

Merry-Go-Round ~~SFChronicle~~ MAR 17 1971

Army Snoop File Easily Accessible



3-17-71
Jack Anderson

AFTER ALL their snooping into people's private lives, Army gumshoes have accumulated millions of dossiers, but have found only 343 bona fide subversives on the Army rolls.

The Army's confidential records refer to them as "known dissenters." Another 106 "suspected dissenters" have been added to the confidential subversive list, which is known inside the Pentagon as the RITA file. The initials stand for "Resistance in the Army."

The number of resident radicals in the Army, incidentally, declined from 527 at the beginning of 1970 to only 389 at the end of the year. The figure continued to dwindle last month to the present 343 level.

★ ★ ★

WITH THE added 106 suspects, those whom the Army now tends to regard as subversives total 449. They are scattered at Army posts around the world. There is even one in the Army's supersecret Strategic Communications Command in Washington, D.C.

There are 110 alleged subversives in the Pacific, 42 in Europe, eight in Alaska and two in Latin America. The rest are stationed at 47 Army installations throughout the U.S.

The most subversives at a single base, according to the confidential records, are found at Fort Bragg, N.C., which has 43 names in the RITA file. There are also an extraordinary number of radicals in Tex-

as—18 at Fort Hood, 14 at Fort Bliss and 13 at Fort Sam Houston.

Meanwhile, the Army has derogatory information on millions of loyal Americans in its snoop file. Other government agencies have also compiled dossiers and blacklists, which are freely exchanged between federal agencies. The traffic in unproven allegations has been promiscuous. Not only are the dossiers widely circulated but most of them carry a low security classification. This gives an alarming number of government employees access to derogatory details about their fellow citizens.

★ ★ ★

THE PRINCIPAL headache at White House these days, even the war and politics, is the conservative Wilbur Mills, the one who heads the Means Com-