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—Acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray 3d

Gray Puts New

By JERRY GREENE
New York News Writer

His top advisers urgently warned him against it. To accept the invitation would guarantee a nasty confrontation that would reverberate across the land with damage both to him personally, and to the agency. It was a booby trap designed to humiliate the ogre of the FBI.

"No," L. Patrick Gray 3d wrote underneath the advisory note, "this one I can't turn down."

And shortly after noon on July 13, the fledgling acting director of the FBI, unaccompanied, erect and sure of himself, strode out on the stage of the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress to address 800 college students, to carry the message of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to its bitterest critics, a deliberate confrontation without precedent in the history of the service.

He looked at the expectant crowd packing the place, sitting on aisle steps and standing in the back. He cast aside a prepared 10-minute text and talked, straight talk, for six minutes, then opened the meeting for questions.

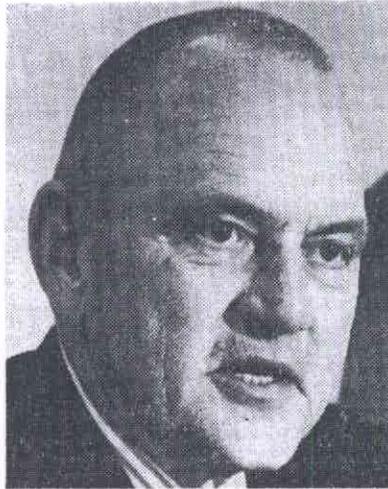
THIS WAS a gathering of the Congressional summer interns, college students working the vacation period in offices of senators and representatives across the land, a cross section of the young, intellectual elite, sophisticated, cream-of-the-crop stuff, campus leaders born to dissent, to question, to probe adult society.

The Nasties opened up instantly, three small groups of them strategically located in the hall: "Why don't you investigate and prosecute the immoral warmonger who resides in the White House?" . . . "Why don't you hire homosexuals?" . . . "Why does the government fail to provide school lunches?" . . . "Why are homosexuals security risks?"

It was orchestrated, well organized. Most of the homosexual questions came from three girls in one group. This was what Gray's advisers had feared. The shouts were shrill and disruptive.

But Pat Gray stood there, his presence winning enough silence for his answers. Then the more serious questions began to pile upon him, and for an hour he explained and sold his own bill of goods.

WHEN HE HAD finished the students —



FBI's L. Patrick Gray III
... successful in confrontation

all save the three small groups — rose in a standing ovation and cheered him out of the auditorium. Within two weeks he had received numerous letters from the interns expressing warm gratitude for the session.

We have gone into the Library of Congress meeting in some detail, for it explains, perhaps better than anything else we have run across, the fresh approach of new leadership for one of the world's most famous criminal investigative agencies, the advent on the American scene of a sharply contrasting era in the relationship between one of the federal government's most sensitive arms and the people it serves.

Pat Gray, a law-and-order square with slightly rounded corners to allow comfortable adjustment to changing times, succeeded the legendary and only previous director of the FBI on May 3, 1972. Gray was an admirer of J. Edgar Hoover, and honors his legend.

But the austere and forbidding Hoover, a monkish figure whose whole life was the FBI, would have never deigned to include the student session among his rare public appearances. He had no time to abide the in-

'Style' in FBI

sults of those he considered public enemies, or close to it.

THE UNKNOWN Pat Gray — lawyer, retired Navy captain, submariner and stand-up-and-cheer-type American — doubtless will be a very temporary director of the FBI should President Nixon fail to be re-elected. He has no guarantee of any sort that Nixon will name him permanent director — the FBI director serves at the will of the President and is now subject to Senate confirmation — but there is no reason to believe that he will not be so appointed, and quickly, if Nixon wins a second term.

But in the interim, Gray by no means considers himself a caretaker. He was appointed and told to take over, and this he has done with enthusiasm and gusto.

"I have only one instruction from the President," Gray told the summer interns. "He has told me to keep the FBI completely out of politics. This is a mandate I will follow."

GRAY HAD a couple of other points for the students which are indicative of character. He told them that he had begun an intensive, personal probe of the bureau immediately upon his appointment.

"To be quite candid," he said, "in spite of my inquisitive attitude, I did not expect to find a great deal wrong with the FBI, and I have not.

"It is exactly what most Americans have believed it to be — a highly competent, exceptionally professional and successful investigative agency which has used its power and prestige with restraint — admirable restraint in fact."

And more: "The changes I have made and will make in the future are less in substance than in style. A change in style is to be expected. Every administrator has his own approach to his task. I must lead the FBI in the only way I know — my own way. This is no discredit to the FBI's history. It is recognition only that change is inevitable in any organization — indeed, even healthy."

GRAY MADE a couple of quick changes in the FBI with shocking suddenness to special agents who had spent a lifetime under the rigid, highly personalized and individualistic discipline of J. Edgar Hoover. He relax-

ed the codes for dress and hair grooming and he ordered the recruitment of women FBI special agents.

There'll be no hippies in the bureau. But Gray decided in these days a special agent didn't necessarily have to resemble a banker, or a pallbearer. In appearance, the standard blue suit and white shirt are out, if the agents so desire. The hair may be a little longer. But there will be no departure from neatness and good grooming, subject to "the customary mode of dress that is acceptable in the business and professional community in today's society."

As for the women, he simply saw no reason why not. He doesn't believe there will be very many; he believes the ranks should not be closed to those who can meet the very tough qualifications, physical, mental, moral and psychological. Two applicants are now enrolled in the FBI training course; a dozen others have been approved for training. There'll be no limited duty assignments; the women will have to take their lumps as they come.

GRAY ALSO opened a new office to help recruit more agents from minority groups of all kinds. He learned that genuine efforts had been made to enlist the minorities for there was a definite need for them. But he wanted more pressure, more opportunities, but here again, there will be no relaxation of standards.

Hoover was the nation's top cop, an almost mythical glamor figure who was sole commander of a law enforcement army, powerful enough by reputation and accomplishment to disdain attorneys general for whom he had poor regard or who appeared to want to use the bureau for political purposes. He had his finger on every operation of the organization. He ruled with an iron fist.

His army included, this year, more than 20,000 employees, of whom more than 8,800 are special agents. His budget was \$334.4 million; Congress never has cut it.

Pat Gray is no cop at all, perhaps never will be, although his whole soul is thrown into study and understanding of the work of the FBI. But his entire record as naval officer and lawyer is full of high accolades for his ability as an administrator and a leader. Those are his tasks now.