

The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over the CIA Agent...

By Art Buchwald

The Church report on the CIA revealed that many newspapermen were on the CIA payrolls and some of them still are. The report refused to name names, so one has only his own suspicions to go on as to who is still a journalist as well as a part-time agent.

The other day I was in the city room of a large metropolitan newspaper. I glanced over the shoulder of a friend who was typing, "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog, the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog, the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog."

"That's a pretty good lead for a story," I commented. "Where do you go from there?"

He immediately covered it up with his arm. "You weren't supposed to see that," he said angrily.

"Why not? I think it's a great story. I haven't heard of a quick brown fox jumping over a lazy dog in years."

"It's not really a story about a quick brown fox. I just got a tip from Vice President Rockefeller's office that there are 400 Communists working in Sen. Everett Dirksen's office."

"Dirksen's dead."

"Yes, that's what makes the story interesting. Why would the Commies have 400 agents working for a dead senator?"

"But how would the reader know the story about the quick brown fox

has to do with the Rockefeller leak about the Commies?"

"The copy boy decodes it."

"You mean he works for the company too?"

"Sure. If he didn't and I handed in this lead he'd throw me out the window. But for heaven's sakes, don't let on that you know because the news editor would get in terrible trouble with the managing editor, who in turn would catch it from the editor."

"Don't tell me they all work for the CIA?"

"It's hard to say. My only contact is with the copy boy who picks up a

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page from the floor as I crumple it up and throw it away. Where it goes from there I have no idea."

"Does the editor know you work for the CIA on the side?"

"I'm not sure. The other day he called me in and gave me a fountain pen that squirted LSD. He said he wanted me to interview the man in the street with it."

"What did he want the man in the street to say?"

"He said it didn't matter. He was more interested in how the pen worked."

"You did it, of course."

"Certainly. It was either that or take my cyanide pill."

"You carry cyanide pills?"

"Doesn't every reporter? Suppose you were covering a fire and you were stopped by a fire marshal and he asked you what you were doing there. You'd either tell him or take the pill."

"Doesn't it get confusing to work for two masters?" I asked.

"No, actually it works to your advantage. I got a Pulitzer Prize last year for this story."

He showed it to me and I started reading, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country, now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country, now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country, now is the time . . ."

"You got a Pulitzer Prize for this?" I asked.

"Yeah, it's a cover story on the Glomar Explorer."

"How would anyone know?"

"Four of the five editors on the jury worked for the CIA and they figured they might as well give the prize to one of their own."