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Hoover Says Data Called Oswald Safe

Warren Probe Warned Against 'Police State'

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FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover warned the Warren Commission against establishment of "totalitarian" security measures that might lead to a "police state" in efforts to protect presidents of the United States.

Hoover also disclosed in his testimony the existence of a

Highlights of Hoover Testimony.

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State Department document indicating that Lee Harvey Oswald, accused assassin of President Kennedy, was a "thoroughly safe risk." He said the document furnished to the FBI was based on an interview conducted by the American Embassy in Moscow before the defector returned to the United States.

The testimony of the FBI director was alluded to but not given in detail in the report of the Warren Commission on the assassination made public last Monday. A transcript of his May 14 testimony, which has not yet been published by the Commission, was made available to The Star today.

The FBI has not commented

on the commission finding that it took "an unduly restrictive view of its role in preventive intelligence work prior to the assassination." It is reported, however, that the bureau has been stung bitterly by the implication that it should have given more careful cooperation in the Oswald case.

Not Very Happy

Hoover testified that "I am not very happy with the criteria expansion" affecting the lists of names of subversives and extremists being furnished by the FBI to the Secret Service as a post-assassination security measure.

He raised the question of "just how far are you going to go for his (the President's) protection and his security" and then continued:

"I don't think you can get absolute security without almost establishing a police state, and we don't want that."

Hoover said that in handling the security problem, "Certain chances have to be taken. You are dealing with a human being when you are dealing with the President of the United States. It makes the security problem all the more difficult but you can't bar him from the people."

With the expanded criteria for furnishing names of potential risks to the Secret Service, Hoover estimated the names of about 10,000 subversives and extremists will have been submitted by the FBI.

Cites Chicago Case

"Then you come to the problem of what you are going to do when the Secret Service gets See HOOVER, Page A-2

HOOVER

Oswald Is Called a Dedicated Red

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those names?" he continued. They have to call upon the local authorities.

"Just recently, in the city of Chicago, when the President was there, the local authorities were asked to give assistance as they usually do to the Secret Service and they went to the homes of some of these people, and it resulted really almost in house arrest.

"Now, I don't think there is any place in this country for that kind of thing but these people who belonged to extreme subversive organizations or organizations that advocated the overthrow of the government by force or violence were told that they couldn't leave their house or if they did they would be accompanied by a police officer."

Hoover said this gave him "great concern" because in New York City alone there are 3,000 or 4,000 such individuals in subversive organizations.

Wants a Balance

"We don't want a Gestapo," he said. "We have to, I think, maintain an even balance."

Hoover said that many of the local police organizations on which the Secret Service would have to depend are capable and efficient, but that some are not.

Hoover said he thought the action in the Chicago incident he cited was a case of very bad judgment. But he said the local authorities do what they think is right.

"Now I guess their attitude with all justice to them is, 'Well, we will resolve the risk in our favor. If we keep these people under surveillance and keep them in the house until the President gets out of town nothing can happen from

them,'" Hoover told the commission.

"That is what you would call totalitarian security. I don't think you can have that kind of security in this country without having a great wave of criticism against it."

36 Known Defectors

The veteran FBI chief testified that there are 36 known defectors to Communist countries now in the United States who have been under investigation. Last December, after the assassination of President Kennedy by defector Oswald, Hoover said, the criteria was expanded and all defectors now automatically go on the list furnished to the Secret Service.

Hoover told the commission that the FBI received a report from the State Department "that indicated this man (Oswald) was a thoroughly safe risk here, he had changed his views, he was a loyal man now and had seen the light of day, so to speak." He said he did not know how intensive the interview was with Oswald in Moscow but that "nevertheless, it was in a State Department document that was furnished to us."

There is no doubt that Oswald was a dedicated Communist, Hoover testified.

"I don't believe, as I look back on it, that he ever changed his views when he asked to come back to this country," Hoover said. "I personally feel that when he went to the American Embassy in Moscow originally to renounce his citizenship, he should have been able right then and there to sign the renouncement.

"He never could have gotten back here. I think that should apply to almost all defectors who want to defect. If they indicate a desire for it, let them renounce their citizenship at once."

None of the FBI's contacts with Oswald gave any indication of any tendency to commit violence, Hoover testified. He said many people read the Worker, the Communist Party organ, but cannot be branded as potential assassins or hazards to the security of the country.

"It is in that area that I am

particularly concerned," he said, "that we don't become hysterical and go too far in restricting the citizens of our country from exercising their civil and constitutional rights. The mere fact that a person disagrees with you on communism doesn't mean he should be arrested."

At another point, Hoover declared, "I think the extreme right is just as much a danger to the freedom of this country as the extreme left."

Hoover testified that the first indication of an act of violence by Oswald came after the accused assassin was dead and his Russian widow, Marina, told the FBI about her husband's attempt on the life of Gen. Edwin Walker. There was no information prior to the Dallas tragedy that would have warranted the FBI reporting Os-

wald as a potential danger to the safety of the President, Hoover said.

Both the FBI and the Secret Service have emphatically denied privately any implication that there has been a lack of close liaison between the two organizations. James J. Rowley, chief of the Secret Service, is a former FBI agent and is a close personal friend of Hoover's.