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Interim FBI Director Gray Favors 'Opening the Window'

By CHRIS SHEAROUSE

The successor to J. Edgar Hoover, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's interim Director L. Patrick Gray III, said today he favors "opening the window" to give the public a better look at FBI activities, but he is not inviting a public inquiry into FBI operations.

The former executive assistant to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare told New Orleans newsmen that in his 23 days in office, he has found "no shortcomings" in the FBI's operations.

Gray said his admission that "perhaps the window needs to be open" could be taken as an admission of a shortcoming, but that he preferred to think that the bureau "has not communicated as well as it might have."

HE SAID HE is moving to create, within the FBI, a "department of equal employment opportunities," and that the FBI has begun active recruiting for prospective agents who are black, Spanish-American and American Indian.

"I am a human being interested in other human beings," Gray told newsmen, who asked whether he could be characterized as more or less conservative than his predecessor. "and I won't buy a liberal or conservative tag."

Of Columnist Jack Anderson's accusations that the FBI keeps numerous files on the activities and sex habits of public figures, Gray said he would "not respond" to such accusations. "I do not recognize that any such accusation has been made at all."

Gray, who was a Navy officer and attorney before assuming his present office, defended his lack of law enforcement background, saying he didn't think it was necessary for him to have a police background. "I was hired for my leadership ability, the position demands somebody who is equipped with sound judgment and reasoning." He added that a recent report by



—States-Item photo by James Gulliot.
L. PATRICK GRAY III, acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, discusses the FBI's operations at a news conference here. In background is local agent JOSEPH T. SYLVESTER JR.

the Stevenson Committee bore out his belief that an administrator, and not a policeman, is required for the job.

HE SAID THE position is "a very important, almost awesome responsibility," and that Nixon has said only that Gray would be "among those" considered for the permanent post sometime after the November election.

"I will tender my resignation after the election, and see what the President does," Gray said.

Gray, 55, is a native of St. Louis, Mo., who attended Rice University, the Naval Academy, and George Washington University Law School.

During World War II and the Korean War he was on submarine combat patrols, re-

tiring as a captain in 1960, whereupon he practiced law in New London, Conn.

From 1969 to 1970 he left his law practice to serve as executive assistant to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, and in 1970 served as a special consultant to the President's Cabinet Committee on Education. He was confirmed by the Senate for the job of assistant attorney general for the civil division late in 1970, and in February of this year he was nominated by the President to be deputy attorney general.

He had been approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee when his nomination was withdrawn and he was named to his present job.

He is married and has four children.

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FBI Director Wants Post Permanently

The acting successor to J. Edgar Hoover as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation said here yesterday he would like to become Hoover's permanent replacement.

L. Patrick Gray III, visiting New Orleans briefly on his way to a Mississippi speaking engagement, said he has been assured by President Nixon that he will be on the list of candidates to be considered as Hoover's replacement.

However, Gray said the decision will be deferred until after the November presidential election and will necessarily depend on Nixon's status at the time. The choice must be confirmed by the United States Senate.

The 55-year-old former attorney, who was named to the post two days after Hoover's death, admitted he has no law enforcement background but maintained that his managerial and administrative abilities will enable him to handle the top law enforcement post.

For the present, Gray said he plans to "open windows" to let the American people know more about the FBI.