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**Many Agents, No Luck** MAY 6 1977

# Jack Anderson's CIA Tail

Washington

Four Central Intelligence Agency operatives moved secretly to tables in the expensive Montpelier Room of the Madison Hotel around noon on March 17, 1972, as part of what the CIA then described as an "extremely sensitive" operation called "Project Mudhen."

The agents were there to watch their boss, CIA Director Richard Helms, eat lunch with a man known in the project under the code name of "Brandy." Brandy was nationally syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, who was being spied on by the CIA for three months in an unsuccessful attempt to determine the sources of his news stories.

According to the highly classified report the agents filed on the

lunch:

"... They lunched and engaged in a rather animated conversation. Brandy and the director departed the restaurant at 1338 hours (1:38 p.m.). Brandy returned, on foot, to his office."

Additional agents posted outside the hotel during the lunch said they found "no indication of possible hostile countersurveillance. Neither patrons nor that establishment's staff exhibited any particular interest towards the director or Brandy."

The details of the spying on the luncheon meeting are included in files that have been turned over to Anderson under a Freedom of Information Act request by the

columnist. Helms was aware of the spying on the lunch and had approved it beforehand to make certain that Anderson wasn't bugging him.

The CIA files compiled on Anderson are more than four inches high and include vast amounts of information on the backgrounds and movements of Anderson and other members of his reporting staff.

The notes of the surveillances, made in hand on previously prepared "logs" on which movements of persons are charted in hourly segments, include observations from a "photographic observation nest" near the office Anderson was using at the time.

Anderson is using portions of

the material as evidence in a \$22 million civil suit he has filed against Richard Nixon and other past and present government officials, as well as against government agencies such as the CIA. He is claiming in his suit that the agencies and officials committed various illegal acts and violated his constitutional rights to free speech and privacy.

The suit is pending before U.S. District Judge Gerhard Gesell, who has ordered the government agencies to answer questions about their spying activities against Anderson. Gesell has also raised questions about the propriety of the Justice Department's legal representation of various former government officials who might have differing interests in the civil suit.

Regardless of the ultimate outcome of the pending litigation, the CIA files released so far provide unusual details of a domestic surveillance of a U.S. citizen by the nation's overseas intelligence agency.

The files are complete with code names and other terminology associated with the spy system, and occasionally includes somewhat humorous accountings of incidents such as the time members of Anderson's own family tracked down and took pictures of the government agents who were assigned to monitor their activities.

The spying operation was approved by the CIA director of security, Howard Osborn, in January, 1972, after Anderson published materials based on classified documents in his nationally syndicated column according to the files.

It continued until April 12, 1972. At that time, the CIA concluded that the surveillance should be stopped because it had been carried on too long, was unfruitful, and the agency was "suspicious that Anderson was aware of the operation."

One of the stated purposes of the operation was to collect information on the "behavioral patterns" of Anderson and his staff, according to the files. To accomplish the task of watching Anderson and his staff, the agency assigned as many as 16 agents in eight cars on any given day to glean such information as the fact that Anderson associate Les Whitten — code-named "Cordial" — "leaves office, picks up lunch, eats alone at Farragut square," according to the logs of the surveillances.

Anderson secretary Opal Ginn

became "Sherry" in the CIA code system, Anderson reporter Joseph Spears became "Champagne," and reporter Brit Hume became "Eggnog." Although the agents were seeking information on the personal lives of the reporters, the most they could determine about Spears and his wife were that they "appear to be maintaining a rather routine pattern of professional activities."

The Montpelier Room luncheon exemplifies the steps the CIA took in its monitoring of Anderson. The agency concluded that since Anderson had been seen using small, visible tape recorders, "he would readily use audio capabilities. This would certainly include bodily-concealed recorders, and-or

concealed transmitting devices," the agency added.

The purpose of the lunch was an attempt by Helms to talk Anderson out of printing classified information in a book Anderson was writing, the agency said.

Anderson and other members of his staff were described in the CIA documents in colorful terms such as "flamboyant, brash, stentorian, and committed."

For example, Whitten, according to CIA agents who followed him, "operates his personal automobile in a fast, impatient manner and will deviate from normal routes in order to avoid minor traffic delays."

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