

Organized Crime Convictions In FBI Cases Up Sharply

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Convictions in criminal cases brought by the FBI, especially those in organized crime and gambling, have sharply increased, according to the bureau's annual report released yesterday.

FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley said the report should refute charges that the bureau's early role in the Watergate investigation had "diminished the FBI's effectiveness, cast doubt on its integrity and devastated employe morale.

"Those who have such doubts," he continued, "underestimate the character of career employees, for these are men and women who truly believe the FBI is the finest investigative agency in the world and daily strive to make it so."

Critics have said the FBI could have been more aggressive in the early stages of the Watergate probe and that it complied with White House demands that it restrict its inquiry.

L. Patrick Gray III, who was acting director after J. Edgar Hoover died in May, 1972, resigned last April 27, after admitting he destroyed some Watergate evidence at the request of a presidential aide.

Kelley's pointed reference to the character of career FBI employees underscored a comment he made at a The Washington Post luncheon last month. He said then that Gray "was not considered a true representative of the bureau. He was an outsider."

The annual report covers the fiscal year that ended June 30, nine days before Kelley became director. It says



CLARENCE M. KELLEY
... "FBI is the finest"

little that is new about the Watergate investigation, except that 56 of its 59 field offices have worked on the various cases and that the bureau has followed leads to foreign countries.

The report shows that convictions resulting from FBI investigations totaled 14,465 in fiscal 1973, up from about 13,000 in 1972 and 13,400 in 1971.

Convictions in fiscal 1973 in organized crime and gambling cases made by the FBI numbered 1,114, a 301 increase over the 1972 figure. By contrast, organized crime convictions in 1969 totaled 319.

The increase results from what one source called "new jurisdiction and increased manpower." The 1968 Omnibus Crime Act broadened the FBI's access to court-authorized wiretaps and the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 allowed it to investigate certain kinds of local gambling

operations that it could not look into before, he explained.

Also, he noted, in 1970 Hoover sought and won congressional authorization to hire 1,000 more agents most of whom went into investigating organized crime. The FBI now has 8,658 agents.

The report also says that despite the current detente with the Soviet Union, there is "no sign of any reduction in the combined intelligence effort being conducted against the United States by Soviet bloc nations." It says that as of last July 1, there were 2,686 Soviet bloc people, including dependents, in the United States. Soviet bloc officials numbered 1,296, an increase of 44 per cent in the last five years, the report says.

A high percentage of them are spies, the report says. "Accordingly, the threat to the United States and the counter-intelligence responsibilities of the FBI have been growing in proportion to the Soviet bloc presence in the United States."

The report shows a decrease in the value of goods recovered by the FBI in its cases—from nearly \$241 million in 1972 to \$192 million in fiscal 1973.