosecutors.

Hoover had made the penetration and subversion of the New Left one of his highest priorities; field agents' careers could be made or broken based upon its successful execution. Siskind's arrest was seen by the St. Louis office as a prime opportunity that would score needed points with the director. They had an iron-clad conviction (Siskind had been caught in the act) and a local prosecutor willing to use federal law—for the first time—as a bludgeon against an activist. The St. Louis office bet that the reliably conservative judges in Missouri would see the broader implications of this case to levy a harsh sentence, one that would send a chill through the spines of Siskind's compatriots. These were the kinds of "tangible outcomes" that Hoover would reward with congratulatory notes in personnel files and with promotions. These were results that could motivate COINTELPRO New Left agents around the nation.

Equally important for the future of COINTELPRO New Left was Assistant Attorney General Yeagley's directive to the FBI to expand its investigative work into the collection of allied, but not direct, evidence. Although he wasn't aware of COINTELPRO and couldn't imagine the extent of the

surveillance and subversion already underway, Yeagley unknowingly endorsed the use of evidence that was, in the later words of COINTELPRO's chief, William C. Sullivan, frequently gathered without regard to ethics, morality, or legality. Allowing agents to present at trial such potentially unrelated and circumstantial information collected from COINTELPRO's clandestine activities gave them license to use statements and actions in support of the broader goal of "law and order" in its most strident form. Should this investigative overreach result in a successful conviction in the carefully watched Siskind test case, Hoover's field agents would have the judicial imprimatur they sought to "imaginatively" collect and interpret evidence. To their delight, the federal grand jury returned an indictment on the sabotage charge, and the noose around the necks of student activists tightened. And then as hoped, three months after Siskind's arrest, Judge Roy Harper outlined what he perceived to be at stake in this oddly consequential sabotage case in which no bomb had ever gone off. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* related Harper's remarks:

> "My information is that you were a user of drugs and a member of the Students for a Democratic Society which is committed to destroying the system of government that made our country great." Judge Roy Harper continued that he had presided over the trial of a group of Communists charged with the violation of the Smith Act several years prior and that "the group you belong to is committed to the very thing they were." Judge Harper went on, "Society is entitled to protection."[52]

He then sentenced Michael Siskind to five years in a federal penitentiary. It was the first time that sabotage charges involving the destruction of "war utilities" had successfully been levied since World War II. It was such a momentous conviction that Walter Cronkite reported it that night on the *CBS Evening News*.[53]

What is most interesting about the Siskind conviction and its ultimate impact was not simply that the twenty-one-year-old student had been successfully prosecuted for a fizzled bombing attempt under what were the harshest possible federal charges in modern US history, nor that the SDS card in his wallet played a significant factor in the prosecutorial strategy, nor that his lot seemed to be tied to a band of communists who had appeared before Judge Harper years before and with whom Siskind had no possible connection, nor that, in spite of his dire prospects, Siskind did not provide

information about his accomplice in return for leniency. No, what is most telling comes from comments J. Edgar Hoover made in a lengthy memo he wrote to Joseph Gamble, SAC of the St. Louis Bureau Office, commending his and his agents' efforts. Hoover wrote:

> The guilty plea entered by [Siskind's name redacted] to the charge of the violation of the sabotage statute marks a decided change, particularly on the part of the Department in the manner in which such cases may be handled in the future. This case . . . [is one] in which your Division and the Bureau can be justifiably proud. All future violations should be vigorously pressed in order that they may result in prosecutive action.[54]

And even more pointedly as to the anticipated future FBI efforts in St. Louis was Hoover's final comment:

> This marks the first time that the Sabotage Statute has been utilized. Prosecution in this matter was initially authorized by the US Attorney at St. Louis, much to the consternation of the Department [of Justice] which had no choice but to follow through on the prosecution.[55]

While Hoover may have overstated Assistant Attorney General Yeagley's initial concerns about the lack of evidence in Siskind's sabotage case, he saw an opportunity in the ability of the St. Louis Bureau to work collaboratively with a far more aggressive St. Louis US Attorney to procure stringent federal convictions for crimes that would otherwise have been relegated to local or lesser federal charges, even if that meant challenging the legal wisdom of the Department of Justice itself. Investigative ingenuity could be married with prosecutorial brashness to yield what Hoover saw as his goal: a way to stem the tide against a progressive ideology that he found anathema.[56] In St. Louis, Hoover had found the right mix of political and cultural conservative activism to suit his purposes. Moreover, entrenched economic interests on the Board of Trustees ensured that the dominant voices in the university's administration would not necessarily object when investigative and prosecutorial innovations were needed to quash student dissent. And now Judge Harper had delivered case law that would reward even the thinnest of evidence with the harshest of convictions. St. Louis was, indeed, fertile ground for Hoover's war on the New Left.

Hoover, not one to rest on his laurels nor to miss a moment to instruct his local agents, articulated the next steps in this battle to SAC Gamble:

> Consider contacting campus sources for the purpose of obtaining full details regarding demonstrations or disturbances at Washington University which were directed toward the war in Vietnam or, specifically, against ROTC training. Determine ringleaders of such disturbances for consideration as possible suspects in this matter. . . . All informants and sources at the Washington University campus should be contacted or recontacted in this matter for assistance in identifying the unknown subject [Siskind's accomplice] of this case. . . . In connection with the foregoing, it should be kept in mind that public knowledge and publicity relative to [redacted—presumed to be Siskind's] plea of guilty may encourage individuals interviewed to be of assistance in this matter.[57]

Even with the victory on Siskind's sabotage charge and sentencing, the FBI was still searching for the identity of his accomplice. The prospect of garnering Hoover's approval for bagging such a prize catch would prove motivational for his field agents, and there were numerous potential suspects on the Washington University campus on whom they could focus their investigative efforts. The cloak of secrecy inherent in COINTELPRO New Left, coupled with the ever-expanding use of infiltrative confidential informants, would soon lure many students into the FBI's net.

Targets, Tactics, and Tangible Results

SAC Joseph Gamble fully appreciated St. Louis's centrality in Hoover's assault on the New Left. Just two weeks after the Director's May 10, 1968, call to action, Gamble responded by identifying four central targets for the St. Louis Bureau COINTELPRO activities: Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (ACTION), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), St. Louis Draft Resistance (SLDR), and the Committee to Support Draft Resistance (CSDR).[58] He identified ACTION as a "racial-type organization" formed as an off-shoot of the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), separating from that organization because the latter was "not militant enough."[59] He further observed that that the latter three organizations were centered at Washington University and Saint Louis University. Having identified his four main targets for neutralization,

Gamble seized on Hoover's suggestion of using relationships with the press to maintain a steady drumbeat of anti-activist public sentiment and noted, "The feeding of well-chosen information to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, a local newspaper whose editor and associate editor are extremely friendly to the Bureau and the St. Louis Office, has also been utilized in the past and it is contemplated that this technique might be used to good advantage with this program."[60] In fact, this relationship had been a productive, familiar one for the FBI long before 1968. In 1962, the FBI had selected the conservative morning St. Louis newspaper as one of five press outlets for disseminating propaganda aimed at discrediting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.[61] Recalling his tenure as *Globe-Democrat* assistant editorial-page editor from 1961 to 1965, well-known conservative activist and eventual Nixon aide Patrick Buchanan later noted:

> A great admirer of J. Edgar Hoover, the publisher [of the *Globe-Democrat*] was in regular contact with the FBI and we were among Hoover's conduits to the American people. Through Amberg [the publisher] the FBI channeled us constant information on local Communists and radicals. The bureau's penetration of the extreme left in St. Louis was truly something to behold. Truly, speaking of the Far Left, J. Edgar Hoover could say, with near biblical certitude in those years, that "Where two or three are gathered together, there I am amongst you."[62]

SAC Gamble's commitment to using the local press as a method of shaping public opinion about New Left activities was made with the full confidence of a receptive welcome and was but one action on the horizon. "St. Louis will carefully analyze these organizations under these programs in an effort to affect [sic] the disruption of the New Left and specific suggestions of Counterintelligence action will be submitted for approval by separate letter," Gamble promised.[63] With Hoover's demand for "tangible results" to be reported every ninety days, SAC Gamble and his successor, J. Wallace LaPrade, got busy making good on the promise that St. Louis, located in the fertile proving ground of midwestern conservatism, offered Hoover in his mission to neutralize the New Left.[64]

The activities of the St. Louis Bureau of the FBI dedicated to disrupting the activities of the New Left fell into three categories: 1) development of confidential informants to increase penetrative surveillance; 2) disruptive

efforts intended to undermine activists and their protests; and 3) creation of a prosecutorial environment in which examples could be made of students in well-publicized cases as a way to create a chilling effect on the activities of others.

Crucial to the success of the second and third goals was the successful fulfillment of the first: the development of a pool of information garnered through a reliable network of informants. We do not know how the St. Louis office of the FBI was able to develop their base of CIs; they may have used the coercive means of trading cooperation for reduced or forgiven criminal charges, as referenced above, or other inducements may have been provided to solicit cooperation. But we do know that activities of student activists on the Washington University campus were monitored closely by a trove of human infiltrators with code names such as Dave, Jed, Ivan, Edna, Gill, Mike, Stella, Fran, Nick, Otto, Ross, and Kip, among many others whose monikers are still redacted from documents.[65] What one gleans from their reports is the wealth of information made possible by the proximity of these informants to their intended targets.[66] For example, several reports provide details on potluck suppers attended by activist leaders Terry Koch, Larry Kogan, Howard Mechanic, and many others in the local chapter of SDS.[67] These events were small, intimate gatherings frequented by a close-knit group of friends, so the presence of the CI speaks to the extensive penetration into the inner circle of the activists' social fabric. These up-close reports of daily life afforded the Bureau a wealth of information that spoke not only to the activities of these twenty-somethings but also insight into their motivations, their habits, their random musings, their financial circumstances, and sometimes their sexual activities.

The information garnered through confidential informants was augmented by the insights offered by confidential sources. These were frequently individuals who voluntarily came to the FBI with information or who, under questioning by Special Agents, unwittingly revealed previously unknown information. Taken together, these informant and source reports offered a rich profile of just what the FBI believed it was looking for in terms of student intentions and activities.

An excellent example of the way in which information from these sources worked to support the COINTELPRO New Left mission can be found in the wake of the February 1970 burning of the campus Army ROTC building. This was the same building targeted by Siskind in his failed arson attempt fourteen months earlier. The Army's continued training presence

on campus increasingly chafed student activists and led them to do more than protest. Sometime after midnight on February 23, some person or group broke the ROTC building's windows, threw in several Molotov cocktails, and successfully burned the structure to the ground. The arsonists were never identified or apprehended. The continued mystery surrounding the identities of those who were responsible frustrated the agents of the St. Louis Bureau of the FBI, earning them palpable impatience from Hoover.[68] The incident intensified the call for increased scrutiny of student suspects by the Bureau, local law enforcement, and federal prosecutors by whatever means necessary. Someone was going to be held to account, and the Siskind conviction was proof enough that direct evidence was not a prerequisite for severe prosecution and punishment in Missouri.

In the FBI's network of suspicion, confidential informants and sources could provide sufficient innuendo and circumstantial fodder for the arson

Figure 5.4 An exchange of views after Washington University student protestors disrupted outdoor ROTC drills on March 23, 1970. Facing the camera is Army ROTC cadet Dennis Guilliams. *Photo by Jim Carrington for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat, *from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

investigation. Details provided by these various sources offer crucial insight into the influences on the FBI's pursuit of the case. In a report covering the period from February 23 to March 4, 1970—that is, the days in the immediate aftermath of the Army ROTC burning—the following information was noted:

> [Name redacted] stated that a second confidential source, who smokes "grass" and is considered a student radical, had advised him that . . . Howard Mechanic left his apartment at 6015 Pershing, St. Louis at approximately 11:00 PM on the night of February 22, 1970. [Redacted] told the source that MECHANIC returned at about 1:00 A.M. February 23, 1970 and he [MECHANIC] stated he had "just torched the ROTC building."
>
> [Name redacted] stated that the source was very nervous about the situation and that he did not want to get further involved. He agreed, however, to recontact the informant and attempt to get him to develop more information.
>
> [Name redacted] was contacted on February 25, 26, and 27, 1970 and on each occasion he indicated that he had been able to recontact the informant. It was suggested [by name redacted] that it might be advisable to put his source directly in contact with Agents of the FBI. He agreed to do this, providing the source had no objections.
>
> On March 5, 1970 [name redacted] advised that he had re-contacted his informant and that the latter was very scared. [Name redacted] stated that the source had no additional information to offer and that he did not want to talk to FBI Agents. [Name redacted] advised that he would maintain contact with the informant and continue to provide the FBI with any information developed.[69]

In another summary report, additional insights were offered:

> On March 2, 1970 [redacted] (protect by request) provided the following information: [Extended redaction], St. Louis, Mo. and has [redacted] on Tuesday evenings an individual by the name of HOWARD MECHANIC. On the evening of February 24, 1970, MECHANIC appeared anxious to talk about a fire that had occurred at Washington University February 23, 1970. [Redacted] remarked to MECHANIC, "You did a good job on the ROTC building," and MECHANIC did not

> reply but instead smiled. MECHANIC stated that he was attending a meeting at Washington University that same night at 8:30 P.M. and was of the opinion that all the students at Washington University (WU) needed to bring them together was an incident like the ROTC fire.
>
> [Redacted] told MECHANIC that [redacted] thought it was a very professional job and probably not done by students and MECHANIC grinned and said, "Do you really think that?"[70]

And finally, in a summary note:

> On February 28, 1970 [redacted] telephonically contacted [redacted] and [redacted] stated that [redacted] had been at HOWARD MECHANIC's apartment when [redacted] had called MECHANIC earlier on February 28, 1970. [Redacted] stated that he felt that the fire at Harris Teachers College and the fire at WU's ROTC Building were both political in nature. [Redacted] stated that in his opinion whoever started the fires worked in teams and that the teams were very small in number so that if FBI informants were to attend meetings of organizations they would not find out about the team and their activities.[71]

What we learn from the compilation of these reports is telling. First, we are privy to the various layers of information—some of it coming from a known informant or a source who is speaking to an unofficial source who is admittedly anxious at the prospect of having these discussions. Other information is being plied from the contact time and time again. Second, we are witness to the extraordinary intimacy of these interactions. These are reports that emanate from interactions within Mechanic's home, in one-on-one conversations, and, in one case, overheard as a private telephone conversation. That's as close as a source could get; the reports come as a function of small group interactions, collected by people who knew their targets well as friends. Third, we are privy to the importance not just of direct information of criminal conduct, but of reported impressions, mannerisms, affect, and non-verbal responses that were weighted as heavily as the reportage of facts. In this context, Mechanic's demeanor became, for the agents of the St. Louis field office of the FBI, telling evidence of his culpability. Finally, the observation that the arsonists worked in small groups so that informants who attended larger organizational meetings would not know of their activities

bears witness to the success of Hoover's intention of creating an environment of fear of an "FBI agent behind every mailbox." Clearly the students knew they were being watched in larger meetings, yet they had no notion of the level of penetration into their innermost circle of friends.

The assumption that there might be informants in their wider orbit obviously weighed heavily on the activists. Was it a deterrent? Obviously not. The Army ROTC building was torched and burned to the ground by one or more unnamed individuals on the night of February 23, 1970. And, given the extraordinary secrecy of the perpetrators, no one was ever brought to justice for the destruction of that federal facility. In the absence of serious leads, the more specious pieces of information took on greater importance as the unsolved crime dragged on and Hoover's impatience became more pronounced. Filling the vacuum were bits and pieces of uncorroborated, impressionistic, and anonymous information about presumed or likely suspects. But those bits of information served as powerful weapons in targeting young activists.

In what was a giant leap of COINTELPRO-led deduction, on April 17, 1970, a memorandum from the SAC Cleveland asserted that "HOWARD LAWRENCE MECHANIC has been developed as the chief suspect in the above-captioned incident [the February 23, 1970, Army ROTC bombing] and may also be the accomplice of [redacted—presumed to be Siskind] who was apprehended in the act of attempting to firebomb the ROTC building in December 1968 and is currently serving a five-year prison term."[72] Mechanic was now suspected of a successful federal bombing and was potentially identified as the unnamed accomplice in the Siskind attempted bombing.

No proof was required for these suppositions, and further investigation had not yielded any confirmation or corroboration. But the confidential informant report noting a "smile," a "grin," and an unconfirmed hearsay "confession" was all the evidence the St. Louis agents needed. Now Howard Mechanic was unknowingly positioned as the FBI's central target. Mechanic's ascendance to the top of the FBI's list of "persons of interest" was but one example among many others on the Washington University campus. As a targeted group living in the shadow of COINTELPRO New Left—which was now operating at full throttle, in total secrecy, and without restraint since its introduction nearly two years earlier—student activists would soon find themselves, unwittingly and without preparation, on a collision course with the federal government.

The Epic Encounter—May 4, 1970

President Richard Nixon's April 30, 1970, announcement of the expansion of the Vietnam War with the bombings of Cambodia and Laos was met with shock by students on college campuses across America. Nixon had stated his intention to withdraw from the Southeast Asian conflict during the 1968 presidential election; his escalation was received as a betrayal and immediately ignited the activist tinderbox. Students began planning nationwide protests against Nixon's policy, and it was no secret that May 4 was the intended date for this unified national expression of anger.

When the May 4, 1970, early morning edition of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* hit its readers' front steps, it contained an editorial vilifying the student protestors at the University of California at Berkeley, at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, and at Hobart College in Geneva, New York. But that was the predictable editorial posture for the hardline conservative newspaper. What was noteworthy, some might say "prescient," about

Figure 5.5 Holmes Lounge, opening off of the Washington University Brookings Quadrangle, frequently served as the planning headquarters and staging point for student demonstrations. Here, activists have temporarily renamed it "Ho Chi Minh Lounge," after the Communist North Vietnamese leader. *Photo by Jack Fahland for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat, *from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

the op-ed, titled "Criminals on Campus," was its specific praise for Ohio governor James Rhodes's activation of the state's National Guard to quell student unrest on the Ohio State University campus. Later that morning, the Guard would move some 140 miles to the west of OSU to Kent State, where they would have a fateful encounter with student protesters.[73] Ohio campuses, like so many in the Midwest, were frequently overlooked as national bellwethers by the media and political cognoscenti. But *Globe-Democrat* publisher Richard Amberg knew that the Midwest was at the epicenter of the war between the status quo and the nation's youth movement. Indeed, with insider's informatioin provided by the FBI the *Globe-Democrat* frequently and intentionally fanned those flames of civic unrest. The newspaper wasn't the cause of what happened the night of May 4, 1970, on the Washington University campus, but, like a mob egging on a schoolyard bully, it eagerly stood on the sidelines yelling "Fight! Fight! Fight!"[74]

At 12:24 p.m., several hours after the *Globe-Democrat*'s public statement of support for Governor Rhodes, four students at Kent State University were shot to death by twenty-eight members of the Ohio National Guard. The guardsmen fired approximately sixty-seven rounds over a period of thirteen seconds, killing the four students and wounding nine others. Some of the victims were protestors. Others were simply passersby and onlookers. It didn't matter; all were swept up in the onslaught by National Guardsmen in an act that quickly became a defining, seismic moment of an era. The photograph of a young girl kneeling over the dead body of one of the victims became the iconic image representing the violent schism that existed between the World War II "Greatest Generation" and their college-aged offspring.

The murders ignited violent protests on college campuses across the nation, and Washington University in St. Louis was no different. Again citing St. Louis as a city of note on the national stage, Walter Cronkite's report on the ripple effect of the Kent State murders observed: "Shooting deaths of four students at Kent State University aggravated campus tensions elsewhere. Other campus fires burned an ROTC building at Washington University in St. Louis while students chanted, 'Remember Kent.'"[75] The student protestors made good on that promise to honor their fallen comrades. That night a mob burned the Air Force ROTC building, the last remaining vestige of the military's presence on the campus, to the ground (Fig. 5.7).

When viewed in the history of antiwar dissent, what is remarkable about the ROTC burning is the extraordinary extent to which the St. Louis office

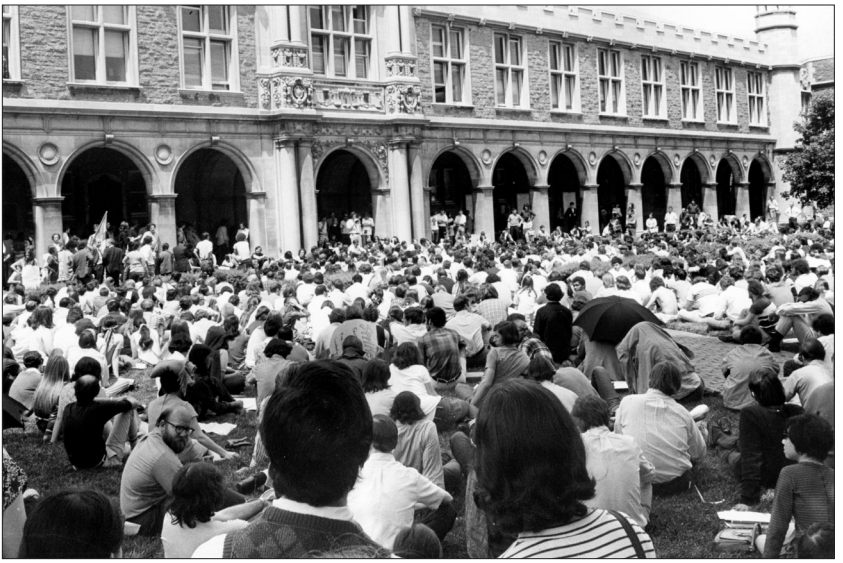

Figure 5.6 Students mass in the Brookings Quadrangle during a term upended by the escalation of resistance to the campus military presence. *Photo by Roy Cook for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat, *from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

of the FBI was immediately ready to capitalize on it as a high-visibility prosecutive opportunity. Michael Siskind's conviction and unique sentencing on sabotage charges a little over a year before emboldened the federal agents. The names Mechanic, Kogan, Kennedy, Koch, and a host of others were already well known to SAC Gamble's successor, J. Wallace LaPrade. Their daily activities had been documented and formed what was now considered a reliable profile of a revolutionary pattern, thanks to a multiplicity of intimate confidential informant reports. The presumption of their guilt in the still-unsolved Army ROTC burning three months earlier steeled the FBI's resolve. Given all the accumulated intelligence and the suppositions that sprang from it, Mechanic was considered a prime suspect among the 3,000 individuals who rioted and destroyed the Washington University Air Force ROTC building on the night of May 4, 1970.

There was already a restraining order in place prohibiting Mechanic, Kogan, Koch, and others from protesting on campus, so the students knew they were violating a local injunction by simply attending the rally.[76] What they didn't know was that the Department of Justice had a powerful new arrow in its quiver that would now be aimed directly at them: the Anti-Riot

Figure 5.7 Firefighters arrive as Washington University's Air Force ROTC building burns in the early morning hours of May 5, 1970. The photo dominated the front page of the *Post-Dispatch* under the lead banner headline "Protesters Burn ROTC Building." St. Louis Post-Dispatch *photograph; reprinted by permission of Polaris Images*

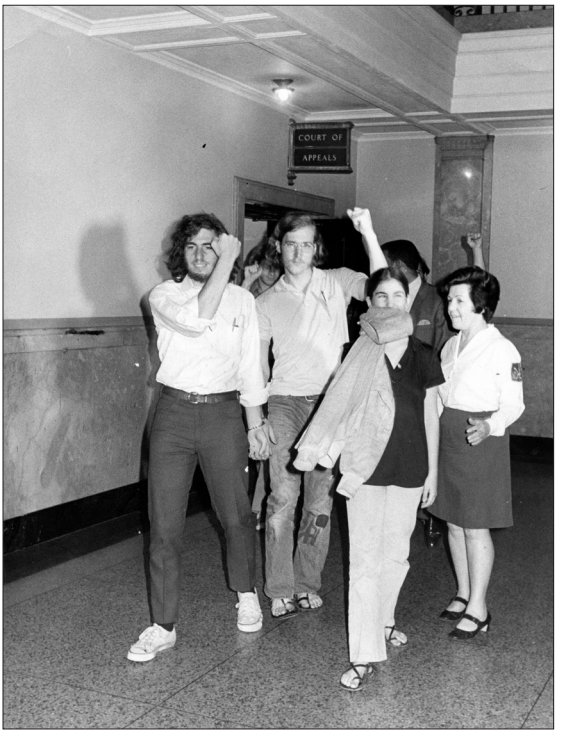

Figure 5.8 Howard Mechanic and William Bothwell (handcuffed together) and Margaret Murphy jubilantly leave the St. Louis Court of Appeals on June 15, 1970. The three had just posted bond in advance of their appeal of convictions for violating a restraining order against "disruptive activities" on campus. These legal proceedings were separate from the federal charges Mechanic and others would face. *Photo by Bob Diaz for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat, *from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

Provisions, also known as the Civil Obedience Act, of the 1968 Civil Rights Act. While the 1968 Civil Rights Act is best known for establishing federal fair-housing practices, this lesser-known provision authorized the levying of federal charges against protestors who impeded the work of firefighters and policemen in the conduct of their duties during a civil disturbance.[77] Legal precedent was still needed to formulate the case law around the use of this statutory weapon. What better locale to flex this prosecutorial muscle against student unrest than in the city where groundbreaking sabotage charges had already been successful? St. Louis was, again, to be the crucible for this judicial test, supported by the intricate network of COINTELPRO-provided intelligence and innuendo upon which to build a potential case. Both the St. Louis office of the FBI and local federal prosecutors were confident that the political and cultural environment would produce juries receptive to arguments breaking this new legal ground. Further, law enforcement officials felt sure they would have the full backing of Washington University's trustees, whose vested interests supported an end to the chaos. And finally, they relied on the recent history of the Siskind conviction to know that Missouri judges would allow the thinnest of evidence to levy harsh sentences.

Standing in the dark at the edge of the rioting crowd that night was Daniel Bartlett, the new US Attorney for Eastern Missouri and Walter Yeagley's successor. Was his presence by accident or design? We don't know. But from his vantage point he bore witness to the burning of Air Force ROTC building. Bartlett had known since March that there were plans to levy these new federal charges against someone, but he didn't know who. The plan had been hatched after the Army ROTC building had burned in February and just a few weeks prior to the fire's destruction that he was now watching unfold before him. Nixon's Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Jerris Leonard, had called upon Hoover to encourage aggressive St. Louis Bureau investigations to pave the way for levying the novel charges.[78] All the local FBI agents and Department of Justice attorneys were waiting for was an opportunity. With the riot playing out before his eyes, Dan Bartlett recognized this as his moment.

Howard Mechanic, Larry Kogan, Napoleon Bland, Joel Achtenberg, Michael Rudofker, and Joe Eisenberg walked onto the WU campus that night having no notion of the trap that had been laid for them. Whatever their actions, no matter how specious the criminal case against them might be, they had fallen directly into the grasp of the FBI and federal prosecutors

in Washington, DC, and in St. Louis. And the results were breathtaking. Without the federal government ever having to prove the question of whether they, themselves, even actually burned the ROTC building, Bland, Eisenberg, Rudofker, and Achtenberg were each sentenced to ten years in federal penitentiary on sabotage charges. Mechanic and Kogan were the first defendants ever to be convicted on a violation of the 1968 Civil Obedience Act. Both were sentenced to five years in federal prison and ordered to pay a $10,000 fine.

The Aftermath

Most of those arrested and convicted on federal charges in the wake of the May 4, 1970, burning of the Air Force ROTC building on the Washington University campus would serve variants on their initial sentences or would later be acquitted after years of appeals. Both Eisenberg and Kogan served their mitigated sentences in the Psychiatric Ward of the United States Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri. Neither of them ever showed signs of psychological impairment or overt distress, except perhaps as one would expect from having been ensnared in a trap laid by the state and federal law enforcement. Napoleon Bland, the only Black defendant, served the longest sentence—seven of ten years on a sabotage charge for his involvement in acts for which no evidence of his participation was offered at trial.

The only defendant who didn't serve his sentence was Howard Mechanic. He fled and lived underground for twenty-eight years as a fugitive. It was Mechanic's flight, the focus of which will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter of this volume, that kept this miscarriage of justice alive. Had Mechanic not disappeared for nearly three decades, these misbegotten arrests and inexplicably harsh sentences might have simply faded from our collective memory, lost in the blur of so many of Hoover's excesses. But my father's consistent refrain—at holidays, when the FBI would come to query him about Howard's disappearance, and sometimes for no reason at all, out of the blue—was "Whatever happened to Howard Mechanic?" His query kept this as a burning question that begged to be answered. My father didn't live long enough to know the results of my investigation. Perhaps that's for the best as he would have been dismayed that my ten-year search for the truth uncovered a surprising number of nefarious government operations intended to subvert the civil rights of Mechanic, his co-defendants, and thousands of others across the nation. He believed in the courts and our

system of justice, so he had no concept of what he was up against when he argued his defense for Mechanic and Kogan. As my father had initially suspected, and I later confirmed, St. Louis was the only city in the nation where these federal charges had been levied. As such, none of us could have imagined the central role that St. Louis came to play in the larger history of the suppression of dissident voices in the US.

In the wake of the 1970 burnings of both the Army and Air Force facilities, the ROTC program was moved off the Washington University

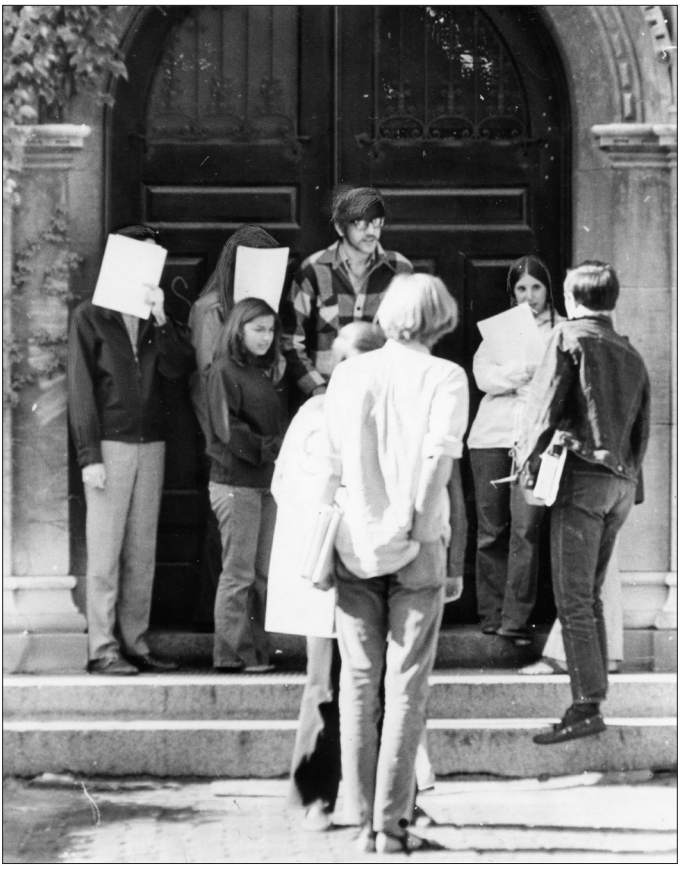

Figure 5.9 Washington University students hide their faces from photographers as concerns about targeting of students by law enforcement agencies grow in the wake of the Kent State murders and the burnings of ROTC buildings on the WU campus. *Photo by Bob Diaz for the* St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, from the collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri–St. Louis*

campus.[79] This relocation took the ROTC program away from being a convenient target of student opposition to the war. It didn't stop protest against ROTC facilities and, indeed, the building on Forest Park Boulevard was bombed and burned on March 9, 1971.[80] But the relocation did diminish the more regular, sometimes daily, assault on ROTC activities by those who intended to end military education on their college campus.

After the trials and convictions of Mechanic and others, on-campus dissent among all activists was even further muted. Statements from the FBI and federal prosecutors had demonstrated their confidence that sentences this harsh would send a chilling message to activists across the nation. And indeed, this strategy worked. In the ongoing surveillance and subversion of student activists after May 4, 1970, one confidential source noted that "some individuals had attempted to organize the Washington University this Spring 1971 for radical activities but that the vast majority of Washington University students opposed what was being done in this direction for several reasons, including the Federal charges that were brought against individuals involved in the burning of the ROTC Building during the summer of 1970 and the penalties which were levied against these individuals."[81] Mission accomplished.

Twenty-eight days after this particular report was filed, J. Edgar Hoover, worried that the disclosure of COINTELPRO and its tactics would embarrass the FBI and permanently tarnish his legacy, sent a memo ending the secret war on his enemies: "Effective immediately, all COINTELPROs operated by this Bureau are discontinued. These include COINTELPRO–Espionage; COINTELPRO–New Left; COINTELPRO–Disruption of White Hate Groups; COINTELRPRO–Communist Party, USA; Counterintelligence and Special Operations; COINTELPRO–Black Extremists; [and] Socialist Workers Party–Disruption Program."[82] Hoover's decision came too late for the students from Washington University, all of whom were now sitting in prison or fighting in the courts for their freedom, or who, like Howard Mechanic, was on the run as a federal fugitive from justice.

Notes

1. I have written on the transformation of history as it enters popular media in Nina Gilden Seavey, "Film and Media Producers: Taking History off the Page and Putting It on the Screen," in *Public History: Essays from the Field*, rev. ed., ed. James B. Gardner and Peter S. LaPaglia (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 2006), 117–28.

2. Section 231 of the Civil Obedience Act concerning Civil Disorders states, "Whoever commits or attempts to commit any act to obstruct, impede, or interfere

with any fireman or law enforcement officer lawfully engaged in the lawful performance of his official duties incident to and during the commission of a civil disorder which in any way or degree obstructs, delays, or adversely affects commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce or the conduct or performance of any federally protected function . . . Shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both."

3. On September 5, 2000, *Dateline NBC* aired a one-hour special entitled "The Fugitive," in which Mechanic's co-defendant, Larry Kogan, admitted to having thrown the cherry bomb at the police officer.

4. Michael Linfield, *Freedom under Fire: US Civil Liberties in Time of War* (Boston: South End Press, 1990), 119.

5. In some of his sworn statements, Bird said that he had witnessed Mechanic using a slingshot to propel the firecracker. In a later statement, he omitted the reference to the slingshot and simply asserted that he had seen the cherry bomb "propelled from the person of Howard Mechanic."

6. Mechanic sold various of his possessions, wrote his family a note, and adopted a new identity in November 1971. The US Supreme Court denied certiorari on May 15, 1972, supporting the conviction upheld by the US Court of Appeals.

7. Seven students were tried and convicted on federal charges stemming from the May 4, 1970, riot on the Washington University campus. Four of the six served various sentences, ranging from ninety days in the psychiatric wing of the Federal Medical Facility in Springfield, Missouri, to seven years in federal prison. Charges against two of the students were ultimately dropped after multiple years of appeals.

8. Judge Gladys Kessler, Filing 59, Memorandum Opinion and Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment, May 16, 2017, *Seavey v. Department of Justice*.

9. FBI memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, RE: Counterintelligence Program, Internal Security, Disruption of the New Left (hereinafter COINTELPRO New Left), May 10, 1968.

10. Ibid.

11. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, Oct. 9, 1968.

12. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, Jul. 5, 1968.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. This overarching penetrative goal was articulated in an FBI memo from Philadelphia, PA, "Report on the New Left," Sep. 1970, and this characterization became the coined phrase for field offices nationally.

17. Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, Jul. 5, 1968.

18. A vivid testimonial outlining the methods and means of obtaining confidential informant (CI) cooperation through coercion related to criminal prosecutions appeared on the public broadcasting program *The Great American Dream Machine* in an investigative report by Paul Jacobs on Oct. 8, 1971.

19. Frequently, agents assigned to COINTELPRO activities were seated separately, behind closed doors and away from their peers. In the case of the COINTELPRO against Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the activities were so expansive that its operations were moved off-site, away from the Atlanta Bureau office, so as to guarantee their continued secrecy.

20. An excellent discussion of the public revelation of COINTELPRO is found in Betty Medsger, *The Burglary: The Discovery of J. Edgar Hoover's Secret FBI* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 2014).

21. Deposition of William C. Sullivan, Nov. 1, 1975, in US Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (also known as the Church Committee), *Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book II* and *Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book III,* Apr. 1976, 92–93, 97–98.

22. FBI memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, May 10, 1968.

23. FBI memo from SAC New York to Director, FBI, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, May 28, 1968.

24. For example, special intelligence units such as Police Cruiser No. 217 of the St. Louis County Police Department provided detailed daily logs and summary memoranda of their visits to organized meetings and informal conversations of student and civil rights activists throughout the metropolitan area.

25. *CBS Evening News*, Mar. 25, 1971, Vanderbilt Television News Archive (hereinafter VTNA).

26. Frank Donner, *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1980), 270–71.

27. Loch K. Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry: The Senate Intelligence Investigation* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985), 82.

28. Donner, *Age of Surveillance*, 272.

29. Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1945–1992* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2005).

30. It is difficult to fix the number of confidential informants used by the FBI. In Donner's *Age of Surveillance*, 137, the author cites 7,893 informants in category 170 ("racial and extremist"), although he cautions that these are quite conservative estimates.

31. Donner, *Age of Surveillance*, 169.

32. Cartha DeLoach, *Hoover's FBI: The Inside Story by Hoover's Trusted Lieutenant* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 1995), 280–81.

33. Devereaux Kennedy, interview by author, St. Louis, MO, Oct. 23, 2017.

34. FBI Memo from SAC St. Louis to Director, FBI, RE: Devereaux Kennedy, Nov. 29, 1967.

35. FBI Memo from SAC St. Louis to Director, FBI, RE: Devereaux Joseph Kennedy, Feb. 7, 1968.

36. The Security Index included those "dangerous individuals who might commit acts inimical to the national defense and public safety of the United States in time of

emergency." For a fuller history of the Security Index, see Athan G. Theoharis, ed., with Tony G. Poveda, Susan Rosenfeld, and Richard Gid Powers, *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide* (Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1999), 27–29. Kennedy's Main File number was 100-20324. The "100" classification series refers to files dealing with "Domestic Security."

37. Further memoranda articulating and codifying activities and expectations to be garnered from COINTELPRO New Left were issued from Hoover to SACs in the field on May 23, May 28, and Jul. 5, 1968.

38. C. D. Stelzer, "Howard's End," *Riverfront Times* (St. Louis), Feb. 16, 2000, quoted police estimates of the number of students in SDS on the Washington University campus at only twenty in 1969. Such a number is obviously difficult to verify and may refer to the number of "card-carrying members of SDS," and not the number of students who would attend rallies or protests on any given day, but it does attest to the lack of a large number of known activists at WU.

39. Kennedy, interview.

40. *Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: Students for a Democratic Society*, report by the Committee on Internal Security, House of Representatives, Ninety-first Congress, Second Session, Oct. 6, 1970, 1.

41. Walter Johnson, *The Broken Heart of America: St. Louis and the Violent History of the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2020), 297.

42. Ibid., 282–87.

43. Pat Byrne, "Protest Prevents Dow from Recruiting Here," *Student Life* (Washington University), Feb. 16, 1968, 1.

44. Walter Johnson, oral history interview for the podcast *My Fugitive*.

45. The presence of ROTC on campus was not just an issue for the student body, but an ongoing, hotly debated topic for the administration and faculty. It wasn't until August 18, 1970, that Chancellor Thomas Eliot decided the ROTC program would be permanently moved off of the university campus.

46. The types of anti-ROTC activities in 1967–1968 reported on by the FBI included an SDS satirical play held on the ROTC drill field on October 15, 1968, in which a small number of children, aged ten to twelve, shot cap guns and then declared a truce while a loudspeaker played "The War Is Over." At that same demonstration, according to FBI reports, SDS members approached cadets, offered them bread, wine, and lollipops, and taunted them. According to the FBI memorandum, "Drill was not disrupted." LHM SAC St. Louis, "Students for a Democratic Society Activities, SLMO," Oct. 15, 1968.

47. FBI Memo from SA Spurgeon J. Peterson to SAC St. Louis, RE: [Redacted] Unknown Subject (hereinafter UNSUB) Attempted Firebombing ROTC Building, Washington University, St. Louis, Dec. 12, 1968.

48. FBI Memo from SAC St. Louis to Director, FBI, RE: [Redacted] Fugitive; UNSUB Firebombs ROTC Building, WUSTL Dec. 3, 1968–Bombing Matters–Sabotage–IS–SDS, Dec. 4, 1968.

49. Letter from J. Walter Yeagley, Assistant Attorney General, to Veryl Riddle, US Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri, RE: United States v. [Redacted] No. 68 CR 283(1), U.S.D.C., E.D. MO, Jan. 31, 1969.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52."Student Gets Five Years: Sentenced in Bombing," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* Feb. 20, 1969.

53. *CBS Evening News*, Feb. 10, 1969, VTNA.

54. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC St. Louis, RE: [Redacted] Unknown Subject; Sabotage, Feb. 13, 1969.

55. Ibid.

56. Journalist Tim Weiner, in his book *Enemies: A History of the FBI* (New York: Random House, 2012), 119–20, summarizes his exhaustive study of Hoover by saying, "Hoover hated ideologies more than individuals, pressure groups more than people; above all Hoover hated the threats to the stability of the American political system, and anyone who might personify that danger was an enemy for life."

57. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC St. Louis, RE: [Redacted] UNSUB; Sabotage, Feb. 13, 1969.

58. FBI Memo from SAC St. Louis to Director, FBI, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, May 28, 1968.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. In a memorandum between William C. Sullivan, FBI Director of Domestic Intelligence, and his aide, Fred Baumgartner, dated Oct. 8, 1962, approval was given for the feeding of anti-MLK propaganda to five newspapers: the *Long Island Star-Journal*, the *Birmingham (AL) Chronicle*, the *Birmingham (AL) News*, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, and the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

62. Patrick J. Buchanan, *Right from the Beginning* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 283.

63. FBI Memo from SAC St. Louis to Director, FBI, RE: COINTELPRO New Left, May 28, 1968.

64. FBI regulations required regular reporting on all field-agent activities, but for COINTELPRO, where tangible results were closely monitored, Hoover issued directives establishing frequent reporting to qualify and quantify the progress of the program. J. Wallace LaPrade was appointed to take Joseph Gamble's place as Special Agent in Charge on May 14, 1969.

65. While the names of confidential informants are always redacted in FBI files due to the highly sensitive nature of their work, periodically in this research, I found that government agencies would simply neglect to redact these names prior to the release of documents. It should be noted that these are code names, as the true identity of the individuals would not be held in subject matter files.

66. Confidential informant reports garnered in this research date from Apr. 26, 1968, to May 12, 1976, with the bulk of the reporting gathered from 1968 to 1973.

67. Confidential informant reports dated Feb. 8, Mar. 9, and Mar. 14, 1969.

68. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC St. Louis, RE: UNSUB; Possible Arson Army ROTC Building, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, Feb. 23, 1970, in which Hoover expresses his frustration at the non-responsiveness of uncooperative

witnesses and suggests that there may be fifteen who should be subpoenaed and questioned under oath by a federal grand jury, Mar. 19, 1970.

69. FBI Investigative Memorandum Feb. 23–Mar. 4, 1970, RE: UNSUB: Possible Arson Army ROTC Building, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, Feb. 23, 1970, St. Louis SA Richard Hradsky.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. FBI Memo, SAC, Cleveland to SA [Redacted], Possible Arson Army ROTC Building, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, Feb. 23, 1970, Apr. 17, 1970.

73. "Criminals on Campus," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 4, 1970.

74. The full extent of the St. Louis office of the FBI's ties with the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* finally came to light in a FOIA document release in November 1977 and was reported in a series of *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* articles, the first of which was Curt Matthews, "FBI Says It Used *Globe-Democrat* to Discredit 'New Left,'" Nov. 23, 1977.

75. *CBS Evening News*, May 5, 1970, VTNA.

76. A temporary restraining order was issued by St. Louis County Circuit Court Judge George E. Schaaf on March 24, 1970, in response to a series of protests that disrupted campus operations and resulted in increasingly violent encounters with the police in which several officers were injured and a number of students were arrested.

77. US Attorney General John Mitchell described these provisions as potentially the most promising weapon against student unrest in a speech at the annual convention of the Tennessee Bar Association on June 12, 1969.

78. Memo from Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Jerris Leonard to Director, FBI, RE: UNSUB; U.S. Army, ROTC Unit at Washington University (WU)–Victim; Disruptions of Army ROTC Classes and Activities at WU; Conspiracy, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1968, Mar. 27, 1970, outlined the strategy to use St. Louis for levying charges for conspiracy to violate the 1968 Civil Rights Act and instructed the FBI to use additional investigative techniques for supporting these charges in investigations already underway.

79. To discourage further acts of violence against the on-campus military presence, Washington University and Saint Louis University combined their ROTC programs and began housing them at 4200 Forest Park Blvd. "Off-Campus ROTC Site Leased," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Aug. 19, 1970.

80. "3 Bombs Damage U.S. Buildings Here," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Mar. 9, 1971.

81. Interview Report of [redacted] source, Apr. 1, 1971.

82. FBI Memo from Director, FBI, to SAC Albany, Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPROs), Internal Security—Racial Matters, Apr. 28, 1971.