

(290) HOOVER

WASHINGTON, DEC. 1 (AP)-WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY GEORGE E. REEDY SAYS PRESIDENT JOHNSON "NEVER HEARD OF" A REPORTED PLAN TO REPLACE FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER.

AT TWO NEWS BRIEFINGS YESTERDAY, REEDY DENIED A REPORT IN THE CURRENT ISSUE OF NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE THAT JOHNSON HAD BECOME A "DISENCHANTED FAN" OF HOOVER AND "HAD DECIDED BY LAST WEEK THAT HE MUST FIND A NEW CHIEF OF THE FBI."

NEWSWEEK, HOWEVER, STUCK TO ITS STORY. EDITOR OSBORN ELLIOTT DISTRIBUTED THIS STATEMENT TO WHITE HOUSE NEWSMEN:

"THE REPORT IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE OF NEWSWEEK THAT 'THE SEARCH IS ON' FOR A SUCCESSOR TO MR. J. EDGAR HOOVER CAME FROM A MOST RELIABLE SOURCE WITHIN THE WHITE HOUSE, AND NEWSWEEK STANDS BY THE STATEMENT."

AT HIS MORNING NEWS BRIEFING, REEDY TOLD NEWSMEN:

"THE PRESIDENT NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A PLAN AND NEVER HEARD OF SUCH AN IDEA."

WHEN THE SUBJECT CAME UP AGAIN AT AN AFTERNOON BRIEFING, REEDY STOOD ON THE EARLIER STATEMENT. WHEN ASKED IF JOHNSON HAD GIVEN HOOVER ANY ASSURANCES HE COULD KEEP HIS JOB AS LONG AS JOHNSON IS PRESIDENT, REEDY REPEATED HE HAD SAID THE PRESIDENT HAS ENTERTAINED NO THOUGHT OF A REPLACEMENT.

A35WX

HOOVER, WHOSE NORMAL RETIREMENT AT AGE 70 NEXT MONTH WAS WAIVED LAST SPRING BY JOHNSON, HAS BEEN CRITICIZED BY CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS SINCE HE REFERRED, IN AN INTERVIEW, TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING AS "THE MOST NOTORIOUS LIAR IN THE COUNTRY."

IN STAMFORD, CONN., LAST NIGHT, KING SAID HE WOULD ASK TODAY FOR A MEETING WITH HOOVER "TO DISCUSS THIS ENTIRE MATTER."

MEANWHILE, JOSEPH RAUH, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN AND NATIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN OF AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION, SAID HE AGREES WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS THAT THE FBI HAS BEEN INEFFECTUAL IN ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE SOUTH.

"I THINK IT'S UP TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON NOW EITHER TO ASK DIRECTOR HOOVER TO STEP DOWN OR TO GIVE BURKE MARSHALL (ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CIVIL RIGHTS) THE TYPE OF INVESTIGATIVE AGENCY HE NEEDS," RAUH SAID IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE WESTINGHOUSE BROADCASTING CO. RADIO PROGRAM "WASHINGTON VIEWPOINT."

PB637AES