

Human misery is too great for men to do without faith.—Heinrich Heine.

## *Bulletin* The attack on Mr. Hoover

The long tenure and advanced age of the FBI's famous and widely revered director, J. Edgar Hoover, has posed an increasingly painful administrative dilemma.

How long should a vital agency be dominated by any one man, no matter how capable?

Even admirers of Mr. Hoover might privately have hoped that some time since he would have bowed to time and gracefully stepped down, resting on a proud record. Even his critics, appraising the full record, might regret that, after so long a time, the storm clouds should be gathering over him.

The resolution of this problem—always a delicate personnel matter with raucous political overtones—has been compounded by two developments.

Information disclosed in the files stolen from the FBI's Media office has raised questions as to whether the activities of the federal investigative agency have exceeded proper bounds in a democratic society. And now the waters have been additionally roiled by the categorical accusation—as categorically denied—that the FBI has tapped congressmen's telephones.

If the latter charge were true, of course, Mr. Hoover should be instantly dismissed. House Majority Leader Hale Boggs (D-La), who made the charge, should produce his proof promptly or tender a full apology to the FBI director. If he does not do either, he will stand branded of demagoguery.

In the meantime, Mr. Boggs has not

helped his position by first accusing Mr. Hoover of using "the tactics of the Soviet Union and Hitler's Gestapo" then clearly retreating by paying homage to him as a "dedicated and able public servant" and "a man whose fairness and patriotism are unquestionable."

A "fair man" using Gestapo tactics? How absurd.

Beyond this intemperance, there is the curious feature that Mr. Boggs has not been supported by others in the congressional Democratic leadership in his charges of wiretapping. Nor, for that matter, has there been so far any rush of congressmen to support his charges. But it is due Mr. Hoover and it is due Congress that the charge either be supported or withdrawn.

What could happen, however, is simply that the murky controversy that has arisen over administration of the FBI will be deepened. It may be more difficult to get the needed examination of certain features of FBI operations. It will certainly be more difficult for the 76-year-old Mr. Hoover to retire, gracefully, now—as he should be encouraged to do—under the kind of attack Mr. Boggs has made, so far without proof.

From any viewpoint, this is an unfortunate business. As normal procedures, the command at the FBI should be changed from time to time. And in these abnormal times, the whole apparatus of domestic intelligence clearly should be subjected to tighter controls and review.

### Boggs Reports FBI Surveillance of Him

Rep. Hale Boggs (D-La), House majority leader, says the FBI tapped his phone and kept him under surveillance. He said he knows what the FBI wanted but will not say until he documents it "in the near future." The Justice Department repeated earlier denials of ever tapping congressmen's phones. The FBI denied watching Boggs now but would not comment on the past. Informed sources said the FBI talked to Boggs at least twice in 1969 about Baltimore contractor Victor H. Fränkil's efforts to win a \$5 million claim against the government for work at the Rayburn House Office Building. According to an expunged grand jury presentment, Fränkil's efforts included threats, job offers and political pressure. Boggs, the sources said, was involved in a minor way in settlement attempts.



Rep. Hale Boggs

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