

Kelley Denies FBI Fumbled Hearst Clues

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CLARENCE M. KELLEY
... assesses first year

FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley yesterday defended his agency against criticism that it had overlooked two major clues in the early stages of the bizarre Patricia Hearst case.

But he said the bureau still does not know the whereabouts of the young newspaper heiress.

Kelley confirmed reports that his agents, when first searching the apartment from which Miss Hearst was abducted on Feb. 4, failed to find hidden cyanide-tipped bullets—a trademark of the Symbionese Liberation Army.

In another search the next day, Kelley said, the bullets were discovered.

Appearing at a news conference to mark his first year in office, Kelley said the Hearst apartment had been properly secured after the first search, that no evidence was lost, and that a more thorough search the next day uncovered the bullets.

"In all probability," he said, "in the haste to try to get going and locate the subject... there wasn't the time and attention paid to the crime scene search which we anticipate will always be given, but not always at that given moment."

Referring to Miss Hearst and the remnants of the elusive SLA, Kelley said, "We do not know whether or not they are out of the country. We do not know where she is."

Kelley also acknowledged that the FBI failed last March to stake out a Berkeley bank where SLA member Camilla Hall held a checking account. But he said the decision was based on manpower requirements for other, more promising leads.

He said his agents had asked bank officials to notify them if Miss Hall tried to withdraw her money but added that, at the time, there was insufficient information to warrant an actual stakeout.

"Had we the information that Camilla Hall was a member of the Symbionese Liberation Army, had we known what we subsequently learned about her participation, I probably—were I there—would say, 'Yes, put the stake-

out on at once.'

"But I find that in the haste and pressure of assignment there are many other considerations. I do not think they made a mistake."

On March 1, four days after the FBI discovered the checking account, Miss Hall entered the bank, withdrew \$1,565, and departed unchallenged, according to a Chicago Tribune report.

For more than five months the FBI has pursued Miss Hearst—first as a kidnap vic-

tim, next as a material witness to a bank holdup, and finally as a bearer of illegal firearms. Kelley vowed yesterday that "we will prevail" in solving the case.

In a fiscal year-end report to Attorney General William B. Saxbe, Kelley said kidnap cases are demanding a "major portion" of the FBI's investigative attention, but that "the overwhelming majority of these cases are successfully concluded with the victim's safe return, the arrest of criminals involved, and recovery of most—in many cases, all—in of the ransom money."

Kelley said in the report that the bureau is stepping up its hunt for Communist spies and prosecuting thousands of organized crime figures.

Pointing specifically to citizens of mainland China and the Soviet Union, Kelley said increasing numbers of officials and visitors from Communist countries require greater FBI counterespionage activity.

"We are redirecting some of our manpower in order that we might give this situation additional attention," he said. "We are giving it additional emphasis."

Ticking off the bureau's accomplishments during his first year at the helm, Kelley said:

- More than 1,250 organized crime figures were convicted in FBI cases, including "ranking syndicate leaders" Carmine Tramunti and Vincent Aloï of New York City, Philip Testa of Philadelphia, Gennaro Angiulo of Boston,

and Frank Brancato of Cleveland.

- More than 2,600 other organized crime figures are being prosecuted in connection with FBI-related cases, among them "five national syndicate leaders in three cities."

- FBI investigations led to a record 15,240 federal convictions in the past fiscal year, more than a 5 per cent increase over the previous record in fiscal 1973.

- A record 37,891 fugitives were pursued and located in FBI cases. Among them were six names on the bureau's "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" list.

- Fines, savings and recoveries in FBI cases totaled \$489.2 million, "which averages \$1.25 for every dollar of direct funds appropriated to the FBI for the fiscal year."

Pointing to two divergent trends in American crime, Kelley said there has been a "dramatic decrease in aircraft hijackings" but a "dramatic rise in financial manipulations, computer frauds and other 'white collar' crimes" during the past year.

One year ago this week, the 62-year-old former FBI agent and Kansas City police chief took the reins of the bureau,

then shaken by events that hurt its morale and reputation and left its future uncertain.

Kelley disassociated himself both from "the shroud of mystique" that critics say enveloped the FBI during the 48-year reign of J. Edgar Hoover and also from the Watergate-related actions of L. Patrick Gray.

He said: "Paramount in my mind... was to establish the fact that we are free of political influence and that every effort should be extended that we might remain so."