SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 15 — For the past 13 months, a career agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation — piqued, he says, by the bureau’s reluctance to adopt meaningful internal reforms — has quietly been compiling a list of alleged illegal and abusive practices within the bureau.

The allegations assembled thus far by the agent, M. Wesley Swearingen, range from charges of misleading testimony by bureau agents and previously undisclosed illegal break-ins by agents to accusations of broad, low-level corruption and abusive practices within the bureau’s Los Angeles office, from which he has taken over a handful of bureau agents.

The agent, M. Wesley Swearingen, who retires in 1977 after 25 years with the bureau, began to make some of his charges to Justice Department lawyers. He says he has assured them that they are investigating the charges seriously.

Mr. Swearingen’s cooperation with the Justice Department had been unknown to the bureau until last month when, in a bizarre twist of events, some classified documents — including a copy of the bureau’s Los Angeles office’s expense accounts and the misuse of Government vehicles to the outright theft by agents of funds that were intended as payments for information.

In a series of recent interviews here Mr. Swearingen, a tall, soft-spoken man with a neatly trimmed beard, portrayed himself as one who had frequently brought Corrupt conduct and other misdeeds to the attention of his superiors, only to be ignored or, in a few instances, punished.

Among his allegations are the following:

1. That agents who recently testified in a Los Angeles criminal case covered up illegal activities by the bureau, and that in at least one other criminal case the bureau fabricated evidence to obtain a confession.

2. That some three dozen agents in the Los Angeles office, including William A. Sullivan, then the Assistant Director in Charge, accepted wristwatches, radios, and other gifts from a wealthy industrialist, rumored to have organized crime connections, whose missing child had been the subject of an unsuccessful search by the bureau.

3. That the FBI had “deliberately set up” a Los Angeles agent to take the classified documents, he said.

4. That some other agents, including Sullivan, and the Assistant Director in Charge, accepted nonexistent receipts, and then the missing child had been the subject of an unsuccessful search by the bureau.

5. That agents working for the Los Angeles office were required to sign a report in the headquarters of two extremist political groups that the F.B.I. official deliberately withheld information about the bureau’s activities from the General Accounting Office, an investigative arm of Congress.

6. That at least two agents arrested in recent years for violations of narcotics and other laws have escaped prosecution, and that one of them was allowed to resign quietly while the other was not punished.

Charles J. Sullivan, above, Assistant Director in Charge of the F.B.I. Los Angeles office, from a man rumored to have organized crime connections.

Among allegations made by M. Wesley Swearingen to the Justice Department investigators, only to be ignored or, in a few instances, punished.

As a result, he said, he decided before his scheduled retirement in May 1977 to take some of the matters that most disturbed him to Justice Department investigators directly, rather than to the attention of his superiors, only to be ignored or, in a few instances, punished.

“After I talked to the Justice Department I felt relieved,” Mr. Swearingen recalled the other day, “and then I called in the Justice Department investigators to look into other questionable activities of the bureau.”

A year ago, he said, he gave copies of F.B.I. documents he had taken when he retired to Charles R. Garry, a San Francisco lawyer who was also representing the Rev. Jim Jones and the People’s Temple.

Mr. Swearingen said he asked the lawyer to send the documents and some other materials to the Justice Department and that Garry did so. A short time later, Jones and the People’s Temple, had been assured by the Justice Department that he will not face prosecution in that regard.

Some of the allegations involve incidents that Mr. Swearingen has reported to the Justice Department, and some others that have been reported by influential people who have assured him that they are investigating the charges seriously.

Discipline Deemed Likely

Mr. Swearingen has not yet communicated some of what he knows or suspects to the Justice Department, and most of the allegations he has made thus far are still unresolved, but at least some of them are now, he says, likely to result in administrative discipline, and, in some cases, even criminal charges against the agents involved.

Among Mr. Swearingen’s principal allegations are the following:

1. That agents who recently testified in a Los Angeles criminal case covered up illegal activities by the bureau, and that in at least one other criminal case the bureau fabricated evidence to obtain a confession.

2. That some three dozen agents in the Los Angeles office, including William A. Sullivan, then the Assistant Director in Charge, accepted wristwatches, radios, and other gifts from a wealthy industrialist, rumored to have organized crime connections, whose missing child had been the subject of an unsuccessful search by the bureau.

3. That the FBI had “deliberately set up” a Los Angeles agent to take the classified documents, he said.

4. That some other agents, including Sullivan, and the Assistant Director in Charge, accepted nonexistent receipts, and then the missing child had been the subject of an unsuccessful search by the bureau.

5. That agents working for the Los Angeles office were required to sign a report in the headquarters of two extremist political groups that the F.B.I. official deliberately withheld information about the bureau’s activities from the General Accounting Office, an investigative arm of Congress.

6. That at least two agents arrested in recent years for violations of narcotics and other laws have escaped prosecution, and that one of them was allowed to resign quietly while the other was not punished.

Mr. Swearingen said he gave classified F.B.I. documents to Charles R. Garry, a San Francisco lawyer whose clients included the Rev. Jim Jones and the People’s Temple.

Copies of the documents were found in a file in the bureau’s Los Angeles office.

In a recent affidavit, Tom Adams, a People’s Temple member, said that he and Teri Buford, another member, while seeking evidence of F.B.I. harassment of extremist political organizations, had photocopied Mr. Swearingen’s file and sent the copies to Mr. Jones in Guyana.

Some of the documents bore Mr. Swearingen’s name and were discovered at Jonestown a few weeks ago by F.B.I. agents investigating the death of Representative Leo J. Ryan, Democrat of California, whose murder on a fact-finding visit precipitated the deaths of Mr. Ryan and more than 900 of his followers.

Although Mr. Swearingen is technically vulnerable to criminal charges for photocopying the classified documents, he said he had been assured by the Justice Department that he will not face prosecution in that regard.

Some of the agents involved in the incident that Mr. Swearingen has reported to the Justice Department will not face prosecution because the five-year statute of limitations that applies to most Federal crimes has expired. The possibility of disciplinary action by the Justice Department remains, however.

Supreme Knowledge Indirect

Another difficulty facing a Justice Department inquiry is that Mr. Swearingen was not directly involved in some of the incidents he has recounted but only heard about them from agents who were involved. For example, Mr. Swearingen says he was not involved in the incident in which Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois branch of the Black Panther Party, was killed in a shootout with police nine years ago.
One of the break-ins described by Mr. Swearingen took place at a printing shop in Eugene, Ore., operated by Clayton Van Lydegraff. Unexpected dividends were realized, Mr. Swearingen said, when he learned that Mr. Van Lydegraff, a man in his 50's who had long been a member of the Communist Party, was in Eugene, Ore., operated by Claytun Van Lydegraff. Unexpected dividends were received for the bureau's use of informers. Mr. Van Lydegraff's arrest had concealed, during preliminary testimony in the case, the fact that the bureau's initial information about the persons on the Nazi list, which had been produced by a warrantless search.

Rowan Klein, Mr. Van Lydegraff's attorney, said that if Mr. Swearingen's allegations were true, any information the Government had collected about Mr. Van Lydegraff and the Weathermen, including that relating to the bombing charge, might be admissible in court.

One source familiar with the Justice Department said that, although the premium on informants had increased, indicating that "something happened" in Eugene, the source said the information was likely to be made public at the upcoming trial. Mr. Swearingen and the Weathermen, including the one involved in the bombing charge, might be inadmissible in court.

One source familiar with the Justice Department said that, although the premium on informants had increased, indicating that "something happened" in Eugene, the source said the information was likely to be made public at the upcoming trial. Mr. Swearingen and the Weathermen, including the one involved in the bombing charge, might be inadmissible in court.

In at least one instance, Mr. Swearingen said, evidence was fabricated by the F.B.I. in a successful effort to obtain confessions from a group of seven suspects suspected of having bombed a railroad bridge in Kentucky during a coal dispute. "Pieces of metal collected at the scene by the F.B.I. were decorated with a powder visible only under ultraviolet light," he said, then given to the suspects for "inspection" during questioning. "The men were told later, he said, that if they had been at the scene of the bombing, their hands would glow when placed under an ultraviolet lamp. Such a lamp was produced, Mr. Swearingen said, and the suspects confessed to the crime on the spot. Other suspects who were not subjected to the ruse were tried, he said, but not convicted.

In the recent interviews, Mr. Swearingen said he had also told the Justice Department that in instances in which F.B.I. agents were arrested by other law enforcement agencies but never prosecuted, and in at least one case, never disciplined by the bureau.

Mr. Swearingen said he had told the department of an instance in which he, in an undercover F.B.I. agent who traveled to Miami in August 1972 to search for Weather Underground fugitives among the demonstrators at the Republican National Convention, was arrested by the Miami police on charges of possessing violence.

Although the agent was severely injured by the police while in custody, he never disclosed his F.B.I. affiliation, Mr. Swearingen said. He said the agent was eventually released and sent by the F.B.I. to Canada, ostensibly on business but with the intention of giving him an opportunity to recover.

While the agent was in Canada, he said, he became involved with a woman who used narcotics and was himself arrested on a narcotics charge. Mr. Swearingen said the man was never prosecuted for either arrest nor disciplined by the F.B.I., but was instead given a transfer he had sought.

Mr. Swearingen also said a young agent was arrested two years ago by a California police department shortly after he had purchased $12 worth of marijuana. The agent, he said, at first tried to