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For the Record . . .

Mr. Hoover on Media Criticism of the FBI

From remarks by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover at the anniversary dinner of the Washington chapter of the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI on Oct. 22.

Nor can justice be served as long as there are some who suggest and others who believe that law enforcement itself is a sinister threat to our free society. There are a few journalistic prostitutes who in their jaundiced outlook upon realities and truth attribute the increase in crime as somehow the fault of the FBI or the result of inadequate performance by it. They do not merely skirt but ignore completely the fact that the overwhelming part of the increase in crime has been in areas where the FBI has neither the authority nor jurisdiction, namely at the local and state level . . .

Incredible as it may seem, there have been instances in which the news media, particularly television, have accepted without question wildly improbable allegations made by hate groups against the police and, even when the facts have been readily accessible, certain segments of the media have, for whatever reason, chosen to ignore and disregard them. Unfortunately, the truth never seems to catch up with the "big lie," and even if it does, it is too late to undo the harm that has been done in denigrating the forces of law enforcement.

The publication of drivel—while admittedly a right—is not the best way of discharging the precious responsibilities of a free press.

Criticism, of course, is essential in our democratic society . . . but criticism, to be valid, must be based on knowledge and a desire to correct deficiencies. The foundation of any news media should be truth, objectivity and justice.

Criticism without basis is demoralizing and serves the interests of those subversives and criminals who seek to serve only themselves and not democracy. No man has the inherent right to place himself above and beyond the law, even though he may personally consider that law to be onerous.