

# Theft of Documents From F.B.I. Unsolved After a Year's Inquiry

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PHILADELPHIA, March 11 —A massive, year-long investigation has failed to produce an arrest in the theft of files from the office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in near-by Media, Pa.

The extent of the unsuccessful F.B.I. effort to solve the case was revealed this week in a document filed by the Justice Department in Federal District Court here.

It reports that more than 100 agents have been searching in 15 states for clues to the theft on the night of March 8, 1971, of more than 1,000 documents.

The Justice Department's report is an answer to questions submitted in December for pre-trial discovery by the Philadelphia Resistance, the American Friends Service Committee and 18 individuals who have sued the bureau on charges of harassment during the investigation.

The Justice Department says that up to 50 of the investigating agents concentrated until last June 15 on blocks in Philadelphia where the Resistance commune and Resistance office are situated. Some of the plaintiffs live in or near the commune in an area called Powelton Village near the University of Pennsylvania.

## 40 Autos Involved

The F.B.I. used 40 to 50 automobiles for surveillance of the area, the Justice Department acknowledged and brought agents from as far away as Jackson, Miss., to help.

The rifling of one of its offices and the subsequent disclosure to the press of the contents of the files has greatly embarrassed the bureau, which has since closed the Media office and 100 other small offices around the country to tighten security.

The stolen documents disclosed that the bureau engaged in extensive noncriminal surveillance, from following the movements at Swarthmore College of Jacqueline Reuss, daughter of Representative Henry S. Reuss, Democrat of Wisconsin, to starting a dossier on a Boy Scout leader in Idaho who planned to take his troop on a camping tour of the Soviet Union.

In reaction to the close surveillance in Powelton Village, residents made fun of agents investigating the theft last June with a "street fair" that included displays of copies of the stolen secret documents and

blown up photographs of investigating agents disguised in jeans and beards.

In its current issue, WIN, magazine of the War Resisters League, published a compilation of all the documents taken in Media a year ago that it considered political. The Citizens Commission to Investigate the F.B.I., whose membership has not yet been identified, has taken credit for "liberating" and distributing the files.

Overt surveillance in Powelton Village stopped last June after some of the residents openly discussed plans to sue. The suit was filed in July. It charged Attorney General John N. Mitchell, F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover and the Philadelphia office of the bureau with invasion of privacy, intimidation, and infringing on the rights of the plaintiffs to free speech and association.

They asked the Federal District court to enjoin the defendants from subjecting them to harassment, threats, violence and illegal searches. They also asked for disclosure of information gathered by wiretapping or other means.

The plaintiffs include members of the two anti-war groups, professors, students, writers and an attorney. The Government refused to disclose most of the information they requested, contending it was "privileged."

David Rudovsky, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said he would ask Federal District Judge Donald W. Van Arsdale to order the disclosure or he would seek a prompt trial.