

# FBI's Surveillance, Documents Are Not Surprising to Subjects

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*Of The Inquirer Staff*

Many of the people mentioned in the documents stolen from the Media office of the FBI seemed to be just ordinary people, but they weren't surprised to learn that the FBI was keeping tabs on them.

Some of them almost seemed to assume that their names would be in some FBI file or another because that's what the FBI does.

This conclusion, at least, could be drawn from a survey by The Inquirer of a dozen persons named in 14 of more than 1000 documents stolen March 8, copies of which were forwarded to several newspapers.

Fifty-six persons had turned up in the files sent to the newspapers, and thereby became part of the ever-growing mass of information government agencies are collecting

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REV. JANG-DHARRIE

*"not surprised"*

about American citizens, provoking charges of invasion of privacy. They got there through phone taps, observations of informants, searches

of bank records and passport office files, information supplied by college officials and mail snooping.

The documents indicated that many of these persons, who were later interviewed by The Inquirer, had nothing to do with revolutionary movements, demonstrations, or other activities that could be considered a threat to the nation.

Still, the persons interviewed accepted almost matter of factly that the FBI had gone to the trouble to write a few words about them and none appeared particularly angry.

"The FBI has its job to do and it does it," said a 16-year-old high school girl who gained FBI notice by calling a tapped Black Panther telephone in search of a speaker for a school program.

An Illinois nurse, who got on the list when she accepted a collect phone call from her Black Panther son seeking a mail order loan on the same tapped phone, was philosophical:

"I don't care where they put

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my name because I'm working hard to make money and an honest living and I don't have time to do bad things."

"It's kind of a disturbing thing, but I can't be terribly surprised," said an Idaho Scout leader who, in trying to arrange a Russian trip for his Explorer troop, wrote a letter to the Russian embassy that ended up in FBI files.

"If I'd known they were interested in that letter," said Thomas E. Ingerson, a cosmologist at the University of Idaho, "I'd have been happy to send them a copy."

A handful of well-known Philadelphia personalities were listed in the stolen files.

One document surveying the activities of the Black Economic Development Conference, reported that the Rev. Wycliffe Jang-Dharrie, president of the West Philadelphia chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was to chair the group's tactical committee.

"I'm not at all surprised that they have a file on me," said Mr. Jang-Dharrie. "They get a file on anyone who becomes vocal in the community and begins to become relevant to the people... you become a threat to the community when you begin helping people."

The FBI report on conversations over the Black Panther Party headquarters telephone excerpted such things as:

"During a conversation between SANDRA and RUSSELL, RUSSELL mentioned there was no heat in the office and said that they had no money.

"During a conversation between DELORES and RUSSELL, DELORES stated her baby was due in four months.

"A representative of Western Union called for RUSSELL... advising that they had a money order for him to pick up."

The remaining documents concerned activists and others on college campuses, including Prof. Daniel Bennett of

Swarthmore, who formerly taught at Brandeis University, who was put under an elaborate net of surveillance because the FBI thought he might aid two suspects in a bank robbery and killing of a policeman. He has denied knowing the suspects.

Commenting on the FBI's investigation of his association with people he claims he doesn't know, Bennett charged that the agency "uses every loose connection of association as an excuse to investigate."

"Since Susan Saxe (one of the bank suspects) attended Brandeis... that gave them excuse enough to watch me," the professor said.

He charged the FBI with being indiscriminate in its investigations and using the

"buckshot method."

Asked if he thought of himself like the government conducts the war in Indochina, he said to illustrate his point, "We drop bombs everywhere hoping to hit the target. More often than not, they miss."

Asked if he thought of himself as a radical, Bennett said:

"J. Edgar Hoover (director of the FBI) is the radical. He operates in a clandestine fashion in which his secret police meddle into the lives of innocent people."

The FBI had a two-page file on Miss Mary J. Lawhon, daughter of Col. and Mrs. Zim E. Lawhon of Scranton. She was described as "an inveterate Marxist revolutionist and a type of person that should

be watched as she will probably be very active in revolutionary activities."

Miss Lawhon laughed when told by an Inquirer reporter in a telephone interview from her home in Berkeley, Calif., that she was described as an inveterate Marxist. But she declined to suggest a more accurate description of herself.

She confirmed an item in the document, which said the information came from "a reliable source," that she had failed in an attempt to get into the Venceremos Brigade, a pro-Cuban group.

All she would say about her political goals was that she wanted the American Government to be replaced by a "democratic-Socialist-nonmale-supremacist society."

A group calling itself the Citizens Commission to Investigate the FBI has claimed responsibility for stealing and distributing the documents, which came on a variety of paper, with and without FBI markings.

One was a handwritten note that didn't seem to mean anything, and most of the others have many apparently coded numbers listed on them.

A common type of stationery for the documents has a letterhead that says "United States Government Memorandum," with the last word in large Italic letters. Across the bottom of these sheets is a bit of government pep talk:

"Buy U. S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan."

## WRO LEADER NAMED

Fiery Welfare Rights Organization leader Mrs. Roxanne Jones is also named on the stolen documents, in a Feb. 9, 1971, report on the Black Economic Development Conference here.

Mrs. Jones, 41, is named as a potential chairman of a women's committee and membership on the executive committee of the BEDC, which was attempting to strengthen the organization. Mrs. Jones could not be reached for comment.

Admitted activists and other leaders in the campus movement said they would have been surprised if the FBI didn't have something on them, but they all acknowledge that this was the first conclusive evidence they had that the FBI was interested in them.

Though they weren't surprised, they were all angry about FBI surveillance, insisting it was an invasion of privacy and had nothing to do with national security. One said it was turning the nation into a fascist state.

It's not known what it means to be listed in an FBI file, even for innocuous reasons, because the FBI refuses to say anything about the matter.

Categorically refusing to comment, an FBI spokesman in Washington would not answer when asked whether all names in its files are indexed so that if scout leader Ingerson, for instance, should apply for a government job an FBI check would show his proposed trip to Russia.

The pilfered files contained the names of all 34 black students at Swarthmore College during 1969, when there were disturbances on the campus.

The stolen documents showed an unusual emphasis on the black movement, but this could be more a reflection of the interests of the people who stole the files than the FBI. More than \$100 were stolen and among the 14 distributed to the press, none dealt with matters that occupy much FBI time such as organized crime, bank robberies, military clearance checks, etc.

Other documents among the 14 concern attendance at a Black Economic Development Council meeting and the BEDC's bank account. Muhammad Kenyatta, Philadelphia area leader of BEDC, which in 1969 issued the Black Manifesto demanding reparations from churches for mistreatment of black people, is also covered extensively.

Another document relates conversations on a Black Pan-

And a communication to all bureaus from "Director, FBI" (J. Edgar Hoover) said:

"Effective immediately, all BSUs (black student unions) and similar organizations organized to protect the demands of black students, which are not presently under investigation, are to be subjects of discreet, preliminary inquiries, limited to established sources and carefully conducted to avoid criticism, to determine the size, aims, purposes, activities, leadership and key activists and extremists' interest or influence in these groups.

"Open individual cases on officers and key activists in each group to determine background and if their activities warrant active investigation ... The investigations to be conducted in accordance with instructions in Section 87D of the Manual of Instructions regarding investigations of organizations connected with institutions of learning."