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Victor Lasky

# The Liberals' Hypocrisy Over J. Edgar Hoover

Washington

ALL OF A SUDDEN, this town's liberals are discovering good things to say about the late J. Edgar Hoover.

Of course, his having departed this vale of tears may have something to do with their newborn affection.



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But, more likely, liberal spokesmen have decided to cash in on the late FBI director's reputation for nonpartisanship as a weapon with which to strike out at L. Patrick Gray, President Nixon's nominee to succeed Hoover.

The idea is to portray Pat Gray as a lackey of the White House and, in effect, an agent of the Republican Party.

Thus, the New York Times, which hated Hoover's guts while he was alive, now contends that "at issue" in Gray's con-

firmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee "are the independence and integrity of the FBI as well as the capacity and will of its director to act as a shield against any political penetration of the bureau's activities."

The Times' assumption appears to be that, until Patrick Gray came along, the FBI had been a paragon of virtue.

But that's not what the Times had been saying prior to Mr. Hoover's death last May.

Almost without letup over a period of many years, the Times editorially denounced Hoover and, at one point, even called for his resignation.

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EVEN MORE astonishing was Jack Anderson's testimony before the Senate committee in which the columnist called for Gray's rejection as FBI director. "No serious person ever accused Hoover of running a political police force," said Anderson.

Then Anderson couldn't have been very "serious" when, over the years, he ran column after column that, in effect, accused J. Edgar Hoover of "running a political police force."

What does appear to be the issue is whether Gray should have transmitted material on the Watergate investigation to the President's counsel, John W. Dean.

Well, that could be argued both ways. But Gray's explanation makes sense. He claimed to have sent the files because Dean was investigating Watergate for the President. Further, Gray said, he had operated on "a presumption of regularity" that if Dean had been "in any way compromised by Watergate the President would (not) have designated him" to look into the case.

And, Gray could have added, every President during Hoover's 47-year tenure as FBI chief was provided confidential information on pending cases, including even the most politically sensitive.

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PAT GRAY has also come under fire for allegedly making political speeches in Mr. Nixon's behalf in last fall's campaign. In one speech, Gray said that the nation was "on the threshold of the greatest growth in our history."

And who could argue about that?

At any rate, Senator John Tunney (Dem-Calif.) contended that Gray's speeches, as well as his handing over of files to the President's counsel, indicated "that he was so much under the influence of the aura of power surrounding the White House staff that he was not as independent as an FBI director should be—and as J. Edgar Hoover would have been."

Again the posthumous rehabilitation of J. Edgar Hoover.

The fact is, however, that all through his lengthy career the liberals took Hoover to task precisely because of that independence Senator Tunney now praises.

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AND WHO can forget the vicious attack on Hoover and the FBI leveled by the late Representative Hale Boggs of Louisiana? Where was Senator Tunney when Boggs publicly proclaimed that the FBI had tapped the phones of members of Congress?

Tunney and others currently praising Hoover were absolutely silent when the press and electronic media gave favorable coverage to Boggs' phoney allegation.

The point is that J. Edgar Hoover is now being canonized by the very people who despised and carped at him when he was alive. The motivation is obvious. And so is the hypocrisy.

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