

Merry-Go-Round

FBI Investigations Into Private Lives



Jack Anderson

NEW EVIDENCE has come to light that the FBI is trafficking in private information about public figures.

A derogatory report on House Democratic leader Hale Boggs, including the allegation that he drinks heavily, has been traced to FBI sources.

This was the inspiration, it has been suggested, for Deputy Attorney General Richard Kleindienst's crack on television that Boggs must have been either "sick or . . . not in possession of his faculties" when he accused the FBI of tapping congressional phones.

Kleindienst told us he had heard the rumors about Boggs' drinking but not from the FBI. The only FBI report he had seen on Boggs, Kleindienst said, concerned the congressman's alleged role in helping Baltimore contractor Victor Frenkil get the contract for constructing a House garage.

The Deputy Attorney General said he had reviewed this report about 18 months ago and had joined in the decision that "there was no evidence to warrant prosecution."

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THE FBI rundown on Boggs, according to a competent source who has seen it and is in a position to know its origin, is written on plain paper without any FBI identifying marks. In the past, we have seen similar anonymous reports that we knew came out of the FBI.

It has been the FBI's practice to collect titillating tidbits about prominent people, which turn up in the course of other investigations. The FBI learned from its

wiretaps at the Soviet Embassy, for instance, that ex - Attorney General Ramsey Clark had telephoned Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin last November about possibly going to Russia to observe the trial of 12 Russian Jews who allegedly had plotted to hijack a plane to fly them to Israel.

J. Edgar Hoover immediately sent a secret message about Clark's plans, quoting a "highly reliable source," on the FBI teletype to the White House, Pentagon, State Department and Central Intelligence Agency.

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PERHAPS the most notorious FBI report that has come to our attention was a memo to ex-President Lyndon Johnson on the sex life of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. A White House aide showed us the FBI memo, dated Feb. 20, 1968.

It quoted a "confidential informant" who said Dr. King had been having an "illicit affair" with the "wife of a prominent Negro dentist in Los Angeles."

Continued the memo: "The source related an incident which occurred some time ago in a New York City hotel, where King was intoxicated at a small gathering. King threatened to leap from the 13th floor of the hotel if this woman would not say she loved him."

The FBI, of course, has no business investigating King's sex life, Boggs' drinking habits, Clark's travel plans or the private lives of any other public figures.

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