

Buller column filed Hoover.

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Merry-Go-Round

**A Move to Limit
FBI Chief's Term**



Jack Anderson

THE WHITE HOUSE is making quiet preparations to prevent the rise of another J. Edgar Hoover.

Well before President Nixon calls in the mastiff-faced crime fighter for a final visit and sends him the last laudatory "Dear Edgar" letter, a proposal will be ready to limit the next FBI director's term.

The staff work already has been started at both the White House and Justice Department on an executive order, or possibly a statute, to establish a fixed term. The tentative thinking is that no future FBI chief should serve longer than seven years.

Almost no one in Washington wants to see another FBI chief attain J. Edgar Hoover's immense power. It is a measure of his power that those who now seek to curb it are working in fearful secrecy.

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NO ATTORNEY GENERAL, though supposedly Hoover's superior, has been able to control him, and on Capitol Hill, the FBI is accorded the same deference as motherhood.

We have thoroughly explored the sources of Hoover's unique power. We have talked to White House aides and Justice Department officials, past and present.

All agree that Hoover has been able to cow Washington officialdom largely be-

cause he keeps files on the high and mighty. He has amassed raw information on Presidents and peons alike that fill miles of cabinets. Few politicians, therefore, will stand up to him for fear he might leak out derogatory reports against them. They know Hoover doesn't hesitate to traffic in unevaluated information. He has furnished undercover reports, backstairs gossip and other titillating tidbits to his political allies.

The durable old G-man has taken special pains to provide Presidents with intimate information from FBI files. This has usually given him direct access to the man in the White House.

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IN PRESIDENT NIXON'S case, Hoover has been slipping him FBI data for years. This information helped Mr. Nixon to build a reputation as an anti-Communist crusader during his early days in Congress. The two men have now become close personal friends. Mr. Nixon likes to recall how he applied for a job with the FBI after his graduation from Duke and to kid Hoover about rejecting his application. The FBI chief blames it on an appropriations cut.

Yet the President believes Hoover is hurting himself and the FBI by hanging on to his job. Mr. Nixon desperately would like to find a graceful way to replace the old curmudgeon without bringing dishonor upon him.