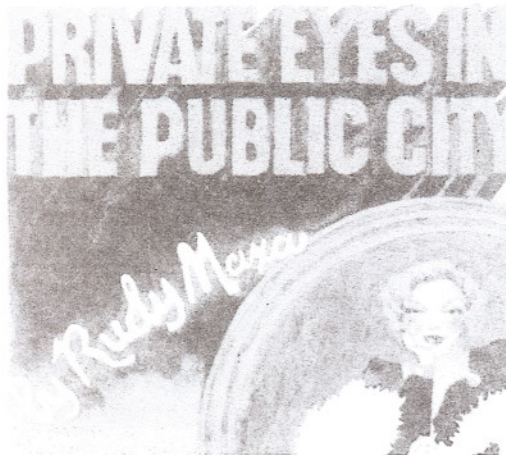


# Mitchell Reports



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**“Y**ou have to be a former CIA, Secret Service or FBI man to be a big shot in this business,” said one Washington private detective, the late John Leon, who was none of those three.

Leon's statement is partly true. The imprimatur of a federal investigative agency helps business, and private investigating is sometimes attractive to retiring government pros. Less paperwork. Income limited only by your own business sense.

One of the few Washington private eyes to ever make it really big was Robert Maheu, a former FBI agent who set up a 15th Street shop in 1954. He handled a railroad proxy fight, hobnobbed with elite corporate clients and caught the eye of Howard Hughes, who lifted Maheu from Washington into the glittering world of Las Vegas big money and Hughes intrigue.

Another thriving area firm, Mitchell Reports, was started by a former G-man. And the company's suburban Maryland office is headed by Maurice Kennedy, a former military intelligence officer who oversees one of the three offices opened by William Mitchell.

A former Georgetown University track star, Mitchell is a big man with a firm, dry handshake and a Karl Malden face: broad forehead, deep-set, narrow slits for eyes with ample jaws that frame a straight line of a mouth.

Mitchell has given up hope of ever being able to do undercover work—he cannot shake the Bureau's ramrod manner or his police face. So he runs his Maryland, Virginia and New Jersey offices and lists his specialty as interrogation.

For the tough questions, Mitchell relies on his mechanical partner, a portable box called a Psychological Stress Evaluator which, unlike a polygraph, requires no elaborate wiring of a person. The PSE measures the degree of stress in a subject's voice and boasts a high rate of accuracy in fingering fibbers. Mitchell says he wouldn't run his shop without one.

Mitchell, sometimes with the help of his PSE, has nabbed:

- an East Coast bank clerk who was funneling other people's money into a phony account.
- two motel workers who were looting guests' rooms.
- a steel plant superintendent, executive and bookkeeper who diverted \$6 million worth of steel to their own private warehouse for later sale in Puerto Rico.

And in a bizarre incident that contrasts with the outcome of the child-molesting case Don Uffinger handled, Mitchell once found his client guilty instead of innocent.

In the course of trying to establish their client's alibi, Mitchell's investigators began to feel that they were being played for the patsy. Mitchell

asked the man to submit to a PSE examination. As Mitchell bore down, pressed for details, started to lean, his client broke, confessing to molesting numerous children, sobbing huge cries of a man who had kept secret shame locked inside him for two decades.

Solving crime, though, is usually the province of the police. Private detectives keep gas in their cars because peo-

ple distrust people. Businesses want background checks on executives angling for promotions. Wives want to know if their husbands really play cards with the guys five nights a week. During summer—the convention season—packs of private eyes follow Washington husbands to Atlantic Ocean resort spots. Jealousy is rampant

Photographed by Matthew Lewis



Former G-man William Mitchell admits he will never be able to do undercover work; he can't shake the FBI's ramrod manner or his policeman's face. His firm, Mitchell Reports, specializes in interrogation by a Psychological Stress Evaluator, the machine that spots a fibber by the stress in his voice.