

SEVEN

Odd Man In

HOOVER ALWAYS took the public position that the United States didn't have and didn't need a national police force. But for all practical purposes we had one, a secret one at that, and it was controlled by the FBI.

This national police force was made up of graduates of the FBI National Academy's special three-week training course for police officers. It was a great honor for a member of a city or state police force to be selected for this training—in fact, the men selected for this training often rose to positions of prominence within their own organizations shortly after returning home. And they were suitably grateful. With good reason, Hoover felt that the alumni of the FBI training course were his men. Thanks to this network of FBI-trained police officers, we had a private and frequently helpful line to most city and state police organizations throughout the country. The police officer who helped me out of a jam when one of my undercover agents was arrested by the Chicago police at a pot party during the Democratic National Convention in 1968 was trained at the FBI National Academy.

Having a man accepted for FBI training was quite a plum for any chief of police. Hoover was aware of this, and he took full advantage of the leverage. When the Capitol Building in Washington was bombed, the only informant who knew anything at all about the case was working for the Washington Metropolitan Police, not the FBI. Although the bombing was within our jurisdiction and was clearly our responsibility, Hoover was so angry that the police were one up on the FBI that he refused to touch the case or let the FBI help the police in any way. When the incident blossomed into a full-scale feud between Hoover and Jerry Wilson, the chief of the Washington Metropolitan

Police, Hoover went after Wilson with everything he had. He crossed Wilson off the FBI mailing list and ordered the National Academy not to accept any more trainees from the Washington Metropolitan Police.

Any other police chief would have dropped the matter and waited, hoping for a change of heart. But Wilson worked in Washington, where power and influence are the name of the game, and he had a friend or two of his own in high places. Hoover was eventually forced to rescind his decision.

During the 1950s I was present at a meeting when John P. Mohr, who as associate director had jurisdiction over the Training Division, suggested to Clyde Tolson that future graduates of the FBI police training course be given a looseleaf notebook with the seal of the FBI embossed on its front cover. "They'd be proud of those books," Mohr told Tolson, "and they'd keep them out on their desks where everyone could see them. It would be a good public relations gimmick."

"The director would be opposed to that," Tolson said immediately, shaking his head. (He really believed that he could talk for Hoover, answer for Hoover, make the same decisions Hoover would make. At the bureau, we used to call the two of them the "unipersonality"—they were two people who acted as one.)

Mohr asked Tolson why the director would be opposed. "One of those police officers could go bad, could be caught taking bribes," Tolson replied. Tolson was afraid that if a rogue cop had an FBI bookcover, he and the bureau would be open for criticism.

Mohr couldn't believe it. "Damn it, Tolson," he shouted, "we give these guys diplomas signed by Hoover. Why can't we give them a bookcover too?" We could, and from then on we did.

Hoover treated local city and state police forces the same way he treated the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the CIA, and every other law enforcement agency that wasn't the FBI. He didn't like his agents to help the police, and if any local police officer had been of assistance to the FBI, he'd get no thanks from Hoover, either publicly or privately.

It was unusual then for an FBI man to develop close ties with many police officers, but Quinn Tamm, who was at one time assistant

director of the Training Division of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, Tamm had been an independent though outspoken the director. Tamm, his mail was arranged. He just sat for a few months of the

Tamm had never been to the country, friend and enemy, and when Hoover had his say that he was no longer allowed, and it didn't matter if he was trained and worked for the FBI, Hoover trusted him a lot. Hoover did everything he could to get Tamm to run for the job of Chief of Police, Hoover had been "I'm younger than you are here long after I

"How does it feel to have a line to God?" Hoover asked him—as all men

There was a local police organization organized crime in November 1957 covered a meeting in the headlines, the FBI and the Mafia. "They're not going to spend their time on results which produce no results—how many

Wm Sullivan, "The Pursuer"

FBI Academy