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5-1 7/27/69



Can a Tear-Gas Peddler Find Happiness in FBI?

WASHINGTON—Can a 19-year-old tear-gas cannister distributor find happiness with the FBI? The answer is no. Jody Gorran, a small-time, small-arms merchant on the George Washington University campus, is disenchanted with J. Edgar Hoover, he told the House Internal Security Committee, which, like himself, is trying to go straight. He has nothing left from his career as an informer but an oversupply of "Paralyzers," the little tear-gas tubes he was peddling without much success when the Secret Service called on him last January and warned him against trying to make a killing with sales to dissident students during the Inauguration.

Apparently feeling he had no recourse but to join the FBI to prove his "loyalty," he applied at the local office and was taken on to spy on his classmates in the Students for a Democratic Society.

The work was easy. SDS is a recognized campus group at GW, like the French Club or the Hibernian Society. Its meetings are open and reported copiously in the press at times of crisis.

But the FBI, like the committee, is convinced that it is a plot, and paid Gorran's dues—\$5 a year with a subscription of "New Left Notes," the revolutionary periodical, thrown in.

Financially, it was a far, far better thing than the munitions business. The bureau paid \$15 a report, and Gorran managed to turn out four a week. When there was a cutback in agents, he was transferred to the intelligence department of the Metropolitan Police Department, which liked his reports about what the young planned to do with counter-revolutionaries after the deluge, and put him on a weekly \$60 retainer.

Gorran, it was quite obvious, was not in the great tradition of FBI spies like Elizabeth Bentley. His hearers, except for the committee, found his testimony hilarious.

As it turned out, he blew his biggest moment. Although he attended many gatherings where the nonviolent overthrow of the government was freely dis-

cussed, he missed the meeting where they decided to take over a university hall.

Nor was he at the barricades. He had to dash for the phone to tell the fuzz what was coming off.

The committee suspended his recital while they settled down in the dark to watch a movie of the Columbia revolt. Gorran went out in the hall and told all.

He had turned on his masters in the FBI not in any sense of moral revulsion but out of a simple concern for his own hide. No steady-eyed, cool agent like the trackers of Dillinger and company, Gorran was appalled when he discovered the work was dangerous.

"Now," he said, looking at Nick Greer, the acting chairman of the SDS whom he had turned in, he doesn't think that "the FBI should be on the campuses."

The committee, not realizing their star witness was a non-stop revolving turncoat, turned on the lights and called him back, not knowing he had blown his cover—and them—sky-high.

There is not much of a lesson to be learned from the tale except possibly that the bureau and the committee ought to subscribe to newspapers instead of informers.

Still, there may be some grain of comfort for citizens who are afraid that the entire student youth is trying to burn the system down.

Obviously, a few are still trying to make it work. Gorran's story, in which the profit and self-preservation motives run so vividly, should reassure people who thought Sammy of "What Makes Sammy Run?" was dead. He is alive and well and making a fast buck off Uncle Sam.