

Antiwar Group Denies Hoover Plot Charges

WASHINGTON (AP) — An antiwar group, accused by FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover of plotting to disrupt capital utility lines and kidnap a high federal official, denied both charges today and said a law suit is being considered.

In a news conference, Roman Catholic priests, nuns and laymen of the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives continually stressed the group's nonviolent character and said Hoover was attempting to set the stage for repression of all leftist groups.

Dominican Sister Susan Cordes, 32, said the group would welcome an official investigation which, she hoped, "would uncover what is happening in this country."

Jesuit Priest Peter Ford, 32, of Jersey City, N.J., said "as a group we have never met with the Berrigans"—Daniel and Philip, both priests held in a Connecticut federal prison and said by Hoover to be principal leaders of the group.

Ford said he has known both priests and many of the group members have read their writings, met socially with them, and worked with them over the years in such endeavors as church social work.

Father Joe R. Wenderoth, 34, of Baltimore said the Berrigans "have no connection whatsoever with us."

The Berrigans earlier issued a statement through their lawyers also denying Hoover's charge and declaring the FBI chief should "either . . . prosecute us or publicly retract the charges he made."