

4/24/71

Jack Anderson

Nixon Would Like to Replace Hoover

By Jack Anderson

President Nixon's public defense of J. Edgar Hoover doesn't square exactly with what the President has been saying in private.

Those who have heard Mr. Nixon discuss the FBI chief in the privacy of his Oval Office tell us the President would like to replace Hoover. At the same time, these intimates say the President respects Hoover and doesn't want to bring dishonor upon him.

After his graduation from Duke, Mr. Nixon applied for a job with the FBI and took the FBI examination. Years later, he kidded Hoover about rejecting him, and the G-man blamed it on an appropriations cut.

Hoover slipped Mr. Nixon information from FBI files, say intimates, that helped Mr. Nixon build a reputation as an anti-Communist crusader during his early days in Congress.

The two men became personal friends, so close that Mr. Nixon received a distinction reserved for the G-man's intimates — an invitation to accompany him to the race tracks. The President is fond of telling how impressed his daughter, Tricia, had been with Hoover's importance because they once had a police escort to the track.

Nevertheless, the President now believes Hoover is hurting himself and the FBI by hanging on to his job. Mr.

Nixon believes he could have persuaded his old friend to retire gracefully if it hadn't suddenly become open season on Hoover.

White House aides had even sounded out Peter Pitchess, sheriff of Los Angeles County, about the possibility eventually of stepping into Hoover's shoes. Customs chief Myles Ambrose has also been mentioned around the White House as a possible successor.

But now, the President feels it would be difficult for Hoover to retire under fire.

Other Presidents who may have wished to replace the FBI chief have always thought better of the idea. John F. Kennedy, as his first act as President-elect, asked Hoover to accept reappointment. But Mr. Kennedy's awe of Hoover quickly diminished.

More than a year before Hoover's 70th birthday, White House aides pointed out to President Kennedy that tremendous pressure would be exerted to keep Hoover on the job after 70 but that it would take a presidential proclamation to waive the statutory retirement age.

Aides still recall his tart, taut reply. "We are not going to have such a proclamation," said Mr. Kennedy.

There was a new man in the White House on Jan. 1, 1964, however, when Hoover passed the 70-year mark. Now at 76, the durable old G-man is still on the job.

Inside Xerox

Some high-level backstage bloodletting is in progress at the Xerox Corporation over the FBI's efforts to turn the company's servicemen into government agents.

The FBI asked the company to have its service representatives make an extra blank sample copy on thousands of its customers 660-series copying machines.

Because every copy, even a blank one, has identifying marks by which it can be traced to the machine which produced it, the FBI wants the samples to help find out who duplicated the documents stolen recently from the bureau office at Media, Pa.

The request for the extra copies was put to Xerox's huge Business Products Division in Rochester, N.Y., which has jurisdiction over the servicemen.

James O'Neill, vice president and head of the division, agreed to furnish the bureau a list of clients but declined to allow his servicemen to be turned into G-men getting information from the company's customers on the sneak.

We got wind of the decision and wrote a story about it which appeared among other places, in the New York Post. A copy of our story quickly reached Xerox national headquarters in Stamford, Conn., near New York.

Our story was the first word Xerox President Peter Mc-

Colough heard of the matter. We quoted a Xerox spokesman in Rochester as saying the decision was made in an effort to uphold "the ethics of the business."

Ethics, however, were apparently not of much concern to McColough. After some frantic long-distance calls to Rochester, he overruled O'Neill and issued a statement saying his company would cooperate.

Washington Whirl

Black Army — Col. Hassan Jeru-Ahmed, the glib promoter who has wangled \$523,000 out of the federal government to subsidize a private black army, has been in league with the neo-Nazis. By Hassan's own admission, he accepted at least \$1,000 from neo-Nazi Willis Carto and used one of Carto's henchmen, Doug Clee, as a fund raiser. In 1967, Hassan wrote a crude anti-Semitic tract and as late as 1970, his men distributed copies on the street. All this has so outraged Jason Silverman of the Anti-Defamation League that he has written an angry salvo of letters to the Health, Education, and Welfare Department objecting to the \$523,000 grant. Hassan denies he is anti-Semitic. "The Jewish community has given me more help than anyone," he told us.