

FBI Director on Two Anderson Columns, 9-17-71

My purpose in writing is to set the record straight concerning two of Jack Anderson's more recent columns—both published in The Washington Post—which falsely and unfairly belittle and derogate personnel of the FBI. I limit this letter to two of Anderson's recent columns because there is not enough stationery at our headquarters, nor are there enough hours in the workweek, to issue public denials of all the misinformation which this purveyor of fiction has written regarding the FBI.

The two columns to which I direct your attention were published in The Washington Post on Aug. 18 and Sept. 2. The former makes the completely false and baseless allegation that disciplinary action was taken against the FBI agent whose very skillful, decisive, and proper action in New York last July brought a successful end to an airplane hijacking. As a matter of fact, not only was this agent not disciplined, but I personally commended him and also gave him a meritorious cash award for his outstanding performance of duty in this case. In addition, he has also been selected for an assignment involving additional responsibility.

The Sept. 2 column irresponsibly charges the FBI with failing to cooperate with the Justice Department's strike forces in the fight against organized crime. Again, contrary to the false picture which Anderson would paint, the FBI, with the approval of the Attorney General, has assigned liaison agents to the strike forces in the field and at headquarters and uses many hundreds of agents to combat organized crime and develop cases which are prosecuted by the strike forces.

To exemplify both the genuine nature and

the high caliber of this cooperation, let me cite the gambling raids which our agents carried out, with departmental task force support and assistance. In Michigan last May these resulted in the arrest of more than 150 persons by FBI personnel equipped with search warrants, affidavits, and warrants of arrest, prepared in close conjunction with task force attorneys.

This workable, effective, cooperative relationship has contributed to a growing record of accomplishments against organized crime across the country. During the 1971 fiscal year, for example, an all-time high 631 federal convictions of organized crime figures were recorded in FBI cases. Furthermore, as the fiscal year ended, FBI organized crime cases involving more than 1,900 other persons, including six national syndicate leaders, were in various stages of prosecution.

In addition, information originally developed by the FBI and disseminated to local state and other federal authorities enabled the recipient agencies to make more than 3,700 arrests in the organized crime field during the 1971 fiscal year. Many of these arrests involved narcotics charges, a most serious area of the crime problem to which Anderson falsely asserts this bureau has been insensitive.

Since Anderson's false statements regarding these matters were published in your newspaper, I am confident that you will share my view that your readers are entitled also to see this factual refutation and statement of truth.

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Washington.