

FBI's Use of Informants Is

By BETTY MEDSGER

*Special to The Inquirer
And Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — Copies of records stolen from the FBI office in Media, Pa., says the bureau's surveillance of campus and black activist organizations is done by a diverse group of informants, including, on at least one campus, a switchboard operator.

One of the documents received by the Washington Post encourages agents to step up interviews with dissemblers "for plenty of reasons, chief of which are it will enhance the paranoia endemic in these circles and will further serve to get the point across there is an FBI agent behind every mailbox.

"In addition," continues the Sept. 16, 1970, document, "some will be overcome by the overwhelming personalities of the contacting agent and volunteer to tell all—perhaps on a continuing basis."

Late Tuesday, Attorney General John N. Mitchell asked that the stolen material not be published on the ground that "disclosure of this information could endanger the lives or cause other serious harm to persons engaged in investigative activities on behalf of the United States."

Copies of the stolen records were received Monday by Sen. George S. McGovern (D., S.D.) and Rep. Parren J.

Mitchell (D., Md.). Sen. McGovern and Rep. Mitchell gave the FBI the documents, believed to be identical to those received by the Washington Post.

Other documents dealt with the Philadelphia Black Panthers, a Philadelphia area college professor, the National Black Economic Development Conference (BEDC), and two peace group meetings, one of which was a world conclave of war opponents. Several of the documents were dossiers on individuals not cited as belonging to organizations under surveillance.

Muhammad Kenyatta, a national vice president of the

BEDC and head of the Philadelphia unit, is mentioned several times in the FBI documents. The BEDC promulgated the Black Manifesto in 1969 calling for churches to pay reparations for racial injustices.

(In Philadelphia, Kenyatta said in an interview that he had seen the documents but declined to comment on them.

"We'll probably have substantially more stuff . . . at a press conference either Wednesday or Thursday.

"It is a very touchy thing. The whole business is very dangerous just like they say . . .

(Asked how he has acquired the documents, he replied:

NING, MARCH 24, 1971

INQUIRER

Revealed by Stolen Records

"The FBI has its system and we have our system.")

A six-page memorandum prepared by an FBI agent includes a reproduction of the BEDC checking account statement at the Southeast National Bank in Chester, during a three-month period last year.

Daniel McGronigle, who was cashier at the time, said Tuesday that he had authorized release of this normally confidential information only after the agent presented a court order or subpoena. "I'm sure he did" show such a paper, McGronigle said in an interview.

Asked if he would have opened checking account records to an FBI agent on an in-

formal basis, McGronigle said, "No."

Kenyatta and his wife, Mary, are the only two persons authorized to sign checks on the account, said the memo. The balance of the account ranged from a high of \$1,948.56 on April 9, 1970, to a low of \$38.19 on May 4, 1970.

Among the checks drawn during the period the account was under surveillance were \$144.95 for phone bills, a \$300 hospital bill, a \$100 grant to a community center and a \$1,000 clothing allowance.

Another memo on BEDC states the time and location of a BEDC meeting. The memo

Continued on Page 8, Col. 3



MUHAMMAD KENYATTA
... has seen documents

Phila. Panthers Watched by FBI

Continued from First Page

included a recommendation that one of the persons present be "indexed."

Agents apparently suspected the Philadelphia area professor of harboring one or more fugitives.

The local police chief, the local postmaster and letter-carriers, a campus security

officer, and a switchboard operator at the college were engaged by the FBI to assist in the surveillance of the professor, according to a report by an FBI agent.

The postmaster, according to the memo, was shown copies of "wanted" posters of the alleged fugitives.

The document quoted the

postmaster as having told the FBI that he had alerted his carriers to the appearance of fugitives. The professor's mail carrier said the memo "reveals that he has no recollection of mail coming to that residence addressed to other than" the professor and his family.

The telephone operator, according to the documents, agreed to furnish the FBI with a list of long-distance telephone calls to or from the professor.

The FBI agent reported that the switchboard operator told him the professor had brought controversial speakers to the campus and that he was generally regarded as a "radical."

In an interview, the switchboard operator said she was shocked by the FBI report. She said the FBI never questioned her about the professor named in the document and that she did not know him.

She denied that she agreed to report on the professor's long-distance calls.

"That could cost me my job," she said. "It would be a breach of ethics. I would never do that."

In a telephone interview, the campus security officer said he would have to confer with the FBI agent before he answered questions, "Because, as I say, we are working together on this."

A memo from another FBI agent reports on several Black Panther conversations.

In an FBI document dated Sept. 16, 1970, an apparent reference is made to student agents:

"The director has okayed PSI's and SI's age 18 to 21. We have been blocked off from this critical age group

in the past. Let us take advantage of this opportunity."

Tuesday night, Justice Department officials denied that SI stands for "student informer" or that PSI stands for "paid student informer," but they refused to disclose what the initials mean.

FBI CODES APPEAR

Justice Department sources said Tuesday there is no question that the documents are copies of files stolen in a burglary of the FBI's Media office on March 8.

The packet contained 14 FBI documents, a covering letter, and an additional statement from the Citizen's Commission to investigate the FBI, which has claimed responsibility for the burglary. Most of the FBI documents were on pages marked "United States Government Memorandum."

Various FBI codes were on the records, including identification numbers and names of agents and numerous case numbers and names of persons under surveillance.

CENSORSHIP APPEAL

Attorney General Mitchell in his appeal for self-censorship said:

"It appears likely that these records include information which would disclose the identity of confidential investigation sources and information relating to the national defense.

"Disclosure of national defense information could injure the United States and give aid to foreign governments whose interests might be inimical to those of the United States. The Department is attempting to determine which of the documents stolen may contain such information."