

# House Unit Yields Power to Probers

By Jack Anderson

Nothing rankles Washington's legislative lords more than encroachments upon their power. Let the President step across the constitutional line and usurp some congressional prerogative, and there will be holy howls on Capitol Hill.

Yet the mighty House Appropriations Committee, the guardian of the federal purse, has delegated some of its most precious powers to FBI agents, Army auditors and other government gumshoes. There is even one CIA agent assigned to the appropriations panel.

These borrowed bureaucrats are entrusted with investigating their own agencies — the same agencies that not only pay their salaries but will take them back after their hitches on the Hill.

Explained committee aide Frank Sady: "They're familiar with the programs and know what's going on" in their own departments.

The committee's curious recruiting practice not only flies in the face of decades of congressional bombast about the sanctity of the Constitution's separation-of-powers doctrine but depends upon foxes to investigate raids on the chicken coop.

J. Edgar Hoover alone has 30 FBI employees working for the Appropriations Committee. Three serve as professional staff members and three as secretaries on a

three-year rotating basis while they continue to draw their FBI pay. The other FBI agents usually spend one to three months away from their regular duties.

## Sleuths on Loan

Sleuths are also shanghaied from other federal bureaus, ranging from the Army Audit Agency to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. An Agriculture Department employee, for example, investigated the food stamp program for the committee.

At least six bureaucrats, including the CIA man, are doing menial work for the committee. They answer telephones, check the punctuation in congressional statements and perform other odd jobs. For this, they continue to draw their regular salaries—up to \$23,089 a year—from their agencies.

"When we spot a bright young man at a budget hearing or elsewhere," acknowledged Paul Wilson, the committee staff director, "we often have him come over and work for us."

The pay level of the drafted bureaucrats isn't considered. Result: the committee often uses home-run hitters as bat boys.

But no one has been foolhardy enough to turn down a personnel request from the committee that dishes out the dough.

## Washington Whirl

Copyright Caper—J. Edgar Hoover, who has given the FBI a Rock-of-Gibraltar reputation for integrity, has been less fastidious about his publishers. Twice, the Copyright Office has questioned his publishers whether his books were written on government time. Such books aren't eligible for copyrights. In each case, the publishing company quickly assured the Copyright Office that everything was on the up and up. After the publication of "A Study on Communism, supposedly authored by Hoover, the Copyright Office asked publishers Holt, Rinehart and Winston "whether Mr. Hoover wrote the work within the scope of his government employment." The publishers replied that the FBI chief wrote the book "on his own time and not as a government employee." This was doubly false. Hoover didn't write the book on his own time; indeed, he didn't write it at all. It was researched and written by FBI employees on government time. Seven years later, when Random House published Hoover's "On Communism," the Copyright Office again got suspicious. This time Random House assured the Copyright Office that "Hoover's portion of the work was not prepared as part of his official duties." The answer cleverly managed to ignore the fact that Hoover

had virtually nothing to do with writing the book at all.

Report to Readers — Our proposal to build a College of Ecology, supported by our readers, has met with overwhelming enthusiasm. There has been vastly more mail than we have been able to process. But readers can be assured that Kirkland Hall College not only is preparing to convert to an outdoor ecology college but will be ready to offer preliminary studies by July 1. The college is located in Easton, Md., on the bank of the Miles River, in the heart of a natural wonderland. The emphasis will be on environmental courses, and instead of conventional sports, instruction will be given in outdoor survival, boat handling, swimming and horse riding.

Careless Doctors—The sick had better pray that doctors are more careful about filling out drug prescriptions than they seem to be about completing narcotics registration forms. The Justice Department's narcotics division has admitted to us that more than half of the drug-handling applications submitted by doctors have to be returned because of boo-boos. The physicians seem to have difficulty filling out a two-page form without errors, despite an ominous warning that false information may lead to a four-year jail term and a \$30,000 fine.