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Monitoring of Right-Wing Programs Is Begun by Newly Formed Council

By Willard Clopton
Staff Reporter

The newly formed National Council for Civic Responsibility began yesterday to monitor 10 widely heard radio programs which it described as voices of "rightwing extremism."

The group said its purposes are to keep a permanent record of the broadcast for use in blunting their impact and in notifying persons who may be unfairly attacked so they can seek equal time in which to reply.

Formed in September "to expose the far right and its main force, the John Birch Society," the Council is composed of more than 200 persons prominent in business, science, education and other fields.

The organization plans to turn "the hot light of public scrutiny on . . . spokesmen for the radical right," said Council Chairman Arthur Larson, former director of the United States Information Agency and now director of the Rule of Law Center at Duke University.

The 10 programs to be monitored account for about 7000 radio and television broadcasts throughout the country each week, Larson said.

The programs are: "Life Lines," "Twentieth Century Reformation Hour," "Citizens Council Forum," "Manion Forum," "America's Future," "Independent American Radio Edition," "Church League of America," and programs of commentary by Howard Kershner, Dan Smoot and Billy James Hargis.

Four of the programs are broadcast in this area and are being monitored by apparatus in the offices of Group Research Inc., 1404 New York

posts went into operation yesterday in New Orleans and Oklahoma City.

Founded in 1962, Group Research Inc. has specialized in the study of so-called right-wing publications. It will perform the monitoring under contract to the Council.

The Council now sponsors a 5-minute daily program, "Spotlight on Extremism," which is heard in 34 cities. It is broadcast locally over WFAZ at 10:35 a.m. weekdays.

Larson said the group will soon begin airing a weekly roundup of quotations from the monitored programs and will make the material available to the press.

The summaries will be presented with little or no commentary, he said, since "they will speak for themselves and people can make their own commentaries."

Stating that "extremist forces" are spending about \$10 million a year on broadcasting, Larson said: "We can no longer ignore the ominous dimensions of the attack that radical reactionary forces

have leveled at the people and the policies that comprise our government."

It is no longer a case, he said, "of extremists talking to other extremists and massaging each others' prejudices. It's getting into the bloodstream of the country."

"We hope to provide a permanent record. If the fresh air of public opinion can blow through, we feel, a good deal of the worst excesses will dry up."

A spokesman for the Council said its broadcasting efforts will be concentrated in areas where the programs being monitored are most widely heard—the Midwest, Southwest, California and Florida.

Larson said the Council's activity had nothing to do with the current presidential campaign, in which extremism has become an issue, and that there had been no discussion about the work with either political party. The group plans to continue the monitoring "long after" election day, he said.