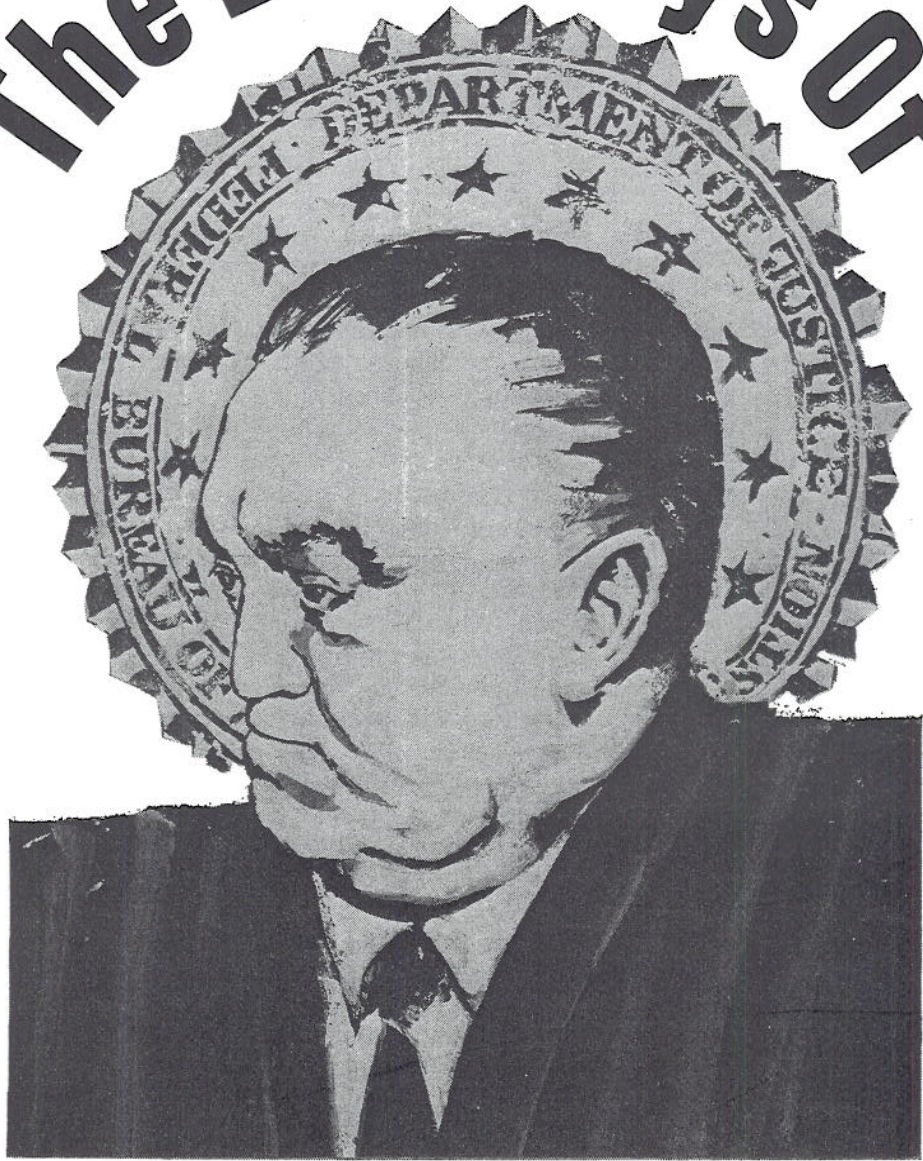


# The Last Days Of



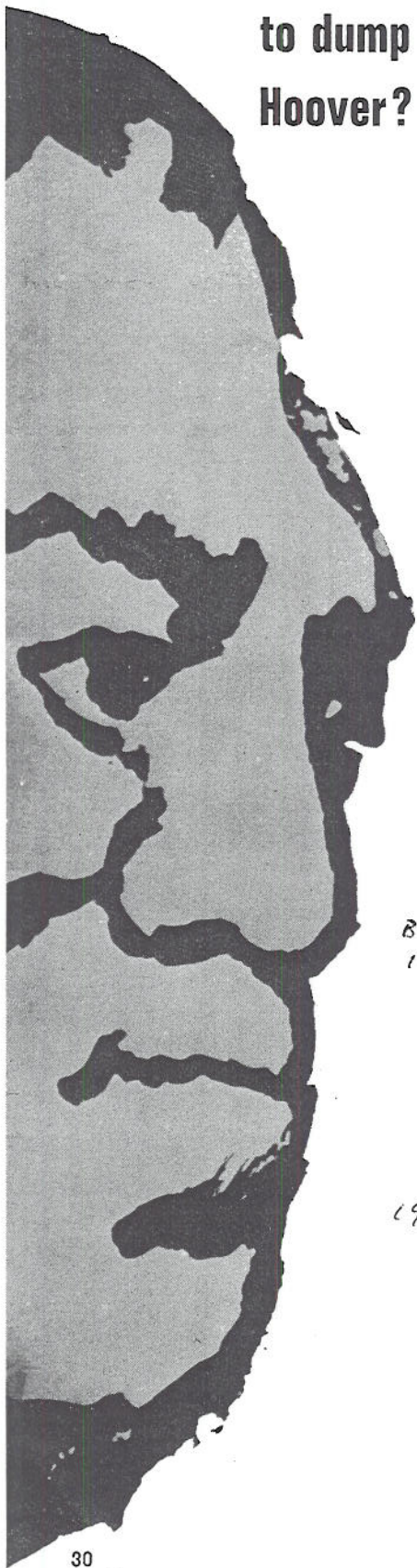
## J. Edgar Hoover

The FBI chief is 74, and closing out a controversial 45-year reign. Was he a force for good or bad? What is he like today? Two observers who have often felt his wrath give a candid summing-up

TURN PAGE



## Was President Kennedy planning to dump Hoover?



BORN  
1895'

1962-63

■ The snow was just beginning to stick to the Washington sidewalks, and a few businessmen fidgeted inside the lobby of the Statler-Hilton Hotel, glancing hopefully at the empty taxi stand outside. The quiet bleakness of the winter morning was disrupted by the clump-clump of a short, dour-faced man who strode through the door into the hotel, his snap-brim hat pulled over his eyes, his right hand jammed into a coat pocket. He quickly surveyed the almost empty lobby, then turned his head and nodded once.

The door opened again and another man entered. His short legs took quick steps across the carpeted floor. The businessmen recognized the face of J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Their eyes followed him expectantly. But the little drama ended at the door of the hotel barbershop, and the men turned back to looking for cabs, while the snowflakes made soft landings on the concrete. Even on a dreary morning, no one was interested in watching a haircut.

If his audience was disappointed, Hoover had his own public relations to blame. He has carefully built the image of a man of action—undaunted, vigilant, prepared for any encounter anywhere with public enemies, communist spies and other forces of evil. It is an image that, after more than 40 years of planted press notices, Hoover himself cannot escape, even in a barber's chair.

The Hoover image and the FBI have become so intertwined that the public can no longer easily distinguish between the man and the agency. For most Americans—from Presidents to housewives—Hoover is the FBI. This wedding of identities has brought enormous power. When Hoover speaks about law enforcement, penny-pinching Congressmen forget their speeches about economy and vote eagerly for his budget requests. His invisible minions may grumble about their director's dictatorial powers, but they also benefit from basking in his image. The greenest agent in the field is accepted by his community as a fearless, incorruptible bloodhound.

The Hoover mystique does, of course, have its disadvantages. He has made himself the indispensable man in government, with power so great that Presidents who would have liked to replace him have hastily reconsidered. Before the last votes had been counted in the 1960 election, John F. Kennedy asked Hoover to accept reappointment. President Johnson even waived the government's wise rule of mandatory retirement at 70 so Hoover could continue.

But Hoover cannot dominate the FBI much longer. In May he will mark—no doubt with modesty at the lavish outpouring of congratulations—his 45th anniversary as FBI director. He will also soon observe another anniversary that the Bureau is less likely to advertise. On New Year's Day, Hoover will be 74. It seems inevitable that the new President, sometime during his first term, will be compelled to pay Hoover his final measure of praise, then, perhaps sadly, replace him.

There was similar speculation as Hoover neared 70. More than a year before, White House aides pointed out to President Kennedy that tremendous pressure would be exerted to keep Hoover on the job after 70, but that it would take a Presidential proclamation to waive the statutory retirement age. By that time Kennedy's awe of Hoover had diminished. Aides still recall his tart, taut reply. "We are not going to have such a proclamation," said the President.

There was a new man in the White House on January 1, 1964, however, when Hoover passed the 70-year mark. Now, four years later, the question arises again, and retirement seems more likely. For even J. Edgar Hoover is human.

He has carefully publicized human strengths, carefully hidden



## Why the FBI chief wants to pick his own successor

human failings. The years haven't appreciably softened the Rock of Gibraltar visage, or rusted the steel-trap mind or mellowed the roaring temper. Nor is he always able to separate himself from his image. In private, he sometimes relapses into the staccato speech and stern mannerisms that are expected of him. But he can also be a boon companion who relishes a good joke, a lively conversationalist who can discourse on an astonishing range of topics, a genial host who personally attends to the wants of his guests.

Hoover still goes to La Jolla, California, in the summer to vacation by the Pacific. While there, he gets his annual physical examination and wreaks havoc with the health and good nature of his companions by insisting on arising at 6 a.m. In December he still goes to Key Biscayne, Florida, to soak up the sun and visit the racetracks. And in Washington, he still slips out to the Maryland tracks to make his wagers at the \$2 window.

Hoover never married, and not all his old friends have been as durable as he is. His closest confidant and constant companion, Clyde Tolson, long the Number Two man at the FBI, is 68 and in failing health. Many friends have passed on. Others have retired to communities where pace and weather are kinder on the bodies and the souls of old men whose work is completed.

A number of corporations have offered Hoover executive positions at salaries unheard of in government, and publishers have pestered him with offers for his memoirs. He has no intention of accepting either. He is content to serve out his days in his jewel-box home in the northwest section of Washington, where a faithful Negro housekeeper cleans and cooks for him and where he can putter among his beloved shrubs and azaleas.

With the realization in Washington that Hoover can't last forever, skirmishing has already started over his successor. Southerners on the Senate Judiciary Committee, who seek a return to sheriff-style law enforcement, have served notice that they expect to be consulted by the President-elect on the appointment. Presumably Hoover has his own idea of who would best fit into his shoes. He has spread the word to the leaders of both parties that a "political" appointee could not be trusted to protect the confidentiality of the FBI's voluminous files of "raw data."

Over the years, Hoover has made a habit of scribbling intemperate remarks, signed with the initial "H," in the margins of FBI reports. Few of the high and mighty have been spared from his scathing comments. This has led some insiders to suggest that Hoover may be more anxious to protect his personal annotations than the raw files from outside scrutiny.

Before he took over the Bureau in 1924, it was used openly for political purposes. He has largely halted this abuse. With characteristic discretion, however, Hoover does make information from FBI files available to the right people. And from time to time, the FBI does act as a political police force.

In his memoirs, former Attorney General Francis Biddle has told how, after he and Hoover became friends, the FBI director used to entertain him with stories of "the intimate details of what my associates in the Cabinet did and said, of their likes and dislikes, their weaknesses and their associations. . . . Edgar was not above relishing a story derogatory to an occupant of one of the seats of the mighty, particularly if the great man was pompous or stuffy. And I confess that, within limits, I enjoyed hearing it."

President Johnson is an avid reader of Hoover's titillating tidbits, which are submitted to the White House in secret memos for the President's bedtime reading. LBJ and Hoover were neighbors for





## What Hoover told LBJ about a civil-rights leader's sex life



years. When the then-Senator's family dog, Little Beagle, failed to come home for dinner, a rather frequent occurrence, the Johnson girls would ring Hoover's doorbell, and the top cop would leave his favorite TV cowboy shows to join Lynda Bird and Luci in the hunt for Little Beagle.

LBJ has always had a fine appreciation for a story about a leader's extracurricular love life. A typical backstairs report, passed on to the White House by Hoover, dealt with an alleged affair of a prominent civil-rights leader. The secret FBI memo quoted a confidential informant as reporting that the man "has been having an illicit love affair with [a Los Angeles woman] since 1962."

A love affair, no matter how sordid, is no business of the FBI—unless, perhaps, one of the parties happens to be a spy. There is no evidence that the leader and the lady, if the story is true at all, were plotting between tendernesses to overthrow the government. Yet J. Edgar Hoover solemnly informed the President: "[He] calls this woman every Wednesday and meets her in various cities throughout the country. The source related an incident which occurred some time ago in a New York City hotel, where [the leader] was intoxicated at a small gathering. [He] threatened to leap from the 13th-floor window of the hotel if this woman would not say she loved him."

When Washington was under siege by the Poor People's Campaign last spring, key southern legislators received copies of an FBI document which stated that another black leader had been seen in what was described delicately as an "unnatural act" with a woman. Gleefully the lawmakers showed the document to numbers of people, despite the prohibition on dissemination of FBI material.

Hoover's gumshoes sometimes have seemed overeager to chase down irrelevant facts about prominent people. The famous FBI "bug" in lobbyist Fred Black's hotel suite, for example, picked up a number of conversations about big-name lawmakers. Although no illegal activity was indicated, agents followed up the intercepted conversations for no apparent purpose than to pry into the lawmakers' affairs.

The agents were most discreet. After overhearing Black make a breakfast date with House Democratic Leader Carl Albert and Sen. Mike Monroney to discuss the location of a new aircraft plant in their home state of Oklahoma, Hoover's men slipped up to Capitol Hill the next morning to snoop around. Their report to the director was so hush-hush that they even used a code word for "secret" and stamped the report "June."

"No surveillance was maintained in the Senate Office Building," they assured Hoover, who is touchy about spying on politicians. "However, WFO (Washington Field Office) made a discreet survey of the streets in the vicinity of the Senate Office Building for Black's car during the pertinent period with negative results. . . . WFO will be alert for any information which would indicate Black did or did not keep his appointment with Sen. Mike Monroney and Rep. Carl Albert." While the G-men were checking parked Cadillacs, apparently, Black arrived by taxicab.

The FBI got the first tip that Sen. Ed Long, Missouri Democrat, was close to St. Louis attorney Morris Shenker by listening to one of Fred Black's telephone calls. This information was somehow leaked to *Life* magazine, which described how Long and Shenker had been splitting law fees. The scandal cost Long his Senate seat. Thus he became a victim of government bugging at the same time he was conducting the Senate investigation into government bugging.



Ironically, Long had refused to include the FBI in his wiretap investigation. He had held hearings into the eavesdropping of other agencies, but when aides suggested that the probe be broadened to include FBI wiretapping, he declared, with no hesitation, "I don't intend to take on the FBI."

On Capitol Hill, the FBI is accorded the same deference as motherhood. Sen. Eugene McCarthy's campaign promise to fire Hoover, for example, was regarded as courageous by some, foolhardy by others. For although the Bureau is held in respect by most Congressmen, at least a few are also apprehensive over possible references to them in the raw files.

Hoover, in turn, has less reason to be afraid of politicians, but this hasn't prevented him from courting them. When Little Beagle Johnson died, Hoover presented the President with another beagle. Not long afterward, while walking across the White House lawn, Hoover heard the President call, "Edgar, come here." Hoover stopped in astonishment. He is not accustomed to being ordered around, even by Presidents.

Fearing for Johnson's mental state, Hoover said slowly, "I am here, Mr. President."

"I'm not calling you, I'm calling the dog," said the President. The gift beagle had been named in honor of the donor.

Hoover also ingratiated himself with both Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey before the election. A friend of both candidates, Hoover assigned men to augment the security forces at the conventions. His men also trailed bothersome newsmen to report on their activities. More than once, at the request of powerful politicians, the FBI has undertaken background investigations of Washington reporters whose stories rubbed sensitive skins the wrong way.

Sen. Tom Dodd, the Connecticut Democrat, who served a year as a G-man and has used the experience to his advantage both on the campaign trail and in his lucrative lectures against communism, once prevailed upon the FBI to shadow an office employee and report back on his romantic activities.

The authors have exposed their share of Washington scandals, a few of which have ended in federal convictions. More often than not, the FBI has shown more interest in who talked to us than in what was revealed. When we began exposing the chicanery in Dodd's office, FBI agents photostated all the documents in our possession, then turned the investigation around and began snooping into our news sources.

Hoover and his publicists are quick to deny any stories in the press, or statements by men in public life, that are less than the adulation which Hoover has come to believe is his due. The refutations are frequently coupled with barbed attacks on the character or the patriotism of anyone who possesses the temerity to question Hoover's sainthood.

After the late Dr. Martin Luther King complained about the FBI's failure to apprehend race terrorists in the South, Hoover called the Nobel Peace Prize winner "a notorious liar." When reporter Fred J. Cook published a book that takes a cold look at the Bureau, a team of agents was made available to deny Cook's allegations. None of these actions fits into the Hoover-made image of cool-as-ice operatives who follow their clues without emotion. But a certain coercion helps to maintain the image.

Few federal crimes seem to activate the G-men so quickly as the sin of defacing their leader's image. A Washington businessman, who was present in a cocktail lounge when a derogatory remark was made about Hoover, was [Continued on page 98]

**When the authors  
of this article  
exposed chicanery,  
Hoover  
investigated *them***





## THE LAST DAYS OF J. EDGAR HOOVER

[Continued from page 33]

astonished to find two FBI agents at his door the next day to question him about the incident.

At the time of Hoover's 70th birthday greetings came from all over the country, and all were welcomed except one. Vince McMahon, the wily Washington sports promoter who became wealthy by making wrestling a standard of taste on television, knew that Hoover seldom missed the regular Thursday night telecast of the grapplers from Washington's seedy old Arena. He instructed Bob Freed, his not always grammatical ring announcer, to extend birthday greetings to "our favorite viewer, J. Edgar Hoover."

Freed was astounded when he stepped out of the ring. He was summoned to the telephone, where an angry FBI spokesman informed him that Hoover did *not* watch wrestling. Hoover may have thought the association was beneath him, but seldom has the FBI acted so swiftly.

The successes of the FBI have become so much a part of the American culture that people can be bored by their retelling. Yet it would be a serious mistake to ignore the superb job that Hoover has

accomplished in building the Bureau into an extremely effective crime-fighting unit.

The cult of personality has had its positive aspects. When Hoover took over as director, the Bureau was loaded with hacks, misfits, drunks and courthouse hangers-on. In a remarkably brief time he transformed it into a close-knit, effective organization with an *esprit de corps* which exceeds that of the Marines.

Under Hoover's reign, agents have been fired for drunkenness, for insubordination, even a few for homosexual behavior. Yet not a single FBI man has tried to fix a case, defraud the taxpayers or sell out his country. This amazing scandal-free record has been accomplished by hiring the best men available, training them well, convincing them they were the best, paying them top salaries (beginning FBI agents get almost twice as much as Secret Service or Internal Revenue people), then selling the public on the idea that the FBI is ready to protect the nation from any internal emergency.

Above all, Hoover has insisted upon discipline. FBI men may be able to face down armed criminals, but they cannot escape the gaze of Hoover. Small disciplinary infractions can bring heavy punishment—transfers to unpleasant posts, suspension without pay, or outright dismissal. The FBI and the Central In-

telligence Agency are the only government agencies where a man can be fired outright without appeal to Civil Service. Neither rank nor record can make an agent immune to Hoover's punitive decrees.

The swiftest punishment is reserved for those whose blunders embarrass Hoover. An ex-FBI man, once high in the hierarchy, claims that dozens of agents have been banished to distant outposts or barred from advancement for slips that caused Hoover bad publicity. He has been known to lay down a whole round of new regulations over the most trivial incident.

Inevitably this suffocating discipline has caused morale problems. Some of the best agents, who refused to be molded into the FBI image, have quit. Hoover's own nephew, Fred Robinette, Jr., resigned in 1951 after staying in the FBI long enough to win his 10-year pin. The departure of his only sister's son hurt Hoover, and he tried to persuade the young man to remain.

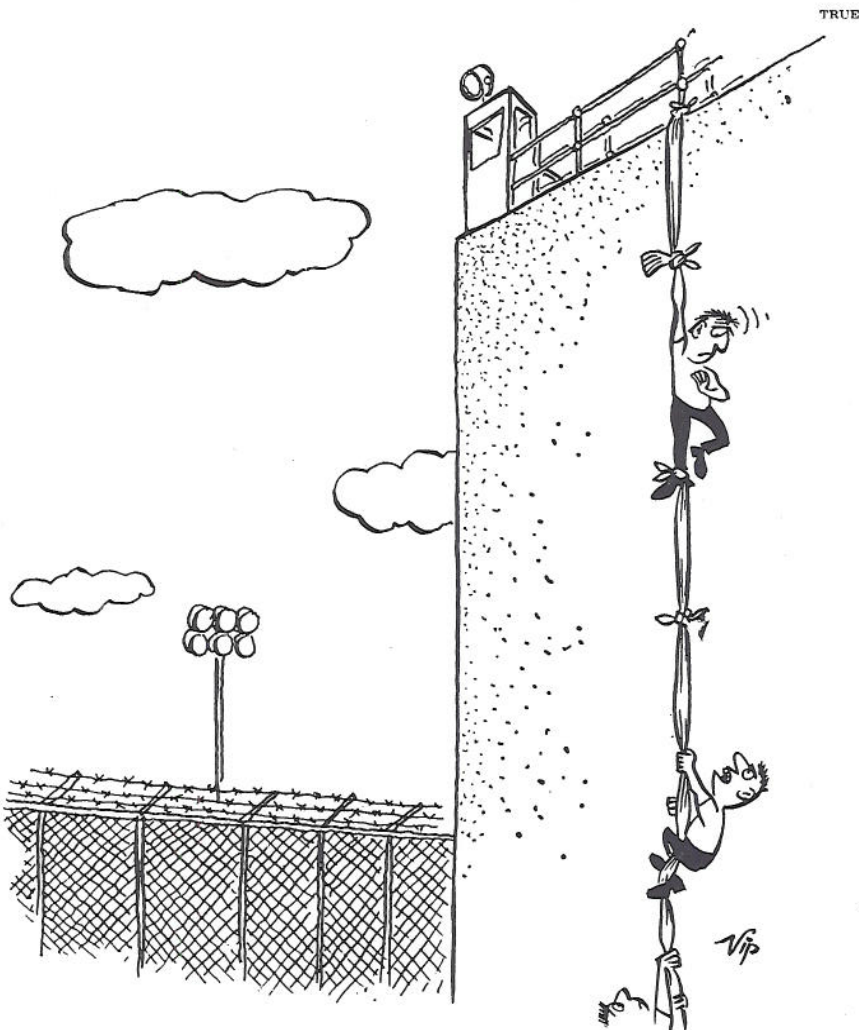
Robinette, now a top Internal Revenue Agent, recalls how his Uncle Edgar tried to explain the need for discipline. Looking back, Robinette now agrees that his uncle was right. It gave satisfaction to both men that Robinette's son, Fred Robinette III, qualified a few months ago to become an FBI agent. Hoover personally swore him in, then shipped him off to Minneapolis to start out like any other raw recruit.

Hoover makes it a practice personally to greet every class of new agents that goes through the Bureau's rigorous training school at Quantico, Virginia. The stories of the long hours of preparation that go into merely meeting the director are legend. The new agents are instructed carefully on how to shake hands with Hoover as they are accepted as full-fledged agents. They are advised to carry an extra handkerchief, since their leader has been known to fire agents who made the mistake of touching him with sweaty palms.

Sometimes a handkerchief isn't enough to get a new man through the ceremony, which is more elaborate than a finishing-school girl's presentation to society. Shortly after the end of World War II, Hoover came in contact with the dry palm of a prospective agent, yet still regarded him with disapproval. The man, who lacked the clean-cut look that Hoover favors, had been wounded in combat, and intensive medication had left him with a sallow complexion.

As Hoover passed down the line of new agents, he cast a baleful eye on the war hero and whispered to an aide. Several hours later, the veteran was told he was being dropped. The excuse was that he had failed his final exam. The veteran, who had never flunked a test in his life, knew he had passed with a high mark. He now found out that FBI agents must not only act as Hoover wishes, but also look like the Hoover image.

The fear of Hoover's whim has subjected FBI men to some dreadful excesses. Because he likes to report to Congress each year that his men have amassed a new record in unpaid overtime, agents must put in extra hours regularly even when there is no legitimate work to keep



"You wanted in on the break. Well, you're *in*, aren't you?"



them busy. Some former agents claim that other records have been built up in an equally absurd manner. Since it pleases Hoover to set new records for arrests, the police work done by city detectives is sometimes counted as another case solved by the Bureau.

The FBI's crime statistics are the official yardstick of just how much evil lurks in the hearts of men, and each year the figures go up. In proportion, so does the FBI's budget, its manpower and its importance inside the government. Despite the budgetary benefits, some critics contend that logically it should be against Hoover's own best interests to have the statistics reflect a steady increase in crime. But the FBI has sold the nation on the idea that the consistent increase shows the continuing need for law enforcement. Although few would agree that the FBI has slanted the numbers to its own advantage, the Bureau is in the position of a baseball team keeping its own batting averages.

Just how much Hoover is feared by his subordinates is illustrated by an incident that occurred while he was on his annual vacation in La Jolla. An agent strolled through Hoover's impressive office in the Justice Department, getting the feel of the room just in case Hoover should one day retire and a successor be needed. Lost in his daydream, the agent tilted the cup of coffee he was carrying, and the brown liquid seeped into the carpet.

The FBI's Crime Laboratory has experts who can tell from a small chip of paint the model and the year of the car from which it came. They can identify correctly the source of a hair and can differentiate between human and animal blood. But there was no one who could remove the stain from Hoover's rug.

As the situation developed, the FBI's best men were put on the case and a command decision was reached. It was decided that the agents would dig into their pockets to buy a new rug for the director's floor. Once again, however, some of the best investigators in the world were foiled in their quest. The rug, it developed, was in a pattern no longer available, and a search of stores from coast to coast failed to find a duplicate.

By now there was an air of genuine crisis in the Bureau's Pennsylvania Avenue headquarters. The weekend had arrived, and Hoover, who is always prompt, was expected back from vacation Monday morning. There were huddled discussions, and orders went out. The factory where the floor covering had been made called in a special crew, and the looms were set up to weave the carpet that had become Number One on the FBI's most wanted list.

Monday morning, Hoover entered his office, his shoes sinking into the deep pile. He sat behind his desk and probably breathed a sigh of contentment. It was good to be back in a place where all the surroundings were so familiar.

Another proud tradition had been established: the FBI always gets its carpet. Of course, Hoover was told nothing about having the rug pulled out from under him. By that time, too many of his trusted associates were involved in the conspiracy. And the culprits could rest assured that the manufacturer would never tell. Pur-

veyors to the FBI are forbidden to mention their connections with the Bureau.

Some of the slicker corporations, of course, have found a way around this firm edict against crass commercialism. They simply play on Hoover's fondness for favorable publicity. In mid-1966, for instance, the FBI finally put the power of the computer to work at tracking criminals. IBM was chosen to provide the machinery.

IBM knew it could not feature the FBI's computer in its ads, but it did not feel constrained to keep the order a secret. Public-relations men were dispatched to the Bureau, where the craving for publicity by both organizations was found to match as perfectly as two prints from the same finger. Soon newspapers across the country were being flooded by press releases in plain white envelopes. In each was a photo of the first of a battery of computers that the FBI would use. Atop it, plainly visible, was the IBM logo. Equally visible at the left of the picture was a large FBI seal.

The man who has made the FBI seal famous was born in Washington, youngest of three children, into the home of a career civil servant, and christened John Edgar. His parents, Dickerson and Annie Hoover, were God-fearing folk who taught him the fundamentalism that still dominates his philosophy. After his father died, Hoover brought his invalid mother into his home and for years provided her with a nurse.

Yet curiously, he never contributed a cent to the care of his sister, Lillian Robinette, who also spent her last years as an invalid. He left all the cost and worry to her son Fred, then a lowly agent on the FBI payroll. When Fred's wife became pregnant, Fred went into debt to hire a nurse for his mother. The neighbors in Lanham, Maryland, where the Robinettes lived, wondered aloud why Lillian's famous brother didn't help out. But Fred had no complaints; he neither sought nor expected financial help from his Uncle Edgar.

It cannot be concluded that Hoover is tightfisted. When Cartha DeLoach, now in charge of FBI investigations, was a struggling agent, he went to pay a \$900 hospital bill and found it had already been paid by Hoover.

Calling children by their middle names is not an uncommon custom of old Washington families, and Hoover developed a preference for Edgar over his first name. He dropped all but its initial in 1933, when he found out that another man named John Edgar Hoover owed a Washington store \$900. The FBI chief has always paid his bills promptly on the first of the month.

In later years, columnist Walter Winchell, who in his heyday probably gave Hoover more publicity than all other newspapermen of any day, is the only friend who consistently calls the FBI chief John.

Hoover began his career in the Justice Department when he was a 22-year-old lawyer fresh out of George Washington University. His first assignment, in the war year of 1917, involved ferreting out enemy aliens. Even in those days he posed for cameramen, personally leading anarchists to the gangplank for deportation.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed) GORDON W. FAWCETT





"Gosh, Colonel Thompson, I never thought of that!  
What would we do with all those plowshares?"

Hoover was particularly adept at skipping through the bureaucratic tangle that tripped less agile men. In 1921 he was named assistant director of the small, inept force then called the Bureau of Investigation. The evidence indicates he was unhappy in his forced association with the dregs of the Harding Administration. Among his agents was Gaston Means, who later went to jail for bilking Evalyn Walsh McLean, owner of the Hope diamond and the *Washington Post*, who gave Means money in an attempt to ransom the Lindbergh baby.

Although not happy with his assignment, Hoover proved he had the outstanding qualification of a bureaucrat. He was a survivalist. He was only 29 when, in May, 1924, Attorney General Harlan Stone named him chief of the Bureau of Investigation and ordered him to clear out the collection of misfits and incompetents that infested it.

In all his years with the Bureau, Hoover has never had to contend with the Civil Service regulations that have choked other agencies with deadwood. From the beginning, Hoover was empowered to hire and fire at will. With this weapon, he quickly built an organization and a reputation that saved him from the new broom of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who swept into Washington in 1933. Indeed, it was in this period that Hoover first established his relentless lawman image, helped along by Homer Cummings, Roosevelt's first Attorney General.

One evening during the kidnapping

terror that followed the abduction of the Lindbergh baby, Cummings invited to dinner a handful of Washington newspapermen, including one of the authors. Cummings asked them to help select a public-relations man for the FBI who would build up the agency's invincibility to such a point that no kidnapper would risk matching wits with it.

The newspapermen recommended Henry Soudam, then chief Washington correspondent for the *Brooklyn Eagle*, who was subsequently appointed special assistant to the Attorney General. Soudam performed so spectacularly that within a year he had transformed Hoover, previously a barely known bureaucrat, into an omnipotent crimebuster whose name was familiar to every American.

The year after Soudam's appointment, however, when the new Justice Department appropriations bill came before Congress, an amendment was quietly slipped in stipulating that no money could be expended for a "special assistant to the Attorney General who was not a qualified attorney." Soudam, as a newspaperman, did not qualify. No one knew who introduced the amendment. But no one had any doubt regarding the original author. J. Edgar Hoover had learned how to get the publicity and did not need help any more.

In the next few years he got the headlines. His men shot it out with John Dillinger and Baby Face Nelson, and Hoover himself arrested Alvin "Kreepy" Karpis. The hoodlum had the effrontery

to phone and write Hoover, taunting him about the failure of the nationwide manhunt for Public Enemy Number One.

Karpis wasn't the only one who gave Hoover the needle. On the day Hoover's agents alerted him that they had Karpis surrounded in a New Orleans apartment house, Hoover was called to the Capitol to take a tongue-lashing from Tennessee's ascerbic Sen. Kenneth McKellar, who charged that the director was a deskbound leader, profiting from the courage of his men in the field.

Hoover barged out of the hearing and rushed to the airport for a plane to New Orleans. He was standing near Karpis' car when the desperado strolled out of the apartment building. As the hood settled behind the steering wheel, Hoover jabbed his pistol behind Karpis' ear.

"Well, I guess you've got me," said Kreepy.

"Put the cuffs on him, boys," snapped Hoover.

There was an embarrassing search for handcuffs; no one had any. Kreepy Karpis, Public Enemy Number One, was finally led to justice with his hands bound by a necktie. That tie, like Dillinger's death mask and other mementoes of the war against crime, occupies a position of honor in the FBI's museum, which has become an important stop for Washington's tourists. The visitors are assured that the agents now have plenty of handcuffs.

The string of successes brought about the upgrading of the Bureau to the FBI in 1935, but there was no apparent change in the devotion to duty or the power of the director. Hoover was still boss, and the FBI was still his own creation. Neither Hoover nor the FBI has ever quite got over those incredible days of the '30's. The world has changed, but Hoover has not. He still sees his job in the black-and-white, good-guys-vs.-bad-guys simplicity so easy when the big problem was knotting a necktie on Kreepy Karpis' wrists.

Hoover still directs the big investigations. He insists on being awakened at any hour a new development emerges in an important case. During the hunt for singer Frank Sinatra's kidnapped son, Cartha DeLoach got a call from the director in his office at 2 a.m.

One of Hoover's pet conceits has been to portray himself and his 16,000 agents as several cuts above the big-city police chiefs and their harassed officers. From this position of superiority the FBI has worked hard to lift the quality of law enforcement in the United States. The Bureau not only provides fingerprint, laboratory and computer service for even the most obscure small-town police chief, but the FBI Academy has trained more than 5,000 local police officers.

This effort has given Hoover a hold on the chiefs' professional organization, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which for years has passed fulsome resolutions in praise of "The Honorable J. Edgar Hoover." It has not detracted from Hoover's glory that the resolutions were quietly prepared by the FBI and approved in advance by the director.

His paternalism toward the police chiefs stiffens only when one of them crowds him too closely in the spotlight. Hoover will brook no competition as the



nation's most eminent spokesman on law enforcement. When Los Angeles' late chief, William Parker, began to acquire a national reputation and was nominated in 1959 for sixth vice-president of the IACP, Chief Philip Purcell of suburban Newton, Massachusetts, was suddenly thrust forward in opposition. Purcell was nominated and elected, say insiders, by the backstage proselyting of the FBI.

Hoover is currently involved in a bitter feud with Quinn Tamm, executive director of the IACP and himself a former FBI official. Hoover's supporters claim that Tamm botched up almost every top job at the FBI. Tamm's friends, on the other hand, say he not only had a great career at the FBI, but that Hoover himself recommended him for the IACP job. They say it was only after Tamm began to get personal publicity and to emerge as a rival to Hoover as the voice on law enforcement, that the FBI chief turned against him.

At the IACP's 1968 convention in Hawaii, an attempt was made to push through a resolution which would permit only its president to speak for the organization. The effect would have been to keep Tamm out of the public spotlight. Since the presidency is rotated among the police chiefs, none would remain in office

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long enough to challenge Hoover's eminence. Tamm's friends are convinced that the FBI was behind the resolution; FBI men who attended the convention had denied it.

Hoover has been able to get along with his nominal superior, the Attorney General, only to the degree that the FBI is left unmolested. While the late Robert Kennedy held the office, he committed the unpardonable offense of issuing direct orders to FBI agents. The ice that formed between Hoover and Kennedy caused a chill felt all over Washington.

It was Hoover who notified Kennedy that his President-brother was dead in Dallas. The Attorney General told intimates afterward that Hoover "was not quite as excited as if he were reporting the fact that he had found a communist on the faculty of Howard University." Thereafter the two men scarcely spoke to each other.

Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, Kennedy's successor as Attorney General, also bumped up against the immovable Hoover. In a heated battle with the FBI chief, Katzenbach ordered then-Solicitor General Thurgood Marshall to tell the Supreme Court the exact extent to which FBI wiretaps had been used in obtaining evidence. Hoover, however, lost only the

battle, not the war. A short time later, Katzenbach was demoted to Undersecretary of State.

The triumphs over his superiors do not mean that Hoover is one to step out of line. He has generally been meticulously proper in his relationships, although recently he has become more political. The fact is that Hoover is very much a cop: his interests and his instincts are those of the station house.

There are few broadening influences in his life. Like the cop on the beat, who twirls his nightstick with his right hand while checking doorknobs with his left, Hoover is a creature of habit. His reading is dismayingly sheltered—the New York *Daily News* in the morning, the Washington *Daily News* at noon, and the Washington *Evening Star* at night. There is no New York *Times* or Washington *Post* to disturb his conservative calm, though Hearst's New York *Journal-American* was on his reading list until it folded. Hoover's taste in magazines is equally limited. He reads the humorless *U.S. News and World Report* and *The Reader's Digest*.

Hoover's favorite reading, however, is the messages that come to him every day from his agents. He studies them carefully and writes pithy comments and instructions in the margins. He is unhappy when the reports deviate much from the short, pungent sentences that mark his own style, which is reminiscent of the editorial page of his beloved New York *Daily News*.

On one memorable occasion, a new agent submitted a memorandum that left Hoover little room at the edges for his marginal notes. The director, to show his displeasure, jotted down on the memo: "Watch the borders." It was a simple order that could have been simply carried out, were Hoover a less frightening figure to his underlings. But at the FBI, Hoover's word is always carried out to the letter.

Moments after the "watch-the-borders" note was removed from Hoover's out-box, agents were being dispatched to the Canadian frontier and the Rio Grande. No one was sure what menace had come to the chief's attention, but everyone at the FBI knew better than to question Hoover. The stakeout continued for weeks until the word filtered down that what Hoover wanted was wider margins.

When Hoover retires, there will be changes in his life. He will have to give up his bulletproof Cadillac, and his office with the rarest of rugs, and his files with the intimate details about so many lives. He will also leave the FBI with a reputation unmatched by any law enforcement agency in the world. It is a tribute to Hoover and the Bureau that they are denounced with equal ferocity by the extremists of the left and the right.

But he will keep the thing that has been most important to the FBI since the day in 1924 when Harlan Stone told him to turn the Bureau into an effective crime-fighting force. That thing is Hoover's indomitable personality. The FBI will survive quite well, since Hoover has given it a firm foundation. But with Hoover gone, it will never be quite the same again.

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