

Censored Summaries

# Saucy Peek at Secrets Of J. Edgar Hoover

## Washington

The Justice Department yesterday released censored summaries of 164 confidential files of late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover that hinted at intriguing reading.

The official summaries consisted of a few lines describing contents of the file folders. But names and other details were blanked.

One undeleted name was Hoover's own. The array of files contained many accusations prominent men were homosexuals — and Hoover's name was mentioned often.

The files also covered a full range of scandals.

One 67-page file on a 1958-65 period bore this description:

"Contains almost entirely letters to Hoover from . . . Washington field office containing general immoral or criminal activities on the part of diplomats, government employees, politicians, sport figures, socially prominent persons, senators and congressmen."

The summaries of the massive "official and confidential" files Hoover kept in his office were drafted by FBI agents in February, 1975, shortly after Attorney General Edward Levi took office.

Levi used them to prepare himself for testifying before the House judiciary subcommittee on constitutional rights.

The files were made public because of a suit under the Freedom of Information Act by Morton Halperin, former National Security Council staff member whose own telephone was tapped by the FBI.

Halperin first sought the files themselves but later agreed to accept the summaries. Before re-

leasing them the FBI deleted almost all the names.

The result is decades of history — of race relations in cities, of alleged homosexuality with denials, subversive activities, and top secret intelligence — with almost all names and virtually all details deleted.

Hoover's files were jammed with accusations that politically or socially prominent men were homosexuals. Several files, according to the summaries, also concerned "gossip . . . to the effect Mr. Hoover was a homosexual."

A 1941 file dealt with "a continuous whispering campaign against Mr. Hoover." One memo, the summary said, names "at least 23 people who are reportedly involved in a smear campaign . . . Some are identified as congressmen."

It also shows a prospective Democratic presidential candidate in 1940 had income tax troubles and this, the summary said, "could result in his downfall as far as his becoming a candidate."

The summaries also show Hoover more than once resisted efforts of other officials to have access to the files.

Former CIA director Richard Helms "desired to discuss broadening operations particularly of the very confidential type," one summary said, but Hoover was "not enthusiastic . . . in view of hazards involved."

A 6250-page file labeled "prominent persons" consists of "seven volumes of summaries recording telephone conversation of — and — , a prominent D.C. lawyer at the request of —."