

Right-Winger Tells of FBI Informant's Aid

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SAN DIEGO — A leader of a right-wing, paramilitary organization which harassed young Leftists here for more than a year says the group was partly organized and financed by an informant for the FBI. Law enforcement officers and others familiar with the situation corroborated his account.

The informant, Howard Berry Godfrey, reportedly participated in a shooting, as well as several firebombings and burglaries, while receiving regular payments from the FBI for his services.

This account was provided this week by Jerry Lynn Davis, the former Southern California coordinator for the Secret Army Organization, a well-armed outgrowth of another right-wing group, the Minutemen.

In a related development, two members of the Secret Army Organization reportedly recognized a photograph of Donald H. Segretti, the young lawyer accused of organizing a Republican espionage campaign last year.

ACCORDING TO the Door, a local radical newspaper, the two rightists identified the man in the photograph as "Donald Simms," whom they had met in the summer of 1971 at a shooting range frequented by members of the paramilitary group.

The two men reportedly said that "Simms" was present at a discussion among the right-wingers about the Republican convention, originally scheduled to be held in San Diego in August 1972, before it was moved to Miami Beach. "Simms" did not participate in the discussion but an unidentified companion did, according to The Door's sources.

Segretti, who has been indicted for distributing false campaign literature in Florida, often used the name "Donald Simmons" in recruiting espionage agents. It is also known that Segretti and the SAO, at different times, both discussed the idea of abducting radicals who might disrupt the convention. But so far there is no firm evidence linking the Republican agent to the SAO.

DAVIS SPOKE to a reporter after his release from jail Thursday, where he had been held pending his sentencing on a charge of possession of explosives. A 31-year-old construction worker, Davis had pleaded guilty and was granted probation.

According to Davis's account, the Secret Army was formed in 1971 to train guerrilla soldiers who could organize a resistance movement should the United States be conquered by a foreign power. Godfrey was one of the six founding members, and contributed the money used to print the group's recruiting literature, Davis said.

Godfrey told friends, and in some cases later testified in court, that he had participated in a long string of violent actions against San Diego's rather small, but vocal community of left-wing radicals.

IN ONE CASE, he admitted breaking into the offices of the Street Journal, a left-wing newspaper, and destroying several thousand dollars worth of printing equipment. In another he said he burglarized the Message Information Center, an outpost of the counter-culture, and stole their records.

According to his own court testimony, Godfrey was riding in a car on Jan. 6, 1972 when another SAO member fired a shot into a house occupied by young leftists that shattered the elbow of a girl named Paula Tharp. Miss Tharp and other residents of the house were then active in planning demonstrations at the Republican convention.

Godfrey took the gun used in the shooting and gave it to his FBI contact. The agent hid it under his couch for six months until the Secret Army Organization member who shot Miss Tharp was apprehended by local police. The incident cost the agent his job.

See also Misc II/Cubans, 17 Apr 70 (L.A. Free Press) 17 Apr 70 et seq.

See also Infiltrators, L.A. Free Press 8 Sep 72.

See also NYTimes 27 Jun 75 - filed W/gate

*Also NYTimes 24 Jun 73
(Sunday; do not have)