

**No Longer 'Keen' on Bill** *Part 4/14/79*

## Bell Switches on FBI Charter

Los Angeles Times

Attorney General Griffin B. Bell, in a potentially crucial switch, says he is no longer "keen" for Congress to enact a charter governing the FBI's domestic and foreign intelligence investigations.

Bell took the new stance, that could jeopardize prospects for passage for the FBI's first legislative mandate, in a closed-door meeting April 4 with the special agents in charge of the FBI's field offices. The Times obtained a copy of his remarks yesterday.

Friday the drive to enact a charter grew out of post-Watergate disclosures of illegal and improper activities that the FBI engaged in when investigating domestic groups and indi-

viduals that the bureau regarded as a suspect. Until now, the Carter administration, like its predecessor, has vigorously supported a charter to assure the FBI's accountability.

My position is that I would just as soon not have it (a charter), Bell told the agents. So if some senator or congressman wants to add something to it that is restrictive, too restrictive, then I am going to say, "well, I'm against it." Let's just drop it, just forget it.

At one time, I thought we needed a charter, particularly a domestic charter, and perhaps a (foreign) intelligence charter, Bell said. But we have learned to live without it, and I'm afraid we'll be done in if we aren't careful...