

# FBI in N.O. Set Up

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(Times-Picayune Washington Correspondent)

WASHINGTON — The New Orleans office of the FBI waged an extensive dirty tricks campaign against Louisiana units of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1960's in an effort to disrupt and demoralize the organization, according to newly released government files.

At one point, the FBI set up a completely fictitious right-wing organization to discredit the KKK leadership, and lured Klan members to join it.

The New Orleans FBI office also suggested but apparently never fully implemented a detailed plan to harass leftist and anti-war student groups at college campuses in New Orleans and

elsewhere in Louisiana.

The documents reveal a wide network of FBI sources and key informants on Louisiana campuses who kept the government informed in detail on activities at Tulane, UNO, Xavier, Grambling and elsewhere.

The FBI operations were part of a national, long-term campaign of disruption and harassment of groups the agency considered subversive. Targets included the Klan, Communist Party, so-called New Left organizations, and black extremists.

Details of the operation, called Cointelpro (for counterintelligence program), were released by the agency in response to a request under the Free-

## Phony Right-Wing Gro

dom of Information Act. More than 52,000 pages of previously classified FBI files on the operation were made public.

The documents — many heavily censored before being released — reveal in unprecedented detail FBI operations during the 15-year harassment program that was ordered discontinued in 1971, including use of the press and media contacts to convey the message the FBI wanted disseminated.

For example, the documents indicate that efforts to discredit the Ku Klux Klan included assisting WWL-TV in the production of a documentary on the organization.

The assistance was to be in the form

of information given to the television station by the agency on a confidential basis that would emphasize the Klan's violent and unlawful activities, according to the documents.

In another incident, the FBI considered distributing copies of an article that appeared in The Times-Picayune which urged a crackdown on radical student groups. However, the documents are silent on what, if any, role the FBI had in getting the newspaper to initially publish the article.

The New Orleans FBI office's dirty tricks campaign against the Klan included formation of a fictitious right wing organization called the National Committee for Domestic Tranquility

## oup to Discredit Klan

(NCDT), which issued a newsletter and personal correspondence to Klan members in an attempt to discredit Robert Shelton, the Imperial Wizard of the United Klans of America Inc.

"It is the objective of the Bureau to create the impression that within the Invisible Empire exists the semblance of an organization (NCDT) which seeks to criticize the (Klan) leadership," according to one document.

The phony organization operated from a Dayton, Ohio, post office box, had a fictitious executive director who wrote to the addresses of known Klan members, and even "opened" a regional office in Alabama.

As part of the dirty tricks campaign,

the FBI sent tourist literature from the Washington, D.C., Chamber of Commerce to Klan members. The mailing "was intended to further instill a fear in these Klansmen" they would be called to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, according to the documents.

The mailings to Klan members "appears to have been successful in removing the veil of secrecy which historically is supposed to surround the Klan," the New Orleans FBI office reported to Washington.

"Members have been at a loss to understand how their names and ad-

Cont. in Sec. 1, Page 4, Col. 1

Continued from Page 1

addresses could be obtained and how it could be perceived by anyone they were Klansmen," the office said.

In an effort to discredit one Louisiana Klansman, the FBI bought him a subscription to "Peoples World," a San Francisco Communist newspaper. Several memos are included in the files on whether government should pay for the "introductory" 10-week subscription, or a longer six-months offer.

The New Orleans FBI office kept a close watch on New Left organizations in Louisiana during the late 1960's through a widespread network of informants.

The office reported to Washington in 1969 it had "sources and informants in key positions in the more active SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) chapters in the New Orleans area."

"These sources and the informants in the past have furnished timely and pertinent information regarding planned SDS activities and will continue to do so in the coming school year," the office reported.

FBI informants provided detailed information on activities at Tulane,

UNO (then LSUNO), Xavier, Grambling and other campuses.

In 1968, the New Orleans office told Washington it "would like to make use of highly selected members of the news media to expose programs and activities of New Orleans organizations."

The media "might also be furnished with New Left plans to infiltrate a specific union, or to operate a New Left school. This information would be furnished on a selected basis to show the New Left in an unfamiliar light," the office said.

Also in that year, the New Orleans FBI office designed a detailed program of "general suggestions for potential counterintelligence action against New Left organizations."

The full plan was apparently never implemented by the New Orleans office, but it included use of "stink bombs" to disrupt meetings, calls to parents of students involved in the organizations, harassing late night telephone calls, and mailing false meeting notices to New Left organization members.

Similar tactics were employed by other FBI offices against student groups in other parts of the country.

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