

High Standards?

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It was, to be sure, loyal and dutiful of the U.S. Attorney's office to spring to the defense of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, now under attack in a court action for firing a Bureau employe because the employe, a bachelor, allegedly allowed a young woman to spend two nights in his own apartment. It serves, however, only to underscore the sanctimonious arbitrariness of the Bureau's personnel policy.

This behavior came to the attention of the FBI through an anonymous letter which should have been picked up by one of its dingy corners and filed in the nearest waste basket. No one has suggested that the young woman was under-age or that anybody was injured by their conduct; we should think, therefore, that it could well have been considered exclusively their own business. But the FBI insists that the young man's supposed interest in the young woman is inconsistent with the "traditionally high standards of personal conduct" for which FBI personnel are noted.

Perhaps the trouble lies in distinguishing what is important from what is unimportant in judging character and suitability. The dismissed FBI clerk was certainly not guilty of any offense that would impair his devotion in combatting bank robbers or hoodlums who violate civil rights.