

FBI Agent Accused of Mafia Payoff

By Jack Anderson

For the first time in FBI history, an agent has been accused of taking payoffs from the Mafia. He is assigned to Detroit where he allegedly has been dealing under the table with lower-echelon Mafia hoodlums.

The moment the allegations reached temporary FBI chief L. Patrick Gray, he dispatched a team of inspectors to Detroit to investigate. Our FBI sources say the inspectors have uncovered enough evidence to fire the agent for associating with Mafia figures. It may be more difficult, however, to prove bribery charges in court.

An FBI spokesman refused to confirm or deny the story. Our sources stress, however, that only a single agent is involved in the unsavory scandal. Over the years, agents have been fired for drunkenness, for insubordination, even a few for homosexual behavior. But not a single FBI man has tried to fix a case, defraud the taxpayers or sell out his country.

This amazing scandal-free record has been achieved by hiring the best men available, training them well, convincing them they are the best and paying them top salaries. We

have been critical of the FBI's practices, not of its personnel.

Before a new director takes over, Congress should take a hard look at the FBI. We have canvassed a dozen former agents who were leaders of the FBI during its days of glory and who belong in its hall of fame. Guided by their insight, we would like to make six modest proposals:

1. The FBI should be divorced from politics, which is impossible as long as it remains under the Attorney General. In our view, the FBI should be established as an independent agency which should answer to both the President and Congress.

2. In this age of specialization, the FBI should be split into two separate divisions, not unlike a professional football team's offensive and defensive units. One should specialize in fighting crime; the other should concentrate on counter intelligence.

3. The FBI should stop keeping gossip files on prominent Americans unless there is reasonable suspicion they have violated federal laws. To insure this, a congressional watchdog committee should be appointed with full power to review the files.

4. FBI agents should be

carefully indoctrinated that they serve the people, not the politicians and that it is as important to prove a man innocent as guilty.

5. In the past, the FBI recruited no agents who looked the least disreputable. They were so image-conscious that they weren't allowed to grow long hair, wear colored shirts or go outside without their coats. To infiltrate the underworld, agents must not only look like hoods but must talk and think like hoods. FBI agents generally are unable to do this and, therefore, must rely upon paid informants whose information is often unreliable. As acting director, L. Patrick Gray adopted some important reforms. But still more are needed.

6. Under the late J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI often feuded with the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Gray changed this, and the IACP's executive director, Quinn Tamm, tells us the cooperation is now at "an all-time high." It is vital, of course, for the FBI to work closely with police departments across the country.

The FBI is still an effective crime-fighting force, since Hoover gave it a firm foundation. But with Hoover gone, it will never be quite the same again.

Our modest proposals, we believe, will strengthen the FBI and restore public confidence in it.

Psycho-Surgery Flap

Those who oppose brain surgery as a way of treating violent prisoners may become violent themselves this week in protests being planned in California.

One major target of the protesters: California's proposed Center for the Study and Reduction of Violence at UCLA. They charge, but the center flatly denies, that psychosurgery will be performed at the center. The center's critics point suspiciously to the recruitment last year of Boston psychiatrist Dr. Frank Ervin, who has co-authored a controversial book, "Violence and the Brain," detailing the use of brain surgery to solve problems of violent behavior.

Dr. L. J. West, the center's director, insisted Dr. Ervin "in no way" is involved in the center's plans even though Ervin's name does crop up among the center's original research proposals.

Ervin himself, meanwhile, has been studying monkeys in Africa and the West Indies for the last six months. He is expected back to UCLA, however, this month.