

Agents Forced to Quit a College After Teacher Criticizes F.B.I.

By DAVID BURNHAM

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has forced a group of its agents to drop out of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice because a professor there criticized the F.B.I.

Donald H. Riddle, president of John Jay, a branch of the City University, said yesterday that he had been informed by the New York office of the F.B.I. that its director, J. Edgar Hoover, had decided that no agents would study at the college as long as the professor who had criticized the agency continued to teach there.

"They said they were not trying to force me to fire the professor but they just wanted me to know Mr.

Hoover's feelings," Dr. Riddle said. "I told them the professor was staying."

Immediately after the conversation, 15 agents left the college. The president said one of them showed the registrar a letter from the New York office "directing this individual to resign from the college."

Spokesmen at F.B.I. headquarters in both New York and Washington refused to comment on the matter.

The subject of Mr. Hoover's annoyance, Dr. Abraham S. Blumberg, described the F.B.I.'s action as "Kafkaesque" and said it had had a "chilling ef-

Continued on Page 28, Column 6

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

fect on free discussion at the college."

Dr. Blumberg has a law degree from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in sociology from the New School of Social Research, and is the author of three books on criminal justice. He said his criticism of the F.B.I. was made last July, during his 30-hour graduate course at John Jay on law and society.

He said: "One day there was a 25-minute discussion during which many of the old critical comments about the F.B.I. — such as that they had been a bit slow on civil rights — were aired. At one point, I said something about the cult of personality and that Mr. Hoover had been in power too long."

Three months later, Dr. Blumberg said, one of the summer-session students who was an F.B.I. agent called him to say that he was writing a letter to the professor, with a proposed outline for his thesis about the F.B.I.

"Several hours later," the professor said, "the agent called to say he was in big trouble. He explained he had

sent the draft of the letter to the F.B.I. typing pool and that it immediately had been 'sent upstairs.'"

Dr. Blumberg said the agent later told him that the F.B.I. had taken his badge, his gun, and his membership card in the F.B.I. Association, had questioned him for several hours and had kept him under virtual house arrest.

The professor said the agent, who has since resigned from the F.B.I., later showed him a copy of the letter.

'Terribly Sad'

"For the most part, it was a very reserved discussion about the internal problems of the bureau," Dr. Blumberg said. "The letter was rather pitiful in a way, because it appeared to be written by a man who was troubled by his role in life, who had some questions about the institution which he was working for, but was basically loyal."

"The best analogy for what occurred," President Riddle said, "is the Garden of Eden. One of their men was tempted by the apple of knowledge, he raised questions and he was thrown out of the garden."

"I think the F.B.I.'s reaction is terribly sad because we have something to offer them," Dr. Riddle continued. "About half of the agents who resigned had been sent by the F.B.I. to John Jay to prepare them as instruc-

tors at the F.B.I.'s expanding police-training program. The others were studying on their own time.

"It is terribly naive of the F.B.I. to think they can send their agents to any college in America and not find someone who is critical of the bureau," Dr. Riddle said.

Dr. Blumberg said: "The issue is freedom of inquiry — can we examine issues rationally. What disturbs me most — in a way — is the crude, redneck quality of the F.B.I.'s reaction. They came in swinging a meat cleaver."

Both Dr. Riddle and Dr. Blumberg asked that the name of the former agent not be disclosed.

The John Jay School of Criminal Justice has 5,000 students, 600 of them at the graduate level. A majority of its students are New York City policemen attending college on their own time.