

Acting FBI Head Plays Tough Role In Press Parley

By Ed Montgomery

L. Patrick Gray III, newly appointed acting director of the FBI, visited local FBI headquarters for the first time yesterday, and did something the late J. Edgar Hoover rarely did — he held a press conference.

Radiating energy and confidence, the husky, crew-cut Annapolis graduate who won 10 decorations as a combat submarine commander before retiring as a captain with 20 years of naval service, quickly demonstrated an ability to handle needling questions.

Reminded of a recent quote attributed to him in Orange County which was critical of the press, Gray said calmly:

"The quote was mistakenly attributed to me. I was quoting Daniel Moynihan and said so at the time.

'I Agree'

"But to keep things straight, let me say I fully subscribe to what Moynihan said. A free press calls for objective, factual reporting



L. PATRICK GRAY III
'Don't put words in mouth'

— not subjective reporting."

When a reporter sought to construe his opening remarks as indicating he hoped to land the job as permanent FBI director, Gray clenched his fist and shot back:

"I've intimated no such thing — don't go putting words in my mouth. I've never run for any office and I don't intend to run for this office. I enjoy what I'm doing and I'm not commenting on the future."

Gray, who is 55 and the father of four, cited the establishment of an office of equal employment opportunity affairs as his first major achievement as acting director.

He said that as of Friday the Bureau had received 11 bonafide applications from women. Of these, eight women have been interviewed, of which three have been approved and five are pending.

Gray acknowledged the FBI is investigating the recent bungled attempt to bug the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in Washington.

Asked if he anticipated any political intervention, he replied:

"I foresee no difficulty in conducting an objective investigation."

Gray said he had not anticipated the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on wiretapping handed down yesterday.

No Comment

"I am a lawyer and as a lawyer I would like to read the opinion before commenting on it," he said in declining to discuss the ruling.

Gray said he regretted recent high echelon resignations within the bureau, adding, "I genuinely do not believe there was anything critical of the FBI in the resignations."

He said he thought the recent 4.8 percent increase in the annuity for retiring agents had much to do with the resignations of veteran agents.

Gray, who is accompanied

by his wife, left today for Sacramento, where Jack Reed was installed last week as special agent in charge.