

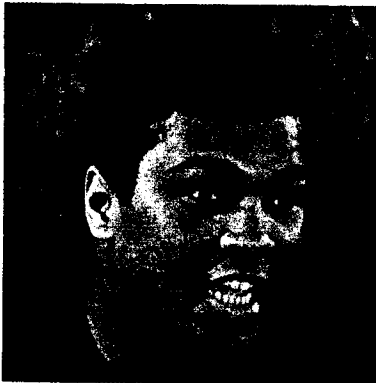
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Who is Rock Hudson's secret lover? What does Muhammad Ali's ex-wife think of him? Where does Joe Namath usually hang out? In a private conversation on April 23, 1963, what did two AVCO executives say about Gerald Ford?

The answers can be found in those celebrated files which the FBI, CIA and other government agencies maintain. Federal agents avidly collect gossip about the sexual habits, financial affairs, personal friendships and political beliefs of law-abiding Americans. The accumulated data are squirreled away in filing cabinets all over Washington.

When I first revealed the existence of these files years ago, official spokesmen solemnly denied that the government pried into the private lives of noncriminals. My sources, therefore, brought me photocopied excerpts from the forbidden files. I have made these available to the Select Senate Committee which is now investigating the investigators.

The photocopies provide irrefutable proof that several government agencies have abused their investigative powers. To illustrate how the government gossip mill operates, here are highlights from the files. I have carefully omitted derogatory information unless the victim gave his consent:



MUHAMMAD ALI

● The FBI men had little interest in boxing champ Muhammad Ali while he was Cassius Clay. It was his conversion to the Nation of Islam that aroused them. Sonji Clay, his ex-wife, was contacted by FBI agents at her residence. They reported afterward: "She advised that Clay would comply with any directive of the NOI in that he is an absolute blind follower of Elijah Muhammad [the Black Muslim leader]." If you can

What Do Secret Government Files Tell About You?

by Jack Anderson

believe the FBI files, by the way, the celebrated feud between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier must be pure theatrics. For in October, 1968, the G-men investigated an application on which Muhammad Ali cited as a reference "Joe Frazier (boxer)."

● The most trivial incident can set the government's investigative machinery in motion. The Secret Service files show, for example, that a friend brought actor Rock Hudson to the late President Lyndon Johnson's ranch in August, 1965. "They requested a meeting with

PARADE • MARCH 16, 1973

"Mrs. Johnson and a tour of the ranch," reported the Secret Service. But because the actor's friend was considered slightly unsavory, "she did not meet with them upon our advice, and they departed a short time later." Hudson's wholly innocent appearance at the LBJ Ranch, however, led to a Secret Service investigation. The FBI was contacted and sent back a report, which began: "Rock Hudson has not been the subject of an FBI investigation. During 1965, however, a confidential informant reported. . . ." There followed an account of the actor's sexual affairs.

● In 1971, an underground newspaper quoted comedian Groucho Marx as making a crack about assassinating President Nixon. Groucho immediately disowned the statement. "I deny everything," he said, "because I never tell the truth. I lie about everything I do or say—about men, women or any other sex." Yet the comedian, then 80, was assigned file number CO 23970009205 and listed as a threat to the President.

● Another comedian, Tony Randall,

shot off his mouth in Philadelphia about President Johnson's war policies in 1968. Congressman James Byrne (D., Pa.) angrily telephoned the Secret Service to ask whether "the derogatory language used by Tony Randall in connection with the President" violated the law. The comedian's comment, of course, had been quite legal. But the Secret Service investigated him anyhow. Once again, the FBI contributed what it knew about him. The worst the FBI could report was that "Tony Randall was one of several individuals who appeared at a Read-In for Peace in Vietnam in New York City."

● The CIA tipped off the FBI that the controversial author, James Baldwin, "arrived at Istanbul, Turkey, from Athens, Greece, via Air France on July 13, 1969." This was followed by a subsequent CIA report which merely quoted an interview Baldwin gave to "Milliyet, a daily newspaper published in Istanbul, Turkey." Baldwin talked about his 45th birthday, about the open beauty of Turkey. He cited the contrast to New York City where he had felt he was "drowning amongst the cement blocks without being able to see the sky and the sea." Yet this harmless interview was treated with such secrecy that

the FBI referred to the CIA mysteriously as "NY T-1" and stamped the newspaper quotations "SECRET—NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION."

- The CIA, quoting "a source of unknown reliability," also alerted the FBI that a group of South African exile students was forming an organization to aid needy students. The students hung out at a Manhattan nightclub which was also patronized, according to this dubious source, by "certain unnamed Soviets in the United Nations." Another informant said the student group was "organized by [singers] Harry Belafonte and Miriam Makeba . . . to solicit funds for South African students here in the United States." The FBI found all this highly suspicious, stamped it "Secret" and dropped it into the Harry Belafonte folder.

- Another time, the FBI sent former Presidential assistant H. R. Haldeman an urgent warning that the renowned conductor, Leonard Bernstein, planned to sneak a peace message into a "mass oratorium" at the Kennedy Center. As the FBI had it, Bernstein's Mass "will follow an antiwar theme, will be in Latin and sung by a choir at the dedication ceremony. Important government officials, perhaps even the President, are expected to attend this ceremony, and it is anticipated they will applaud the composition without recognizing the true meaning of the words." As it turned out, Bernstein's Mass contained only one line that could be interpreted as antiwar—"Dona Nobis Pacem," or "Give Us Peace." But President Nixon played it safe and stayed away.



JANE FONDA

- The Secret Service discovered that actress Jane Fonda on Dec. 10, 1970, had canceled another appearance and "was going to Killeen, Texas, for reasons unknown." This happened to coincide with a Lyndon Johnson visit to dedicate a college in Killeen. With great alarm, the Secret Service prepared to protect President Johnson from the tiny but turbulent actress.

- The late Dr. Martin Luther King's successor, Ralph Abernathy, threatened to quit in 1970, according to his FBI file, because "he had not been accorded the respect or cooperation to which, as president [of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference], he was reasonably entitled." He decided to stay on, however, after talking it over privately with his wife. The FBI, astonishingly, knew all about this husband-wife conversation. Reports the FBI file: "While discussing with his wife the aforementioned comments, Abernathy said he could not resign" at that time, because he "could be accused of creating organizational turmoil." The only way the FBI could have known about the discussion with his wife, Abernathy told my staff, was to have bugged his home.



JOE NAMATH

- The government's gumshoes spend a great deal of time observing and reporting on the sexual adventures of a variety of law-abiding Americans. It is scarcely news to sports fans, for example, that Joe Namath is as dazzling in the boudoir as on the football field. Yet his after-hours passes are in the FBI records. Notes an FBI report: "Namath . . . also reportedly had an affair with an airline stewardess . . ."

- There is an FBI file even on President Gerald Ford. It contains a report about a bugged conversation between two AVCO executives who on April 23, 1963, talked about how Ford, then a Michigan Congressman, had helped them.

These government files show that Americans are closer than they may think to George Orwell's concept of 1984. He described an advanced police state whose citizens couldn't make a move without Big Brother knowing it. For some time, our federal uncle has been developing a Big Brother complex. It is up to Congress to change the trend.