

## Testimony Before Hill Subcommittee

# FBI Denies Giving Writer Data

5/21/76

By Walter Pincus

Washington Post Foreign Service

Deputy Associate FBI Director James B. Adams said yesterday that the bureau did not authorize giving a writer, Jacque Srouji, access to FBI documents or prompt her recent appearance before a House subcommittee investigating safety in the nuclear industry.

But Adams, in testimony before the Small Business Energy and Environment Subcommittee, did not rule out the possibility that individual agents may have given Srouji documents.

He would not answer any questions about the relationship between Srouji and the FBI, saying "the matter is the subject of an investigation" and that "potential criminal violations" are involved.

Srouji, who attended yesterday's hearing with her lawyer, told the subcommittee April 26 that she was given access in 1975 to FBI reports on the 1974 automobile death of Karen Silkwood, a technician at an Oklahoma plutonium plant.

Her death followed a dispute she had over nuclear

safety with plant officials, and has been the basis of a continuing controversy.

At the time she saw and copied FBI reports, Srouji was writing a book on nuclear energy.

It was testified that as a result of her subcommittee appearance, Srouji's employer at that time, The Nashville Tennessean newspaper, initially learned that she had a special relationship with the FBI.

Tennessean publisher John Seigenthaler testified yesterday that the subcommittee's counsel called him May 3 to say Srouji's statements were being challenged by the FBI. The agent involved, Seigenthaler said, "denied giving her any documents."

Seigenthaler then related to the subcommittee yesterday the substance of three long conversations he had with Srouji over the next three days.

"I have absolutely no way to know if all she said was true," Seigenthaler said, "but I believe a great deal of it."

According to the publisher's testimony, Srouji told him she worked on The Nashville Banner in the

mid-1960s "as a reporter and FBI informant with the knowledge and support of that newspaper's management."

In February, 1975, Srouji decided to write on a book on nuclear energy.

In preparing the book, Srouji, according to Seigenthaler, developed new FBI relationships. Her former Nashville FBI control agent had been transferred to Oklahoma, Seigenthaler said, and helped direct the bureau inquiry into the Silkwood death.

The agent, according to Srouji's statements to Seigenthaler, gave her access to FBI reports on Silkwood and guidance to sources within the Kerr-McGee Corp., which owns the plant.

At about the same time in 1975, Srouji also made contact with a staff member of the Soviet embassy in Washington with whom she discussed her nuclear energy book, according to Seigenthaler's testimony.

"She said she reported to the FBI on a continuing basis" about the Soviet contact, Seigenthaler said.

In September, 1975, Srouji took a part-time night copy desk job with the Ten-

nessean while she was completing her book.

Last December, Seigenthaler testified, Srouji told the newspaper's copy desk she could help get information about some FBI raids on Nashville gambling establishments.

She provided some tips and, Seigenthaler said, "the city desk encouraged her." As a result she turned over to the paper a number of FBI documents about Nashville crime that were "good background" to news stories.

"I never thought of it as a two-way conduit," Seigenthaler said, but when he questioned Srouji earlier this month, she told him FBI agents asked "questions about Tennessean staff members," he said.

Seigenthaler told the subcommittee he believed the FBI "has been unwise, reckless and dangerous" in its handling of Srouji.

He read from a memo Srouji sent him May 4, the day before she was fired from the Tennessean. She wrote of her FBI relationship that if "a sacrifice is in order, then I can certainly take some of Mr. Hoover's finest along..."