

KATZENBACH GETS REBUFF BY HOOVER

F.B.I. Chief Backs Agency's Anticrime Effort in Reply to the Attorney General

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WASHINGTON, July 22 —

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, took issue today with statements by Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach about the bureau's efforts in the campaign against organized crime.

Mr. Katzenbach made his remarks Tuesday in an effort to deny published reports that the bureau was not fully cooperating in the campaign. In an interview with The Associated Press, the Attorney General said that the commitment of Mr. Hoover and the F.B.I. to combat organized crime was "beyond question."

The interview followed an article Sunday in The New York Times that quoted informed sources as saying that after President Kennedy's death the bureau ceased to cooperate fully with the Justice Department's campaign against organized crime.

Denies Rivalry Exists

Today Mr. Hoover took offense at two remarks Mr. Katzenbach made in the interview. The F.B.I. director felt the remarks reflected unfavorably on the bureau.

Mr. Hoover objected to the Attorney General's statement that the F.B.I. and others of the 26 Federal agencies involved in the anticrime effort "have a great deal of professional pride and organizational jealousy."

"While that's a good thing, sometimes it's a problem to get the agencies to contribute their information for the good of others, rather than keeping it to themselves when they think they can make a good case by going it alone," Mr. Katzenbach said.

Through a bureau spokesman, Mr. Hoover replied:

"There's not a scintilla of turpitude that as it pertains to the F.B.I. There is no organizational rivalry or bureaucratic

He also bristled at Mr. Katzenbach's statement that, if there was any tapering off of cooperation after President Kennedy's death, "it's because hundreds of F.B.I. agents were assigned to the assassination."

Mr. Katzenbach had also said that the bureau had "more agents working on organized crime than at any time in the past."

Asserts Reports Continue

In Mr. Hoover's response, the bureau emphasized that it did not wish to create an argument with the Attorney General but wanted to "clear up the record."

A spokesman for Mr. Katzenbach replied that "the Attorney General has the highest regard for the F.B.I. and its efforts in organized crime." He said the Attorney General would have no more to say on the matter.

Mr. Hoover, said, "There was no diminution of reports by the F.B.I. to the Department of Justice after President Kennedy's assassination. Our reports continued as usual."

The director's reaction was the first public friction between the two officials since Mr. Katzenbach took over the Justice Department last September.

It blunted Mr. Katzenbach's effort to soothe ruffled feelings between the bureau and lawyers in the Organized Crime Section of the Justice Department. It also underscored the independence of Mr. Hoover from Justice Department control, a subject of criticism in the past.

Baker Case Involved

The article Sunday quoted reports that the bureau had stopped giving Justice Department lawyers information on the investigation of Robert G. Baker, former secretary to the Senate's Democratic majority, the day after President Kennedy's death. The report said that the flow of information from the bureau to the organized crime section had dropped off within a month.

The sources said that the F.B.I. had continued to develop cases against racketeers but on an independent basis that often ignored the other agencies in the anticrime campaign.

Mr. Hoover's independence has grown under the successive administrations of seven Presidents, from Calvin Coolidge to Lyndon B. Johnson. It suffered a setback when Robert F. Kennedy, then the Attorney General, forced a showdown early in his brother's Administration, but later Mr. Hoover was able to regain some of his direct access to President Kennedy, reliable sources said.