

# Bugging Expose Causing Jitters

By Jack Anderson

Those infernal red telephones, which were wired to pick up the talk in at least six governors' offices, have raised new concern about eavesdropping.

The apprehension over hidden bugs and wiretaps has become so acute in Washington that officials at the highest levels guard their utterances as if the walls had ears.

Ex-Attorney General Ramsey Clark tells us that no less than Lyndon Johnson was worried about the privacy of his vice presidential office. Other former aides say he suspected even his White House office might have been bugged.

During an eavesdropping scare in the late 1960s, the Federal Communications Commission was asked to check various senatorial suites for electronic taps. Listening devices were discovered in the offices of two senators.

Some senators were so nervous over what the FBI might be overhearing that Clark, while he headed the Justice Department, asked J. Edgar Hoover bluntly whether the FBI kept dossiers on members of Congress. The FBI director sent a memo categorically denying the existence of any such dossiers.

Evidently Hoover didn't

consider the raw files—which the FBI definitely does keep on some members—to be "dossiers." Miscellaneous information about these senators and congressmen, including references picked up by secret listening devices, is deposited routinely in the files.

The famous FBI bug in lobbyist Fred Black's hotel suite, for example, picked up a number of conversations about big-time lawmakers.

The agents, of course, were most discreet. After overhearing Black make a breakfast date with House Democratic Leader Carl Albert and then Senator Mike Monroney to discuss the location of a new aircraft plant in their home state of Oklahoma, Hoover's men slipped up to Capitol Hill the next morning to snoop around.

Their reports to the director were so hush-hush that they even used a code word for "Secret" and stamped their reports "June."

"No surveillance was maintained in the Senate Office Building," they assured Hoover, who is touchy about getting caught sypping on politicians. "However, WFO (Washington Field Office) made a discreet survey of the streets in the vicinity of the Senate Office Building for Black's car during the pertinent period with negative results. . . . WFO will be alert for any information which would in-

dicade Black did or did not keep his appointment with Sen. Mike Monroney and Rep. Carl Albert."

The Fred Black bug was identified even in the "June" memos merely as WF 1441-C. Cautioned one memo: "Information received from WF 1441-C, if utilized, should be carefully paraphrased to protect the identity of the source. No dissemination of information from this source is to be made outside the Bureau without prior Bureau authorization."

## FBI in Bedroom

Black used his hotel suite strictly as an office. But on at least two occasions, the hidden listening device picked up bedroom scenes.

In the case of one couple who borrowed Black's suite, according to the FBI account, "the informant noted that they spent most of the time in the bedroom of the suite. This activity occurred during the middle of the day."

On the other occasion, a prominent Washington figure brought a girl into Black's suite. Identifying the man by name, the secret FBI report said: "(They) utilized Black's rooms for approximately one hour during the morning. . . . During most of the time, the male and female utilized the bedroom."

Hoover used to forward such titillating accounts to former President Johnson, who

had a fine appreciation for a story about a leader's extracurricular love life. A typical backstairs report, passed on to the White House by Hoover, dealt with an alleged affair of the late Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In his memoirs, ex-attorney General Francis Biddle told how after he and Hoover became friends, the FBI director used to entertain him with stories of "the intimate details of what my associates in the Cabinet did and said, their likes and dislikes, their weaknesses and their associations. Edgar was not above relishing a story derogatory towards occupants of one of the seats of the mighty."

Over the years, Hoover has made a habit of scribbling in-temperate remarks, signed with the initial "H," in the margins of FBI reports. His subordinates, knowing his strong prejudices, also make derogatory references to people he doesn't like. One memo even made sneering references to ex-Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach's facial expressions.

Footnote: FBI eavesdropping isn't nearly as widespread, however, as Washington officials imagine. This column is convinced, after making careful checks with sources inside the FBI, that the FBI is now operating less than 60 listening devices and wiretaps across the country.