

SPECIAL INQUIRY ON INVASION OF PRIVACY

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1965

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

The subcommittee met, pursuant to recess, at 11:05 a.m., in room 2203, Rayburn Office Building, Hon. Cornelius E. Gallagher (chairman) presiding.

Present: Representatives Cornelius E. Gallagher, Benjamin S. Rosenthal, Frank J. Horton, and Henry S. Reuss.

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. The special inquiry will come to order.

The Chair would like to welcome a member of the Government Operations Committee, Mr. Reuss, who has done considerable work in this field and has taken a great interest, and the Chair would like to make him part of this hearing and hopes that he will participate in any way he wishes.

Mr. REUSS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate it.

Mr. GALLAGHER. This hearing is a continuation of a special inquiry under the House Committee on Government Operations into the subject of invasion of privacy as it is related to the efficiency and economy of certain Federal investigative and data-gathering activities. Today and Friday we will take a look at the use of psychological questionnaires or personality tests on Federal employees and job applicants.

Tests of this kind are used by a number of Federal agencies allegedly to pinpoint persons with existing or potential psychological problems. The stated objective in the giving of most of these tests is to protect the Federal service from persons who might not be suited for certain types of jobs. This is a commendable objective and certainly no one in Congress has any quarrel with it.

However, individual rights must also be balanced against Government responsibilities and, unfortunately, many of these tests constitute what is, in my opinion, a serious invasion of the right to privacy, particularly in the circumstances in which they are given. Many Federal workers and job applicants are subjected to extensive tests on their sex lives, family situations, religious views, personal habits, childhood happenings, and other matters normally regarded as only the private business of individuals.

This special inquiry has invited the distinguished Chairman of the U.S. Civil Service Commission, Mr. John W. Macy, Jr., to the hearing