

FRIENDS OF F.B.I. IN A FUND APPEAL

Gets 'Excellent Response'
to Wide Mail Campaign

By ROBERT M. SMITH
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 20.—The Friends of the F.B.I.—an organization formed to respond to criticism of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and J. Edgar Hoover—reports an "excellent response" to the several hundred thousand requests it has sent out for tax-deductible contributions.

The group's spokesman, Lee Edwards, a public relations man here who has done work for various conservative causes and candidates, said today that the response had been so good he hoped to announce next month the start of the group's project, nonpartisan commission of leading jurists, scholars and journalists . . . study the F.B.I. and its contributions to America."

Mr. Edwards said that Prof. Harold D. Lassell of the Yale Law School would head the study of the Federal agency already announced by the Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University and the Committee for Public Justice headed by Roger Wilkins, a former Assistant Attorney General.

Actor Signs Letter

The letters asking for support were signed by Efram Zimbalist Jr., the honorary chairman of the Friends. Mr. Zimbalist portrays Inspector Lou Erskine on "The F.B.I." television program.

In the appeal, Mr. Zimbalist took note of the studies by the Woodrow Wilson School and the Committee for Public Justice. "Such sponsorship," he wrote, "suggests the bias that could prevail and foreshadows the distorted, damaging 'findings' that would result."

Mr. Zimbalist asserted that "the F.B.I. and J. Edgar Hoover are being subjected to the degradation of an attack by self-serving politicians, their supporting media and certain radical elements that ultimately seek the destruction of all law and order in the United States . . ."

"We, the Friends of the F.B.I.," he went on, "are determined to counter the campaign against the F.B.I. and Mr. Hoover, which threatens to undermine the whole structure of law and order in the United States."

The letter cited three examples of "attacks" on the Federal agency. One was taken from an article and another from an editorial in The Washington Post. The third was a quote from the House majority leader, Hale Boggs, who asserted last April that the F.B.I. had tapped the telephones of members of Congress.

'Middle America' Lists

Mr. Zimbalist asked the recipients of the letter—who Mr. Edwards said had been taken from various "Middle America" mailing lists—to sign a "declaration of support for the agency and Mr. Hoover and to contribute money "to produce a truly objective and scholarly study" and "to carry through an effective educational campaign."

He said "your gift is tax-deductible, so I ask you to please be generous." The letter identified the Friends of the F.B.I. as "a project of the Commission for International Due Process of Law, a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization."

The president and director of the commission is Luis Kutner, a Chicago lawyer. Mr. Kutner was telephoned for comment on the Friends but did not return the call.

In its application for tax-exempt status, which is on file at the Internal Revenue Service, the commission said that its purpose was "to promote and encourage interest in and understanding of human rights as related to international law and the charter of the United Nations."

'Dedicated to Research'

8 The application also said that the commission "is dedicated to research and consileration of national and international methods by which the rights of the individual may be protected from arbitrary infringement and protecting individual liberty through international tribunals . . ."

Mr. Edwards said, "The one thing we'd like to emphasize is that our organization is called Friends of the F.B.I., as distinct from an attempt being made by some to label us as exclusively a pro-Hoover organization. What we're interested in getting at is the truth. We think the truth will best serve the F.B.I."

Thomas E. Bishop, F.B.I. press spokesman, said that the agency "has no connection or relationship of any kind" with the Friends group. He acknowledged, however, that the agency provided free to the television show in which Mr. Zimbalist stars "the equivalent of two employes' time."

SFChronicle, 21 Jul 71
(China file):

... Meanwhile, witnesses at a Senate hearing warned the President against any dangerous illusions about a mellowing Chinese Communist leadership.

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Lee Edwards, secretary of the Committee of One Million Opposed to Communist China's Admission to the United Nations, said "true and meaningful" relations with Peking could not come about until "communism no longer enslaves the Chinese people."

It is "simply not true," said Edwards, that the Chinese have become resigned to Communist rule. "The real story of the Chinese people's rejection of communism has been written by the millions who have fled the awful tyranny of Mao Tse-tung's peoples' paradise and those who have perished in the attempt," he said.

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