

# Investigation Can Be a Big Weapon

By Jack Anderson

For years, we have reported on the alarming trend toward government by investigation. The federal bureaucracy is crawling with investigators who, if they are to earn their salaries, must investigate someone. Today, this could be almost anyone who deals with the government or makes out a tax return.

It has become an all too frequent practice, in conflicts between private citizens and federal agencies, for the government to try to settle disputes by investigating the disputants. The power of investigation, which is supposed to be used for the good of the citizens, is often used instead to intimidate, coerce and strike back at persons who challenge the rulings or oppose the policies of government.

Government files are literally crammed with the life histories of wholly innocent citizens. These files are loaded with derogatory information—true statements, deliberate lies, idle gossip—whispered into the ears of eager government gumshoes.

The dirt these gumshoes pick up on people is swept into dossiers which are freely exchanged between federal offices. This gives an alarming number of government employees access to the raw files. If the subject happens to be a prominent person, the gossip from his files travels swiftly in titillating whispers.

The Secret Service, for example, recently wanted to know more about a famous singer. A request for information brought in a deluge of raw allegations from various government agencies.

The FBI had a full file on the singer, a black woman, although she has been accused of no crimes and isn't likely to commit any. Even the CIA submitted a confidential rundown on her sex habits, with this cautionary note:

## Sex File

"Because of the sensitive nature of this information and the method by which it was procured, it is furnished for LEAD PURPOSES ONLY, and should not be utilized for

any other purpose, quoted, or disseminated further without the permission of the originating office."

Having cleared its conscience, the CIA proceeded to spell out unsubstantiated charges about the singer's sex life. "A confidential source," declares the three-page memo, "advised . . . that her escapades overseas and her loose morals were said to be the talk of Paris. The source stated that subject had a lurid sex life in Paris and described her as a sadistic nymphomaniac. . . ."

The memo went on and on about her sex activities, with these added comments: "Another informant described her as having a very nasty disposition, a spoiled child, very crude, and having a vile tongue. The informant states subject was not well liked by most actors and actresses working with her. The informant states she is a very selfish, shallow person who deliberately upstages and miscues actors working with her. . . ."

"The informant states that subject did not associate with very many Negroes and often bragged that she had very little Negro blood. The informant states that those who work with subject know from experience either to play up to her or to keep their distance to avoid subject's treachery."

A spokesman stressed, and we have confirmed, that the CIA doesn't keep files on American citizens, except for security files on its own personnel. The information about the singer turned up in another context.

This illustrates, nevertheless, how promiscuous the traffic in unproved allegations has become inside the government.

Footnote: Even the National Security Agency, which is supposed to limit its activities to deciphering foreign codes, produced material about the singer. The NSA offerings, however, were limited to texts of foreign broadcasts about her.