

Operative's Account Is Termed 'Distorted or False' by the F.B.I.

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 23 — The Federal Bureau of Investigation said today that an account by Joseph A. Burton of his activities as an undercover intelligence operative for the bureau "distorted or false."

"Burton's current allegations, like those he has made in the past, are distorted or false, the bureau said in a statement. "He, himself, has made public statements contradicting his allegations. Among his many distortions, the F.B.I. desires to comment on three principal allegations."

The statement continued:

"F.B.I. Cointelpro operations were discontinued in April, 1971. The activities of Burton and the 'Red Star Cadre' were not designed or carried out as any type of domestic Cointelpro operation.

"The title Red Star Cadre was a description selected by Burton himself to expand coverage in connection with his activities as a confidential source for the F.B.I.

"Burton was targeted to uncover foreign intelligence direction and influence on the Marxist-Leninist movement in the United States.

"Burton was not instructed or directed by the F.B.I. to join any labor union. When he did join a union of his own volition, he was specifically advised that the F.B.I. was not interested in legitimate union activities.

"Burton traveled to Miami, Fla., in August, 1972, to cover possible violence at the Republican National Convention. He was under explicit instructions not to engage in violent activities. He has never reported to the F.B.I. he incited people to overturn a bus or told them how to blow it up. He did not report that others had discussed such activities."

Reached by telephone at his Tampa, Fla., home, Mr. Burton said that he would categorically refute, under oath if necessary, each of the assertions of falsity or distortion contained in the F.B.I.'s statement.