

Informant's Story of FBI Hush Money

Washington

The Justice Department is investigating an FBI informer's allegations that bureau agents paid him for refusing to testify before a grand jury probing the FBI, knowledgeable sources said yesterday.

"These are strictly allegations and they are in the process of being checked out" by department investigators, one source said.

The sources said investigators do not have evidence to corroborate the charges made about a week ago by Timothy Redfearn, an informer paid by the Denver FBI office to spy on Socialist Workers party members.

Redfearn told party representatives that FBI agents directed him to break into a congresswoman's home, but he did not repeat this allegation to department investigators, said a source familiar with the government probe.

Therefore, this source said, the
Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

Justice Department is not looking into the allegation that agents told him to break into the Denver home of Representative Patricia Schroeder (Dem-Colo.).

Earlier, a source had indicated this allegation was being examined by the federal investigators.

Redfearn made the payoff allegations when he was questioned in Denver by Assistant Attorney General J. Stanley Pottinger and two other government lawyers in the course of their broad investigation of alleged FBI burglaries, the sources said.

He stated that two FBI agents paid him \$4100 for stealing documents and refusing to testify before a Denver grand jury investigating the alleged theft of documents from the Socialist Workers party's headquarters, the sources said.

The FBI issued a statement denying the allegations.

"The allegation concerning Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder is without foundation and not true," the FBI said. The agents accused of making the payoffs, John Allmon and Frank Renner, deny that they paid Redfearn money for any purpose during the period and specifically deny paying him in order to prevent his testimony before a grand jury in Denver," the FBI said.

Redfearn made the allegations when questioned in Denver by Assistant Attorney General J. Stanley Pottinger and two other government lawyers who were conducting a broad investigation into alleged burglaries by FBI agents and informers, the sources said. Redfearn is serving a prison term. Redfearn repeated his account to Ruth Getts,

a Denver Socialist Workers party official, and other party representatives.

Representative Schroeder said in a telephone interview that she is familiar with Redfearn's account but has not attempted to verify it. She said there have been several break-ins at the family's Denver home, both before and after her election to the House in 1972. Since her election, she said, the house has been rented to another family.

"We just did nothing with it (the information) because I figured even if the FBI had done it, there would be nothing we could prove one way or another and we'd never find out," Schroeder told the Los Angeles Times yesterday.

If the FBI was involved, Schroeder speculated, the authorization probably came from the Denver field office rather than headquarters in Washington.

"There are a lot of agents out there who have never liked me," Schroeder said.

As for the "hush money," Redfearn told the department officials he received the cash last year in five installments between July 7 and some point in September, the sources said.

Redfearn broke into the party's office last July 7 and took records which he delivered to FBI agents who copied them. The disclosure of that incident prompted the local grand jury probe. Though the grand jury investigated FBI involvement in the burglary, it indicted only Redfearn last September 23.

Redfearn never testified before the grand jury. He pleaded guilty to second-degree burglary and was sentenced to a maximum ten years in prison.

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