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## J. Edgar Hoover Has a Tantrum

THE INTEMPERATE REMARKS of J. Edgar Hoover concerning Dr. Martin Luther King—and the Warren Commission—and the “bleeding heart” judges whose leniency on the bench offends him—constitute a public show of emotion that must be regretted.

Such a verbal tantrum by the holder of his particular office is most unseemly; in his case, it is also uncharacteristic. Under trying conditions in a position of fierce pressures, Mr. Hoover has for almost four decades borne vexatious tribulations with silence. His record in this respect makes his outburst of Wednesday all the more mystifying.

The designation of Dr. King as “the most notorious liar in the country” defies logical explanation. It was apparently meant to show disagreement with criticism that Negro leaders have directed against the FBI for alleged inadequacies in the civil rights investigations in the South. Dr. King denies he uttered such criticism. But even if guilty as charged by Hoover, he would at worst have been guilty of error, not of mendacity. And by no stretch of the imagination could this minister of the Gospel, respected to an extent that gained him a Nobel Prize, be deemed “notorious.”

THE UNFORTUNATE violence of Hoover's outburst has now been emphasized by Dr. King's soft rejoinder. With ministerial charity, he speaks of the “extreme pressures” and “the awesome burdens, complexities and responsibilities” of the director's job. Dr. King professes “nothing but sympathy” for his traducer—a sentiment that the public might fittingly adopt in view of Hoover's long, useful and generally impeccable service.