

Senate Votes 96-0 for Kelley As FBI Head

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The police chief of Kansas City, Mo., Clarence Marion Kelley, was unanimously confirmed by the Senate yesterday to fill the 14-month-old vacancy as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

He immediately held a press conference at FBI headquarters here to declare that he will be "a firm but fair administrator" and "make my own judgments and decisions."

"As director of the FBI," Kelley said, "I promise to bend every resource of that great agency into achieving higher standards of professionalism, promoting better cooperation among agencies, and engendering public support to defeat the criminal."

With only four senators absent for the vote on Kelley's nomination, the other 96 approved him on a roll call after a 30-minute debate.

Sen. James O. Eastland (D-Miss.), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which had unanimously endorsed Kelley on Tuesday, said that the hearings he chaired revealed "nothing wrong and everything good about the nominee."

Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield of Montana said, "I can think of no better director than Mr. Kelley."

But Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) warned that the new director must set standards "which will assure that the bureau is never misused or abused again," as he said it had been during the Watergate affair.

Kennedy called upon Kelley to purge from the FBI ranks anyone "who participated or acquiesced in the excesses of recent years" — an apparent reference to some who served under the late J. Edgar Hoover, the bureau's director for nearly half a century, and under L. Patrick Gray III, who was acting director for 51 weeks.

Kelley, 61, who has been Kansas City police chief for the past 12 years and earlier served for two decades as an FBI agent, is expected to be sworn into office after the July 4th holiday.

Until then, William D. Ruckelshaus, who has been acting director since Gray's resignation in late April, will remain in charge.

Kelley made no commitments about personnel during his press conference yesterday, but said he had already "done some thinking" about whom to name to the key post of associate FBI director.

FBI employees who had still not met their new director crowded into a bureau classroom as Kelley read a prepared statement.

He stressed that "professionalism means that law enforcement must be constantly alert to change (and) means a deep and abiding respect for the rights of citizens. Really, this is what free government is all about . . . Law enforcement is the servant of the people. This means respect for the rights of all our people—of every race, creed or religion."

Kelley acknowledged, as he had during his confirmation hearings, that "I am not familiar with current FBI procedures and operations" and that "I know nothing" about the Watergate affair.

In response to questions, he said he feels that wiretaps can be "very beneficial" to law enforcement, but must be restricted by legal safeguards.

Under some circumstances, he added, "surreptitious entry" may be necessary for planting bugging devices in foreign intelligence cases, but said he does not believe in other forms of illegal entry by the FBI for the purpose of obtaining information.