

# UNDER SURVEILLANCE: HERBERT MARCUSE AND THE FBI

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## ABSTRACT

*This article is the first in a series that seeks to examine the Federal Bureau of Investigation' (FBI) surveillance of social philosopher and activist Herbert Marcuse between 1943 and 1976. We intend to map in parallel lines local, national, and international media representations of Marcuse, scholarly analysis of Marcuse's writings, Marcuse's own correspondence, speeches, and texts in comparison with the presentations of Herbert Marcuse in the collected FBI documents. Our goal is to assess what the Marcuse's FBI files tell us about the FBI, Marcuse, the New Left, and U.S. society in the 1960s. In particular, close attention is paid to examining events described inside the FBI documents occurring in the mid-1960s when Herbert Marcuse was emerging as a self-proclaimed Marxist radical, a father figure to New Left and countercultural activists, an influential author, public speaker, and teacher, and was beginning to be perceived as a threat by the FBI to U.S. national security. We seek to clarify if FBI documents can provide information and insight to help illuminate and understand U.S. social and cultural history, in this particular case, to assess how FBI documents measure up against scholarship and perceived views of Marcuse and the 1960s. We are thus interested both in what we can learn about Herbert Marcuse's life and*

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*times from these documents and what FBI surveillance and documents tell us about the FBI and U.S. intelligence services.*

In the 1960s, Herbert Marcuse was emerging as one of the most important intellectuals in the United States. His 1941 book *Reason and Revolution* provided an introduction to Hegel, Marx, and social theory for English-speaking audiences. Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1955) provided an audacious synthesis of Marx and Freud and powerful critique of contemporary U.S. society that also anticipated the 1960s counterculture with its celebration of Eros, emancipation, play, and the aesthetic-erotic dimension of experience. Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) radicalized his critique of "advanced industrial society," providing powerful critical perspectives on both contemporary capitalist and communist societies.<sup>1</sup>

Marcuse, a German-Jewish emigrant from Nazi Germany, was a member of a remarkable group of radical intellectuals who were initially rooted in Frankfurt, Germany, and moved their Institute for Social Research to Columbia University where they continued their research projects into fascism, the authoritarian personality, and contemporary forms of power and social control. Marcuse was a key figure in this group and continued developing the "critical theory of society" on his own in his American context after Horkheimer, Adorno, and other members of the group returned to Germany after the war.

Marcuse was not only of increasing interest to intellectual and the emerging radicals of the New Left and counterculture but also elicited the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and its Director J. Edgar Hoover.<sup>2</sup> In this study, we examine the FBI's surveillance and records on Marcuse and are interested both in what we can learn about Herbert Marcuse's life and times from these documents and what FBI surveillance and documents tell us about the FBI, the New Left, and U.S. society in the 1960s. This preliminary study focuses on documents that portray Marcuse's initial scrutiny from the FBI during his government service in the 1940s and then his political activism in the early through middle 1960s, before he had become an icon of the New Left and media celebrity. Hence, we begin with the FBI documents on Marcuse through an examination of how these documents positioned Marcuse's place in U.S. society and politics in the 1940s and then the 1960s in relation to the social and political contexts of their time.<sup>3</sup> We start in the next section by noting how Marcuse came to the attention of the FBI in the mid-1960s after having passed FBI security clearances for his work with the U.S. Government during the period between 1943 and 1951.

## MARCUSE, THE FBI, AND U.S. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

On May 13, 1966, the FBI officially began systematic surveillance on Herbert Marcuse, then a Professor at the University of California, San Diego, for his perceived role in the rising student movement and countercultural protest against U.S. military involvement in Vietnam and Indochina. However, this was not the first formal investigation of Herbert Marcuse conducted by the FBI.<sup>4</sup> In fact, it was at the very least, the third formal investigation of Marcuse who had been the subject of constant surveillance of the FBI over the previous two-and-a-half decades, largely as standard security checks in relation to his work with the U.S. Government.

The scope of the official surveillance that began in May 1966 sheds light on earlier routine FBI investigations of Marcuse between 1942 and 1952. Ironically, between 1942 and 1952, at the same time that the first two FBI investigations of Marcuse were underway, his main form of employment came from the U.S. Government itself. Although he still had a brief connection to Columbia University (e.g., through a series of four lectures he gave at the Russian Institute in 1948), Marcuse held positions for U.S. intelligence services during World War II and then the State Department.<sup>5</sup>

Previously, Marcuse had worked as a researcher, translator, and informant at the Office of War Information (OWI), Bureau of Intelligence, beginning in December 1942 and then with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) from April 1943 until September 1945, before becoming the Chief of the Central European Branch of the Division of European Research for the State Department.<sup>6</sup> What began as a special FBI inquiry into Marcuse's activities in the spring of 1943 as a prelude to his entering the OSS escalated over the next decade to include a full-scale investigation under Executive Order 9835 in 1950, according to which the FBI in conjunction with the Attorney General and the House Committee on Un-American Activities investigated government employees on suspicion of disloyalty and/or violation of Federal Law.<sup>7</sup> As a federal government employee in the period following the World War II – a period that became known as the “Red Scare” – Marcuse had been under investigation for his supposed connection to Communist countries, organizations, ideologies, and sympathizers. And even though Marcuse was officially cleared of all charges and no longer under formal investigation by the end of 1952, the stigma of suspicion had been attached to his name and would remain there for the rest of his life.

In retrospect, it is easy to see how Marcuse's first official FBI investigation came into being. As a German-Jewish radical intellectual fleeing Nazi Germany, Marcuse came to the United States in 1934 after several of his colleagues had been invited by the President of Columbia University to teach and conduct research in New York.<sup>8</sup> It was during this time that the Institute for Social Research, now known as the Frankfurt School (and home to thinkers such as T. W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Leo Löwenthal, Erich Fromm, Franz Neumann, Marcuse, and others), relocated from its original home in Frankfurt, Germany, to Columbia University in New York.<sup>9</sup> Along with Marcuse, who worked at the Institute branch at Columbia from 1934 to 1939, his colleagues who conducted work with the Institute at Columbia from Horkheimer and Adorno to Franz Neumann and Leo Löwenthal found themselves either as the subject of FBI surveillance or as providing testimony concerning their colleagues who sought U.S. Government positions during World War II.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, even beyond the Frankfurt theorists, the FBI became immediately suspicious of Jewish immigrants from Germany, especially members of the intelligentsia, and kept their activities under close surveillance.<sup>11</sup> While the work at the Institute in New York had by the post-war period appeared to have gained the respect of the academic community in the United States, and the Institute was viewed as a "credible institution," within the FBI the work conducted at the Institute in Frankfurt and then at Columbia was seen as pro-socialist, Marxist, and a house of sympathizers for communism.<sup>12</sup> No doubt then, Marcuse's record as an academic – in particular his having worked (although briefly) at the Institute in Frankfurt and Geneva, combined with his authorship of two books on Hegel and many articles on Marx, critical philosophy, fascism, and the totalitarian state – only enhanced the extent to which the FBI took an interest in what he had to say.<sup>13</sup> (Indeed, this is true of many who had conducted research and published writings on such subject matters). Ironically, it was neither of these scenarios that first brought Marcuse to the attention of the FBI during the World War II. Rather, it was his position working *for* the U.S. Government that made him appear as a possible security threat and ideological danger.

The first FBI report about Marcuse that is present in his Freedom of Information FBI dossier, inside file #77-27880, was dated April 20, 1943.<sup>14</sup> Marcuse at the time was employed within the OWI, Bureau of Intelligence, which was apparently under the supervision of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and he had applied to work at the OSS.<sup>15</sup> Upon applying, internal investigations on Marcuse's character, background, and

even credit history were conducted, and all were part of the regular routine for vetting U.S. Government employees. As outlined in the report, four confidential sources were interviewed as character references, and all spoke positively of Marcuse as an academic, as a person, and as a supporter of American ideals. On May 21, 1943, J. Edgar Hoover sent an internal memo to the FBI SAC (Special Agent Center) office in New York City with the following text: "Herbert Marcuse, OEM, Discontinue Investigation."<sup>16</sup> For a brief moment, the FBI considered Herbert Marcuse a loyal American and not to be a security risk.

However, this was not the end of the first FBI investigation of Herbert Marcuse. Although he had been cleared by the FBI internal review, his freedom from FBI suspicion was short-lived. In fact, in the August 9, 1950 report that started the second major FBI investigation of Marcuse mention is made of Marcuse inside FBI investigations from fall 1948 through to spring 1949.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it appears that in contradiction to Hoover's 1943 memo, the surveillance of the activities of Marcuse was in fact not discontinued. This additional surveillance is corroborated in a September 14, 1950 letter to J. Edgar Hoover from a SAC agent in New York that makes reference to "an extensive investigation conducted by the State Department concerning MARCUSE at which time some 25 to 30 persons were interviewed."<sup>18</sup> The same letter also mentions "'an extensive investigation conducted by the agency [The Civil Service Commission]' in late 1944 and early 1945 'concerning HERBERT MARCUSE' in connection with his employment as a research analyst with O.S. Services ... [where] some persons were interviewed."<sup>19</sup>

In both cases, the agency concluded that "none of whom [the interviewees] questioned MARCUSE's loyalty," but immediately contended that many of those interviewed made reference to Marcuse's connection to the "Institute of Social Research," which according to the FBI had brought Marcuse into direct connection with known Communists and therefore, as one respondent (later identified as Dr. Eric Franzen of New York) noted in 1950, "any information which came into MARCUSE'S hands would ultimately reach Drs. HORKHEIMER and POLLOCK and, that there was absolutely no question that MARCUSES primary loyalty was to the International Institute of Social Research."<sup>20</sup> Over the next three decades, the information that had been used to clear Marcuse's name in 1943 would come under this type of continual re-interpretation by the FBI as the information was gathered and files maintained, and the first investigations would be reopened and become an important part of the multiple FBI investigations that would follow. So, although formally closed on

May 21, 1943, Bureau surveillance of Marcuse remained active between 1943 and 1950.

This is a theme repeated throughout FBI documentation of Marcuse, where the 1943 investigation, although proving Marcuse to be loyal, appears in later Bureau reports as reason to keep Marcuse under suspicion. The treatment and re-interpretation of documents clearing Marcuse in formal FBI investigations in 1953 and 1966 was the same.<sup>21</sup> The individuals listed as references on Marcuse's initial application for State employment in 1942: Franz Neumann, Max Horkheimer, and Friedrich Pollock – whose names and reputation helped earn him employment at the OWI and OSS, would all be mentioned in later reports as evidence of Marcuse's connection to radical un-American thought and as reason for suspicion. Furthermore, the "confidential sources," who had professed to FBI agents that Marcuse was a loyal American and good worker, were replaced by "confidential sources" suspicious of his actions and associations. By the end of the 1940s, the Marcuse FBI file had been officially re-opened and Marcuse became the subject of a formal loyalty investigation of government employees based mostly on his connection to the Institute for Social Research, the work of his intellectual colleagues, and his previous 1943 investigation by the FBI.

On August 9, 1950, at the request of J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI SAC Washington Office was asked to conduct a preliminary report on "loyalty" of Herbert Marcuse, then Chief of the Central European Branch of the Division of Research for Europe within the State Department.<sup>22</sup> Marcuse's connection to radical thinkers, pro-Communist and pro-Socialist intellectuals, had garnered some interest within the Bureau. During his tenure with the OWI and then with the OSS, Marcuse had spent his time conducting research for the government and as such was to refrain from publishing personal and academic works.<sup>23</sup> However, many of his Frankfurt School counterparts used this period to publish articles, essays, and books widely critical of capitalism, politics, culture, and modes of thought, such as Adorno and Horkheimers' highly controversial *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout this period, Marcuse kept regular correspondence with his colleagues from the Institute of Social Research. It appears that it was Marcuse's relationship to the Institute and to other radical refugee intellectuals that resulted in his 1950 loyalty inquiry. For example, one of the testimonies used as the basis for questioning Marcuse's loyalty in 1950 (as it had in the 1943 investigation) was that a librarian at UCLA testified having witnessed Marcuse and other German scholars (believed to have

been Adorno and Horkheimer) coming into the UCLA library. According to this “confidential source” in the April 20, 1943 report, the gentlemen looked at books about Marxism and “appeared suspicious.”<sup>25</sup>

Marcuse’s connection to social critics and public figures also under investigation for possible un-American activity continually raised eyebrows within the Bureau. This was another theme repeated throughout the FBI documents on Herbert Marcuse, where more was made of his connection to other people than of his own work and character. At first, in 1943, it was Marcuse’s connection to the influx of European (and more specifically German-Jewish) immigrants fleeing Nazi occupation, and the public notion that immigrants from Germany were either un-American or unappreciative of the American way of life that raised suspicion. In the mid- to late 1940s, it was Marcuse’s connection to the Institute for Social Research and to intellectual Marxists that raised suspicions. In the 1950s, it was his connection to known or suspected communists and Marxists and his own espousal of critical Marxist philosophy that incited attention inside the Bureau, while in the 1960s, it was his connection to the “student movement”, the “New Left”, the counterculture, Angela Davis, and European radicals, such as Rudi Dutschke. In each and every scenario, Marcuse was treated within the Bureau as guilty by association and more often than not, it was the actions of those people around Marcuse and the media, and the public perception of Marcuse’s connection to these people and/or movements that became the framework that defined Herbert Marcuse in FBI documents as a Marxist, a revolutionary, an anarchist, and a dangerous supporter of the New Left and world revolution.

## **MARCUSE’S 1960s ACTIVISM AND THE FBI**

After leaving the State Department in 1951, Herbert Marcuse spent more than two decades teaching at well-established academic centers such as Columbia, Harvard, Brandeis, and the University of California, San Diego. It was Marcuse’s teaching and his writing, lectures, and speeches, including *One-Dimensional Man*, “The Obsolescence of Marxism,” “The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition,” and other texts dealing with the New Left, socialism, and revolution that not only caught the attention of the FBI but also caught the creative imagination of a generation of student protest in the 1960s.<sup>26</sup>

FBI documents contain a wide and impressive record of Marcuse’s activism throughout the 1960s. One FBI document, labeled SD100-13701,



dated November 8, 1967, which covered the investigative period of October 9 to November 1, 1967, under the rubric "SECURITY MATTER -C," features reports by five Bureau informants (labeled REGISTERED) and three San Diego informants who compiled a wide-ranging report on Marcuse's politics, writings, and activities of the early through mid-1960s. This document indicates that "On January 18, 1967, SD T-2 furnished the following information concerning the previous activities of subject:"

On May 10, 1961, subject signed an open letter to President KENNEDY regarding Cuban policy.

On Marcuse 12, 1963, subject reportedly signed a petition for clemency regarding CARL BRADEN and FRANK WILKINSON.

On November 1, 1967 SD T-2 advised that CARL BRADEN and FRANK WILKINSON, both known Communist Party, USA, members, were both convicted of contempt of Congress in 1961 for refusing to testify before the Committee on Un-American Activities ...

On December 5, 1963, subject signed a petition on behalf of three students indicted for going to Cuba, under the auspices of the "Emergency Civil Liberties Committee" ...

On February 16, 1965, subject reported to be signer of open letter to President JOHNSON urging negotiation in Vietnam.

In March 1965, subject contributed an article to the issue of "Monthly Review."

On September 17, 1965 subject's signature appeared on an advertisement in the "Washington Evening Star", entitled "Eternal Light Vigil", under the auspices of the American-Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry.

On October 31, 1965, the "New York Times" carried an advertisement which was signed by the subject and which was entitled "Ad Hoc Committee on Vietnam War."

On March 25, 1966, the Los Angeles Free Press' indicated that subject was a scheduled speaker on March 25, 1966, at a teach-in held under auspices of the University of California at Los Angeles' Vietnam Day Committee (a protest against U.S. policy in Vietnam).

[The next entry is blacked out by the FBI and unreadable, but the succeeding FBI description indicates that Marcuse was involved in an effort to obtain "clemency for Hugo Blanco, a Peruvian revolutionary freedom fighter"] ...

On May 14, 1967, SD T-5 reported that Dr. MARCUSE had recently lectured in connection with a course being offered by the University of California Extension Service entitled "The New Radicals." In this lecture Dr. MARCUSE stated that the "vested interests" exist and seek to preserve the status quo and that the conservatives may bring more evil than the radicals. He said that the conservatives advocate the intensification of



the war in Vietnam, the repression of civil rights, anti-intellectualism and censorship in education. He stated that the New Left is not socialistic, not tied to labor movement [sic] and not committed to one class of society, whereas the Old Left was primarily socialist and labor oriented. He stated that the New Radicals and the New Left are the youth intelligentsia [sic], the “hippies”, civil rights leaders, and radical “squares” like professors, writers, and artists. He said that the Youth of the New Left have no established leadership or effective communication but they represent incongruous social classes and show spontaneity and flexibility. He said that the New Left is suspicious of any new ideology or action of the “establishment”. MARCUSE said that the immediate goals of the New Radicals are the termination of war and “participatory democracy.” Source stated that Dr. MARCUSE appeared sympathetic toward the New Left and in his lecture advocated the teaching of non-conformis [sic] ideology, independent of government, and free universities. He pointed out that participatory democracy would entail the dissolution of the military-industrial complex, a vast extension of welfare, the breaking up of information monopolies and the abolition of foreign policy.<sup>27</sup>

The same memo indicates that “On February 15, 1967, SD T-2 made available information concerning Dr. MARCUSE’s writings and statements” and the next several pages of the memo provide summaries of a large number of publications by Marcuse, some critiques of his work, and summaries of reports of Marcuse’s activities in newspapers such as the *New York Times* or *San Diego Union*.<sup>28</sup> Other files in Marcuse’s FBI dossier indicate that the FBI hired out individuals to provide summaries of Marcuse’s books and writings under the rubric “Research Satellite Division, Domestic Intelligence Division.”<sup>29</sup>

In re-examining the FBI documents from the Bureau’s surveillance of Marcuse, in addition to writings by and about Marcuse, what becomes evident is that there is a clear battle ensuing around the social construction of the public image of Herbert Marcuse, starting in 1966 and continuing through the 1960s and into the 1970s. At this time, the FBI was engaged in an ideological battle with the youth of the country in the midst of a counter cultural revolution. And at the same time as young people and others were actively creating a public image of Herbert Marcuse as idol and icon of the emerging New Left and antiwar movement and activist for social change, the Bureau was equally hard at working for a collective construction of Herbert Marcuse as a threat to National Security. To effectively construct Marcuse, then a 70-year-old Professor as a clear and present danger to American society, the Bureau worked to paint him as an individual who stood at odds with the core values of U.S. democracy, and this battle was waged through the emphasis on representing Marcuse as the “other,” that is, as “a self-proclaimed Marxist,” a Jewish-German intellectual and immigrant, as an anarchist, and as a revolutionary. In addition to highlighting the differences in Marcuse’s life with the social construction of what it meant to be an American, the Bureau also

worked to demonstrate Marcuse's connection to student rebellion, counter-culture, and people such as Angela Davis and Rudi Dutschke and filed reports under rubrics like "Security Index C" and categories such as "anarchist," New Left revolutionary, and "threat to national security."<sup>30</sup>

Beginning in the spring of 1966, Herbert Marcuse's connection to the growing student and antiwar movements in both Bureau circles and the mass media intensified. His perceived connection to student and New Left uprisings at home and abroad and a backlash against Marcuse witnessed through the public protest to have him removed from UCSD as well as a series of death threats from the Ku Klux Klan all attested to his growing radicalism, public influence, and interest for the FBI. The surveillance and construction of Marcuse as a dangerous radical by the FBI in the period around 1966 will be explored in the following sections through a close scrutiny of three speeches given by Herbert Marcuse in the spring of 1966. The talks took place across the country (one in the Midwest and one on each coast), at three well-established academic centers, and as part of officially sanctioned University symposiums or teach-ins. Coverage of each of the three speeches given by Marcuse can be found inside his FBI dossier and appeared to be instrumental in establishing his identity as a self-proclaimed Marxist, a father figure to the New Left and countercultural activists, and as a threat to national security in the spring of 1966.

In particular, Marcuse's April 25, 1966, talk at the University of Notre Dame, at a symposium on "Marxism in Academia" entitled "The Obsolescence of Marxism," garnered national attention and was used by the FBI and the national media to portray Marcuse as "the self-proclaimed Marxist." A month prior, at a teach-in at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Marcuse openly attacked U.S. foreign policy and called for student activism, actively participating in the role of "countercultural father figure" and "threat to national security." Only days after his talk in Notre Dame, and already in the national spotlight, Marcuse delivered the keynote address at the Yale Socialist Symposium, in a talk that appeared to mix the "Marxism" of his Notre Dame talk with "the anti-war sentiment" of his UCLA speech, in a talk that was closely scrutinized by the FBI.

### **THE OBSOLESCENCE OF MARXISM: MARCUSE SPEAKS IN SOUTH BEND**

April 25, 1966, may not have been Herbert Marcuse's high point as an educator, philosopher, or social critic, but in retrospect, it holds significant

importance to the public representation of Herbert Marcuse and the FBI's interest in him. In fact, evidence suggests that it was a rather typical and ordinary moment in his career. As one of many speakers at an international symposium on Marxism, academia, and intellectual thought at the University of Notre Dame, in South Bend, Indiana, he spoke on re-thinking the use value of Marxist thought in relation to contemporary American society and politics and some of the challenges inherent in doing so. Marcuse was not even the keynote speaker of the event. And yet, it was this speech at Notre Dame that captured not only the attention of the FBI (and then became the basis for re-opening his Bureau file that had been closed for more than a decade) but also the attention of major sources of mass media such as the *New York Times*.

Marcuse's speech in South Bend, Indiana, made the headlines of the April 26 edition of the *New York Times*, where on page two, the article "Marxist views Vietnam in the Context of Capitalism," immediately became the topic of national discussion. For example, in a personal letter from Arnold Tovell Marcuse's editor, in Boston, to Marcuse's home in La Jolla, CA on May 3, 1966, he writes as an afterthought to the work-related letter: "My wife says she's in hearty agreement with Mrs. Marcuse's letter to the New York Review of Books! So am I, but I was much more intrigued by the way the *New York Times* treated your appearance in South Bend. Did you have a good time?"<sup>31</sup>

The national discussion sparked by Marcuse's speech extended beyond friendly correspondence to include even the FBI. For example, FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover, noted in his May 13, 1966 letter from his Virginia office to the San Diego office, "[e]nclosed herewith is a Xerox copy of an article which appeared on page two of the April 29, 1966 'The New York Times' ... you are instructed to discreetly identify subject, review indices and contact established sources and pertinent confidential informants concerning subject; and submit results in a report-form suitable for dissemination."<sup>32</sup> Perhaps, the April 1966 speech at South Bend, which at the time was an ordinary event in his life as a public intellectual, has found a space in the construction of his role in media representations as one of the most important public talks Marcuse ever gave.

Although Herbert Marcuse was always a scholar with a clear interest in Marxist theory and Hegelian philosophy, it was only in the aftermath of the South Bend talk that the construction of Marcuse as a "self-proclaimed Marxist" began to crystallize in the public media representations of Herbert Marcuse. And while Marcuse never actually says the words "I am a Marxist" or "as a Marxist" anywhere in this talk, it appears that a

great deal of the focus springs forth from one of the first lines of his talk, where in explaining how his title “The Obsolescence of Marxism” is more of a question than a statement, he notes “[t]he title of my paper is not supposed to suggest that Marx’s analysis of the capitalist system is outdated; on the contrary I think that the most fundamental notions of this analysis have been validated.”<sup>33</sup> The *New York Times*’ coverage of the event immediately framed Marcuse as “the Marxist Professor,” claiming “Professor Marcuse of the University of California, San Diego, noting that he was a Marxist, contended that Marxian analysis was relevant to the internal structure and development of affluent capitalistic societies such as the United States.”<sup>34</sup> Ensuing Bureau documents, such as the FBI Directors’ letter dated May 13, 1966, frame the need for continued surveillance of Marcuse based on the fact that the “subject [Marcuse] identified himself as a Marxist.”<sup>35</sup> It appears that missed in the *New York Times* and FBI synopsis of the South Bend lecture was Marcuse’s larger point that “the factors which have led to the passing and obsolescence of some decisive concepts of Marx are anticipated in Marxian theory itself,” concluding, “the affluent society corroborates rather than refutes the internal contradictions which Marx attributed to capitalist development.”<sup>36</sup>

Thus, Marcuse’s talk at South Bend spoke more to the inherent Marxist nature of U.S. society where corporate powers dominate social, political, and cultural life than it did to a call for proletarian revolution or socialism, both of which Marcuse argued were unlikely in the contemporary U.S. context.

Although the talk at South Bend was the first public lecture of Marcuse to garner significant press and public response, it was not the first time Marcuse had been openly political in challenging U.S. foreign policy. For example, on May 3, 1961, at Brandeis University, Herbert Marcuse, then a Professor in the History of Ideas program at Brandeis, participated in an organized protest against America’s current stance on the Cuban Revolution.<sup>37</sup> In one of his first public criticisms of U.S. foreign policy in the post-war era, Marcuse laid the framework for many of his future arguments against U.S. intervention and occupation in developing nations and its practice of violent intervention in the affairs of foreign countries. Many of these themes were repeated in the April 1966 “Obsolescence of Marxism” talk at South Bend as well as in his April speech “The Inner Logic of Vietnam” at a UCLA teach-in and in his April 1966 talk at the Yale Socialist Symposium, which we engage below.

In his 1961 speech at Brandeis, Marcuse argued that the Cuban crisis, in which the U.S. Government found itself, was a self-created problem.

According to Marcuse, the decision of Castro to rely on the foreign aid of Communist nations like the Soviet Union was simply the most basic response (in the best interest of his people) to the U.S. embargo, based on perceived U.S. interests but wrapped up and sold to the public under the banner of Cold War ideological battles. Marcuse argues that the U.S. rhetoric of using military force in protecting Cubans from violations of civil rights under the Castro regime was hypocritical since the United States was happy to support violent and hostile takeovers in other countries from militant rightwing or Fascist groups not associated with Communism, which systematically violated human rights (he lists Spain, Formosa, Guatemala, and Haiti as just a few examples).

Marcuse then argues, “[i]t seems, in other words, that we are only against repression of civil rights and liberties if it comes from the left, but certainly not if it comes from the right.”<sup>38</sup> Marcuse furthers his critique of U.S. foreign policy to suggest that the “hypocrisy” of the policy lies in the fact that the U.S. Government is moving further and further away from a society that protects the civil liberties of its own citizens. He argues, “what we see is the rapid transformation of our own society into a *unfree* society which already shows the tendencies which we so valiantly deplore in other countries.”<sup>39</sup> Marcuse then lists the change in how we exchange ideas and communicate in society as the key indicator of this loss of freedoms: “the restriction of the freedom of the press ... a self-imposed censorship, ... a moratorium on criticism, ... a *misinformation* of the public, and [the emergence of the importance and value invested in] the cult of personality.”<sup>40</sup>

What is particularly interesting about Marcuse’s talk on Cuba is how he ends the talk by challenging his audience at Brandeis to take up the cause to make their voices heard. “I do not overestimate what can be done, but I think we have a duty to make use of the democratic means and instruments still available to us and to let the President know – not the CIA: American policy is made by the President, and we should not make the CIA a scapegoat – let the President know how you feel.”<sup>41</sup> Marcuse does not call for violent opposition or radical social change but instead promotes change through “the long march through the institutions.”<sup>42</sup>

And this is precisely what Marcuse did. One week after his talk at Brandeis, on May 10, 1961, Marcuse joined his students in signing an open letter to President Kennedy regarding U.S. foreign policy in Cuba.<sup>43</sup> According to an FBI report filed on November 8, 1967, between the period of 1961 and 1965, as we reported earlier, Marcuse was actively involved in protesting U.S. domestic and foreign policy through the existing channels of

power. On February 16, 1965, Marcuse signed an open letter to President Johnson urging for negotiation and not escalation in Vietnam, and again on October 31, 1965, where Marcuse was one of many signatures on an open letter that was printed as a large advertisement in the *New York Times* produced by the "Ad-Hoc Committee on the Vietnam War."<sup>44</sup> Although he was not under direct FBI surveillance at this time, it appears that his actions of protest and activism remained visible and were duly noted.

Furthermore, an article from the spring 1965 edition of the Brandeis student newspaper, *The Justice*, indicates that Marcuse spoke at a large rally during this period in Boston Commons called to protest United States involvement in the war in Vietnam.<sup>45</sup> Marcuse noted that the U.S. intervention in Vietnam violated all the commandments of international law, "especially," in the words of the journalist summarizing Marcuse's speech: "since it is a war not in defense of our own country but of a faraway land and one in which we are slaughtering thousands of helpless and miserable people in the name of the American way of life." The author noted that Marcuse drew the analogy between the people of Nazi Germany and the American people since the Germans surrendered their freedom to Hitler and the Nazis, while people in the United States were surrendering their freedom to the Johnson Administration. Moreover, Marcuse predicted that the "best" outcome in Vietnam could lead to "the task of policing a huge hostile population," while nuclear war was a "negative consequence."

In retrospect, "The Obsolescence of Marxism" presented at South Bend was not an isolated talk, but instead was part of a larger dialogue that Marcuse had been participating in for several years. As noted above, Marcuse's 1961 talk on Cuba first outlined his views on the important role that developing countries play in the sustained maintenance and expansion of capitalism. This would later become one of his major arguments against the U.S. occupation of Vietnam; mainly that Vietnam should not be looked at in isolation as an event happening "over there" but instead to recognize the global elements of capitalism and the interconnections between policy "at home" and "abroad." As Marcuse so eloquently states in "The Obsolescence of Marxism," "[w]hat happens in Asia or Africa is not external to the system but has become an integral part of the system itself."<sup>46</sup>

As already noted above, the ideas found in Marcuse's South Bend talk had earlier philosophical roots. In 1963, his lecture "The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man" Marcuse posited how psychoanalysis, although at the time out of fashion in academic circles, "sheds new light on the politics of advanced industrial society."<sup>47</sup> Although the lecture focused

primarily on psychoanalysis, it allowed Marcuse insight into two key areas that later became the backdrop for his 1966 lecture on “The Obsolescence of Marxism.” First, in examining the connection between psychoanalysis and the affluent society, Marcuse concluded “that which is obsolete is not, by this token, false.” Where for Marcuse in 1963, claims about the obsolescence of psychoanalysis provided the basis for revisiting psychoanalytical thought in the current social and political context, in 1966, he used the same logic to examine the importance of Marxism as a critique of contemporary capitalism and in relation to America’s role in Vietnam.

A second important point expressed by Marcuse in his 1963 lecture on psychoanalysis is his concern for the removal of individual freedoms in the United States through the controlling of information. According to Marcuse, “[t]he danger signs are there. The relationship between the government and the governed between administration and its subjects is changing significantly – without a visible change in the well-functioning democratic institutions.”<sup>48</sup> Where Marcuse lays out the transformation of democratic control away from the hands of the people in his talk on “The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man,” he outlines the process for regaining this democratic control at the end of his talk on the “The Obsolescence of Marxism” with a discussion of the role of the intelligentsia in promoting truth in a society where information is deliberately suppressed and spun. “And as repression is flattened out and extended to the entire underlying population, the intellectual task, the task of education and discussion, the task of tearing, not only the technological veil but also the other veils behind which domination and repression operate, – all these ‘ideological’ factors become very material factors of radical transformation.”<sup>49</sup>

On April 27, 1965, in his last public talk at Brandeis University, Marcuse’s speech, “The Obsolescence of Socialism” asked if the concept of social revolution had become a misnomer in an affluent society.<sup>50</sup> Once again, Marcuse notes that the title of the talk is meant only half ironically, since on one hand a Marxist analysis in his view captures dynamics of capitalist societies and, on the other, there is an “acute need of the present, of moving past this society.” The May 4, 1965 edition of *The Justice*, in summarizing the talk suggested that “in attempting to unite, in this address, the delineation of his latest modes of thought with a call to social action, Dr. Marcuse both exemplified and crowned the approach to student action and to the world at large that he has consistently held at Brandeis.”<sup>51</sup> Here, Marcuse’s argument for the need for student protest in social revolution gets an early articulation, which is taken up again in “The Obsolescence of Marxism” where Marcuse argues that the syndrome of revolutionary



potential exists in uniting the underprivileged locally and abroad with radicalized youth and members of the intelligentsia.

Hence, Marcuse's April 25, 1966 talk at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, was more than just a conference paper delivered by a university professor at an international symposium. Instead, it was snapshot that captured in a single moment, more than five years of public discourse by Herbert Marcuse on the negative aspects of U.S. foreign policy, the interconnectedness of global capitalism, the suspension of civil rights, and the decline of democracy and freedom inherent in the affluent society.

During this time, in addition to his public lectures on Marxism, and his teaching at both Brandeis and UCSD, Marcuse also penned two key critical works: *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) and *Repressive Tolerance* (1965), in this same vein of thought.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the obsolescence that Marcuse appears to be questioning in his speeches between 1961 and 1965 is not Marxism, psychoanalysis, or socialism. In each and every case, it is the intensifying *obsolescence of U.S. democracy* that Marcuse is calling attention to. The democratic values that were believed to be self-evident and which underpinned the formation of the United States, namely that all men were held equal under the law and therefore had the freedom to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, are for Marcuse disappearing alongside the suspension of freedom of speech, attacks on political criticism and dissent, and repression of oppositional groups, all of which are fundamental to the maintenance of a democratic public sphere which Marcuse saw on the decline in the United States in the 1960s (although New Left radicalism later in the decade would provide him with renewed hope).

What appears special in retrospect concerning this particular moment in April 1966 in South Bend, Indiana, and what may have contributed to the notoriety that it received in the public press, private correspondence, and FBI memos was the vigor with which Marcuse suggests that not only was the United States in the *wrong* for its participation in Vietnam but that people had both a moral duty and a civil right to oppose government policy. This was also the focus of Marcuse's keynote speech at an anti-Vietnam teach-in at UCLA one month prior, entitled "The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam."

### **THE INNER LOGIC OF AMERICAN POLICY IN VIETNAM: MARCUSE SPEAKS IN WESTWOOD**

Even though his April talk at South Bend garnered significant public notice, only one month earlier, Marcuse gave a much more politically charged talk

at UCLA. Unlike at South Bend where Marcuse examined the academic importance of Marxism and used the America–Vietnam conflict as a case study for the value of Marxist analysis in the face of advanced industrial capitalism, his talk at UCLA was a pointed and direct attack at the way in which the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations had dealt with Vietnam.<sup>53</sup> The title of Marcuse’s lecture, “The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam” while drawing on Marcuse’s Hegelian notions of logic, is in fact meant to be a question even though it is poised as a statement. Marcuse uses this same style of prose, that is, he couches the irony of asking a question into the subtext of a direct statement; in creating the title for his talk at South Bend, “The Obsolescence of Marxism,” where he noted, “A most important thing was omitted [from the title]-the question mark. For me the question mark is the most condensed symbol of the dialectic in Marxian theory.”<sup>54</sup> Herein lays the root of Marcuse’s discussion at UCLA – that the basis of American foreign policy in Vietnam is rooted in an *inner logic* that is hidden from U.S. citizens through propaganda and misinformation and, of even greater importance, flawed at its core.

The student union building at UCLA housed the “teach-in” on March 25, 1966. The antiwar protest at UCLA was part of a larger national protest “National Teach-In Week” organized by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The SDS were well known to the FBI and often referred to as a housing ground for communists inside Bureau documents. In fact, the Yale-New Haven local chapter of SDS would sponsor the symposium at Yale that Marcuse would speak at in the spring of 1966. We have noted earlier in this article the affinities between SDS and Marcuse and how Marcuse thoroughly embraced the SDS goals of an end to the Vietnam War, addressing poverty, and promoting participatory democracy. Marcuse spoke out at SDS rallies, supported their goals, and agreed to participate in a 1965 SDS Radical Education Project, which his own teaching was already embodying.<sup>55</sup>

Teach-ins as a form of protest, according to Louis Menashe and Ronald Radosh in *Teach-Ins: U.S.A. Reports, Opinions, Documents*, started in March of 1965 at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and “sprang from the feeling of large sections of the academic community that Government leaders were no longer listening to criticism of U.S. policy on Vietnam and the American public, subjected to the massive persuasive powers of the information media, would soon stop offering it. Accordingly then, the academic community turned to their most reliable constituency, their students ... and together, teachers and students built a movement.”<sup>56</sup> The UCLA teach-in, as a form of antiwar protest brought together local

teachers, students, and political activists.<sup>57</sup> By the spring of 1966, the teach-in had become a strong and viable option of democratic protest and was used quite widely across the country.

Likewise, by 1966, Southern California had become a politically charged environment ripe with opportunity for protest. However, this was not always the case. In September of 1964, in seeking the advice of close friends regarding his decision to either stay at Brandeis or accept the offer to relocate to La Jolla and UCSD, fellow Frankfurt School theorist, Leo Löwenthal, in a letter dated September 29, 1964, tells Marcuse “[i]t is true that Southern California is politically lousy, but one is always in a minority and there are quite a few people who are decent enough. And don’t forget that I’m in the neighborhood.”<sup>58</sup> And yet, less than one year later, almost immediately upon arriving at the University of California, San Diego, Marcuse found himself front and center at UCSD in politicized discussions with students and colleagues on topics such as U.S. foreign policy, academic freedom, and the value of civil protest.

An FBI report on Marcuse dated, July 13, 1966, notes that Marcuse spoke at an anti-Vietnam rally at UCSD on October 15, 1965.<sup>59</sup> The rally or teach-in, as it was described by the FBI, was in connection with the International Days of Protest and was attended by over 400 people. Marcuse was advertised in leaflets and flyers to be one of four keynote speakers at the event, where he is said to have spoken openly about protesting U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam. History is made by the marriage between individuals and circumstance; Marcuse may have entered into a Southern California that was devoid of radical politics according to Löwenthal in 1964, but certainly by fall of 1965 that was no longer the case. Marcuse would play a role in the politicization of this region over the course of the next decade.

However, Marcuse’s political voice was not simply reserved for students but was shared with faculty and university administration when necessary. For example, on October 11, 1965, only days before the scheduled protest, Seymour Harris and Harold Urey, Professors at UCSD, issued a memo to UCSD faculty asking for their support with regard to a public statement on academic freedom to be distributed and released to the press in the aftermath of the October 15 protest depending on its outcome.<sup>60</sup> And while the statement itself appears to support academic freedom by stating that faculty members “will be protected against attempts of the Administration or others e.g., newspapers and other media of communication or special groups of citizens to silence him,” it continues to argue for a level of distance between the academic and the individual arguing: “above all, no faculty

member or group of faculty members have the right to speak for the University or give the impression through well organized demonstrations that they in fact reflect the position of the university.”<sup>61</sup>

Marcuse’s response to the memo was swift and bold. In a letter to Harris and Urey dated October 14, 1965, Marcuse argued that the memo was a violation of the very protections of academic freedom that University claims to protect. According to Marcuse, the Chancellor of UCSD had already publicly addressed this issue in responding to public outcry toward the event being held at UCSD published in an editorial in *The San Diego Union* on October 8, 1965, when he stated that “his administration will sustain the freedom and responsibility of a great university against any intimidation from whatever source.”<sup>62</sup> Marcuse pointedly explained to Harris and Urey how circulating the memo “before the scheduled demonstration has taken place, but to be released dependent on the manner in which the demonstrations are conducted, is ... such an intimidation.” Marcuse concluded his letter to Harris and Urey with a statement of intimidation of his own arguing that “The Chancellor has unequivocally stated where his administration stands. It would be a catastrophe to this university if his policy would be counteracted from within his own faculty.”<sup>63</sup>

The political climate in Southern California had become actively charged and it would not be long before campuses nationwide would follow suit. In fact, six months later, on April 23, 1966, only two days before Marcuse would speak at South Bend, the notion of academic freedom (especially in light of criticism directed to U.S. foreign policy) again became a front-page news when Rutgers Professor of History, Eugene Genovese, at a teach-in at his home institution stated, “I am a Marxist and a socialist. Therefore, unlike most of my distinguished colleagues here this morning, I do not fear or regret the impending Vietcong victory in Vietnam. I welcome it.”<sup>64</sup> The backlash against Genovese, teach-ins, and left of center academics was almost immediate. For example, Genovese was removed from his role at the state-funded Rutgers University, and only two days later, another “self-proclaimed Marxist” who was also critical of American foreign policy now found himself the subject of an FBI investigation. And while the words from Marcuse’s UCLA or South Bend talks never met with such attacks, he did use similar rhetoric at Westwood when he ended his “Inner Logic” lecture by boldly stating that “[t]he nation that was once the hope of all liberating forces the world over has become the hope of all counter revolutionary forces the world over. The United States has become the advance guard of repression and reaction.”<sup>65</sup>

The speech itself, “The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam,” shares more similarities with Marcuse’s 1961 arguments against America’s role in Cuba than with his arguments on Vietnam from his “Obsolescence of Marxism” talk at South Bend. The thematic lens of the lecture explores the disappearance of rational, critical discussion on U.S. foreign policy and provides a sharp and in retrospect accurate critique of U.S. foreign policy that can be directly traced to his earlier talks on Cuba. However, in 1966, the ideas first raised as questions by Marcuse re-appear here with a more direct purpose. Whereas, in 1961, Marcuse had argued that the United States appeared headed down a path of mis-information; by 1966, Marcuse was arguing that the U.S. Government was directly engaged in a large-scale propaganda campaign, similar to the advertisements for soap or candy, which aimed to sell the American public on foreign policy issues without any direct participation of the people.<sup>66</sup> For Marcuse, such propaganda was undemocratic and clouded in a logic that was deliberately hidden from public discourse. And while Marcuse did explore the role of the United States in Vietnam in his talk at South Bend, he spoke more of the potential for revolutionary action against such foreign policy instead of directly critiquing the policy as he did at Brandeis in 1961 or again at UCLA in 1966.

The speech, “Inner Logic,” begins with a very frank statement, “the official justification for the American policy in Vietnam is couched in Orwellian language; as such it defies rational discussion.”<sup>67</sup> Marcuse’s critique that the U.S. role in Vietnam lacked rational logic, spoken at UCLA, was twofold. Firstly, Marcuse argued that U.S. participation in Vietnam was unethical since it was rooted not in the advancement of freedom and democracy as it was sold to the public but instead that it was rooted in the economic needs of monopoly capitalism on a global scale that required the affluent society to exploit underdeveloped nations to provide the necessary conditions for advanced industrial capitalism. As Marcuse argued, “the existence of a gigantic military establishment is an integral, stimulating factor of the U.S. economy ... [and that] the affluent society is in need of an enemy, against whom is people can be kept in a state of constant psycho-social mobilization.”<sup>68</sup>

Secondly, Marcuse’s critique centered on the notion that the real motives for American foreign policy were hidden from the people, couched in terms of “the fight for freedom” that directly manipulated the American people into participating in the exploitation and abuse of fellow global citizens. He argued using the rhetorical device of irony so prevalent in his work at the time, “‘we are fighting for freedom’ – that is to say, on behalf of a military

dictatorship which wouldn't last twenty-four hours without American bombs. 'We are fighting for freedom' by protecting the social groups and interests whose power is based on exploitation and slavery. 'We are fighting for freedom,' in short, by supporting a military junta which fights *against* the economic and social changes which might create the very preconditions of freedom."<sup>69</sup> For Marcuse, what was missing from the foreign policy and the propaganda used to sell war to the American public was the freedom of a rational, critical, national discussion as those who chose to speak out were immediately branded as un-American and ostracized by local, state, and national governments and media outlets.

Marcuse concludes his critique of the "The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam" with a powerful analysis of how the war unleashes aggressive and brutal instincts that are not satisfied in the technologically mediated war involving bombing and high-tech weapons system and assuaging guilt as soldiers did not see individuals who they bombed or shot at long distance. The result is "brutalization on a massive scale, a quality which is expressed also in our daily life at home in the form of violent language, images, and mass behavior."<sup>70</sup> The conclusion is that the "war against Communism, waged on this basis of brutalization, becomes – by the logic of prevailing conditions – a war for reactionary military dictatorship." This leads to counterrevolutionary putsches and reactionary dictatorships all over the world, and the United States, once a beacon of liberation and democracy, becomes a bulwark of repression and reaction.

## **SOCIALIST PERSPECTIVE OF MODERN MAN: MARCUSE SPEAKS IN NEW HAVEN**

Hence, Marcuse's critique of U.S. foreign policy was radicalizing as the New Left and the antiwar movement were expanding. Interestingly, Marcuse's talk at the April 1966 Yale Socialist Symposium provides academics and historians with a speech of Herbert Marcuse's previously unknown. And while the words to the speech or Marcuse's participation at the Symposium are nowhere to be found in any previous edited collections or biography pieces on Marcuse, or even in his personal notes or correspondence, a significant amount of discussion surrounding the speech is recorded inside the FBI dossier. For example, where the UCLA or Notre Dame speech is mentioned and referred to only in small paragraph sections, a September 30, 1966 FBI report includes almost 5 typed pages of quotes delivered by

Marcuse in his symposium speech and close to 10 pages of discussion on the event.<sup>71</sup> The FBI coverage of Marcuse's participation at Yale appears to come from three sources: the April 1966 "Yale Weekly Calendar" that promoted the event in advance of it happening; the April 30, 1966 issue of *New Haven Register Journal Courier* (NHRJC) that published the article "Socialist Attacks Affluent Society" summarizing the event; and the testimony of one to two confidential FBI informants.<sup>72</sup> According to the FBI coverage of the event, the Yale-New Haven chapter of SDS and The Yale Socialist Union (described by the FBI as "the focal point for radical student activity on the Yale campus") co-sponsored the "Third Annual Symposium" entitled "Socialist Perspective of Modern Man" and paid the expenses of Herbert Marcuse to attend and speak at the event.<sup>73</sup>

According to the *NHRJC*, Herbert Marcuse's speech in New Haven lasted for more than two hours and was "well received" by the 500 people in attendance. Coming only days after he received national attention in the *New York Times* for his remarks on American participation in Vietnam while speaking in South Bend, and only a week after Historian Eugene Genovese found himself in trouble with New Jersey state officials for outwardly criticizing U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Marcuse continued at Yale his radical critique of U.S. foreign policy. As the *NHRJC* reported, "A leading American socialist told an audience ... that the affluent society is irrational and dominated by blind contradictory forces."<sup>74</sup> Marcuse's speech itself appears consistent with themes raised as early as his 1961 speech at Brandeis on Cuba and with ideas that he would continue to hone in speeches such as "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition" in 1967.<sup>75</sup>

According to an FBI confidential informant, Marcuse's speech dealt with four themes.<sup>76</sup> First, Marcuse argued that "the capitalist system is incompatible with peace and the struggle for peace is the most important goal of Socialism." Next, Marcuse suggested that in 1966 three types of countries existed: "Industrialized Advanced, (such as the United States), Less Industrialized (such as France, Italy, and Germany), and Underdeveloped" and that the survival of the first kind comes only through the exploitation of the third. Marcuse also argued that "the radicalized intelligentsia is the vehicle of change" and that it would take an energized youth united with the intelligentsia to bring about real change. Lastly, Marcuse spoke about the role of the U.S. mass media in intellectually and politically dulling the individual and related this back to his initial argument that the capitalist system requires a vicious and threatening "enemy" to channel its libidinal aggression toward. When examined in relation to the



earlier talks at UCLA and Notre Dame, it appears that the talk at Yale was not only a combination of the two earlier speeches but also a culmination of the growing radicalism of the New Left.

The *NHRJCI* account of Marcuse's speech also stresses the theme laid out in *One-Dimensional Man* and articulated in many talks of the time that today's capitalist society is increasingly shaping thoughts, behavior, needs, and aspirations and that liberation requires new needs and consciousness. Hence, for radical social change, there "must be new social institutions and a new way of life."<sup>77</sup> The threat of Communism was responsible, Marcuse argued, for the unification of capitalist countries, but national liberation movements and an alliance of radical youth and the intelligentsia might pave the way for radical social change, a theme Marcuse would continue to develop throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s.

## CONCLUSION

On September 30, 1966, the San Diego Office of the FBI published a full report for the FBI director, which outlined in detail all of Marcuse's activities known to the FBI either through direct surveillance and interviews or through information gathered in other non-related investigations over the past two decades. And while Marcuse had been busy openly protesting U.S. foreign policy over the past five years, with heightened activity at home and abroad in the spring and summer of 1966, at the conclusion of the Bureau's 21-page report, the San Diego Office stated "[i]n as much as previous investigation of the subject and current informant coverage of his activities have failed to reflect membership or affiliation with the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party or other subversive organization, no additional investigation of his activities is being conducted and the case is being closed."<sup>78</sup>

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's response to the September report, in a letter dated October 18, 1966, was to agree with the synopsis presented by the San Diego office but rather than closing the Marcuse file, to move it from the category of "Security Matter -C" to "Reserve Index A" for future reference in case things were to escalate.<sup>79</sup> As Hoover noted, "Although subject is not a member of a basic revolutionary organization, he is a self-admitted Marxist who travels extensively making frequent speeches in which he espouses Marxism. He is also currently participating actively in protest demonstrations against the United States intervention in Vietnam ... [and] is an author and a philosophy professor ... [and therefore] in a

position to influence others against the national interest in a time of national emergency.”<sup>80</sup> Marcuse’s time on “Reserve Index A” would be short-lived, and when he would emerge in Bureau investigations under heightened surveillance in 1968, his file would no longer be under the classification of “Security Matter –C,” but instead under the classifications of “revolutionary” and “anarchist” as the FBI and media construction of Herbert Marcuse passed in the period up to 1966 from “self proclaimed Marxist” and “grandfather of the New Left” to the more explosive “anarchist” and “threat to national security.”

In retrospect, it appears that the publicity that the Marcuse’s talk at South Bend in 1966 garnered was more the result of media publicity through the *New York Times*, resulting in the public image of Marcuse as a revolutionary in the 1960s, in conjunction of corporate media and FBI reports on Marcuse. As Marcuse’s speeches increasingly came to be described in the mainstream media, the FBI intensified its surveillance of Marcuse. As noted above, in instances such as his protest of foreign policy in Cuba or letters to the President, Marcuse had presented on numerous occasions oppositional speeches and actions of protest in the half-decade before his lecture at South Bend that failed to register with either the FBI or the American public.

After all, “The Inner Logic” talk given a month earlier at UCLA was much more direct and poignant in its attacks against U.S. foreign policy than the more philosophical and theoretical “Obsolescence of Marxism.” However, after the April 23<sup>rd</sup> speech of Eugene Genovese, supporting a Viet Cong victory in Vietnam, the U.S. Government, the media, to a larger extent, and public appeared more attentive to the rising voices of dissent within academia, and in some quarters appeared ready for the repression of radical professors and students. With Marcuse’s discussion of the role of underdeveloped nations in the maintenance of advanced industrial capitalism and the affluent society, it now appears that for the third time since his naturalization in 1940, the German-Jewish immigrant Professor Herbert Marcuse was at the center of a formal Federal Bureau of Intelligence investigation into his participation in allegedly subversive or “un-American” activities.

When one revisits the public talks at UCLA in March and at Notre Dame and Yale in April 1966, it is not surprising to find Marcuse under Bureau surveillance. What is surprising is the relative speed at which the case emerged, the role that the mass media played in the framing of Marcuse, and the re-emergence of earlier investigations in the construction of Marcuse in 1966. FBI scrutiny and media attention would increase in the later 1960s,

especially in 1968, the year that ultimately came to define Marcuse evermore in public consciousness as a person whose ideas and actions were oppositional to the U.S. society and foreign policy. Hence, FBI surveillance played a hitherto insufficiently recognized role in the public image of Herbert Marcuse as a radical in the 1960s, and FBI scrutiny would continue to intensify, a development that we shall pursue in further studies.

## NOTES

1. See Marcuse (1941, 1955, 1964).

2. A file titled "FBI" found among Marcuse's personal papers contains a letter typed on University of California, Santa Cruz, Adlai E. Stevenson College stationery by a typewriter similar to that of Barry Katz with handwritten edits on the text also appearing to be in Katz's script, leading our intelligence analysts to assume that Katz induced Marcuse to write to the FBI asking for the "full contents of my FBI file under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act." The letter contained no date, but Marcuse received a response by the FBI in a letter signed by Michael E. Shaheen, Jr. Counsel, indicating that "A review of the FBI files ordered by the Attorney General indicates that you have been affected by an FBI counter-intelligence program in 1969." The file in Marcuse's folder contains evidence of a program labeled "Cointelpro-New Left" against San Diego radical groups, but does not list any of Marcuse's activities. Another dossier in Marcuse's personal files contained evidence of a FBI memo dated 2/14/69 labeled "Cointelpro-New Left" that authorized authorities to circulate a leaflet captioned "The Gigantic 'Pick the Flag Contest' is Here." The memo indicates that the leaflet "has been prepared by the New York Office and contains the pictures of Dave Dellinger, Che Guervera, Mark Rudd, and Herbert Marcuse." According to the memo, "New York feels that this leaflet will ridicule Dellinger and embarrass him and create further dissension between the Coalition for an anti-Imperialist Movement consciousness-AIM and NWC." The memo evidences the puerile gay-baiting employed by the FBI against the New Left.

The FBI lists its current dossier of Freedom of information documents on Marcuse as containing 518 pages (see [http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/foiaindex\\_m.htm](http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/foiaindex_m.htm)), but an earlier dossier obtained by Douglas Kellner contains less documents, while a more recent request by Stephen Gennaro elicited a larger file, so Marcuse's FBI files released appear to be variable in terms of what and how much is released to individual requests.

3. Our contextualization draws on Kellner (1984), Marcuse (1998, 2004). These books draw on a vast literature on Marcuse and his life and socio-historical context and we will use these and many other sources as well as we proceed with this study.

4. Marcuse had been subject to standardized FBI checks in the 1940s when he worked with the Office of War information (OWI), the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and the State Department. For an overview of Marcuse's activities in U.S. intelligence services in World War Two and post-war work with the State Department, see Katz (1989) and Marcuse (1998).

5. In February 1948, October 1949, and November 1949, Marcuse gave public lectures at the Russian Institute of Columbia University on the topics: "What is Dialectics?," "The Marxian Theory of History and Society," and "The Development of Marxian Theory after Marx," cited in FBI documents beginning with a letter from FBI Director to SAC Washington Field, dated November 14, 1950, File 121-24128. Obviously, Marcuse's lectures on Marxism evoked interest in the FBI.

6. See Marcuse (1998) Marcuse's U.S. Government employment is cited repeatedly in FBI documents beginning with a letter from FBI Director to SAC Washington Field, dated August 9, 1950, page 3, File 121-24128. The contents of the letter provide the Washington Office with all of the current information on file for Herbert Marcuse (then Chief of the Central European Branch, Division of Research for Europe, State Department) including an outline of all his previous employment and positions within the U.S. Government.

7. See FBI documents: Letter from FBI Director to SAC Washington Field, dated August 9, 1950, page 6, File 121-24128, and Letter from J. Edgar Hoover to Samuel P. Boykin, Director, Office of Consular Affairs, Department of State, dated September 22, 1950, where Hoover states "A loyalty investigation ... has been instituted by the Bureau based upon allegations that he is a Marxist and possibly possesses a pro-Communist sympathies."

8. On the Frankfurt School, see Jay (1973), Wiggershaus (1995), and Wheatland (2009). On Marcuse's relation to the Frankfurt School, see Kellner (1984, 1989) and Marcuse and Kellner (2001).

9. The Institute retrospectively became known as the Frankfurt School after key members such as Horkheimer and Adorno returned to Germany in the late 1940s. Their work is more accurately described at this point as working toward developing a critical theory of society within the Institute for Social Research; see Kellner (1989).

10. Files on Marcuse, Horkheimer, and other German refugee intellectuals are found in the FBI FOIA Reading Room (<http://foia.fbi.gov/>). On Adorno and the FBI, see Jenemann (2007) and Rubin (2002). For a more detailed account of FBI surveillance of German refugees during World War II, see Stephan (2000).

11. For example, Albert Einstein was the subject of extensive FBI surveillance as highlighted in Jerome's (2002) book.

12. Marxist sympathies of the Institute are cited repeated in FBI documents beginning with a teletype to Washington Office from New York Office dated August 29, 1950, File 121-24128.

13. For an overview of Marcuse's writings at this time and their relation to Marxism, see Kellner (1984).

14. This is the first official document inside of the FBI dossier of the Marcuse files released by the FBI. However, it is certainly not the first document about Marcuse. The document itself makes references to a letter on April 11 of the same year. Also, in Marcuse's own personal correspondence, such as his November 11, 1942 letter to Max Horkheimer, Marcuse mentions how his current hiring for U.S. intelligence work still has to go through FBI approval but appears only to be a formality at the moment. See Marcuse to Max Horkheimer in Marcuse (1998, pp. 234-235).

15. The Office for Emergency Management (OEM) was established by administrative order May 25, 1940, to serve as an executive of the President of the United States to clear information on defence measures. It was terminated on

November 3, 1943, and replaced by the OWI and OSS agencies in which Marcuse served.

16. FBI documents, internal memo, J. Edgar Hoover to SAC New York, dated May 21, 1943, File 77-27880.

17. FBI documents, letter from FBI Director to SAC Washington Field, dated August 9, 1950, page 6, File 121-24128.

18. FBI documents, letter from SAC New York to FBI Director, dated September 14, 1950, File 121-24128.

19. *Ibid.*

20. FBI documents: letter from SAC Washington Agent Guy Hottel to FBI Director, dated September 14, 1950, page 2, File 121-24128. We found a copy of this report in Marcuse's FBI dossier, which uncharacteristically names the sources on the report that are usually blacked out, as is material that suggest FBI surveillance strategies and sources.

21. This re-use of these documents will be examined again in later articles dealing with the activities of Marcuse in 1968 and after.

22. See FBI documents: letter from FBI Director to SAC Washington Field, dated August 9, 1950, page 6, File 121-24128.

23. See Marcuse (1998).

24. Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) and Horkheimer and Adorno (2002).

25. Cited repeatedly in FBI documents, beginning with FBI Report, SAC Los Angeles, dated April 20, 1943, named in report to be part of File 77-1327, but currently archived in File 77-27880.

26. See Marcuse and the New Left.

27. FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated November 8, 1967, pages 4-1, File 100-445771. In particular, the speech of Marcuse that is paraphrased above is very similar in text and in theme to his June 1967 speech at the Free University of West Berlin titled "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition" available online at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/marcuse/works/1967/violence.htm> and published in *Five Lectures* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970, pp. 83-108) and collected in *Herbert Marcuse: The New Left and the 1960s* (pp. 57-75). It is also striking here that Marcuse takes the concept of "participatory democracy," laid out in the 1962 Port Huron Statement, a founding document of SDS, as a basis for a New Left, thus showing Marcuse's philosophical and political affinity with the New Left; the Port Huron Statement can be found online, <http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst306/documents/huron.html>

28. FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated November 8, 1967, pages 4-1, File 100-445771.

29. This is a practice that appears continually throughout the later FBI documents but first appears in FBI Documents: letter from FBI Director to SAC, dated April 10, 1968, File 100-445771.

30. The FBI applied varying categories of classification to Marcuse that are noted on each and every FBI document underneath Herbert Marcuse's name in the top left-hand corner of the document under the heading of SUBJECT. The categories changed but seemed to indicate the varying degree of subversive threats and level of surveillance for each subject; as we are indicating, Marcuse received a number of classifications over his long career as a government worker and then as an academic

critic and activist. For more information on the categories and their significance, see Swearingen (1999). Swearingen reports that the Bureau had two indexes: the Security Index, which consisted of known Communists (or internal government workers) whose actions were viewed to be hostile or as potentially threatening to National Security, and a Secret index, unknown to the President or Attorney General referred to inside the Bureau as the Communist Index or Reserve Index. The Reserve Index housed a significantly larger number of people and was a catchall for those individuals in a position to influence others (such as doctors, professors, teachers, labor union leaders, writers, and media) that could not be directly linked to subversive organizations. For example, on p. 41, Swearingen states “Together, the Security Index and the Communist Index [later referred to as the Reserve Index] totaled approximately 50,000 names in Chicago [in 1955] ... the Security Index totaled approximately 5,000 names ... the Reserve Index ... 45,000.” For more information on the secretive nature of FBI surveillance of individuals found on the security index, the history of the index, previously known as the Custodial Detention Index, and its connection to the illegal detainment of German, Italian, and Japanese Americans during World War II, see Theoharis (1998).

31. Letter from Arnold Tovell, Marcuse’s *Beacon Press* editor, to Marcuse, May 3, 1966, found in Herbert Marcuse personal collection.

32. Cited in FBI Documents: letter from FBI Director to SAC San Diego, dated May 13, 1966, File 100-445771.

33. Marcuse (1967).

34. Handler (1966).

35. FBI Documents: letter from FBI Director to SAC San Diego, dated May 13, 1966, File 100-445771.

36. Marcuse (1967, pp. 409, 416).

37. A text found in the Herbert Marcuse archives (#231.00) has the long title “PROF. HERBERT MARCUSE speaking at Cuba protest meeting, Brandeis University, 3 May 1961: *NOT FOR PUBLICATION*.” The six-page double-spaced typewritten text contains Marcuse’s first significant known critique of U.S. foreign policy in the early 1960s and sketches out the lines of a strong anti-imperialist critique that he would follow throughout the decade and into his final years in the 1970s; we will refer to it below as “Remarks on Cuba.”

38. Marcuse, “Remarks on Cuba,” p. 3.

39. Marcuse, “Remarks on Cuba,” p. 4. (Emphasis by Marcuse).

40. *Ibid.* (Emphasis by Marcuse).

41. Marcuse, “Remarks on Cuba,” p. 6.

42. See Douglas Kellner, “Introduction,” *Herbert Marcuse and the New Left*.

43. This letter is cited in the FBI Report, dated November 8, 1967, that we had presented in detail above.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Hirschfield (1965). A date for the rally was not mentioned in the article, but since the article ends with a summons for people to come to the big march on April 17, 1965, to “End the War in Vietnam,” we assume the speech was given in the spring of 1965 before the April Washington march.

46. Marcuse (1967, p. 416) (citations to this text will refer to the published version referenced in note 31).



47. Marcuse (1970). On Marcuse's long engagement with Freud and psychoanalytic theory, see Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter Six, and the Introduction by Douglas Kellner, Tyson Lewis, and Clayton Pierce to *Philosophy, Psychoanalysis and Emancipation*, Volume Five, *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, forthcoming.

48. Marcuse (1970, pp. 46ff).

49. Marcuse (1967, p. 417). On Marcuse's concept of radical education, which fleshes out the task of intellectuals and education, see the collection edited by Kellner, Lewis, Pierce, and Cho (2009).

50. Marcuse's personal office file contains an article by Acker (1965). We are relying on what appears to be a highly detailed and seemingly reliable report on the lecture by Robert Acker in explicating the talk.

51. *Ibid.*

52. See the discussion of these texts and their context and influence in Kellner, Marcuse, Chapter 8.

53. Marcuse's lecture, "The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam" was first published as an edited text of his March 25, 1966 lecture at UCLA in Menashe and Radosh (1967, pp. 64–67) and is republished in *Herbert Marcuse and the New Left* (pp. 38–40, page references below will be to this edition and hereafter referred to as "The Inner Logic").

54. Marcuse (1967, p. 409).

55. Thus, Phillip Wheatland's attempt in a recent book to engage in alleged myth-busting by claiming that study of early New Left documents and interviews with key figures in early SDS groups suggests that Marcuse's impact on the New Left was exaggerated is shown to be highly problematical. While Wheatland is correct (pp. 439ff) that Marcuse was not widely known by sectors of the American New Left until around 1968, he exaggerates the claim by interviewing people in SDS who indeed were not influenced by Marcuse, like Todd Gitlin, who remains hostile to Marcuse's work to this day. As we have shown, Marcuse was involved in many SDS rallies and had a philosophical and political affinity with the organization and the New Left. On Marcuse's critical relation to the SDS radical education project, see Kellner, Lewis, and Pierce (2009).

56. Menashe and Radosh (1967, Preface v).

57. In fact, according to an FBI report on Herbert Marcuse from September 30, 1966, notable participants at the event included Dorothy Healy, the Chairman of the Southern California District of the Communist Party. And yet, even with the FBI present at this event, there is no mention of the content of Marcuse's speech at the event inside the FBI files. The only mention of Marcuse's connection to the teach-in is a one-paragraph note that simply says he was there, first appearing in a July 13, 1966 report summarizing Marcuse's political activity and then again in the September 30, 1966 report, but this time with the addition that mentions the participation of Dorothy Healy.

58. Leo Löwenthal Archive, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main.

59. FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated July 13, 1966, File 100-445771.

60. The October 11, 1965, memo from Seymour Harris and Harold Urey, Professors at UCSD, to UCSD faculty and Herbert Marcuse's typed response were found in Herbert Marcuse personal collection.



61. *Ibid.*
62. Herbert Marcuse, cited in memo.
63. *Ibid.*
64. For a full text version of Genovese's speech and commentary on the social and political reaction to his comments see Menashe and Radosh (1967).
65. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic" p. 40.
66. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic" pp. 38ff.
67. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic" p. 38. On Marcuse's use of Orwellian language where, following Orwell's novel *1984*, peace is war, freedom is slavery, and so on and on the connections and differences between Orwell and Marcuse's thought, see Kellner (1990).
68. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic," p. 39.
69. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic," p. 38.
70. Marcuse, "The Inner Logic," p. 40.
71. FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated September 30, 1966, File 100-445771.
72. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–16.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
75. See notes 25 and 35.
76. FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated September 30, 1966, pp 12–16, File 100-445771.
77. From FBI Documents: FBI Report, SAC San Diego, dated September 30, 1966, pp. 12–16, File 100-445771, quoting from an article "Socialist Attacks Affluent Society" (no author) in *New Haven Register Journal Courier*, April 30, 1966, no page number.
78. FBI Documents: letter from SAC San Diego to FBI Director, dated September 30, 1966, File 100-445771.
79. FBI Documents: letter from FBI Director to SAC San Diego, dated October 18, 1966, File 100-445771.
80. *Ibid.*

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