

CW/FX

--NY ONLY--

HOOVER-NEVADA ELN (480)

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RENO, NEV., NOV. 7 (AP)-FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER, WHO USUALLY STAYS ALOOF FROM SUCH THINGS, FINDS HIMSELF SQUARELY IN THE MIDDLE OF NEVADA'S GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION TOMORROW.

DEMOCRATIC GOV. GRANT SAWYER HAS BET HIS CHANCES OF BECOMING NEVADA'S FIRST THREE-TERM GOVERNOR AGAINST HOOVER'S CLAIM THAT CASINOS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ORGANIZED CRIME.

SAWYER'S REPUBLICAN OPPONENT, LT. GOV. PAUL LAXALT, SAYS A DENIAL OF HOOVER'S ALLEGATION BY THE GOVERNOR'S STATE GAMING COMMISSION IS "THE LAUGH OF THE CENTURY."

SAWYER TOOK ON HOOVER AND HIS AGENTS EARLY IN THE CAMPAIGN WHEN HE TOLD MINERS AND CATTLEMEN IN NEVADA'S VAST AND SPARSELY POPULATED EASTERN COUNTIES:

FBI TACTICS IN EAVESDROPPING WITH CONCEALED MICROPHONES IN CASINOS ON THE LAS VEGAS STRIP "REMINDS ME OF ALL I HAVE READ AND HEARD OF NAZISM."

LAXALT FIRED OFF A QUICK TELEGRAM TO HOOVER APOLOGIZING FOR THE STATEMENT AND CLAIMED THE GOVERNOR HAS "DEEP ROOTED, HOSTILE ATTITUDES . . . TOWARD LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES."

FBI AGENTS SAID THEY EAVESDROPPED BECAUSE THEY "RECEIVED INFORMATION" ABOUT COUNTING ROOM RAKEOFFS AND HIDDEN STOCK INTERESTS FOR THE UNDERWORLD.

WHEN THE STATE INVESTIGATED, THE FBI REFUSED TO TESTIFY. SAWYER ADOPTED THE CAMPAIGN SLOGAN "HE FIGHTS FOR NEVADA" AND ACCUSED THE FEDERAL AGENTS OF CONDUCTING "SILENT WARFARE."

HE ACCUSED THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OF HARASSMENT, BETRAYAL AND BLACK-MAIL. "JUSTICE OFFICIALS WENT SO FAR, HE SAID, AS TO FEED "INPROVABLE

AND UNVERIFIED" INFORMATION ABOUT ALLEGED CRIMES TO SELECTED NEWSMEN.

HE CALLED FOR PROSECUTION OF FBI AGENTS UNDER NEVADA'S ANTI-EAVESDROPPING LAW. A CLARK COUNTY (LAS VEGAS) DISTRICT ATTORNEY SAID HE WOULD PROSECUTE.

SAWYER DEMANDED THAT FEDERAL AGENTS FILE FORMAL CHARGES OR QUIT MAKING THE ALLEGATIONS. HE SAID THE FBI CLAIMS WERE PART OF A CALCULATED PLOT TO "DESTROY NEVADA'S LEGALIZED GAMBLING."

LAXALT SAID HIS FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS AS GOVERNOR WOULD BE TO ASK HOOVER FOR A PERSONAL MEETING TO "MAKE PEACE." HE SAID SAWYER HAD STARTED A WAR WITH THE FBI HE COULDN'T WIN.

HE CALLED FOR COOPERATION WITH THE FBI IN ITS SEARCH FOR NEVADA CRIME AND DECLARED:

"IF THERE ARE ANY INDICATIONS OF UNDERWORLD ELEMENTS AND THEY REALLY THINK THIS IN WASHINGTON, WE WILL LOSE LEGALIZED GAMBLING-- AND YOU CAN BE ASSURED OF THAT."

HOOVER REMAINED TRADITIONALLY SILENT--UNTIL LESS THAN TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE GENERAL ELECTION, WHEN HE WROTE A LETTER TO PUBLISHER H. M. GREENSPUN OF THE LAS VEGAS SUN DECLARING:

NEVADA'S LEGALIZED GAMBLING "OCCUPIES A POSITION OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE IN THE SCHEME OF ORGANIZED CRIME AND RACKETEERING. . .

"FUNDS ILLEGALLY SKIMMED FROM CERTAIN NEVADA CASINOS HAVE BEEN USED FOR A MULTITUDE OF NEFARIOUS PURPOSES."

SKIMMING IS A GAMBLERS' TERM FOR RAKING OFF CASINO PROFITS BEFORE REPORTING THEM TO TAXMEN.

HOOVER SAID HE CONSIDERED SAWYER'S ATTACK A PERSONAL ONE -- AND SAWYER REPLIED THAT HE CONSIDERED HOOVER'S STATEMENTS TO BE THE SAME.

HE DEMANDED TO KNOW "UPON WHAT THEORY THE FEDERAL AGENCY FEELS ENTITLED TO VIOLATE THE STATE LAW, AND IN MY OPINION, THE FEDERAL LAW AND THE U.S. CONSTITUTION" IN EAVESDROPPING ON THE CASINOS.

THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY FROM HOOVER TO DATE.

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