

SPECIAL INQUIRY ON INVASION OF PRIVACY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 1965

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVASION OF PRIVACY
OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:10 p.m., in room 2203, Rayburn Office Building, Hon. Cornelius E. Gallagher (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representative Cornelius E. Gallagher, Benjamin S. Rosenthal, and Frank J. Horton.

Also present: Norman G. Cornish, chief of special inquiry; Miles Q. Romney, associate general counsel, Committee on Government Operations; James A. Lanigan, general counsel, Committee on Government Operations; and Raymond T. Collins, minority professional staff.

Mr. GALLAGHER. I would like to call this subcommittee to order.

I wish to welcome the witnesses and the people who are here today and make an opening statement. And then an opening statement will be made by Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Horton, my colleagues of this special inquiry.

The hearings beginning today are part of a special inquiry by the Committee on Government Operations of the U.S. House of Representatives. Among the duties of that committee is studying the operation of the activities of the Federal Government at all levels in order to determine whether such activities are being conducted economically, efficiently, and in compliance with law.

Toward the end of the 88th Congress, the chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, the Honorable William L. Dawson, authorized a special inquiry into the investigative activities of Federal civilian agencies.

The need for such an inquiry had become apparent because of a large body of evidence that certain activities and operations of Federal agencies were being carried out concerning which serious questions could be raised. Were they authorized by law? Were they in consonance with basic constitutional principles? How much Federal money was being spent in carrying out these operations?

The basic principles involved in these questions can be conveniently wrapped up in the concept—the individual right of privacy. Of course, there can be no right of absolute privacy. However, all persons and their governments need to be alert to maintain the right of privacy to the maximum extent consistent with the public good. The Federal Government should take the lead to show by example that it recognizes the vital importance of protecting this right. Therefore, the committee felt that a study should be made of the operations