

FBI exec lied at SWP trial

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The FBI has recently lost a couple of rounds in relation to the suit brought against the agency by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

Former FBI official M. Wesley Swearingen revealed last week that the FBI lied during the trial when it argued that the agency had a commitment to protect the identity of its informants. Swearingen accused the FBI's number two executive, James Adams, of perjury in the incident.

The FBI's line of reasoning had been employed to wrest Attorney General Griffin Bell away from a contempt of court citation that is being appealed.

Following Swearingen's statements, federal Judge Thomas Griesa in New York directed the FBI on Jan. 16 to turn over documents which Swearingen gave to the Justice Department as proof that Adams committed perjury.

In a related development, a Washington federal appeals court approved an agreement last week that the Trotskyist SWP could keep secret the names and addresses of political contributors. The SWP's \$40 million damage suit against the FBI, which confirmed agency harassment of the organization, contributed to the decision.

LIES AND MORE LIES

The documents, according to the former agent, show that Adams lied when he stated that the safety of 18 agents who infiltrated the SWP would be jeopardized if the FBI turned over its files to the SWP. The documents further show, Swearingen noted, that Adams lied by testifying that the FBI promised its informants that their identities would not be revealed.

Swearingen disclosed that the FBI invented this pledge of confidentiality after the SWP filed its suit. He said the informants always knew that they might have to testify in court on their spying activities.

Last year the FBI provided the judge with the names of 19 informants who the bureau said suffered after their identities were revealed. The documents prove, Swearingen said, that none of the people were identified against their wishes. They openly testified in various criminal cases or revealed their identities themselves.

NO DISCLOSURE OF DONORS

In Washington, meanwhile, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) signed an agreement with the SWP which temporarily exempts the SWP from disclosing the names and identities of its contributors. Common Cause had been trying to force the SWP to disclose the names in accordance with federal election law.

The FEC admitted that "the record discloses that the SWP and persons connected with it have been subjected to systematic harassment" and therefore it "cannot constitutionally be compelled to comply with reporting requirements."

The consent decree, announced by the American Civil Liberties Union, which represented the SWP, exempts the group from the federal campaign disclosure law until after the 1984 elections.

A.W.