

Huge FBI Search for An Embarrassing Thief

Philadelphia

A massive, year-long investigation has failed to produce an arrest in the theft of files from the office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in nearby Media, Pa.

The extent of the unsuccessful FBI effort to solve the case was revealed last week in a document filed by the Justice Department in U.S. District Court here.

This report said that more than 100 agents have been searching in 15 states for clues to the theft of more than 1000 documents on the night of March 8, 1971.

The Justice Department's report is an answer to questions submitted in December for pre-trial discovery by the Philadelphia Resistance, the American Friends Service Committee and 18 individuals who have sued the bureau on charges of harassment during the investigation.

AGENTS

As many as 50 of the investigating agents concentrated until last June 15 on blocks in Philadelphia where the Resistance commune and the Resistance office are situated, the Justice Department said. Some of the plaintiffs live in or near the commune in an area called Powelton Village, near the University of Pennsylvania.

The rifling of one of the FBI offices and the subsequent disclosure to the press of the contents of the files has greatly embarrassed the bureau, which has since

Surprise SP Strike Ended 'For Time Being'

The surprise strike that shut down most Southern Pacific railroad operations Friday has ended "for the time being," SP spokesmen reported yesterday.

U.S. District Judge Robert F. Peckham ordered the 8000 strikers back to work pending a hearing on March 20, and Saturday and Sunday the workers were complying with his order.

"We expect commuter and other service will be normal on Monday," railroad officials announced yesterday.

closed the Media office and 100 other small offices around the country to tighten security.

The stolen documents disclosed that the Bureau engaged in extensive non-criminal surveillance, from following the movements at Swarthmore College of Jacqueline Reuss, daughter of Representative Henry S. Reuss (Dem-Wisc.), to starting a dossier on a Boy Scout leader in Idaho who planned to take his troop on a camping tour of the Soviet Union.

RIDICULE

In reaction to the close surveillance in Powelton Village, residents made fun of agents investigating the theft last June, with a

"street fair" that included displays of copies of the stolen secret documents and blown-up photographs of investigating agents disguised in jeans and beards.

Overt surveillance in Powelton Village stopped last June after some of the residents openly discussed plans to sue. The suit, filed in July, charged Attorney General John N. Mitchell, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and the Philadelphia office of the Bureau with invasion of privacy, intimidation, and infringing on the rights of the plaintiffs to free speech and association.

Powelton Village residents asked the U.S. District Court to enjoin the defendants from subjecting them to harassment, threats, violence and illegal searches. They also asked for disclosure of information gathered by wiretapping or other means.