

# Professor Unsurprised By FBI Surveillance

By **PAUL F. LEVY**  
and **KITSI BURKHART**

*Of The Bulletin Staff*

Copyright, 1971, The Bulletin Company

A Swarthmore College philosophy professor said yesterday that he was not "the least bit surprised" that he had been under surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"Sometimes you get the feeling that the FBI has everybody under surveillance," Professor Daniel Bennett said.

The surveillance of Bennett came to light from copies of the files stolen from the Media office of the FBI on March 8 by a group calling

itself the "Citizen's Commission to Investigate the FBI."

Copies of the FBI documents have been mailed to several Congressmen and newspapers, including The Bulletin, during the past week.

## **Distorted Picture**

The U.S. Justice Department has said that about 1,000 documents were taken, but that only a few are being distributed to the press to show a distorted picture of FBI activities.

Joe D. Jamieson, special agent in charge of the Philadelphia office and 18 resident offices in smaller cities in Eastern Pennsylvania, has refused to discuss the matter.

Bennett said that two FBI agents visited him at home last week to determine if he knew anything about the burglary.

"I told them I didn't know anything about the theft," he said.

## **Operator Helped**

During the surveillance on Bennett, according to a copy of a FBI memorandum from a field agent to Jamieson dated last Nov. 13, the FBI:

— Contacted a telephone operator at the college and got her to "confidentially furnish pertinent information regarding any long distance telephone calls" made by Bennett.

— Obtained background information on Bennett from the Swarthmore police chief,  
*Continued on Page 2, Col. 6*

Bemmer

Bulletin

Sat Mar 20 '71

# Professor Kept Under Surveillance

Continued From First Page

who also agreed to "observe the Bennett's resident from the front of his (nearby) house."

— Obtained agreement from a postoffice official to keep track of any mail to or from Bennett "which might be significant."

## A Boston Informant

According to the memorandum, Bennett was placed under surveillance because a "Boston informant" had told the agency several persons wanted for a bank robbery "might have some contact" with the Bennetts.

The suspects in the bank robbery had attended Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass., where Bennett taught in the mid-1960s.

"I have no knowledge of them (the suspects in the bank robbery) specifically," Bennett said, "but they could have been in a class I taught."

Bennett, 40, has a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a doctorate from Stanford University. He taught at the University of Massachusetts, as well as Brandeis, before joining the Swarthmore faculty as an associate professor in 1968.

## Regarded As 'Radical'

He teaches social and political philosophy with emphasis on civil disobedience.

In the memorandum to Jamieson, the field agent who is not identified, quotes the telephone operator as stating that Dr. Bennett is "generally regarded as a radical."

He also asks that the FBI "conceal identity (of the operator) due to position at school." The operator was unavailable when The Bulletin sought to contact her.

"We are certainly going to make as thorough an investigation as possible of her role", Dr. Robert Cross, the president of Swarthmore, said.

## In "Good Standing"

He said the surveillance of Dr. Bennett came as a "total surprise." Bennett is "in good standing with the school," Dr. Cross said.

"Generally speaking," Dr. Cross added, "I believe in an open society."

"I don't believe in surreptitious surveillance."

Bennett said he does not accept any political labels "now available" and that "radical" was "as good a description for Rev. Carl McIntire (the conservative minister) or some of FBI director) J. Edgar Hoover's friends" as it was for him.

Bennett said he belongs to the War Registers League, an international organization opposed to all ware, "and in that sense I'm an internationalist."

He said the only active

peace demonstration he has taken part in was against Dow Chemical Co. at the University of Massachusetts while he was teaching there.

He said the only active peace demonstration he has taken part in was against Dow Chemical Co. at the University of Massachusetts while he was teaching there.

He said he favors "no-violent revolution," though he is sympathetic to those "with Maoist tendencies... and even those who believe in terror."

"The last thing you do as a human being is write off another human being," he said in an interview from California where he is attending a convention.

He said the ideas of the late Rev. Martin Luther King best represent "the kind of consciousness that has to be at the center of any revolution."

A major point in the FBI surveillance report on Bennett was he has a printing press in his garage and was frequently visited by students.

## Aided Panthers

Bennett said the press was used to print some material for the Black Panthers before their revolutionary "people's national convention" in Philadelphia last fall, as well underground as newspapers.

Noted the surveillance report:

"He (Swarthmore Police Chief William G. Weidner) recalled that during the past summer, the Bennetts held a 'rock festival' in their back yard attended by more than 50 college age youngsters. The chief was required to break this up when it got too loud, but this is the only occasion he had to contact the Bennetts in police business.

"The chief noted that the garage in the rear of Bennett's residence has been converted into a printing shop and it houses enough equipment to publish a newspaper. He does not know that a newspaper is published there, but he is keeping a close eye on the garage to ascertain what activity takes place there."

"The chief is certain that no one lives in the garage, but he has seen 'hippie types' frequent the garage. He will remain especially alert for the appearance of the subjects (wanted for the bank robbery) and he will contact his sources and alert them concerning the subjects."

Bennett agreed that students visit his house frequently, but "is that a crime," he asked.

At the time of the report Bennett lived at 16 S. Princeton st. in Swarthmore, and Wiedner a short distance away around the corner on Dartmouth ave.

Since then, Bennett has moved to a small apartment

above Mike's Barber Shop at 1609 Chichester ave. in Swarthmore.

## Refuses to Talk

Wiedner refused to comment on the reports or discuss any cooperation he may have given the FBI.

Bennett said the "most ridiculous (asinine) part of this whole thing" is that the FBI would give such high credence to the comments of a telephone operator.

In addition to keeping track of Bennett's telephone calls, the memorandum quotes the operator as saying that he was the "subject of criticism by the school administration since he has taken on himself without clearing with others the responsibility of inviting controversial speakers to the school."

The operator, according to the memorandum, also told the FBI that he altered his course curriculum, which is "an action on his part over and beyond his authority."

## Open to Everybody

Bennett said the "whole surveillance thing by the FBI is a way of inventing paranoia in people carried out by penny novel spy tactics."

"I never did anything that was not open to everybody," Bennett concluded. "I would have told them more than this if they wanted to know it."

"The FBI can come to any course or meeting I have, or to my house if they want."

"They're welcome."