

# Tolson Says FBI Official Swayed Kin

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Clyde A. Tolson, who was J. Edgar Hoover's closest friend and deputy for decades at the FBI, disinherited his own brother to the benefit and at the suggestion of yet another long-time FBI official, the brother has charged.

In a petition challenging Clyde Tolson's will, brother Hillory Tolson accused John P. Mohr of using "fraud and deceit" to exclude Hillory Tolson from the \$500,000 estate. Mohr, generally described as the No. 3 man at the FBI, retired from the bureau June 30, 1972, about two months after Hoover died and Clyde Tolson resigned.

"Before June, 1972, and many years prior to then," Hillory Tolson's petition states, "Tolson suffered physical and mental debility." Tolson, according to the petition, was often incoherent and confused and was unable to walk without aid.

"As a result of (Tolson's) weakened condition, physically and mentally, (Mohr) and those in collaboration with him prevented others, including (Hillory Tolson)," the petition said, "from seeing (Clyde Tolson), who became a virtual recluse."

Hillory Tolson and his two children are Clyde Tolson's only living relatives. The contested will says, "To my brother, Hillory A. Tolson, and his children, James Walter Tolson and Pamela Tolson Holst, I leave nothing by this will."

Tolson's holdings—\$430,000 in cash and stocks, \$70,000 in oil and mineral leases in the Southwest and Hoover's house on 30th Place NW—are left to 13 beneficiaries and two nonprofit associations.

Much of the estate presumably came from Hoover, who left Tolson almost all of his holdings, estimated at \$551,500 when he died on May 2, 1972.

Hillory Tolson, a one-time FBI agent himself, a former official with the National Park Service and now the executive director of the White House Historical Association, referred all ques-

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1965 photo

CLYDE A. TOLSON  
... his will challenged

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tions to his attorney, Rolland Lamensdorf.

Lamensdorf said he knew of no specific event or long-standing grievance that would have caused Clyde Tolson to disinherit his brother. "It's surprising to me that what occurred did occur," Lamensdorf said.

Only Mohr is named in the petition as having "exercised undue, duress and coercion" on Clyde Tolson, although there is the suggestion in the petition that other unnamed individuals participated. Lamensdorf would not list other names.

There are two Tolson wills that Lamensdorf knows of, he said, one dated in June, 1972, and the other the following August. Clyde Tolson died in April of this year. Both specifically exclude Hillory Tolson.

Lamensdorf said that the Tolson brothers had not been close in recent years. "Frankly," he said, "I think Clyde Tolson was an extremely dedicated man to the FBI. He restricted himself during and after hours to the FBI . . . He was a very sick man over the last three years of his life."

Mohr would receive \$26,000 in the Tolson will. He had no comment on the allegations in the petition, but indicated that his attorneys would be responding in court.

The other beneficiaries include:

- Annie Fields, who was Hoover's housekeeper for years at 4936 30th Pl. NW, would receive \$32,000 plus the house furnishings. When Tolson in-

herited Hoover's home, he moved in and the housekeeper remained.

• James E. Crawford, both Hoover's and Tolson's chauffeur, \$32,000. He drove Hoover and Tolson, who lived in a nearby apartment before Hoover's death, to work together almost every day.

• Dorothy Skillman, Tolson's long-time secretary, who would receive \$27,000. "She was very devoted to Mr. Tolson," a source recalled. "She was in the truest sense an executive secretary and should have been included in any will."

• Three Washington physicians, Drs. Joseph V. Kennedy, William Wardrop and Robert Choisser, who would receive \$15,000 each. Dr. Wardrop said yesterday that the three of them attended Clyde Tolson, but refused to discuss his ailments or his mental capacity. He said he had not expected to be included in the will.

Tolson's condition in his later years, the petition said, was brought on by severe hypertension, cerebral vascular disease, arteriosclerosis and severe hemorrhaging in the right eye. He had suffered two strokes, the petition said.

Hillary Tolson's petition seeks a jury trial. The petition asks that Tolson replace Mohr as executor of the estate and the disbursement of the estate could be changed in further litigation.

J. Edgar Hoover's FBI was also Clyde Tolson's FBI, according to many who were familiar with its operations. The two men were the closest of friends and worked very well together.

"Tolson was the man who got things done," a source said yesterday. "He was the detail man. He had a photographic memory and was a meticulous administrator."

But Tolson's health began to fail in the late 1960s, and he reportedly suffered a stroke at that time. However, his speech and mental acuity were unimpaired, although he was forced on occasion to remain home, where he insisted on being kept abreast of matters.

"The only guy he would listen to was his doctor or Hoover himself," a source said.

Tolson's health continued to deteriorate and, by the time he retired in 1972 on the date of Hoover's funeral, he was no longer very active in day-to-day operations of the bureau, according to W. Mark Felt, former acting associate director of the bureau.

Cartha D. DeLoach, former assistant to the director and who left the bureau in 1970, said yesterday that he had lunch in New York with both Hoover and Tolson about a week before Hoover's death, and that Tolson's mind was clear. We talked at great length."

Mohr, who had been largely responsible for the administrative functions of the bureau — from supporting Hoover and Tolson in congressional budget hearings to making sure a car was available for the director—reportedly took over much of the day-to-day concern and care for Tolson after Hoover's death.

TOLSON DIED 14 APR 75