

# Nixon Pessimistic on Paris Talks

By Jack Anderson

President Nixon has abandoned any real hope, say insiders, of achieving a Vietnam settlement.

When the peace talks began in Paris, U.S. strategists expected long, painful negotiations. But they believed a political settlement could be negotiated.

Now the White House is convinced that the Paris peace talks will produce nothing but propaganda. The only hope is to produce a stalemate that will prevent a Communist takeover.

The invasions of Cambodia and Laos clearly hurt Hanoi and strengthened Saigon. But rather than make the North Vietnamese more conciliatory at the truce table, these attacks made them more recalcitrant.

The Communist negotiators seem determined not to negotiate a settlement that would appear to have been forced by military action.

Footnote: The Communist cadres, meanwhile, have been drumming the line throughout Vietnam that Hanoi will make no concessions. The view in the White House is that any concessions at this point would disillusion and damage the cadre system.

## Frightening Hoover

J. Edgar Hoover, the scourge of public enemies, Communist spies and other forces of evil, has been intimi-

dated by a 26-year-old reporter.

The FBI chief, astonishingly, believes his "personal safety" is threatened by Charles Elliott, a reporter on my staff.

Except perhaps for a Jesse James mustache, there is nothing menacing about Chuck Elliott. He is a mild-mannered, self-effacing young man, a little on the hefty side, rumped in appearance, who shuffles quietly around Washington in pursuit of news.

I asked him last January to keep an FBI-like eye on Hoover. From time to time, Chuck tailed him, inspected his trash and questioned his neighbors.

We never intended to frighten the great G-man. We merely wanted to dramatize, by this little burlesque, our distaste for some of the FBI's snooping tactics. We also thought it might be in the public interest to reduce Hoover, for 47 years a Washington deity, to human proportions.

For example, Chuck discovered evidence in Hoover's trash, in the form of rich dinner menus and empty Gelusil cartons, that the great man suffers from gas pains.

All this, if audacious, seemed harmless enough to us. But apparently Hoover felt his personal security has been jeopardized.

## Hoover Strikes Back

First, there were countermeasures straight out of a

Sunday night FBI television episode. Two FBI types appeared at Chuck's door, got him to identify himself, then snapped his picture and rushed off triumphantly in a waiting sedan.

Then Chuck's roommate, who happens to be the son of an FBI agent, told his father about Chuck. The roommate, Peter Ruehl, said he merely wanted to alert his father in case the FBI should discover the relationship.

Ruehl assured us he had said nothing about Chuck that should have caused alarm.

The father, Vincent Ruehl, promptly notified Hoover. Not long afterward, Peter received a cryptic note from the FBI chief surreptitiously addressed to him at his place of work.

"I am grateful for your actions with respect to Charles Elliott," wrote Hoover. "Your concern for my personal safety means a great deal to me personally."

This fear of lurking enemies isn't new with Hoover, although it may come as a shock to a public familiar with his bulldog visage, stern mien and staccato speech. For 47 years, planted press notices have portrayed Hoover as a fearless, undaunted crusader against crime, corruption and communism.

Typical is the story, disputed in recent accounts, of how he personally appre-

hended former Public Enemy No. 1 Alvin "Kreepy" Karpis in New Orleans. As the desperado settled behind a steering wheel, so the story goes, Hoover jabbed his pistol behind Karpis' ear.

"Well, I guess you've got me," said Kreepy.

"Put the cuffs on him, boys," snapped Hoover.

## No Handcuffs

There was an embarrassing search for handcuffs; no one had any. Kreepy Karpis was finally led to justice with his hands bound by a necktie. That tie, like other mementoes of the war against crime, occupies a position of honor in the FBI's museum.

One of Hoover's neighbors told us the FBI chief won't disembark from his limousine if there are any hippies in sight on the street. And a short, dour-faced man, his snap-brim hat pulled over his eyes, his right hand jammed into a pocket, has been seen checking out a hotel lobby and barber shop before Hoover would venture inside for a haircut.

The truth is that the FBI is run by a fading old crime-fighter, who has built one of the most formidable law enforcement agencies in the world but who, at 76, deserves to retire to a place where the pace and weather are kinder on the bodies of old men whose work is completed.