

HOOVER SAYS REDS EXPLOIT NEGROES

F.B.I. Chief Asserts Party Infiltrates Rights Drive

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WASHINGTON, April 21 —

J. Edgar Hoover believes that "Communist influence does exist in the Negro movement" and can influence "large masses" of people.

The director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation made this statement to a House Appropriations subcommittee Jan. 29. The testimony was made public today.

"The party is continually searching for new avenues in order to expand its influence among the Negroes," Mr. Hoover said. "In particular, it has sought ways and means to exploit the militant force of the Negro civil rights movement."

"We do know that Communist influence does exist in the Negro movement and it is this influence which is vitally important," he said.

"It can be the means through which large masses are caused to lose perspective on the issues involved and, without realizing it, succumb to the party's propaganda lures," Mr. Hoover said.

Mr. Hoover's comments could well be drawn into the current civil rights debate. Some Southern opponents of the pending legislation have repeatedly charged that the Negro rights movement is Communist-inspired.

In the testimony, Mr. Hoover said, however, that Communists attempted to exploit "what are often legitimate Negro complaints and grievances."

He said, "Racial incidents are magnified and dramatized by Communists in an effort to generate racial tensions. As a result, such campaigns are actually utilized as a stepping stone to extend Communist influence among the Negroes."

Communists try to make propaganda abroad, Mr. Hoover said, by propagating "the idea that this country is against equal rights for all races."

Mr. Hoover said, "The number of Communist party recruits which may be attracted from the large Negro racial group in this nation is not the important thing. The old Communist principle still holds: 'Communist must be built with non-Communist hands.'"

Some other officials displayed signs of irritation today at Mr. Hoover's failure to indicate the relatively small inroads made by Communism among Negroes.

Last summer, Senator A. S. (Mike) Monroney, Oklahoma Democrat, wrote to Mr. Hoover about charges of Communist influence in the civil rights movement. Mr. Hoover replied that under Justice Department policy he had sent the request onto the Attorney General.

On July 23 Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy sent Senator Monroney this answer:

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"Based on all available information from the F. B. I. and other sources, we have no evidence that any of the top leaders of the major civil rights groups are Communists, or Communist-controlled.

"It is natural and inevitable that Communists have made efforts to infiltrate the civil rights groups and to exploit the current racial situation. In view of the real injustices that exist and the resentments against them, these efforts have been remarkably unsuccessful."

As indicated by its text, that letter was written after consultation with F.B.I. officials.

At one point in his testimony, Mr. Hoover went off the record, possibly to talk about individual leaders of civil rights groups.

The comments on Communism and civil rights were part of Mr. Hoover's annual testimony in support of the F.B.I. fund request. He also touched on many other topics.

He said the Soviet Union had engaged in "revolting" efforts to blackmail American visitors to Russia into spying.

"An American college professor and a woman tourist," he said, "went to Moscow, where they were drugged while separately visiting the Soviet Un-

ion, photographed while unconscious, participating in acts of sexual perversion, arrested and their cooperation in obtaining intelligence information solicited under threat of prosecution and exposure."

Mr. Hoover also opposed proposals to transfer to the F.B.I. the investigative work of the Treasury Department's Bureau of Narcotics. He said the F.B.I. was capable of doing the job but it was wiser not to.

"I think we are entirely too big today," he said, "bigger than we should be."