

FBI Kept a Close Eye on Former Chicago 'Boss' Daley

Am 8/30/76
Associated Press

CHICAGO, Aug. 30—Even "The Boss," Mayor Richard J. Daley, wasn't exempt from the FBI's suspicion of being a communist sympathizer, a tool of the mob or an accommodator to civil rights leaders.

Under a federal Freedom of Information Act request, the Chicago Tribune obtained 300 pages of Daley's file compiled by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. The reports span Daley's career from state senator in the 1940s until his death in 1976, the newspaper said in today's editions.

The file on Daley, Chicago's mayor from 1955 through 1976, contains a wealth of innuendoes and guilt by association. None apparently rose beyond the level of gossip.

The file cites a speaking invitation, which Daley declined, issued at the instigation of a man referred to in the file as a "reported communist."

When Daley first ran for mayor, the Communist Party of Illinois "issued instructions to members that Daley must be elected for the Party to retain its strength in labor."

The file also alleges that organized crime

figures found Daley sympathetic to them, at least before he became mayor. Later, mobsters like Sam Giancana complained about Daley's weakening of the ward boss system, which the mob relied on for political favors.

Informers told the FBI of Daley's efforts to reach out to black civil rights leaders, including the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. In the riotous aftermath of King's assassination in 1968, the FBI reported extensively about Daley's "shoot to kill" order aimed at arsonists, a stand the FBI praised.