

75 Next Jan. 1

Hoover Retirement Due

WASHINGTON — (CDN) — FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover plans to retire Jan. 1, on his 75th birthday, several state attorneys general have been told while attending a conference here.

In anticipation of this, a source said, efforts are being made to round up support for Supreme Court Associate Justice Byron White as Hoover's successor.

Another frequently mentioned candidate for the nation's top law enforcement post is San Francisco Police Chief Thomas J. Cahill.

Since the first year of the Kennedy Administration, when Hoover reached the voluntary retirement age of 65, there has been intermittent speculation he would soon quit or be replaced.

KEPT ON

But President Kennedy kept him on. So did Presidents Johnson and Nixon, even though Hoover had passed the mandatory retirement age of 70.

Asked about the latest re-

ports, an FBI spokesman said:

"Mr. Hoover has not indicated any plans to retire, and I don't think he has any intention of retiring anytime soon. As I understand it, he has been told by President Nixon that he can stay on as long as he wants to."

Nevertheless, one attorney general reported, after conversations here with Justice Department and White House officials:

"It's my understanding Mr. Hoover will voluntarily step down on Jan. 1, and has said so."

SAME UNDERSTANDING

He added that other state and federal law enforcement officials he has spoken to during the three-day meeting of the National Association of Attorneys General have had the same understanding.

As a result, he said, a group of these officials — state and federal — have begun a campaign to get White named to succeed Hoover.

Hoover, they have been told, is seeking to choose as

his successor an FBI official now under him. Hoover's most likely choice, they understand, is Clyde Tolson, associate director of the bureau. Tolson is in his 60s and has been with the FBI almost since its founding.

WHITE A DEMOCRAT

His supporters say White probably would be acceptable to legal conservatives and the Nixon Administration, although he is a Democrat and was appointed to the court by President Kennedy.

Although he was regarded as a liberal when he joined the Supreme Court in 1962, White has been a middle-of-the-roader, often leaning toward the conservative view in criminal cases.

Another reason Nixon might be willing to name White, his supporters say, is that it would give the President another spot to fill on the Supreme Court.

This June, Chief Justice Earl Warren will retire, and Nixon will name his successor.