

Glimpse of the FBI at War in Peace

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The chief of the FBI's Honolulu office was censured, placed on probation and transferred to Richmond last summer after the wives of special agents in the office wrote a letter of complaint about him to Acting FIB Director L. Patrick Gray III.

Richard Rogge was removed from the desirable Honolulu post when a special inspection team sent to Hawaii by Gray reported back that there was a "serious morale problem" in the field office, bureau sources said yesterday.

The action against Rogge actually predated the more severe disciplinary measures recently taken against FBI officials in Los Angeles and Washington, but has been a closely guarded secret.

"I got that one by you," Gray told reporters at a United Press International convention here on Monday, after revealing—perhaps inadvertently—that he had disciplined a third regional FBI chief whose name was revealed.

Neither Gray nor other ranking FBI officials would comment on the matter yesterday.

But The Washington Post

learned that one reason for the secrecy was the unusual nature of the stimulus for punishment of Rogge: the wives' letter.

Shortly after the death of long-time FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover last May, the wives of several agents wrote a confidential note to Gray protesting their husbands' "working conditions," the sources said.

The women complained that under Rogge, who had been special agent in charge of the Honolulu office since October, 1969, their husbands were required to do nighttime guard duty.

They also contended that Rogge humiliated the agents in his office by "dressing them down" in front of others when they made mistakes.

In addition, the wives wrote, the Honolulu chief frequently used "off-color language" in the presence of women. They asked Gray to remove him and send out a more polite G-man.

Some of the complaints in the wives' letter were "nitpicking crap," the FBI sources told The Washington Post, but Gray immediately ordered the bureau's Inspection Division to conduct an inquiry.

The inspectors reported back that the night guard duty had been required only be-

cause the FBI's Honolulu office was in a "bad neighborhood."

Although several of the other charges could not be substantiated by the inspection team, its report, as paraphrased by The Washington Post's sources, told Gray that "from a leadership standpoint, things could be better" in Honolulu.

The acting FBI director, with a mandate from the White House to restore central discipline in the bureau, subsequently decided it "would be better for morale" to transfer Rogge, the sources said.

Gray apparently considered his action against Rogge, a 25-year FBI veteran, to be "mild" especially since he was assigned to Richmond, which has a larger FBI office than Honolulu.

(Ranked as a "medium-size" field office, Richmond has more than 50 special agents with jurisdiction over most investigations in Virginia.)

Nonetheless, the director's censure remains in Rogge's FBI personnel file and his probationary period in Richmond is being closely monitored by FBI headquarters here.

Before the Honolulu wives complained, the sources said, the 46-year-old Rogge had the

reputation within the FBI of "driving his people hard and getting a lot of results."

Honolulu was his first field command position, after he had been assistant special agent in charge of the Philadelphia and Los Angeles field offices and had held several positions at FBI headquarters.

Rogge also served as second in command in the Richmond FBI office for 18 months in 1965-66.

He could not be reached for comment yesterday in Richmond, where he took charge Aug. 14. According to The Washington Post's sources, Rogge is considered to be doing "a good job" there so far.

Several agents in Honolulu, reached by telephone yesterday, insisted that they had the impression that Rogge's move to Richmond was a "routine transfer." They declined to say whether their wives had signed the letter of complaint.

Since Gray took temporary charge of the FBI upon Hoover's death, there has been a change of the special agent in charge at 18 of the bureau's 59 field offices.

The FBI insists, however, that all but three resulted from retirements and promotions and the resulting chain of transfers. Gray has also announced a policy of rotating field commanders with top positions in the Washington headquarters.

The other two disciplined field office chiefs were Wesley G. Grapp, of Los Angeles and Robert Kunkel, of Washington.