Thefts Prompt FBI To Close Some Offices

By George Lardner Jr. Washington Post Staff Writer

The FBI is planning to close some of its 500 resident-agent the proposed closings and ap-than a third will be shut offices in hopes of preventing parently no final decision has down. At many others, howany more embarrassing burglaries.

Tighter security was or-Edgar Hoover, who is said to annoyed by the nationwide

Pa., office March 8.

be axed.

According to one account,

documents from the Media, the FBI's suboffices closed. But Justice Department The FBI had no comment on sources predicted that less been made on which ones will ever, stricter security measures will be put into effect.

According to local police, dered by FBI Director J. the 76-year-old Hoover was so the burglars forced their way into the Media office through have been furious over the publicity over the Media raid an unused door by pushing theft of more than 1,000 FBI that he initially wanted all of aside a file cabinet that normally blocked it on the inside. The resident agent in charge was subsequently suspended without pay for 30 days and transferred to Atlanta.

> The FBI is also understood to have dispatched a team of inspectors to check on the security of all its offices, big and small, as a first step in preventing a recurrence of what Justice Department officials have called "a new peacenik tactic."

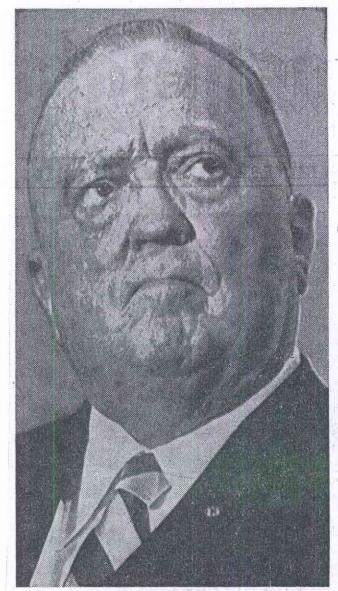
> Copies of 31 of the documents stolen in the Media raid have been mailed to various newspapers and members of Congress. Responsibility for the theft has been claimed by a group calling itself "The Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI," but no arrests have been made.

> With 8,400 agents, the FBI maintains 59 field offices or headquarters regional major cities in the United States and Puerto Rico, along with 11 "liaison posts" in for-

eign countries.

Reporting to the field offices, in turn, are some 500 "resident agencies" or suboffices scattered throughout the nation to provide wider geographic coverage and a ready response to cases requiring investigation.

Some suboffices are oneman operations, with resident agents operating at times out of their own homes. Others keep more than a dozen FBI men at work. Whenever possible, the FBI sets up shop in a local Federal building or post office, but in some small



FBI Director Hoover: Furious over stolen documents.

towns, such as college com-building where a guard is almunities, the offices are in ways posted at the main encommercial buildings that are trance to the building. more difficult to guard.

The FBI has maintained approximately 500 suboffices for at least nine years, with their stairs, the public entrance to locations varying more often than their number.

The closings, it was understood, will depend on the with nothing more than two FBI's assessment of the need desks. for a local office and the cost of guarding it adequately. have complained that the doc-Some, it was said, will "just be uments stolen in the Media told to put more locks on their raid and made public by the doors."

top (17th) floor of the Federal state tactics.

Visitors find their handbags, briefcases and other packages searched on entering. And upthe FBI office consists of a double door with two locks opening onto a reception room

Justice Department officials self-styled Citizens Commis-Regional headquarters gen- sion were carefully plucked erally have plenty of locks alout of context to make the ready. The FBI's Los Angeles FBI look bad and to create the bureau, for example, is on the impression that it uses police-