

# Hoover's Report On Radical Left Was Toned Down

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WASHINGTON, July 18.—The Justice Department, it has been learned, edited the most recent report of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to delete some of its stronger language about the Radical Left.

Nevertheless, Hoover's report on dissent in America has brought accusations from some quarters that the FBI is tampering with civil liberties, making fair trials for radicals impossible, and investigating students involved in conventional political campaigns.

The 22-page fiscal year report on the FBI's activities was released Tuesday, the same day Attorney General John Mitchell held his first press conference in a year.

His appearance before the press and a recent speech in defense of the right to demonstrate and dissent are part of a campaign by Mitchell to improve his image and convince the young he is guarding their civil liberties.

The tough tone of the FBI report contrasted sharply with Mitchell's new attitude.

Although the report was made by Hoover, it was released in Mitchell's name.

Because of the obvious con-



J. EDGAR HOOVER

... wrote stern report

trast, Mitchell's aides tried to tone down the report before its release. Hoover's assistants protested that the FBI director's reports never had been edited before, but some language considered inflammatory was deleted.

For example, because the Justice Department thought such publicity might infringe on the right to a fair trial, the names of radicals under indictment were cut.

However, the department approved Hoover's charge that the Black Panther Party was "the most dangerous and violence prone of all extremist groups."

The report also characterized the Weatherman faction of the Students for a Democratic Society as "a principal

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force guiding the country's violence-prone young militants."

The report did not include the number of Panthers (at least 15) who have been killed by police.

Among the Panthers and militant white groups, the Weathermen have been largely discredited because of their violent tactics and their view, now deemed unrealistic by other radicals, that the nation is ready for revolution.

A spokesman for the American Civil Liberties Union pointed out that some Panther leaders and Weathermen are awaiting trial and "statements like Hoover's make it almost impossible for these defendants to get a fair trial." The first of a number of Panthers is now on trial in New Haven for murder.

Asked about this at his press conference, Mitchell said the Panthers are "not on trial as Black Panthers, but as individuals accused of specific offenses."

Juries will not be prejudiced by a defendant's affiliation



JOHN MITCHELL

... a softer image

with the Panthers in spite of what Hoover said, Mitchell asserted. "I hope our jury system works better than that," he said.

Hoover's report spends the first nine of its 22 pages on the radical left and less than three on organized crime. It draws no conclusions in the single paragraph reporting its investigations of shootings by law enforcement authorities of six Negroes during distur-

bances in Augusta, Ga., two Negroes at Jackson State College in Mississippi and four white students at Kent State University in Ohio.

SCHOOL CLOSING

Included in Hoover's report of "protest activity," among the statistics of demonstrations, arrests, injuries, deaths, and bombing, is a note that "student committees have been formed on numerous college campuses . . . to encourage the support of political candidates opposed to administration policies and will insist that schools be closed for a period so that students will be free to participate . . ."

This movement, begun at Princeton in May, is led by moderate youth, including members of the Republican Ripon Society.

An ACLU spokesman said of the FBI's interest in these groups: "It's bad enough that the FBI is keeping tabs on radicals, and peaceful demonstrators. Now the report implies the FBI is also watching legitimate, conventional political activity. If that is true, it is the most flagrant violation of privacy and constitutional protection."



DAVID HILLIARD

... "rhetorical" threat

The FBI would not comment on this charge. But Mitchell said the statement on student political groups "had nothing to do with FBI activities. It was simply recited as a factual circumstance."

The primary target in Hoover's report was the Black Panther Party, which he said "has called for the assassination of the President and other government leaders."

One Panther leader, David

Hilliard, is under indictment for threatening the life of the President. Hilliard has claimed the threat, made during an anti-war speech last year, was rhetorical.

The FBI declined to say what other threats the Panthers have made.

NO RAIDS MENTIONED

FBI information director Tom Bishop said the report "speaks for itself." He would not elaborate on it, answer questions about it, detail some of the charges it contains, or explain why some facts were omitted.

The report, for example, does not mention raids on

Panthers, made with FBI help, which have resulted in the deaths of Panthers.

The Hoover report says the Panthers receive "substantial monetary contributions from prominent donors." But Hoover's spokesman declined to name the donors or acknowledge that the report might have been referring to well publicized fund-raising parties which have been given for the Panthers by prominent liberals, like composer-conductor Leonard Bernstein.

Bishop said the FBI would not detail or document its general charges "because investigations are continuing."