

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak *Part 6/12/70*
**Aide's Departure Revives Concern
Over FBI Role When Hoover Leaves**

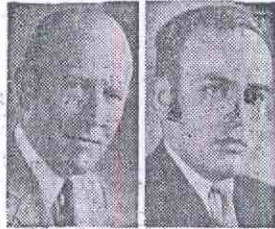
POLITICIANS deeply worried about the future of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the dim beyond after J. Edgar Hoover view last week's abrupt departure of Cartha D. DeLoach as a close call that dramatized the need for basic FBI reform.

There were sighs of relief in Washington when DeLoach, No. 3 official in the bureau, bowed to intense pressure and suddenly announced his retirement at age 49, thus eliminating himself from consideration as Hoover's successor. Had DeLoach ever succeeded Hoover (as seemed quite probable a few years ago), the charges against him of right-wing bias and blatant opportunism would have rocked and possibly wrecked the FBI.

But to serious students of basic FBI reform, DeLoach came too close for comfort, underlying their conviction that the frightening powers of Hoover's office must be radically reduced for the post-Hoover era. Moreover, there is growing feeling the next director should be more sensitive to the national political climate than Hoover has ever been.

What makes this so important today is the grim prospect in the years just ahead. With dissent rising and leftist terrorism intensifying, the FBI's role will be ever more difficult. The delicate problem for the future FBI director will be to avoid blind repression and help restore the confidence of youth and the liberal community.

WHETHER ANYBODY can surmount those problems is debatable, but critics of DeLoach know that he was not the man for this sensitive task. Espousing a rightist ideology inside the bureau, he has operated with great abandon in the Washington backrooms of business, journalism, and politics. DeLoach's connection with the Johnson White House was so intimate that plans were afoot for easing Hoover out and replacing



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him with DeLoach if President Johnson had been elected to another term.

But what worried DeLoach's critics most was his closeness to Hoover, a remote figure during his 46-year tenure who lacked both proteges and intimates. Thanks to hostility toward DeLoach by others, however, Hoover has drawn away from him recently. Although he did not press for DeLoach's resignation, Hoover is not unhappy over it.

With DeLoach gone and Hoover, at age 74, determined to stay in power until forced out by death or physical disability, politicians of both parties close to the FBI are now looking hopefully toward the following reforms:

Reform No. 1: They want Hoover's successor from outside the ranks of the FBI—preferably a moderate liberal who would avoid the strident tone that often dominates Hoover's rhetoric. Supreme Court Justice Byron White may come closest to filling this prescription.

Reform No. 2: A specific time limit, perhaps one eight-year term, is regarded as essential for Hoover's successor. Although Hoover has become a fighting symbol to the American left, he has seldom abused his power. But in the tense times ahead, the man with all the government's investigative dossiers ought not, in the overwhelming view of politicians, to be beyond the authority of Presidents to remove him as, in effect, Hoover has been.

Reform No. 3: Experts on the FBI want it split into two separate bureaus—oper-

ations and intelligence. This would ease the problem of the FBI agent skilled at catching kidnapers (operations) but wholly untrained to make political distinctions between a revolutionary terrorist and a fuzzy peace dissenter (intelligence). That would mean two directors, further reducing the power of Hoover's successor.

THE LAST TWO proposals might make it harder to lure Justice White or any other lifetime federal judge to the FBI. But critics see them as essential for the future, even though Hoover has not deserved much of the abuse heaped on him by liberals. In truth, the FBI has been just as tough on the Ku Klux Klan and the Minutemen as it has been on terrorists from the left. It has shown vastly more self-restraint and regard for civil liberties in dealing with the Black Panthers—under intense provocation—than local police departments.

What serious students of the FBI now want is assurance that it will be equipped to cope with the post-Hoover era and, beyond that, maybe even win the confidence of the nation's dissenters.

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