

Hoover Reportedly Forsaw

J. Edgar Hoover, the late director of the FBI, predicted that a serious scandal could hit President Nixon, according to a syndicated columnist who says he interviewed Hoover a few months before his death.

Andrew Tully, in a column distributed yesterday by the McNaught Syndicate, writes that Hoover told him in January, 1972, that "the President's kindergarten," as the FBI director called the White House staff, kept

"coming up with half-baked schemes."

In an apparent reference to convicted Watergate conspirators E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Libby, Hoover said, "By God, he's (Mr. Nixon) got some former CIA men working for him that I'd kick out of my office. Some day, that bunch will serve him up a fine mess," according to Tully.

Tully said that he had promised Hoover that no part of their off-the-record conversation would be published until after his death "and then only if I deemed publication historically relevant.

"That condition has now been met," Tully said, by virtue of an article in The Philadelphia Inquirer last week that asserted that the President had committed himself to dismissing Hoover in late 1971.

According to Tully's ac-

count, Hoover had talked Mr. Nixon out of firing him.

Asked if rumors that he was under pressure to retire were true, Tully says, Hoover replied that "I put the kibosh on those jaspers who want to get rid of me. I saw the President a couple of months ago and we agreed that I would stay on the job.

"I knew what was going on," Tully quotes Hoover as saying. "The President asked me what thoughts I had about retirements and I said none, then I told him why. I told him he needed me around to protect him from those people around him."

According to the columnist, Hoover deprecated some of Mr. Nixon's top aides and advisers during the interview, calling John N. Mitchell "not equipped to be Attorney General" and describing former White House aides H. R. (Bob)

Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman and press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler as qualified only "to sell advertising."

As for former White House counsel John W. Dean III, Tully quotes Hoover: "He doesn't know law. I ignore the S.O.B."

Hoover also told the columnist that he had been

Nixon Scandal

forced too put the kibosh on one crazy intelligence scheme against subversives," apparently the 1970 intensified domestic intelligence that the President has said Hoover vetoed just before it was to go into effect.

Tully also says that Hoover added, "I'm getting old, I know that. Hell, even I can't live forever. But I'll live until I die, and until that day comes I'll do the dirty job of telling the President what I think."