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NYTimes

AN AIDE OF HOOVER AT F.B.I. RETIRING

Bishop, Who Has Served as Spokesman, Leaving at 55

By WALTER RUGABER
Special to the New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—The Federal Bureau of Investigation announced today that Thomas E. Bishop, who rose under the late J. Edgar Hoover to become assistant director in charge of the crime research division, would retire on Feb. 1.

Mr. Bishop, who has served principally as the bureau's official spokesman, follows a number of Mr. Hoover's lieutenants in leaving the F.B.I. since the director's death on May 2.

Mr. Bishop is a 55-year-old native of Cincinnati who became inspector in charge of what was then called the crime records division in 1967. He has a reputation as a close-mouthed official often unwilling to comment on Bureau affairs.

He is said to have maintained this posture even though I. Patrick Gray 3d, named acting director of the bureau after Mr. Hoover's death, became accessible to many newsmen and made it clear that he wanted the F.B.I. to have a more "open" image.

Mr. Gray began to bypass Mr. Bishop, and it was noted in today's announcement that responsibility for dealing with the press and with Congress would be moved from Mr. Bishop's office into Mr. Gray's.

Survey of Division Set

The announcement also said that an inspector would make a "management survey" of the remaining functions in Mr. Bishop's division and would make recommendations for the "reorganization and reassignment" of those activities.

Mr. Bishop, whose departure had been expected, said in a letter to Mr. Gray that his move after more than 31 years in the F.B.I. — "in effect, my entire adult life" — had been "an extremely difficult one." He added:

"... Many considerations, not the least of which are my responsibilities to my family, make it necessary that I take this step at this time... I leave

with a deep sense of loyalty to the organization and everything it represents."

Mr. Gray, in a "Dear Tom" letter also dated today, praised "the loyalty, devotion, and professional competence with which you have discharged your many heavy responsibilities."

SFChronicle

Gray's Top

FBI Foe

Resigns

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Washington

Thomas E. Bishop, assistant director of the FBI in charge of its crime research division and the bureau's chief public spokesman for the past five years, announced yesterday that he would retire next February.

Acting FBI director L. Patrick Gray III said that he would not replace Bishop and would instead bring responsibility for the FBI's contacts with congress and the press into his own office.

He also launched "a management survey" which could lead to total abolition of the crime research division and reassignment to others of its remaining functions.

The FBI released an exchange of polite letters between Gray, who took over for the late J. Edgar Hoover last May, and Bishop, who has been in the FBI for over 31 years.

In fact, however, Gray and Bishop have been feuding almost from the moment the acting director was named by president Nixon. Had Bishop not retired, FBI sources said, Gray would have forced him out in the near future.

One issue of contention between them was Gray's new "open window" policy, under which he was vowed to provide many more details about the bureau's operations to the press and the public.

Bishop, who came up through the FBI ranks under Hoover, voiced objections inside the bureau to this policy and to the number of public speeches Gray gave, the bureau sources said.

Recently, Bishop was blamed for two incidents that brought considerable criticism of the FBI.

In one, it was revealed that the bureau had for 21 years been collecting information about members of congress and congressional candidates, allegedly as part of its "congressional relations program."

FBI sources said that Bishop—under whose jurisdiction it fell—had never told Gray of this information-collecting, despite the acting director's requests for full briefings when he took over last spring. When Gray did learn of it, he was infuriated and suspended the program.

In another matter of controversy, Bishop was held responsible for forwarding to FBI field offices in 14 states a White House request for election-year political advice on issues involving criminal justice.

That request went out in a teletype over Gray's name but without his knowledge.

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