

# Federal Snoopers



## Jack Anderson

**I**N SEEMINGLY innocuous but prying little ways, the federal government is compiling data on millions of Americans. This could extinguish the right of privacy and lead to a regimented society in this land of the free.

Federal snoops, for example, can consult a 452-page manual, which will tell them how to track down the most obscure personal details about almost anyone, anywhere.

A Metropolitan Opera singer? Check "Opera Biographies," published in London by Werner Laurie. A New Jersey hog farmer? The manual advises: "Hog farmers who feed garbage are required to obtain a license from the Department of Agriculture"

Or do you want to locate a divorced construction worker of Croatian descent? No problem. Just look up his marriage and divorce papers. You can also check with the construction union and the Croatian-American Association.

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**T**HIS EXHAUSTIVE handbook on snooping is called "Where's What," with the subtitle, "Sources of Information for Federal Investigators." It was compiled in 1965 by Harry J. Murphy, who was then an investigator for the Central Intelligence Agency.

Perhaps significantly, the CIA gave him a year's leave at the

Brookings Institution to work on the project. He returned to the CIA but has now retired. He stressed to us that the investigative techniques suggested in his book were used by the CIA only, to check prospective employees, not to spy on citizens.

Nonetheless, the CIA keeps tabs on hundreds of thousands of Americans who have absolutely no wish to work for the CIA.

This can best be done, apparently, through the government itself. According to Murphy's handbook, the federal government offers a smorgasbord of information about the citizenry. Selective Service and military records, income tax returns, Social Security files and even census records can be pried open by federal snoops.

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**J**UST ABOUT every time a citizen rubs against the government, whether it be to license a business, register a car, claim unemployment insurance, or even purchase savings bonds, he must leave behind his life history.

Much of the information is of no practical value to anyone except some bureaucrat with Big Brother complex.

Footnote: Perhaps the only people safe from the government's cradle-to-grave files are those who have managed to dodge every census since 1890. The 1890 census, Murphy relates with a touch of regret, was destroyed in a 1921 fire.