

Merry-Go-Round**FBI Eavesdropping
In VIP Bedrooms****Jack Anderson**

THOSE INFERNAL red telephones, which were wired to pick up the talk in at least six governors' offices, have raised new concern about eavesdropping.

The apprehension over hidden bugs and wiretaps has become so acute in Washington that officials at the highest levels guard their utterances as if the walls had ears.

Ex-Attorney General Ramsey Clark tells us that no less than Lyndon Johnson was worried about the privacy of his Vice Presidential office. Other former aides say he suspected even his White House office might have been bugged.

During an eavesdropping scare in the late 1960s, the Federal Communications Commission was asked to check various Senatorial suites for electronic taps. Listening devices were discovered in the offices of two Senators.

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THE FAMOUS FBI bug in lobbyist Fred Black's hotel suite, for example, picked up a number of conversations about big-time lawmakers. Although no illegal activity was indicated, agents followed up the intercepted conversations for no apparent purpose than to pry into the lawmakers' affairs.

The agents, of course, were most discreet. After overhearing Black make a breakfast date with House Democratic leader Carl Albert and then-Senator Mike Monroney to discuss the location of a new aircraft plant in their home State of Okla-

homa, Hoover's men slipped up to Capitol Hill the next morning to snoop around.

Their reports to the director were so hush-hush that they even used a code word for "secret" and stamped their reports "June."

Black used his hotel suite strictly as an office. But on at least two occasions, the hidden listening device picked up bedroom scenes. All this was eagerly reported in the FBI summaries.

In the case of one couple who borrowed Black's suite, according to the FBI account, "the informant noted that they spent most of the time in the bedroom of the suite. This activity occurred during the middle of the day."

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HOOPER USED to forward such titillating accounts to former President Johnson, who had a fine appreciation for a story about a leader's extracurricular love life. A typical backstairs report, passed on to the White House by Hoover, dealt with an alleged affair of the late Rev. Martin Luther King.

In his memoirs, ex-Attorney General Francis Biddle told how after he and Hoover became friends, the FBI director used to entertain him with stories of "the intimate details of what my associates in the Cabinet did and said, their likes and dislikes, their weaknesses and their associations. Edgar was not above relishing a story derogatory toward occupants of one of the seats of the mighty."

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