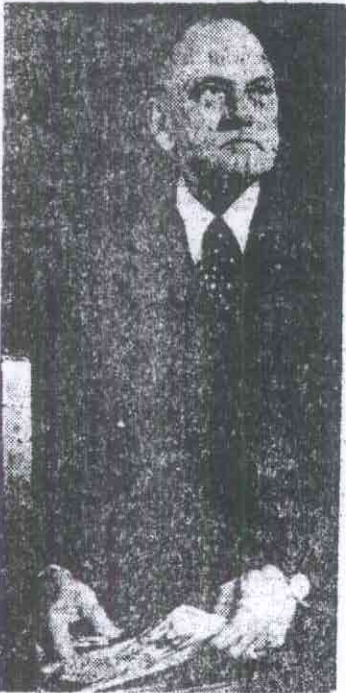


FBI Data Disclose Gray Was Told NYTimes SEP 10 1976
About Misdeeds When He Was Chief

By JOHN M. CREWSON
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 9—Shortly after becoming acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1972, L. Patrick Gray 3d was advised of a number of improprieties and irregularities in the bureau's operations, including the misappropriation of "thousands of dollars of public funds" by its exhibits section, according to published bureau documents.



The New York Times

L. Patrick Gray 3d at Senate hearing during his stormy reign as acting director of the F.B.I.

Mr. Gray apparently took no action to investigate any of the charges, which were contained in an anonymous letter sent to him less than two weeks after he replaced the late J. Edgar Hoover on May 3, 1972.

The exhibits section, the bureau's carpentry shop, is at the center of a criminal investigation of what the Justice Department describes as the "systematic theft of Government goods and services" by bureau officials over the last five years, a period that includes Mr. Gray's 11-month tenure as the bureau's acting chief.

Documents published last year by the House Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights show that Mr. Gray sent the letter, presumably written by a disgruntled bureau employee, to the F.B.I. Laboratory to see whether it could be traced to its source.

Author Not Identified

It was understood today that the letter was never returned by the laboratory and that its author was never identified. The subcommittee, headed by Representative Bella S. Abzug, Democrat of Manhattan, has requested a copy of the letter from the bureau.

Among the documents published by the subcommittee, however, is a long reply by John P. Mohr to some of the mischievous charges. Mr. Mohr was then the bureau's administrative chief. He retired about a month after his May 11, 1972, letter to Mr. Gray. He is one of a number of former bureau officials who have since come under the Justice Department's scrutiny.

In his reply, Mr. Mohr dismissed the allegation that "thousands of dollars in public funds" had been misspent by the exhibits section in work on Mr. Hoover's house as the product of "a very small mind."

But Mr. Mohr acknowledged that "from time to time employees of the exhibits section were called upon to handle minor repair jobs at Mr. Hoover's home."

He told Mr. Gray that Mr. Hoover had paid for any equipment installed by the section and said that he saw "nothing so unusual about the fact that Mr. Hoover did utilize the services of the exhibits section employees for this purpose."

Gray Won't Elaborate

Through his lawyer, Steve Sachs of Baltimore, Mr. Gray declined to elaborate on his response to the allegations in the anonymous letter.

Justice Department investigators have learned over the last few months, according to sources with information about their inquiry, that the alleged misuse of the exhibits section extended over a number of years and involved the provision of free services to several bureau executives in addition to Mr. Hoover.

The Mohr letter also advised Mr. Gray that all of the official bureau files in Mr. Hoover's office at the time of his death had been delivered to W. Mark Felt, then the associate F.B.I. Director and now also retired and under Justice Department investigation in connection with illegal burglaries committed by bureau agents.

According to testimony by Attorney General Edward H. Levi last year, those files, labeled "official and confidential," or "O.C.," included individual folders on 15 past and present members of Congress, many of them containing derogatory personal information.

One of Mr. Gray's chief concerns after his arrival at the bureau was to substantiate or discount persistent rumors that Mr. Hoover had compiled "secret dossiers" on political and public figures containing such derogatory information.

'No Secret Files'

At a news conference on May 4, for example, he told reporters that he had begun to inquire about the files when he first heard of Mr. Hoover's death two days before, adding, "None of you guys are going to believe this, and I don't know how to make you believe it, but there are no dossiers or secret files."

"There are just general files, and I took steps to keep their integrity," he said.

Although the Mohr letter referring to the O.C. files given to Mr. Felt was written a week after that news conference, one former bureau official said today that Mr. Gray had learned that they were in Mr. Felt's office almost from the moment he arrived at the bureau.