

Crime rate keeps on rising but FBI keeps eyes on sex

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WASHINGTON — With crime running rampant across the country, the FBI has tied up countless agents prying into the private lives of political figures, black leaders, movie stars, football players, newsmen and other prominent Americans.

Indeed, no American who speaks his mind is altogether safe from the all-seeing FBI.

FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, the old curmudgeon of law enforcement, fiercely resisted a White House suggestion that he spare a few hundred agents to crack down on drug abuses. But he can spare agents to snoop into the sex habits, business affairs and political pursuits of individuals who aren't even remotely involved in illegal activity.

Hoover's gumshoes have loaded FBI files with titillating tidbits about such diverse figures as movie actors Marlon Brando and Harry Belafonte, football heroes Joe Namath and Lance Rentzel, ex-boxing champs Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali, black leaders Ralph Abernathy and Roy Innis.

It's no secret that the FBI hounded the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the apostle of racial brotherhood and nonviolent protest. We have seen FBI reports on his political activities and sex life. On one occasion, Hoover had a personal run-in with the black peacemaker.

Now the FBI is watching his widow, Coretta King. As evidence of what the FBI considers suspicious activity, here's a typical excerpt from her secret file:

"On Feb. 18, 1970, a confidential source advised he had learned that Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King, Jr., contemplated pursuing in the near future a program of voter registration in several Southern states."

Persecution complex

In Joe Louis's case, the FBI went to pains to report on a mental breakdown, which led to his confinement in a Denver

hospital. The former boxing great, who held the world heavyweight title longer than any other man, felt persecuted by imaginary enemies.

In keeping tabs on the pathetic ex-champ, the FBI seemed to be suffering somewhat from the same aberration.

The FBI keeps a particularly hostile eye on newsmen who are critical of government policies. The undefatigable muckraker I. F. Stone, for example, is kept under regular surveillance.

"Stone's residence," his secret file shows, "was verified on Feb. 5, 1972, by a representative of the FBI utilizing a suitable pretext."

The most suspicious notation was placed in his file in 1966. "On Feb. 11, 1966, at 1:09 p.m.," states a surveillance report, "the subject was observed to meet Oleg D. Kalugin in front of Harvey's Restaurant, 1107 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. Together, they subsequently entered Harvey's Restaurant."

The FBI added darkly that Kalugin was the "press secretary" at the Soviet embassy.

Hang-up on sex

Hoover also appears to have a hang-up on sex. His gumshoes go out of their way to find out who's sleeping with whom in Washington and Hollywood.

The file on one famous movie actor, not mentioned above contains nothing but rumors about his sex life. Indeed, the file begins by acknowledging that the actor "has not been the subject of an FBI investigation."

Nevertheless, the FBI has compiled a full dossier on the actor.

Sex report

"During 1965," begins the FBI summary, "a confidential informant reported that several years ago while he was in New York he had an 'affair' with movie star———. The informant states that from personal knowledge he knew that (the actor) was a homosexual."