

TOWARD-TOMORROW Fr. Henry Atwell

An acquaintance of mine, in a recent conversation with a federal officer, chanced to mention my name. The officer, I'm told, said of me, "Oh, yes, we know him. We have a file on him. He's quite a well-known radical."

It was also intimated that my phones, and perhaps even my offices, are under surveillance.

As incredible as this first seemed, in the light of Watergate and the disclosure that all White House conversations are bugged, I find all this not quite as incredible as I might otherwise

Since my curiosity was at least whetted by the thought of my possibly being bugged. I decided to check it out. And then the incredible actually happened!

First I turned to the Rochester Telephone Directory, page 496. and looked up "frequently called numbers" for the U.S. Covernment. The FBI seemed the likely place to, start. I stated my

Bishop Issenmann Is Hospitalized

Cleveland [RNS] — Bishop Clarence G. Issenmann of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland is showing "marked improvement" after being hospitalized three weeks with a heart condition, according to an announcement by the diocesan news bureau.

Despite the improvement, the bishop was expected to remain in St. John Hospital another week, Father Joseph H. Kraker, director of the bureau, said in a release dated July 6.

The release said Bishop Issenmann's heavy responsibilities had led to "severe exhaustion" and "a strain on his

Parish Priest, 36, Named Archbishop

Athens [RNS] Father Nicholas Foscolos, 36, a parish priest serving on the island of Tenos, has been named Roman Catholic Archbishop of Athens.

He succeeds Archbishop Benedict Printesis, 56, who has

A native of Tenos, the archbishop-designate studied in Rome and was ordained in 1961. No reason was given for the resignation of Archbishop Printesis, who had held the post since 1959.

The Roman Catholic community in Greece is small. The country is predominantly Greek Orthodox

PAPAL VISITOR

Vatican City [RNS] Muslim Paul VI received President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan in a private audience here on July 14.

question, "How do I find out if the government has a file on me and what does it say about me?" identified myself and asked if might know to whom I was speaking. The anonymous voice at the FBI said, "I'm just an agent here," but would give no further identification. He said he "couldn't give out any information like that." I asked, "Who can?" and was told, "Try

So next I called (toll-charge) the FBI office in Buffalo, again identified myself and explained concern. Again an anonymous voice, courteous but virtually computerized, informed me, "The files are confidential. We don't give out information

I pointed out I was not askingfor information about someone else, but about myself — did the government even have a file on me and how do I find out what it contains or who might provide me that information?

"Sorry, that information is confidential," and there the conversation ended.

I've stewed about this ever

To my knowledge, I've never broken any law of our government, I certainly have never advocated breaking any law of either local, state or federal government. I have never participated in even any demonstration against government policy or practices. I have, from time to time, expressed my thoughts on issues facing the people of our nation. I have, from time to time, listened to people whose thoughts differ from official government policies. This freedom to dissent was, I have been taught since childhood, part of a heritage that makes me happy to be an American and what makes this country different from so many other countries. And for this I am now told I am "a well-known radical."

Even that would be pain enough but when I inquire of the government to either affirm or deny this, I'm told that this is "confidential."

Somewhere I recall hearing that the U.S. government was meant to be not some faceless, anonymous, "confidential," anonymous, bureaucratic hierarchy but rather "of the people, by the people and for the people."

Is it not also appalling that the government seemingly and secretly begins to build up its case against its citizens even before they are ever engaged in any law-breaking activity?

Dr. Henry Kissinger wiretapped the phones of his own aides, not because he mistrusted them, but precisely because he trusted them and wanted to be able to prove their loyalty.

If we have come to such a state that you are tapped if you are trusted and tapped if you're not trusted, then what has happened to our Constitution's historic Bill of Rights with its guarantee of freedom of speech? Next time you hear a funny little click on.

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