

Newsman Ordered to Shred Files

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Columnist Jack Anderson, who has often written in the last year about the shredding of government and political documents, had some of his own telephone toll records shredded into spaghetti-sized confetti yesterday—under court orders.

The unusual shredding in the U.S. courthouse originated when an Anderson investigative reporter, Les Whitten, was arrested last Jan. 31, and charged with possession of stolen documents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The FBI subsequently subpoenaed the long-distance toll records of telephones at the office and homes of Anderson and Whitten and at the homes of two Indian activists, Hank Adams and LaNada Boyer, apparently in an effort to check on their contacts surrounding the documents.

Whitten later testified before a federal grand jury that he actually was returning the three boxes of documents to the BIA when he was arrested. The grand jury refused to indict Whitten and two others charged in the case.

Despite the grand jury's refusal to indict in the case, the FBI kept the toll call records, which Whitten claimed was a violation of the First Amendment and a government attempt to put together "a permanent record of many of our best sources."