

In the light of the marked passage the Shaneyfelt proposal to sue me for libel was a con, proposed in the certainty it would not be approved and then passed off with the false presumption that it would be helpful to me, all needed for Hoover to agree not to have me sued.

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### *The Bureau*

he tapped the side of his head with his index finger a few times. The man who had asked turned out to be a member of the John Birch Society, and he reported the entire incident, including his interpretation of the gesture ("Mr. Hoover, he believes you are out of your mind") in a long letter to Hoover.

Hoover blew up. He suspended Wells from the bureau and confiscated his bureau property: his gun, badge, manuals, credentials, everything. Then he had him transferred out of headquarters to an office whose SAC was right under Hoover's thumb. I knew it would be only a matter of time before the SAC would find fault with Wells and fire him. I decided to try to save Wells's job by using one of Hoover's favorite techniques against the director himself, the letter-writing campaign.

I contacted some of the other guests at the party who kindly consented to write letters telling Hoover that Wells hadn't made a deprecating gesture, that he was merely scratching his head, and that, furthermore, Wells's behavior at the party had been a credit to the FBI and to Hoover himself. But the letters didn't change Hoover's mind or Wells's status. Wells wrote a letter himself to Hoover in which he denied that the incident had ever taken place and announced that he planned to sue the John Bircher who had written it for defamation of character.

To Hoover, a lawsuit involving the bureau meant only one thing—a publicly embarrassing situation which was to be avoided at all costs. Within days of his threatened lawsuit Wells was back at work at headquarters, but not as my liaison.

The bureau system made liars of us all. If you didn't lie you couldn't survive.

I remember the day Wells came into work on his fiftieth birthday. He had put in more than twenty years with the FBI and was eligible for retirement, his government pension assured. "I'm a free man," he said that day. Wells didn't quit when he turned fifty. When I asked him why he had decided to stay on, Wells said, "Would I leave the circus?"

It was hard to leave the circus. My whole family had been pleading with me for years to get out. After I'd put in twenty years of ser-

vice, was fifty years on me even more longer. I liked to were either in could have retired with job, but nothing was ready to quit bureau, I had written of remaining atmosphere," but

Again in 1950 intelligence with bureau headquarters marines. I was told but would allow was tantamount this was not true people pass on

By 1945 when visitor, I noted the little as possible paychecks.

The main thing relations. Luckily most talented I Many of my friends higher positions over's policies and I would be "bureaucratic" because I was important: the enormous need for improvement and Jews, the new files to the press supposed enemies where it was needed in public relations