

FBI Trick on Klan Thwarted, Memos Show

Post 4/14/76

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United Press International

One time, when the FBI made a practice of playing "dirty tricks" on all kinds of extremist groups, a plan directed at the Klu Klux Klan fizzled.

As part of the secret "Co-intelpro" program which the FBI waged from 1956 until 1971, agents hatched a plan in May, 1966, to phone "embarrassing questions" to Georgia klan Grand Dragon Calvin F. Craig when he appeared on an "open line program" of Atlanta radio station WQXI.

But their plot was foiled, because all the lines were kept busy by other callers.

The Atlanta FBI bureau reported back to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, May 17, 1966, that the klan had asked its members to flood the station with favorable calls and questions.

According to more than 200 pages of memos made public Wednesday under the Freedom of Information Act, FBI agents felt they were more effective with other strategies, including phony hate letters sent to klan members and altered documents, which they leaked to "black national-

ists" as part of the bureau's program to disrupt extremist groups.

In the memos, FBI agents claimed the got effective results with a letter purportedly sent by a disillusioned ex-klan member to active members citing klan violence and urging them to re-examine their reasons for being klansmen.

Agents often reported signs of turmoil in klan organizations as the "tangible results" of a wide variety of hate mail tricks and other strategies.

The FBI would on occasion use an anonymous telephone call, according to a June 30, 1970, memo to Hoover, from the Baltimore bureau concerning the United Klans of America.

It said an informant found that while a UKA member's wife was out of town for a week in June, "the husband had a girlfriend in the apartment.

"Anonymous calls were made to the klan member's mother-in-law and wife bringing this fact to their attention," the memo said. As a result, it said, the UKA member became "upset and suspicious of everyone."