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(680) FBI-NEWSWEEK

WASHINGTON, DEC. 7 (AP)-THE FBI HAS ACCUSED NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE OF "A NEW LOW IN REPORTING" FOR AN ARTICLE IN WHICH THE MAGAZINE SAID PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAD DECIDED TO REPLACE J. EDGAR HOOVER AS FBI CHIEF--AN ALLEGATION WHICH THE WHITE HOUSE SINCE HAS DENIED.

THE CRITICISM, ALONG WITH AN ACCUSATION THAT THE MAGAZINE PRESENTED INACCURATE STATISTICS ON THE FBI, WAS IN A LETTER SENT BY FBI ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR CLYDE TOLSON TO NEWSWEEK EDITOR OSBORN ELLIOTT. REACHED LAST NIGHT AT HIS NEW YORK HOME, ELLIOTT SAID THE MAGAZINE STANDS BY ITS STORY.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE ARTICLE IN NEWSWEEK'S DEC. 7 ISSUE (RELEASED IN ADVANCE OF ITS COVER DATE), SAID REP. JOHN J. ROONEY, D-N.Y., HEAD OF A HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE, WAS ESPECIALLY SYMPATHETIC TO HOOVER'S REQUESTS FOR FUNDS.

THE ARTICLE SAID FIVE SPECIAL FBI AGENTS ARE ON LOAN TO ROONEY TO HELP WITH SUBCOMMITTEE WORK. TOLSON'S LETTER DENIED THIS.

AT THE TIME TOLSON'S LETTER WAS WRITTEN ON NOV. 30, THE FBI DECLINED TO RELEASE THE TEXT. IT SAID THAT WAS UP TO THE MAGAZINE. A NEWSWEEK SPOKESMAN SAID YESTERDAY THE MAGAZINE WAS NOT RELEASING NOR PRINTING THE LETTER.

HERE IS THE TEXT OF TOLSON'S LETTER RELEASED YESTERDAY BY THE FBI:

"DEAR MR. ELLIOTT:

"YOUR ARTICLE IN THE DECEMBER 7 ISSUE OF NEWSWEEK, ENTITLED 'J. EDGAR HOOVER AND THE F.B.I.', REPRESENTS A NEW LOW IN REPORTING.

"YOU SAID THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAS BECOME DISENCHANTED WITH MR. HOOVER AND HAS DECIDED HE MUST FIND A NEW DIRECTOR OF THE F.B.I. THIS STATEMENT WAS REPUDIATED IN ITS ENTIRETY BY THE PRESIDENT ON NOV. 30. HE STATED, IN EFFECT, THAT IT WOULD BE WELL FOR NEWSWEEK (ALL CAPS) TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE WHITE HOUSE BEFORE MAKING SUCH STATEMENTS.

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"YOUR STATEMENT CONCERNING F.B.I. STATISTICS IS INACCURATE. YOU STATE 'OTHER CRITICS ASSERT THAT THE F.B.I. FURTHER FALSIFIES THE CAR

INVESTIGATED BY THE F.B.I. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY CLAIM THAT ALL OF THESE CARS WERE RECOVERED BY THE F.B.I.

"YOU STATE 'ROONEY HAS FIVE F.B.I. AGENTS ON LOAN TO HIM TO HELP WITH THE COMMITTEE'S WORK.' THE FACT IS THAT MR. ROONEY HAS NO SPECIAL AGENTS ON LOAN TO HIM FOR ANY PURPOSE WHATSOEVER.

"YOU FURTHER STATE THAT 'ONE REASON MAY BE THAT THE F.B.I. DIRECTOR . . . NEVER BOTHERED TO SEND HIM (ROBERT KENNEDY) A NOTE OF CONDOLENCE ON HIS BROTHER'S DEATH.' THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT MR. HOOVER WROTE MR. KENNEDY ON THE DATE OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY. A COPY OF HIS LETTER IS ATTACHED.

"THERE ARE MANY OTHER MISSTATEMENTS OF FACT IN YOUR ARTICLE.

"VERY TRULY YOURS,

"CLYDE TOLSON"

THE NOTE FROM HOOVER TO KENNEDY, RELEASED LAST WEEK BY THE FBI, SAID:

"WORDS FAIL ME WHEN I TRY TO TELL YOU HOW GRIEVED I AM OVER THE TERRIBLE TRAGEDY OF THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT. I AM HEARTSICK FOR YOUR FAMILY IN ITS LOSS OF A BELOVED MEMBER, AND HEARTSICK FOR OUR NATION WHICH COULD SO ILL-AFFORD TO LOSE ITS LEADER.

"SINCERELY,

"EDGAR"

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ELLIOTT SAID LAST NIGHT HE HAD SENT A REPLY TO TOLSON ON SATURDAY, SAYING THE MAGAZINE STILL STANDS BY ITS STORY.

ELLIOTT ADDED THAT THE MAGAZINE WILL NOT GO BEYOND A STATEMENT IT MADE SHORTLY AFTER GEORGE REEDY, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY, DENIED THAT HOOVER WOULD BE REPLACED.

NEWSWEEK SAID AT THAT TIME ITS SOURCE WAS A HIGHLY AUTHORITATIVE ONE WITHIN THE WHITE HOUSE.

ELLIOTT SAID HIS LETTER CONCEDES THAT NEWSWEEK "SEEMS TO BE" IN ERROR "CONCERNING THE LETTER THAT WE UNDERSTOOD WAS NOT SENT TO ROBERT KENNEDY."

HE SAID KENNEDY'S STAFF HAS "UNEARTHED" THE LETTER, AFTER A SEARCH PROMPTED BY THE CONTROVERSY, BUT THAT KENNEDY HAD NOT RECEIVED IT UNTIL AFTER THE SEARCH BEGAN.

ELLIOTT SAID HE TOLD TOLSON THE HOOVER STORY "REPRESENTED PERHAPS