

11-27

Further Glimpse Into Cointelpro

Even in the heavily expurgated version, it is one of the most formidable dossiers the Federal Bureau of Investigation ever released—52,643 pages from its own files, of fact, fantasy and internal politics that motivated the bureau as it harassed what it deemed subversive domestic groups through a program called Cointelpro.

After three years of disclosures about intelligence abuses, there was a certain familiarity about some of the revelations. Nevertheless, some new details were fascinating.

One plaintive example of the pressure on field agents to produce data came from a special agent in Mobile, Ala. in the 1960's: "As previously noted the only Black Nationalist organization active in this division is the Youth Progressive Committee in Montgomery, Ala., which has a reported membership of eight, two of whom are informants."

A newsletter called "Chevara News" (after the Cuban revolutionary hero Che Guevara) was to contain false ideology to confuse the Students for a Democratic Society. An anonymous letter charging a political dissenter at a New Jersey state teachers college with sexual "liaison" with his 13-year-old stepdaughter was sent to educational authorities. J. Edgar Hoover himself took a guiding hand in Cointelpro. He, for example, suggested turning off the power during the meeting of the American Communist party's 1966 convention.

The bureau released the Cointelpro files without comment, and is planning to release 80,000 pages on its investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy next week.