

FBI Raiders Cancel Capital Appearance

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WASHINGTON. — Members of a group which raided FBI files at Media, Pa., last month were supposed to emerge from the underground here Thursday night but they mysteriously canceled their appearance at the last moment.

The group, which calls itself the Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI, was scheduled to attend a meeting and speak to a press conference, then take sanctuary at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church in northwest Washington.

A few hours before their scheduled appearance they sent word via a neatly mimeographed statement that "We

are now led to believe that our appearance might provoke an unwanted confrontation with the government's police authorities.

"Our own intelligence sources indicate that the possible consequences of our taking sanctuary at this time could seriously jeopardize the non-violent character of the (peace) demonstrations under way."

The commission, since it stole dozens of documents from the FBI offices March 8, has been distributing copies to newspapers and television stations. The documents have disclosed FBI operations among leftist groups and on

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campuses, and names of informants were revealed.

So far, the FBI has been unable to discover the identity of the thieves.

The curious affair of the on-again-off-again appearance of members of the commission began Tuesday afternoon when the four coordinators of the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice, which is sponsoring current peace demonstrations, received identical copies of a telegram.

It had been sent from Newark at 2:20 P. M. on Tuesday and was received in Washington about an hour later. In the telegram the citizens' commission requested permission to appear at one of the coalition's meetings Thursday night.

The telegram asked that coalition leaders post large "Yes" or "No" signs in their office windows in downtown Washington, depending on their response.

Coalition leaders unanimously gave consent and "Yes" signs were posted as instructed Tuesday night and all day Wednesday.

Wednesday evening a mimeographed press release mysteriously appeared in newspaper bureau offices announcing that commission members would appear at the church to "publicly take responsibility" for the theft of the file.

Coalition leaders, however, did not get copies of the press release. While awaiting instructions from the commission, the coalition arranged a security guard at the church and vowed to protect from arrest the commission members who appeared.

On Thursday afternoon, the cancellation notice also mysteriously appeared in newspaper and coalition offices as reporters were on their way to the church and as police and Federal agents began a stake-out inside and outside the church.
