

Ex-No. 3 FBI Aide Is Target of Probe

9-30-76
By John M. Goshko
and Timothy S. Robinson
Washington Post Staff Writers

The Justice Department is investigating allegations that John P. Mohr, former No. 3 man in the FBI's executive hierarchy, had a \$5,000 wine rack built in his home by FBI personnel using government-owned materials.

These allegations represent the first specific example of possible wrongdoing involving Mohr to become known since the Justice Department launched a probe early this year of financial "abuses of power" within the FBI.

Mohr declined to comment on the allegations.

The investigation is centered on charges that some FBI officials misused funds or property during and immediately after the final years of the late director, J. Edgar Hoover, who died in May, 1972. Mohr, a Hoover confidant who retired shortly afterward as head of the bureau's powerful administrative division, is known to have been a target of the inquiry from its outset.



JOHN P. MOHR
... power under Hoover

Informed sources said yesterday that information about the wine rack was furnished by John P. Dunphy, former chief of the FBI's exhibits section and a key witness in the investigation.

See MOHR, A8, Col. 6

MOHR, From A1

Dunphy, a 28-year FBI veteran, was forced to resign his 37,800-a-year position last month and then pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of misappropriating less than \$100 worth of FBI-owned material to build a bird house at his home. He was fined \$500 Tuesday by Chief Judge William B. Jones of the U.S. District Court here.

The sources said Dunphy had described the wine rack as covering almost an entire wall of Mohr's Arlington home and had estimated its commercial value at approximately \$5,000. He said the rack had been built by carpenters from the exhibits section, the sources added.

However, the sources were unable to specify when the wine rack allegedly was built. If it were more than five years ago, the statute of limitations on federal offenses would probably preclude any attempt to charge Mohr with misappropriating government funds of property.

Prior to his 1972 retirement, Mohr was regarded by many FBI sources as probably the most powerful man in the bureau. Many contend that during Hoover's final years in office—a period when both the director and his titular chief deputy, Clyde A. Tolson, were seriously ill—Mohr ran the FBI.

Even after the current director, Clarence M. Kelley, took office in July, 1973, most of his top appointments were regarded within the bureau as Mohr loyalists; and Kelley has been plagued throughout his administration by rumors that Mohr continued to exert great influence over FBI affairs.

Among those identified as a Mohr loyalist was Nicholas P. Callahan, Kelley's initial choice as his deputy director. In July, however, Kelley abruptly fired Callahan for reasons that have not been publicly explained but that are known to be related to the Justice Department investigation.

This inquiry began after the Senate intelligence committee heard charges last year that the FBI had favored a Washington electronics firm, U.S. Recording, in awarding contracts for the secret purchase of thousands of dollars worth of electronic surveillance equipment.

The president of U.S. Recording, Joseph Tait, is a long-time friend and poker partner of Mohr. The subsequent investigation so far has failed to turn up any evidence of illegalities in the FBI's dealings with U.S. Recording.

But, as the result of other information uncovered by department investigators, the probe later was broadened to include other questionable financial practices and "abuses of power" within the bureau.