

Secrecy
AND
Power

R.C. Powis

(See 34T card)

he Bureau were not the only ones alienated by all of the changes sweeping American culture, of course. An angry radical right flourished in the sixties that included H. L. Hunt, Fred Schwarz's Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, and the insubordinate General Edwin A. Walker, among many others, and for them the Kennedy administration was coming to represent the changes they feared and detested. Hoover's alienation from the New Frontier made him more than ever the idol of the right wing. Out of favor with the administration and its constituency, he symbolized the values still held by older members of middle America, by Southern whites, rich conservative Texans, and traditionalists frightened of change.¹⁷

But there were other factors eroding Bureau morale. In the late fifties and sixties, a career in the FBI was becoming less of a plum for a young lawyer. The Bureau still paid well—much better than the Secret Service, better than Justice Department lawyers of equivalent seniority, and one grade above the pay for Ph.D.s in the CIA (all testimony to Hoover's clout with Congress)—but the opportunities in private practice were even greater. The chief financial attraction of the Bureau was actually its retirement program, considered the most generous in government. Agents could retire with one-third pay after twenty years, two-thirds after thirty years. The result was again to reinforce the absolute conformity of agents and their obedience to any whim of Hoover's, so as not to jeopardize their pensions, since Hoover still could dismiss agents without appeal. (The Bureau was exempt from Civil Service Regulations, though veterans could appeal to a grievance board outside the Bureau.)¹⁸

The closed, highly disciplined Bureau, permeated with Hoover's inflexible presence, ran counter to the expectations and habits of most college graduates in the sixties. The Bureau began to have trouble recruiting new agents. In the fall of 1960, there were three occasions when new agents' classes had to be postponed for lack of applicants. Without broadcasting the fact, the Bureau began to look to nonlawyers as agents. At the beginning of the sixties, sixty-one out of 349 agent recruits were from the Bureau's clerical workers, many of whom had gone to work for the Bureau direct from high school and so were presold and preindoctrinated in the Bureau's ways, called by its critics "Bureau-think." This inbreeding, with its consequent suspicion of outsiders, was one reason why some critics charged that the Bureau had become a "secret society."¹⁹

It was around this time that veteran executives who had been

important example was the departure of Louis B. Nichols, who retired in 1959 to take a lucrative executive position with Schenley Distillers. In the opinion of many in the media, Nichols was the man most responsible for the Bureau's public relations success over the years. He had handled the Bureau's "grief" from the mid-thirties until his retirement, at which time he was one of the two assistants to the director with special responsibility for the Crime Records Division, the Bureau's publicity office.²⁰

Nichols was replaced by Cartha DeLoach, who was smooth and facile where Nichols had been overbearing and intimidating. Nichols had many faults, including an inability to organize his routine, which kept his file full of exasperated censures from Hoover. He was, however, straightforward and blunt, and would either answer a query or simply refuse to provide information without equivocation. Nor was his loyalty ever in question: He was Hoover's man every hour of his life, one of two friends and associates who named sons after Hoover (the other was an old friend from the Bureau of 1919, George Ruch.)²¹

As the Bureau diverged from the rest of the Justice Department, Hoover's aides had to try to negotiate the Bureau's relations with the department while defending themselves against Hoover's suspicions that any dealings with it indicated disloyalty to himself. Assistant Director Courtney Evans, as Hoover's liaison to the department and the White House, had the impossible task of explaining Hoover to RFK and vice versa, and keeping them both happy. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach said that the only way Evans could do this was to "explain something to Bobby one way and explain something to Hoover another way. And I don't think anybody could have done the job in any other way."²²

Hoover's age was now working to isolate him from all but the oldest political figures in Washington, and these tended to be conservative congressmen and senators from the one-party South. At the same time, his in-fighting with the Kennedys demanded greater energy and concentration, so he had to cut back on volunteer work, such as his service on the Board of the Presbyterian National Center. To complete a general constriction of his social life, aging began to take its physical toll on both him and those close to him: In 1962, he had surgery (probably a prostatectomy); the following year, Tolson had major heart surgery, followed by a series of strokes over the next few years. His older friends began to die off, and this all resulted in a greater withdrawal into the Bureau and the protection it afforded him against

Hoover's fight against the forces of change caused him to continue to let opportunities for law enforcement leadership slip away. While the country was undergoing a drastic increase in crime—in reality the first real crime wave of Hoover's career—Hoover continued to fulminate against the “beastly punks” who were coddled by “muddle-headed sentimentalists.” It was left to President Kennedy, who established the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime in May 1961, with brother Bob as chairman, to try to do something about the surge in crime.

The New Frontier's approach to the crime problem was, predictably, far from the law enforcement philosophy promoted by Hoover over the years. Robert Kennedy and the director of the president's crime committee, David Hackett (an old prep school friend), were impressed by the “opportunity theory” of Lloyd Ohlin and Richard A. Cloward. In their study, entitled *Delinquency and Opportunity* (1960), Ohlin and Cloward explained crime as the result of social barriers that blocked the middle-class aspirations of the poor. Hackett and RFK were convinced that delinquency was a “cover word” for poverty, and that, in turn, was a cover word for racial discrimination. The Juvenile Delinquency Act of September 1961 was based on Ohlin and Cloward's theories, and Ohlin was made head of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency that was established under the act.²⁴

The Kennedy administration was searching for innovative ways to grapple with the causes of crime: causes which the New Frontiersmen saw in the removal of terroristic social controls over the black community, the culture of poverty itself, and, perhaps, improved reporting of crime (one of Hoover's earliest innovations), particularly within the black community where crimes against blacks had often been ignored. They refused to follow Hoover in blaming crime on the moral failings of the poor; they tended to see it as a misguided but understandable attempt by the poor (often the nonwhite poor) to gain entry into the middle class, or at least to gain the material possessions enjoyed by the middle class. To Hoover, though, crime was an assault against the middle class and its values, and its punishment was an essential defense of that way of life.

Hoover and the Kennedys simply saw the world differently, conditioned by different experiences and different expectations. To Hoover, the values of the middle class defined the moral bounds on behavior, and so the solution to crime was to indoctrinate the young in the life style of the middle class: home, school, and church. From the

mopolitan experience, the middle class's own racial prejudices and status distinctions produced the deprivations that led to crime. For Hoover, and millions like him, the Ohlin-Cloward theory—providing social services for the poor instead of stepping up the repression—was an assault on the respectability and dignity of the middle class. Hoover had always seen middle-class morality as the normal condition from which juvenile delinquents slipped or regressed. Robert Kennedy and his aides in the Justice Department had discovered an underclass, largely black, that had never had any contact with the middle-class values Hoover defended (except to see them as alien and meaningless). By the 1960s, Hoover's ideas were so far removed from the activist philosophy of the Kennedy Justice Department that the notion of having the FBI play its earlier role in formulating national crime prevention policy was probably unimaginable to both Hoover and the Kennedys.²⁵



Ever since the Apalachin embarrassment in 1957 and Attorney General William Rogers's short-lived Special Group against organized crime, Hoover had been trying to build up the Bureau's store of information on the mobs without compromising the FBI's autonomy by joining interagency anticrime strike forces. When Robert Kennedy came to the Justice Department, with his reputation as an expert on organized crime, he had every intention of setting up a National Crime Commission to combat organized crime. But faced with Hoover's adamant opposition to any such venture, he had to abandon the proposal. Without Hoover's support, it would have been politically and practically futile.

Because of Hoover's lack of enthusiasm for such investigations, Kennedy had to rely on the department's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section of the Criminal Division (under Edwyn Silberling) rather than the FBI to coordinate information. He also went outside the Bureau to organize a team of twenty lawyers to press the investigation of Jimmy Hoffa and the Teamsters (this was the so-called Get-Hoffa squad under former FBI man Walter Sheridan).²⁶

By the end of 1961, however, Hoover had abandoned his opposition and had made organized crime an FBI priority, with Courtney Evans's Special Investigations Division spearheading the effort. Hoover's explanation of his change of heart was that until the September 1961 anti-racket laws (steered through Congress by Robert Kennedy), “the FBI



Death came in the early morning of May 2, 1972. Hoover's body lay in state in the Rotunda of the Capitol. His funeral procession wound down Pennsylvania Avenue through the official Washington where he had lived his entire life, past the White House and the Justice Department, past the still uncompleted FBI headquarters that now bears his name, and past the site of his by-then-vanished boyhood home. His grave is in the old congressional cemetery near Seward Square, a few yards from that of Clyde Tolson, who died on April 14, 1975.



Bureau began installing in King's hotel rooms in December 1963, were soon producing a mass of incriminating evidence—incriminating not in the sense that it furnished any support for the Communist-control theory, but that it gave Hoover intimate knowledge about sexual activities of King's that were hard to reconcile with his role as religious leader and moral spokesman. These revelations would lead Hoover to sanction even more aggressive attacks on King during the Johnson administration.

For Hoover, the implications of the King case were clear. The Kennedys had not broken with King, and they had not exposed him. While they had not left themselves as vulnerable as Truman had in the Harry Dexter White case, they still had in Hoover's eyes shown themselves the type of "pseudo-liberals" whose regard for the rights of Communists had time and again frustrated his anti-Communist campaigns. Another recent episode may have led Hoover to the same conclusion. In 1962, as an act of Christmas clemency, the Kennedys had released Junius Scales, who was the only Communist convicted under the membership provisions of the Smith Act. (The Foley Square Eleven and the others had been convicted of *advocating* the overthrow of the government.) The release outraged Hoover: Even though Scales had broken with the Party, he had refused to name any of his fellow Communists. "Naming names" was Hoover's price for certifying the rehabilitation of ex-Communists, and the Scales precedent, he feared, would make it impossible to insist on that test in the future. "Naming names" had long been part of anti-Communist orthodoxy, and so the Kennedys had damaged the cause. Hoover had always felt that the Communist's protectors were as dangerous as the Communist himself. Before, this conviction had pitted him against the Truman administration. Now it gave him one more reason to hate the Kennedys.

Hoover began his career providing A. Mitchell Palmer with the research, the analysis, and the strategy for the 1919–1920 antiradical drive. In the 1960s, Hoover found *himself* relying on an ambitious, younger aide for knowledge of developments in the radical movement, plans to combat it, and analyses of his agents' reports. This was William C. Sullivan, who had entered the Bureau in 1941 at the age of twenty-nine. From 1961, when Hoover promoted Sullivan to head the Bureau's Domestic Intelligence Division, until 1971, when he left the Bureau under fire, Sullivan was Hoover's window into radical America.⁴¹

Intelligence Division prepared the monograph that served as the plan for COINTELPRO against the Communist party in 1956, was responsible for the extension of that program to the Socialist Workers party in 1961, the Ku Klux Klan in 1964, the Black Nationalists in 1967, and, finally, in 1968, the New Left. William Sullivan was the FBI official most responsible for the Bureau's shift after 1963 from a strategy that stressed preparations for an "internal security emergency" (primarily utilizing the Emergency Detention Act of 1950) to one that aimed at combating domestic unrest.

By the 1960s, the tight discipline Hoover maintained over his subordinates and his insistence on absolute loyalty and conformity made it unlikely that an independent thinker would reach the top ranks. In William Sullivan, however, Hoover thought he had chosen and trained a man whose judgments he could rely on, a man of integrity and intelligence who could chart the Bureau's course through the shifting currents of American radical politics. Hoover was profoundly mistaken, however, and what he took for initiative and independence in Sullivan was in reality a surpassing ability to flatter Hoover by catering to his prejudices. Near the end of his life Hoover finally admitted that "the greatest mistake I ever made was to promote Sullivan."⁴²

William C. Sullivan was not a typical FBI executive. An exception to the rule drilled into FBI personnel that an "agent never volunteers information," Sullivan was opinionated and willing to share his ideas with an unusual range of acquaintances: professors, writers, reporters, and intellectuals. He even looked different from the conventional G-man. Unlike the smooth organization men who staffed Hoover's executive conferences, Sullivan was a short Irishman who reminded one writer of a "James Cagney type with a New England accent thrown in." He had an unpredictable personality: He was personally sloppy, typed his own memos, full of errors, and picked up the nickname "Crazy Billy" from his colleagues. There were important officials who could not abide him, including Tolson and DeLoach, but many others would not stand for a word against him even after he left the Bureau—among them Courtney Evans and John Mohr.

Like Hoover, Sullivan had a talent for turning laws and programs to purposes unforeseen by their creators. As Hoover had made use of the deportation statutes to cripple American radicalism, Sullivan adapted the techniques developed against Nazi and Soviet agents during World War II and the early cold war and used them to fight

Washington, Sullivan became the greatest expert on communism the Bureau ever produced—except for Hoover himself, of course. The Bureau's blanket surveillance of the Party put Sullivan in a position to analyze every meeting, every phone call, every conversation of the Party leadership. He probably knew more about American communism than the Communists themselves.⁴³

Hoover seems to have seen a younger version of himself in Sullivan. He encouraged Sullivan to develop anti-Communist tactics so innovative as to recall Hoover's own creative period, four decades earlier. Like the young Hoover, Sullivan understood the value of research and looked for novel ways to use the fruits of that research against his enemies. Sullivan was willing to get out of his office and talk to independent scholars and Communist intellectuals. He built up contacts among academicians, and during the early sixties even gave a series of lectures at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. He collected a personal library of 3,000 volumes on communism, which he lent to his colleagues. In all this he was almost unique; the only other man in the FBI who had ever investigated Communist thought and history so thoroughly had been Hoover himself.

In no other subordinate did Hoover ever tolerate Sullivan's sort of independence. Sullivan seemed to cast a spell over Hoover; some FBI colleagues saw a father-son bond between them. One small indication was Hoover's use of a familiar form of address with Sullivan. Hoover's practice was to call his agents "Mister." When they reached the executive level he dropped the "Mister" and called them by their last name. But Tolson he called Clyde; Louis Nichols was Nick. After Nichols left the Bureau in 1959, the only man Hoover ever again called by a nickname or first name was Bill Sullivan.⁴⁴

On August 23, 1963, at the height of his investigation of the Martin Luther King-Stanley Levison-Jack O'Dell relationship, Sullivan gave Hoover a sixty-seven-page brief on the Communist party's efforts to infiltrate the civil rights movement. Sullivan's report concluded, "There has been an obvious failure of the Communist Party of the United States to appreciably infiltrate, influence, or control large numbers of American Negroes in this country." The report did contain the careful qualification that "time alone will tell" whether future efforts by the Party to exploit blacks would be as unsuccessful as those in the past. Nevertheless, Sullivan's meaning was plainly that Communist infiltration of the civil rights movement need be of no further concern to the Bureau or the country.⁴⁵

Hoover was baffled. Sullivan's

keep his eyes off it. He was fired." They had to carry handkerchiefs, because the director was supposed not to like moist handshakes.

A trainee would remember his introduction to Hoover the rest of his life. "The face was impossible, like papier-mâché, and much older than any of the photographs revealed, but there was strength in those hard eyes and in his hand as we exchanged a firm Bureau handshake that would have made our administrator proud."

In January 1962, a disgruntled ex-agent, Jack Levine, sent a thirty-eight-page memo to Herbert J. Miller, the assistant attorney general in charge of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department, complaining about Hoover's management of the Bureau. Levine's complaints ranged over topics like anti-Semitism, racial prejudice, and right-wing proselytizing, but almost all concerned Hoover's unlimited power over the lives and careers of agents.⁶¹

Like other agents, Levine recounted many of the folktales that illustrated the power of Hoover's prejudices in the administration of the Bureau. There were stories about a supervisor fired because he had hired a clerk with pimples, another criticized for buying *Playboy* "because the Director looks upon those who read such magazines as moral degenerates." Levine himself was advised to resign because a whiskey bottle was found in an apartment where he was rooming. These "unreasonable perfectionist attitudes of the Bureau and the futility in protesting or offering constructive criticism," he said, made agents afraid to bring problems to the attention of headquarters, so headquarters was denied the information needed to administer the FBI intelligently.

One reason for the demoralization of the Bureau, Levine thought, was Hoover's practice of enforcing regulations by means of disciplinary transfers. Levine pointed out the severe economic consequences for the agents of this policy, which may have been an important factor in turning the Bureau into an organization of yes-men. When Hoover established his system of discipline, agents rented their homes or lived in rooming houses or hotels. In the years after World War II, however, America had become a nation of homeowners, and agents owned homes, too. Now an administrative transfer—orders to report immediately to a post that was likely to be on the other side of the continent—was a catastrophe that could cost an agent thousands of dollars from a forced sale. Agents were willing to do almost anything to avoid the director's wrath if it meant that kind of punishment.

Levine also thought that the strict rules and regulations had become

recourse for many agents was to evade rules, falsify records, and otherwise compromise their integrity. The result was moral rot pervading the Bureau, caused, ironically, by the very system Hoover had installed to prevent dishonest and unprofessional behavior. Levine offered as an extreme example the system of "voluntary" overtime combined with demands that the Bureau show an improvement in this area each year. At the time Levine wrote, the quota had reached the incredible average of three and a half hours per day per agent. Widespread cheating was necessary to achieve this, and since everyone was doing it, administrative chaos resulted, which allowed many to evade all supervision. Levine also reported that pressure for convictions led to unreported use of illegal microphone surveillance, wiretaps, and mail openings.

William C. Sullivan's decision to swallow his principles and misrepresent his convictions about the danger of communism in America in 1963 had drastic consequences for American society. The ease with which he abandoned his convictions on that critical matter may have been conditioned by countless smaller compromises he had had to make over the years to survive in Hoover's FBI. Hoover's system of leadership was turning his men into liars, and so, eventually, he had to rely on liars for advice.



On November 22, 1963, Robert Kennedy was holding a luncheon meeting at Hickory Hill, his home in McLean, Virginia: the topic was organized crime. Back at the Justice Department, Angie Novello, his secretary, was too overcome by the news from Dallas to be able to call her boss. Hoover placed the call for her. Kennedy later remembered that the director said, " 'I have news for you. The President's been shot.' Or, 'I have news for you' and I might have said, 'What?' and he said, 'The President's been shot.' And—well, I don't know what I said—probably 'oh' or something—and I don't know whether he then—I asked him or got into whether it was serious, and I think he said, 'I think it's serious.' He said, 'I'll call you back . . . when I find out more.' I don't remember anything more of that conversation." When Hoover called back, Kennedy recalled that "he was not a very warm or sympathetic figure"; Hoover did not seem upset. "Not quite as excited as if he was reporting the fact that he found a Communist on the faculty of Howard University."⁶²

In such circumstances, a failure to unmistakably express comfort

whether deliberate or not, was gradually interpreted by RFK and his friends as calculated heartlessness. It is far more likely, however, that Hoover had other things on his mind, because once again, there had been an enormous failure of American intelligence. Hoover was untouched by the Bay of Pigs fiasco, but that had cost Allen Dulles his job, and Dulles was a man who had been in government even longer than Hoover: He had entered government service in 1916. Now, as after Pearl Harbor, there was no telling where the blame would fall, and Hoover had to learn whether he could be held to account.

As soon as word of the assassination reached Washington, Hoover put together a preliminary report that he gave to Lyndon Johnson the next day. From the very beginning of the investigation, everyone involved—Hoover, the FBI, the CIA, and then the Warren Commission—was under pressure to issue a report that would convince the public that Oswald was the lone assassin. In a phone conversation with Johnson aide Walter Jenkins, Hoover said, “The thing I am most concerned about, and so is Mr. Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin.” Katzenbach was even more specific: “Speculation about Oswald’s motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists.” On December 9, 1963, soon after the commission was named, Katzenbach wrote each member asking them to issue a press release stating that the FBI report said Oswald was the lone assassin.⁶³

Behind this rush to provide documentation for this lone assassin position was fear, on the part of the White House, of public reaction if any of the circumstantial evidence linking Castro to the assassination were to become known. This is not to say that anyone was convinced that Castro was definitely responsible, but there was so much seeming plausibility to the chain of events connecting Havana to Dallas that the White House feared uncontrollable demands for revenge against the Cuban leader. Because of the agreement that had ended the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962 (the United States guaranteed it would not attack Cuba if the Russians removed their missiles), a renewed conflict with Cuba would certainly have created a new confrontation with the Soviet Union, whose outcome could not be foreseen.

As far as Hoover knew, the CIA plots to assassinate Castro had been halted in 1962. This was, however, not the case. The CIA had a highly placed contact in the Castro government, Rolando Cubela,

plot the demise of the Cuban leader. On September 7, Castro gave an unusual interview to an Associated Press reporter in which he stated that he knew about planned attempts on his life, and said, “We are prepared to fight and answer in kind. United States leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe.” On September 12, 1963, the Coordinating Committee for Cuban Affairs, which was in charge of the assassination plots, agreed that Castro might retaliate in some way. Nevertheless, on the very day President Kennedy was assassinated—in fact, while the killing was taking place—a CIA case officer in Washington was telling AMLASH he would be given a gun and other assassination weapons to use against Castro. “As AMLASH and the case officer broke up their meeting, they were told the President had been assassinated.”⁶⁴

Hoover pushed his agents hard to complete their investigation quickly because the House, the Senate, and the State of Texas were all planning their own studies. The FBI report was delivered to Johnson on December 5. According to William Sullivan, Hoover tried to head off any other inquiry into the assassination by leaking an advance copy of the report to the press. Johnson, however, knew that even Hoover’s prestige was not high enough to allow him to declare the matter settled on the basis of the FBI’s conclusion. To mollify Hoover, Johnson told him that he had wanted to “get by” on just the FBI report, but because of all the rumors, he had to have a high-level committee evaluate it. Hoover regarded the Warren Commission as a potential adversary, its very existence a threat, and so the Bureau’s main concern during the investigation it conducted for the Warren Commission was to protect its own reputation and avoid criticism.⁶⁵

The assassination of John F. Kennedy seemed to place Hoover in the role he had so often played in the past: reassuring the public that the government had a dangerous situation under control. But while Hoover’s agents conducted the Warren Commission’s investigation, the result of his own investigation of the Bureau’s handling of the Oswald case was a blow to his confidence in the abilities of the FBI.

The Bureau had first opened its Oswald security file on October 31, 1959, when it learned that Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union. The FBI’s investigation at that time concluded that even though Oswald’s experience in the U.S. Marines had placed him in proximity

Hoover did suggest to the State Department, though, that Oswald's identity might be used by the Russians to slip an impostor back into the United States.

In June 1962, after his return from Russia, Oswald was interviewed by the FBI. His case was closed on August 20, 1962, after a second interview, even though the field agents in Fort Worth, Texas, found him hostile and evasive, and there were many suspicious circumstances that might have been followed up. The Bureau's position was that Oswald's marriage to Marina in Russia, which certainly had to be approved by the authorities, would have been unlikely if they were going to use him as an agent. The Secret Service, on the other hand, thought that letting Oswald have a Russian wife might have been envisioned by the Soviets as giving them a future hold over him.

In September 1962, shortly before the October missile crisis, the Bureau learned that Oswald had subscribed to a Communist paper, *The Worker*, which contradicted his statements that he was disenchanted with communism. When combined with one or more other suspicious activities, that subscription would have been enough to qualify Oswald for the Emergency Detention list under the rules then in effect, but the agents neglected to follow through.⁶⁶

Special Agent James Hosty of the Dallas field office, who had been assigned the Marina Oswald file, finally noticed Oswald's *Worker* subscription and recommended reopening the case. Approval was given on March 26, 1963. In April, the New York office learned that Oswald had joined the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and had been passing out pro-Castro material in Dallas. This information was not reported to Dallas until the end of June, and was not sent to Washington until September.

In August, Oswald moved to New Orleans, which was at that time a hot-bed of anti-Castro activity. On August 1, 1963, in fact, the FBI seized a ton of dynamite and other weapons that anti-Castroites had stockpiled near New Orleans. While he was in New Orleans, Oswald tried to join one anti-Castro group on August 7, and was then arrested when he was spotted passing out pro-Castro material by a member of the group he had tried to join, who scuffled with him. Evidently, Oswald, whether he was acting on his own or under instructions, had been trying to infiltrate the group. On this occasion, Oswald requested another interview with the FBI; again he misrepresented his politics and political activities. Later that month, Oswald took part in a radio debate during which he defended Castro and

The most obvious danger signal missed by the Bureau was in September, when Oswald left New Orleans and went to Mexico City, where he met with a diplomat at the Soviet embassy who was also an officer in the KGB. The Bureau even believed the diplomat belonged to a KGB unit responsible for assassination and sabotage assignments. Oswald also attempted to meet Cuban officials in Mexico City to get permission for a trip to Havana. The report on Oswald's activities in Mexico City was on a desk in Washington on November 22.⁶⁷

In early November, the Dallas office learned that Oswald had returned to Dallas and was working at the Texas Book depository. Agent Hosty interviewed Oswald's wife, who seemed afraid. Two weeks before the assassination, Oswald visited the Bureau's Dallas office and left a note for Hosty that threatened to blow up the FBI and the Dallas Police Department if Hosty did not stop bothering Marina. Two days after the assassination, Hosty later reported, he destroyed the note on orders from his supervisor.

The Bureau's initial internal investigation after the assassination convinced Hoover that the FBI's handling of the case was so deficient that the only way to minimize criticism, since the Bureau could probably not escape it completely, was to fix all blame on Lee Harvey Oswald as a lone assassin, unaided by any conspiracy that might have (1) tied the killing to prior CIA plots or (2) raised the question of why the FBI was unaware of a widespread plot.

Everyone concerned with the investigation had reason for keeping it focused exclusively on Oswald. For this reason, Hoover assigned the work for the Warren Commission to his Criminal Investigations Division, rather than the Intelligence Division that had handled the Oswald security file. Despite the Bureau's awareness of the CIA involvement in assassination attempts, the FBI did not investigate possible Cuban government involvement, and there were no interviews of Cuban informants. In July 1964 (two months before the release of the Warren Report), when FBI headquarters finally learned of the AMLASH plot, the agents conducting the investigation for the Warren Commission were not informed.

The results of the FBI's internal investigation, ordered while the Warren Commission investigation was still under way, contained a devastating analysis of FBI deficiencies: "Oswald should have been on the Security Index; his wife should have been interviewed before the assassination, and investigation intensified—not held in abeyance—after Oswald contacted Soviet Embassy in Mexico." Hoover's immedi-

The Inspection Division warned him that such disciplinary action might prove embarrassing. The Warren Commission might subpoena agents who would then have to say that they had been punished for their handling of the case; their punishment would surely be interpreted as an admission by the FBI that its handling of the case had been deficient. Hoover refused to delay, saying, "In any event such gross incompetency cannot be overlooked nor administrative action postponed." Even after DeLoach wrote a long memo warning against the public relations danger of admitting the Bureau was in the wrong by punishing FBI personnel, Hoover wrote, "I do not concur," and, on December 10, sent out seventeen censures (including one to William C. Sullivan) for "shortcomings in connection with the investigation of Oswald prior to the assassination."⁶⁸

Hoover was particularly outraged that Oswald had not been on the list of individuals considered dangerous enough to be picked up in wartime. When every FBI official who studied the case came back with the conclusion that under the prevailing criteria, Oswald had not qualified for the list, Hoover replied, "They were worse than mistaken. Certainly no one in full possession of all his faculties can claim Oswald didn't fall within this criteria."

When the Warren Report was released on September 24, 1964, Hoover ordered a thorough review of what it said about the Bureau. "Chapter 8 tears us to pieces," he said. He was informed that "the Commission has now set forth in a very damning manner some of the same glaring weaknesses for which we previously disciplined our personnel such as lack of vigorous investigation after we had established that Oswald visited the Soviet Embassy in Mexico." He was also told that some of the agents' testimony makes the Bureau "look ridiculous and taints its public image." (An agent had referred to the Dallas police station as resembling "Yankee Stadium during the World Series games," which the Inspection Division called "editorializing and flamboyant.")⁶⁹

Hoover's fury against the offending agents boiled over again because the Warren Commission report revealed to the public some of the Bureau's failings that he had already uncovered. The Inspection Division urged more disciplinary action. Hoover informed his executives that the personnel who did not include Oswald on the Security Index "could not have been more stupid . . . and now that the Bureau has been debunked publicly I intend to take additional administrative action." Four days after the release of the report, eight of the original

that this was a mistake because it would be interpreted as admitting, "See, the Commission is right, Mr. Hoover has taken strong action against personnel involved in this case and thus admits that the Bureau was in error." Hoover replied, "We were wrong. The administrative action approved by me will stand." Then he made an astonishing statement: "I do not intend to palliate actions which have resulted in forever destroying the Bureau as the top level investigative organization."⁷⁰

As always when criticized by outsiders, Hoover ferociously defended the Bureau against the Warren report even while he was saying, within the walls of the Bureau, that "there is no question in my mind but that we failed in carrying through some of the most salient aspects of the Oswald investigation. It ought to be a lesson to all, but I doubt if some even realize it now." He ordered a rebuttal of the Warren Commission for the few mild criticisms it made of the Bureau, and he insisted that the FBI counterattack start at once. His aides suggested releasing to the press the Bureau's criticism of the Warren Commission several days before sending the commission a copy, so that the Commission's eventual reply would have less impact. Hoover agreed, saying the Bureau did not owe the Commission any courtesy, and that if the Bureau did not strike back hard, "we might as well lay down and let anybody and everybody kick us around and not defend nor retaliate."⁷¹

Hoover's shock at the poor performance of the FBI revealed by the assassination did not seem to be shared by his top executives, who treated the matter strictly as a public relations problem. A month after the report was released, DeLoach reported to the Executive Conference that the Bureau had been damaged by the Warren Commission, but that the damage could be overcome with a combination of expanded press relations and investigative achievement; they should adopt Hoover's maxim, DeLoach said, that "nothing is more devastating to a smear than an offensive of real outstanding accomplishments." Hoover himself, who took the episode to heart (it was "his Bureau" that had done this to him) was not so sure: He said sadly that "the FBI will never live down this smear which could have been so easily avoided if there had been proper supervision and initiative."⁷²

There was another FBI failure relating to the assassination that Hoover never spoke of and never admitted. Throughout the three years of Kennedy's presidency, Hoover knew of the massive amount of hate mail the president received, much of it violent and filled with

he stood in constant danger of attack. Though the country had not yet begun the decade of assassinations that Jack Kennedy's death inaugurated, the director of the Bureau that had been designed as the chief executive's main arm of defense against crime should have been more alert to the threat to the president's safety that these slanders represented. Perhaps Hoover was less vigilant because he, too, disliked the Kennedys. But not even Robert Kennedy had fully appreciated the amount of hatred that had been focused on his brother by 1963: "the Teamsters, the gangsters, the pro-Castro Cubans, the anti-Castro Cubans, the racists, the right-wing fanatics, the lonely deluded nuts mumbling to themselves in the night." Hoover's greatest failure under Kennedy may have been his blindness to the implications of the rabid opposition the president was attracting, and from this followed his failure to provide the White House with pointed commentary and intelligence on the magnitude of the threat to Kennedy.⁷³

Hoover's recognition of the FBI's vulnerability because of its handling of the Oswald security file may have affected the way he conducted his affairs under Kennedy successor. Hoover knew and liked Lyndon Johnson, vastly preferring him to the Kennedys. Now he had one more reason for making clear his loyalty to Johnson: It was obvious to Hoover that his only safety lay in complete and absolute subservience to Lyndon Baines Johnson, who was going to make the final decision as to whether any heads would roll.

Hoover's aversion to Kennedy, Kennedy's men, and the values of the New Frontier made him seek refuge against the tumultuous, changing world outside the Bureau. His few ventures away from the Bureau were to the protected environs of exclusive hotels in Florida and Southern California, and the homes of his rich Texas and Hollywood friends. He had dropped all social contact with surviving relatives, even with his niece, Dickinson's daughter, who worked in the fugitive section of the Bureau, and with Lillian's son, his nephew Fred, an FBI agent who retired in 1952. (Fred's son, Fred Robinette III, became an agent in 1968.) His only personal relationship continued to be with Tolson, and Tolson's health was disintegrating markedly after his 1963 heart surgery. Tolson now looked weak, painfully thin, and much older than Hoover, even though he was five years his junior.

The Bureau was Hoover's home now; it had absorbed the essence of the Victorian-era Seward Square. The Seward Square of the sixties,

have seemed an abandoned (and somewhat embarrassing) husk, part of the disordered society that was lapping at the edges of the safe haven Hoover had created for himself within the FBI. Since May 1960, there had been a plan to merge several Methodist churches into one that would be housed in a new building to be constructed on the site of Hoover's old home. In February 1963, when construction was about to begin, a New Jersey woman told the FBI that she was ready to head a citizens' committee to preserve 413 Seward Square if Hoover approved, and Capitol Hill neighborhood organizations rounded up endorsements from groups claiming to represent 12 million Americans. But like the Central High alumni at the time the school had passed into black hands, Hoover preferred to let his past vanish rather than have it preserved in the declassified possession of blacks. He passed along word that he did not want to take part in this movement and ordered that "any further efforts in this regard be discouraged."⁷⁴ The church built on the site in 1966 has a stained-glass window dedicated to Hoover with the motto "Statesmanship Through the Christian Virtues."

After the assassination, Hoover's barely suppressed resentment of RFK surfaced, now fueled by his need to prove his absolute loyalty to Lyndon Johnson. The story was circulated that when Kennedy tried to use the direct phone to Hoover's desk, Hoover let it ring until it stopped, then said, "Put that damn thing back on Miss Gandy's desk where it belongs." Hoover thought that Courtney Evans was too close to Kennedy, so he replaced Evans as liaison to the department and the White House with Cartha DeLoach, who had gotten to know Johnson when he was the Bureau's congressional liaison; DeLoach was, moreover, a Southerner (from Georgia).⁷⁵

Robert Kennedy made gracious overtures to Hoover in an attempt to at least preserve civilities. In December, Kennedy gave his staff, including Hoover, engraved cuff links as a souvenir of their years together, and Hoover, to give him credit, responded with a handwritten note of thanks for "a constant reminder of a friendship I shall always treasure." It is doubtful, however, that Ethel Kennedy's attempt to loosen Hoover up when the cuff links were given out did her husband any good. She teased him, "Don't you think Chief Parker [of the Los Angeles Police Force, whom Hoover detested] is a wonderful man? Don't you think that if you ever retired, he'd be the man to

replied meekly, 'Yes, Ethel.'” In May 1964, Kennedy made another peace overture: Congratulating Hoover on his fortieth anniversary as director, he wrote, “In the past few months I have not had the pleasure of associating with you as closely as formerly. I regret this but would not want this occasion to pass without congratulating you on this milestone and wishing you well in the future.”⁷⁶ (Hoover replied that “Time flies by very fast indeed when a person is engaged in the type of work he enjoys doing.”) Kennedy thought, wrongly, that things were on the mend and told his press secretary, “I am glad we wrote him.”

While cultivating Johnson, Hoover let it be known, with an air of satisfaction, that “I didn’t speak to Bobby Kennedy the last six months he was in office.” (He left in September 1964 to run for the Senate in New York.) And Kennedy, when he learned that Hoover had begun to deal directly with the White House without notifying him, sadly told an aide, “Those people don’t work for us anymore.”⁷⁷

Robert Kennedy’s friends bitterly resented what they interpreted as Hoover’s lack of compassion for Bob and his haste to ingratiate himself with Johnson (but, with Johnson hating and fearing Kennedy as he did, even if Hoover had not disliked Kennedy, Johnson would have insisted on Hoover’s help against him). In fact, the feelings of Kennedy’s friends were so intense on the subject of Johnson that some considered Special Assistant for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy a traitor for staying on under LBJ. It was easy for Hoover to exploit Johnson’s fear of a Kennedy plot to overthrow him in 1964. He knew that any speculations he passed on to the White House in that regard would get a ready hearing from Johnson, who was eager to believe the worst of Robert Kennedy.

It had been a foregone conclusion, under President Kennedy, that Hoover would have had to leave when he reached the mandatory retirement age on New Year’s Day, 1965. The assassination had changed everything. It had carried one of Hoover’s oldest and closest friends into power at the White House, a president who craved the kind of loyal service only Hoover knew how to give. As 1964 began, Hoover had every reason to hope that Kennedy’s end meant that his own had been indefinitely postponed.

CHAPTER 12

LBJ’s FBI

I’d rather have him inside the tent pissing out than outside pissing in.

LBJ’s perhaps apocryphal explanation of why he kept Hoover as FBI Director.¹

WHEN LYNDON JOHNSON took over the presidency he was surrounded by Kennedy loyalists. Some of them resented Johnson for taking command so quickly. Others harbored grudges over slights, real or imagined, to the prerogatives of the Kennedy family. All of them felt that fate and Johnson had snatched the power they had won in 1960, and which should have been theirs till at least 1968. It did not matter that Johnson paid regular tribute to the memory of the lost leader, or that Johnson turned his legislative program into a memorial to the dead president; there was still resentment of Johnson as a usurper—in the minds of some, a particularly loutish and graceless usurper. And always, Johnson was conscious of the hovering figure of the slain president’s brother Robert, the one person in politics Johnson most hated and feared, stationed where he could do the most damage, in the government’s most strategic domestic office, that of attorney general.

In November 1963, Johnson desperately needed men whose loyalty he could count on, men who would, in a famous LBJism, kiss his

smelled like a rose. Lyndon Johnson knew J. Edgar Hoover, knew him well, had known him as a friend and a neighbor for some twenty years. Johnson never quite put Hoover to the Macy's window test, but he did get many tokens of loyalty and praise from him. After a televised tour of the LBJ hill country, Hoover told Johnson the program "was excellent and more particularly brought out your humbleness and your down to earth characteristics"; Hoover described a televised news conference as "terrific. The soundness and sincerity of your answers were masterful. I only wish our Washington Senators Baseball Team had an outfielder as capable in fielding some of the hot ones you handled. They were certainly loaded but you handled them like a Mickey Mantle." More importantly, by defending Johnson and attacking his enemies, Hoover proved that he was a man Johnson could trust.²

Hoover's warm relationship with Johnson had begun nearly twenty years earlier, in 1945, when Lyndon and Lady Bird bought their first house in Washington. It was on Thirtieth Place in the northwest section of Washington, a suburban block of detached, two-story houses in varied architectural styles, separated only by carefully tended lawns and shrubbery, the same block to which Hoover had moved in 1939. The neighborhood children got to know Hoover and he got to know the Johnson girls. Later in his life, Hoover used to tell stories of his years as Johnson's neighbor: When Johnson was in the Senate and "we were neighbors," he said, Johnson "had a little dog he called Little Beagle Johnson. Every few days he would come over in the evening and say, 'Edgar, Little Beagle Johnson's gone again. Let's go find him' and we would go off looking all over the neighborhood."³

Johnson's last attorney general, Ramsey Clark, felt that the nearly two decades they spent as neighbors "almost disqualified" Johnson from being able to properly supervise Hoover. "The Johnson daughters felt he was a rich uncle or something. Not that they'd see him that much, but in the old days he'd occasionally come over for breakfast on Sunday." For LBJ, who was "young enough to have grown up in the Dillinger days and he liked that sort of thing," Hoover was still America's Number One G-man.⁴

For his part, Hoover admired Johnson. Some of his best friends were Texans like Clint Murchison and Sid Richardson, and he said of Johnson, "You can't box him in. He will do as he pleases, whether right or wrong as far as security is concerned. Texans don't like to be told what to do. This is characteristic of Texans. They are a separate

Hoover's presence in Johnson's administration was reassuring to those people most upset by Johnson's Great Society and civil rights policies. When LBJ decided to keep Hoover as director, he received hundreds of letters congratulating him on his decision; some even recommended that he consider Hoover for higher office: secretary general of the United Nations, for example. One writer thought Johnson should split the recently resigned Arthur Goldberg's Supreme Court seat between Hoover and Tolson and make them co-justices. Conservative columnist Russell Kirk wanted Hoover as attorney general. There were many Americans who simply relied on Hoover and they would accept no substitute. In December 1964, Art Buchwald took a harmless dig at Hoover by claiming he was a "mythical person first thought up by the Reader's Digest." One of Johnson's Texas friends wrote LBJ that he knew many people who believed the story, and he asked for an affidavit that he could show to "certain people in Dallas" to prove Hoover was "a real live individual." Hoover's supporters might not have been all that sophisticated, but they were fiercely and humorlessly loyal.⁶

With the prestige and political backing Hoover had throughout the country, his presence would help prove that civil rights was not a Communist plot (or, at least, not only a Communist plot); only with Hoover at its head could the FBI serve effectively as a signal of the government's disgust with racial violence in the South. Given the FBI's past resistance to active civil rights enforcement, it was also felt that only Hoover's unquestioned authority over the Bureau could ensure that Field agents would actually comply with a drastic shift in the Bureau's civil rights policy.

Hoover was also useful to Johnson when the law-and-order backlash to racial demonstrations and ghetto riots made crime as important as Vietnam as a political issue. In 1966, Johnson was able to draw on Hoover's prestige to give some credibility to his anticrime program, and as a gesture of the administration's concern about the crime issue, LBJ proposed to Congress a sixfold increase in enrollment at the FBI's National Academy to facilitate the training of local police officers.

A friendship with Lyndon Johnson was rarely conducted on a basis of equality. Johnson was domineering, even cruel in his dealings with his closest associates, sending them through wild mood swings of depression and exaltation as he lavished or withheld affection. In contrast, the Hoover-Johnson arrangement was more like a genuine

some of Hoover's mannerisms (he complained that Hoover spoke so fast he couldn't understand him), but he also called Hoover regularly for wide-ranging discussions on the issues of the day; Johnson simply liked to talk to an old friend who sympathized with his problems. (Johnson's diary lists some sixty phone conversations with Hoover during his administration.)⁷

While Johnson treated Hoover with great respect, both of them knew Hoover was vulnerable because of the Bureau's questionable performance in the Oswald security case, which had put it in an adversarial relationship with the Warren Commission. Hoover was even more vulnerable because of his age. He would reach the mandatory retirement age of seventy on January 1, 1965. Once Johnson decided that having Hoover would help him consolidate his power, however, he made the waiver of mandatory retirement as painless as possible. The normal procedure was for the overage official to retire and then be rehired as an annuitant, meaning he had to be rehired every year. (This is what Hoover did for Tolson in 1970.) By using the mechanism of a waiver, Johnson ensured that it would take a positive act by any future president to get rid of Hoover; had Hoover been an annuitant, his superior—the attorney general—would have had to recommend to the president a new reappointment each year. At the time Johnson made the waiver, Robert Kennedy was the attorney general. Since no one knew the future, the assumption was that it would have been Kennedy who would have had to recommend Hoover's reappointment. (As it happened, Kennedy left the Justice Department in September 1964.)⁸

The ceremony Johnson staged in the White House Rose Garden to announce the waiver of retirement was both graceful and gracious.

J. Edgar Hoover is a hero to millions of decent citizens, and an anathema to evil men. No other American, now or in our past, has served the cause of justice so faithfully and so well. . . .

J. Edgar Hoover has served the government since 1917—he has served nine Presidents, and this Sunday, he celebrates his fortieth year as Director of the FBI. Under his guiding hand, the FBI has become the greatest investigation body in history. . . .

Edgar, the law says that you must retire next January when you reach your seventieth birthday, and I know you wouldn't want to break the law.

But the nation cannot afford to lose you. Therefore, by virtue of and pursuant to the authority vested in the President, I have today signed

One of the most effective ways Hoover could reciprocate and thus demonstrate his loyalty to Johnson was to attack Robert Kennedy. Until Robert Kennedy's death, Hoover kept up a running feud with him, which must surely have been gratifying to Johnson. The most sensational was a 1966 row over whether RFK had authorized the FBI's use of microphones (involving illegal trespasses) in organized crime investigations while he was attorney general. News commentator Robert Spivack said "There is little doubt that J. Edgar Hoover has severely damaged the image of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, particularly among young people to whose idealism Kennedy has appealed. By portraying him as party to what is essentially the dirty business of snooping, Hoover is saying that Kennedy is no innocent, but a hard and ruthless young man on the make." Congressman Wayne Hays of Ohio got in touch with Johnson to let him know how much he had enjoyed the rhubarb, and suggested that "you should fire J. Edgar Hoover on the strength of Bobby Kennedy's statements and answer the backlash by pointing at Kennedy. . . . This is your best bet for getting rid of both men."¹⁰

Immediately after John Kennedy's assassination, Hoover started to bypass Robert Kennedy and deal directly with the White House. Robert Kennedy had earlier felt that even though it was difficult, it was "not too bad" working with Hoover; in April 1964, however, he told an interviewer Hoover was "dangerous" and was "rather a psycho." He thought the FBI was "a very dangerous organization . . . and I think he's . . . senile and rather frightening." A sign of Hoover's hostility was his removal of Courtney Evans as White House liaison, replacing him with an old friend of Johnson's, Cartha DeLoach, head of the Crime Records Division, who had known Johnson since the Senate days. DeLoach achieved an extraordinary degree of intimacy with Johnson. Hoover tolerated this, although there were rumors that he was jealous of DeLoach's rapport with LBJ. Hoover knew Johnson's personality, his incessant demands on his subordinates' time and his need for constant reassurance of their loyalty, and so the director was grateful for the buffer DeLoach provided between himself and the president. DeLoach was apprehensive that Hoover *would* become jealous, however, and he begged Johnson to check with Hoover before asking personal favors of him.¹¹

One reason DeLoach was so useful to Johnson was that he was a figure of political significance in his own right; he had inherited the extensive network of media contacts developed by Louis Nichols,

as well as provide access to the press for manipulating public opinion through selective leaks. DeLoach's role as a power in the American Legion also made him a useful ally for the White House. The Bureau had always been concerned about the Legion's tendency to run amuck hunting for spies and subversives. In 1953 Hoover had given DeLoach responsibility for straightening out the Legion; to do this, DeLoach gained control of the Americanism Committee of the Legion, which let him orchestrate the Legion's political platform, leading a reporter to call the Legion's annual conventions "FBI productions." As the Vietnam War escalated, DeLoach encouraged the Legion to back Johnson's war policy, and brought delegations from the Legion to the White House as a show of support at critical moments.¹²

Because of the extraordinary rapport between them, there was no service Hoover would refuse Johnson, no matter how far removed it might be from his law enforcement or domestic intelligence responsibilities. Not since the FDR-Hoover relationship was there anything approaching the political use the Johnson administration made of the FBI.

During the 1964 Democratic convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Hoover sent a team of agents under DeLoach to collect information on the political opposition (chiefly the Mississippi Freedom Democrats' challenge to the regular [Jim Crow] Mississippi delegation) and to monitor the possibility of a convention stampede to nominate Robert Kennedy for vice president against Johnson's wishes. The Bureau sent Johnson's aides a stream of political intelligence. This was done, of course, without Kennedy's knowledge, and since Kennedy was still attorney general at the time, Hoover's loyalty to Johnson had put him in the position of spying on his immediate superior. DeLoach later wrote presidential aide Bill Moyers, "I'm certainly glad that we were able to come through with vital tidbits from time to time which were of assistance to you and Walter [Jenkins]." The tidbits consisted of forty-four pages of memoranda gained from wiretaps on the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) headquarters, and telephone messages on "minute to minute developments." The Bureau team also worked to create difficulties for demonstrators against Johnson. Johnson later congratulated Hoover on the intelligence the Bureau had furnished during the convention, calling it "one of the finest [jobs] the President had ever seen."¹³

Johnson used the Bureau for other political tasks. He had DeLoach

arrest on charges of making a homosexual approach in a YMCA restroom in October 1964. At the outset, before it was clear that the situation could not be contained, the White House had DeLoach explore ways of controlling the damage without destroying Jenkins, one of Johnson's most trusted and valued aides. Other services included a background check on members of Barry Goldwater's campaign staff. During the 1968 campaign, Johnson suspected the Republicans of plotting with the South Vietnamese to delay negotiations in Paris until after the elections, and so Hoover looked into alleged contacts between Spiro Agnew and China lobby member Anna Chennault, but was unable to give Johnson the evidence he wanted.¹⁴

Hoover also provided LBJ with foreign intelligence. It is possible that Johnson did not trust the CIA after the Bay of Pigs operation and the Kennedy assassination. In any case, following the 1964 invasion he ordered Hoover to establish an FBI intelligence post in the Dominican Republic and he thought enough of the FBI's performance in that country to ask Hoover to recommend possible candidates for appointment as U.S. ambassador there.¹⁵

The relationship between Hoover and Johnson was so close that it encouraged both men to use the Bureau in all these ways, which would have been impossible if they had felt constrained to observe any of the formalities of normal Justice Department protocol. The confidence bred in Hoover by his friendship with LBJ made him defiant and contemptuous toward his Justice Department superiors, and reinforced him in his belief that the Bureau should be subject only to his will as he acted for the president in the best interest of the nation.



Lyndon Johnson inherited a Justice Department that was making enormous efforts to reorient American law enforcement toward the understanding and prevention of crime instead of just denouncing and repressing it. In 1963, Robert Kennedy's Committee on Poverty and the Federal Administration of Federal Criminal Justice (chaired by Francis A. Allen) recommended that a recognition of crime's roots in the culture of poverty be made the basis of federal law enforcement and proposed a new Office of Criminal Justice to implement the shift in philosophy. In 1964, the new Criminal Justice Act established that office under the direction of the deputy attorney general, Nicholas Katzenbach. The Office of Criminal Justice, said Robert Kennedy, would "deal with social problems that affect the criminal process, such as poverty, mental illness, and drug addiction."

26. Ibid., p. 269; Navasky, *Kennedy Justice*, p. 26.
27. Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 264.
28. Guthman, *We Band of Brothers*, p. 266.
29. Kennedy was in favor of court-ordered wiretapping for criminal investigations and urged Congress, unsuccessfully, to pass such legislation. The taps he approved while he was attorney general were almost exclusively for national security cases (Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 271). See also Guthman, *We Band of Brothers*, p. 263. The dispute surfaced in 1966, and is carefully discussed in Navasky, *Kennedy Justice*, p. 80.
30. Navasky, *Kennedy Justice*, p. 81; Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 269.
31. Ollestad, *Inside the FBI*, p. 129; Levine, *Memo on the FBI*, p. 7, JFKL.
32. Schlesinger remarks that even to call this tokenism "would have been wild overstatement" (Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 292).
33. Navasky, *Kennedy Justice*, p. 100.
34. For John F. Kennedy's dilemmas in the area of civil rights, see Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, p. 930; John Doar and Dorothy Landsberg, *The Performance of the FBI in Investigating Violations of Federal Laws Protecting the Right to Vote—1960–1967*, U.S. Senate, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence, *Hearings*, Vol. 6, FBI, 94th Cong., 1st sess., p. 948.
35. David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.: From "Solo" to Memphis* (New York: Norton, 1981), p. 41. The other principal source for this discussion is Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 79–184, "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., A Case Study." The FBI's source was one of the Bureau's most trusted informants on the Party, code-named "Solo."
36. Both Navasky, *Kennedy Justice*, p. 152, and Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 359, point out the possible connection between the White case and the Kennedys' response to the allegations about King.
37. Garrow, *FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.*, p. 45.
38. Ibid., p. 55.
39. Executive Committee of Director, Nov. 22, 1955, FBI File, 66–6200–?, in Max Rafferty Papers, JFKL; Garrow, *FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.*, p. 56. The fact that Hoover and DeLoach tried to approach King means that they had not yet written him off as hopeless since there are many memos in which Hoover orders his men not to waste their time trying to straighten someone out once he decided the person was his enemy.
40. Garrow, *FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.*, p. 59.
41. Sullivan was born in 1912 on a farm near Bolton, Massachusetts. He obtained a degree in education from American University and taught in Bolton. He then worked for the Internal Revenue Service in Boston before joining the FBI in August 1941. He worked in counterintelligence during the war until he became ill while on a special assignment in Spain and was

- transferred to the Domestic Security Division in Washington, D.C., where he spent the rest of his career. See William C. Sullivan with Bill Brown, *The Bureau: My Thirty Years in Hoover's FBI* (New York: Norton, 1979), passim, esp. 14–46; obituary, *New York Times*, Nov. 10, 1977, p. D13; Sanford Ungar, *FBI* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly, 1975), pp. 295–312; Demaris, *The Director*, pp. 76–97, passim.
42. Mark Felt, *The FBI Pyramid: From the Inside* (New York: Putnam's, 1979), p. 142.
43. Sullivan to Belmont, Oct. 9, 1956, FBI File 100–3–104, sec. 2; Director to SAC, Chicago, Nov. 23, 1956, all in Rafferty Papers, JFKL.
44. Felt, *The FBI Pyramid*, p. 111.
45. Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 106.
46. Hoover note on memo from Baumgardner to Sullivan, Aug. 23, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," pp. 105–106.
47. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who knew Sullivan long before Sullivan left the Bureau, told me he did not hear Sullivan criticize Hoover in conversations with him prior to Sullivan's being fired in 1971; the change in attitude afterward was marked (telephone interview, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., June 4, 1986; Sullivan testimony, Nov. 1, 1975, in Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 107).
48. Hoover comments on Baumgardner to Sullivan, Aug. 26, 29, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 107.
49. Sullivan testimony, Nov. 1, 1975, p. 20, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 120.
50. Sullivan to Belmont, Aug. 30, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 108.
51. Baumgardner to Sullivan, Sept. 16, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 108.
52. Hoover's marginal notes on Baumgardner to Sullivan, Sept. 16, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 109.
53. Sullivan testimony, Nov. 1, 1975, p. 46, quoted in Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 109.
54. Hoover marginal note on memorandum from Tolson to Hoover, Sept. 18, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 109.
55. Sullivan testimony, Nov. 1, 1975, p. 30, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 109.
56. The Church Committee characterized Sullivan's testimony as "only one side of the story." It raised the possibility that Sullivan had been trying to maneuver Hoover into supporting increased domestic intelligence programs. The third, and most likely, possibility, ignored by the Church Committee, is that Hoover really wanted to know the truth, since he was going to have to defend his position against media cross-examination (Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, "King," p. 111).

57. Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, pp. 131–132; Garrow, *FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.*, pp. 74–75.

58. Turner, *Hoover's FBI*, p. 61 and passim. Many more of these anecdotes can be found in Joseph Schott, *No Left Turns* (New York: Praeger, 1975).

59. Ollestad, *Inside the FBI*, p. 54.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

61. Levine, *Memo on the FBI*, JFKL. Levine, a graduate of New York University Law School, joined the FBI in September 1960 and left less than a year later. He told his story to Fred J. Cook, who made it part of his *The FBI Nobody Knows* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 1–48.

62. Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 608.

63. Hoover to Johnson, Nov. 23, 1963, preliminary report; Katzenbach to Moyers, Nov. 26, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, p. 23.

64. Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, pp. 13–20.

65. Hoover to Belmont, Dec. 10, 1963, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, p. 23, and p. 5. The Church Committee later thought it was obvious that Hoover's great concern was possible criticism of the Bureau's handling of Oswald's security case (p. 47). See also Hurt, *Reasonable Doubt*, p. 32.

66. Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, p. 89.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

68. William C. Sullivan said that the reason Hoover was in such a rush to discipline the agents was so that if the Warren Commission did break through his defenses he could show he had cracked down on the offenders (Sullivan, *The Bureau*, p. 52).

69. Hoover, handwritten note on DeLoach to Mohr, Sept. 25, 1964, and Gale to Tolson, Sept. 30, 1964, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, pp. 53, 54.

70. Hoover note on Sullivan to Belmont, Sept. 24, 1964, and Hoover note on Belmont to Tolson, Oct. 1, 1964, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, pp. 52–55.

71. Hoover, Administrative Cover Sheet from FBI Supervisor to Gale, Oct. 12, 1964; Hoover note on Rosen to Belmont, Oct. 2, 1964, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, pp. 53, 55. The FBI kept separate books on its critiques of the Warren Commission, tallying up as serious blunders actions that it defended before the commission. For example, the Bureau noted that it had "by letter to the Commission indicated that the facts did not warrant placing a stop on the passport as our investigation disclosed no evidence that Oswald was acting under the instructions or on behalf of any foreign Government or instrumentality thereof. Inspector

felt that with Oswald's background we should have had a stop on his passport, particularly since we did not know definitely whether or not he had any intelligence assignments at that time" (Gale to Tolson, Sept. 30, 1964, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, p. 54).

72. In Hoover's jargon, "smear" simply meant criticism of the Bureau, true or false. Hoover note on DeLoach to Mohr, Oct. 6, 1964, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book V, Assassination of JFK, p. 57.

73. Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 616.

74. Jones to DeLoach, Feb. 1, 1963, FBI File 67–561–?; DeLoach to Mohr, Feb. 7, 1963, FBI File 67–561–?, Hoover Personnel File.

75. Schlesinger, *RFK*, p. 629, vouches for the telephone story, which evidently had wide currency in the Bureau (Schott, *No Left Turns*, p. 204–205, and Turner, *Hoover's FBI*, both tell it); Ralph de Toledano, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man in His Time* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1973), p. 308, says it is a fabrication.

76. Guthman, *We Band of Brothers*, p. 266; Hoover to Robert Kennedy, Jan. 9, 1964; Robert Kennedy to Hoover, May 12, 1964, Robert Kennedy note on Hoover to Robert Kennedy, May 13, 1964, General Correspondence, Hoover, J. Edgar, Personal Papers of Robert Kennedy, JFKL.

77. Schlesinger, *RFK*, pp. 629–630; Guthman, *We Band of Brothers*, p. 658.

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(pp. 393–438)

1. Ovid Demaris, *The Director: An Oral Biography of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: Harpers Magazine Press, 1975), p. 232. When Demaris asked Ramsey Clark about this statement by Johnson, Clark said he doubted if Johnson had said it, or, if he had said it, that he meant it: "I think he kind of enjoyed having him around. He was always extremely cordial to Mr. Hoover, always anxious to have him involved."

2. Hoover to Johnson, Mar. 15, 1964, FG 135–6, WHCF; Hoover to Johnson, May 10, 1966, Name File: Hoover, J. Edgar, WHCF, LBJL.

3. *Nation's Business*, Jan. 1972.

4. Demaris, *The Director*, p. 232. For the story of Hoover's visit in 1959 to the LBJ ranch, see Joseph Schott, *No Left Turns* (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 172, 1984; see letter of thanks from Hoover to Johnson, Nov. 10, 1959, LBJ Famous Names Box J. Edgar Hoover, WHCF, LBJL. For friendly correspondence between Hoover and Johnson, see Johnson to Hoover, May 6, 1958, LBJ Famous Names Box J. Edgar Hoover. Compare the warm tone of the LBJ letters to the correct but perhaps condescending JFK correspondence. JFK to Hoover, June 9, 1962, and Sept. 26, 1962. Name File:

5. Hoover, "Off the record remarks," informal reception for editors of Georgia and Michigan newspapers, Apr. 15, 1965, OCPA. Hoover was criticizing the Warren Commission's recommendations for improving the protection of the president.

6. Tucker to Johnson, Oct. 12, 1966; Morrison to Clinton, July 23, 1965; Russell Kirk column, Dec. 12, 1964; Burford to Johnson, Dec. 16, 1964, Name File: Hoover, J. Edgar, WHCF, LBJL.

7. LBJ Phone Diary, LBJL; Sanford J. Ungar, *FBI* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1976), p. 292.

8. Callahan to Mohr, Feb. 18, 1959, FBI File 67-561-?, Hoover Personnel File, FBI. For instances of Bureau sensitivity to the age issue, see reaction to a critical "Man in the Street" interview about the reappointment, Jones to DeLoach, May 14, 1964, FBI File 67-561-356, Hoover Personnel File, FBI.

9. Executive Order 11154, May 8, 1965, in Ralph de Toledano, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man in His Time* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1973), p. 301. Also see Tolson to LBJ, May 18, 1964, Name File: DeLoach, Cartha D., WHCF, LBJL, thanking the president for a picture of the ceremony.

10. Manuscript, Robert Spivack, "Watch on the Potomac," Dec. 14, 1966, and H. H. Wilson to the President, Dec. 13, 1966, EX JL, Dec. 12, 1963-July 31, 1967, WHCF, LBJL.

11. Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1978), p. 260 (hereafter referred to as *RFK*), citing interviews of RFK by Anthony Lewis and John Bartlow Martin at the Oral History Program, JFKL.

12. Ungar, *FBI*, p. 282. DeLoach arranged for Walter Trohan to speak at the American Legion convention, and wrote a speech for him (DeLoach to Trohan, Sept. 14, 1964, DeLoach, Trohan Papers, HHL). See also James to LBJ, Feb. 22, 1966, Diary Back-up, LBJL.

13. Schlesinger, *RFK*, pp. 663-664; Ungar, *FBI*, p. 288; Staff Report: Political Abuse and the FBI," DeLoach to Jenkins, Aug. 25, 1964, and DeLoach to Mohr, Aug. 29, 1964, "Morning Summary of Activities, Democratic National Convention," Senate Select Committee, *Hearings*, Vol. 6, FBI, pp. 476, 623-637, 714-717; DeLoach to Moyers, Sept. 14, 1964, Name File: DeLoach, Cartha D., WHCF, LBJL.

14. Statement of the President, Oct. 15, 1964, Jenkins File, LBJL; William C. Sullivan, *The Bureau* (New York: Norton, 1979), pp. 68-70; Ungar, *FBI*, p. 291; "Addendum to Staff Report on Political Abuse and the FBI: The Johnson Administration and Mrs. Anna Chennault," Senate Select Committee, *Hearings*, Vol. 6, FBI, pp. 483-484.

15. Hoover to Watson, Sept. 15, 1965, Hoover, J. Edgar, Macy Papers, LBJL.

16. Richard Harris, *Justice: The Crisis of Law, Order, and Freedom in*

17. "Daniel J. Freed, "Proposed District of Columbia Crime Control Program," Oct. 12, 1967; see [H. Rowan] Gaither: Crime-General, and Crime General—Juvenile Delinquency, Presidential Task Forces, Gaither Papers, LBJL.

18. Harris, *Justice*, p. 56. Nicholas Katzenbach later said that one of the reasons he left the Justice Department was that he found it so unpleasant working with Hoover (Senate Select Committee, *Hearings*, Vol. 6, FBI, p. 202).

19. Hoover, speech to former special agents of the FBI, Sept. 28, 1967, p. 4, OCPA.

20. John T. Elliff, *Crime, Justice, and the Attorney General: The Justice Department in the 1960s* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1971), p. 122.

21. See Watson to LBJ, Nov. 30, 1965, JL, WHCF; "Wiretaps," Administrative History, Department of Justice, Vol. III, LBJL; "Warrantless FBI Electronic Surveillance," Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, pp. 271-351, esp. 285, 310; Pub Law 90-351, June 1968. Hoover to Katzenbach, Sept. 14, 1965, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 287; Athan Theoharis, *Spying on Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple, University Press, 1978), pp. 113. In 1964, Hoover also ended mail covers and trash covers (Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman/Two Continents, 1978], p. 443). Johnson's order banning wiretaps was drafted by Katzenbach on April 8, 1965, to take effect July 1 (White to Moyers, Apr. 10, 1965; Katzenbach to LBJ, Apr. 8, 1965; Busby to Moyers, Apr. 20, 1965, Justice Department, Moyers File, LBJL). Hoover ended mail covers on September 29, 1965; he ended surreptitious entries on July 19, 1966 (Sullivan to DeLoach, July 19, 1966, p. 3, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 365).

22. Belmont to Tolson, Feb. 27, 1965, Senate Select Committee, *Final Report*, Book III, p. 670.

23. Statement in early 1964 before House Appropriations Committee, opposing FBI takeover of Federal narcotics enforcement, cited in Ungar, *FBI*, p. 421.

24. Hoover, "Faith, Freedom and Law," speech to Michigan State Bar Association, June 8, 1967, OCPA; "Off the record remarks."

25. Hoover, "Faith, Freedom and Law."

26. Hoover, "Off the record remarks."

27. Elliff, *Crime, Justice, and the Attorney General*, p. 38.

28. Hoover, "Off the record remarks"; speech to former special agents of the FBI, Sept. 28, 1967.

29. Hoover, "Time for Decision," "Sword of Loyola" Award Dinner, Chicago, Nov. 24, 1964.

30. Hoover to Tolson et al., Aug. 19, 1966, FBI File 67-9524-?, Tolson Personnel File, FBI.

31. Hoover, "Our Heritage of Greatness" Dec. 12, 1964, speech to the