

EA99 (DT FW-INSERT) (200)

NEW YORK, DEC. 7 (AP)-NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE SAYS ITS STORY STATING THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON WAS LOOKING FOR A SUCCESSOR TO FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER CAME FROM "A MOST RESPONSIBLE WHITE HOUSE SOURCE."

THE STATEMENT WAS IN A DEC. 4 LETTER FROM NEWSWEEK EDITOR OSBORN ELLIOTT TO CLYDE TOLSON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE FBI.

THE TEXT OF THE LETTER WAS RELEASED BY THE MAGAZINE TODAY AFTER TOLSON HAD GIVEN NEWS MEDIA A LETTER HE HAD WRITTEN NEWSWEEK, CALLING THE ARTICLE "A NEW LOW IN REPORTING."

TOLSON HAD QUESTIONED THE ACCURACY OF THE ARTICLE IN THE DEC. 7 ISSUE.

ELLIOTT REPLIED THAT:

--THE MAGAZINE'S REPORT THAT FIVE FBI AGENTS WERE ON LOAN TO REP. JOHN J. ROONEY, D-N.Y., HEAD OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE, CAME FROM THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AND WAS CONFIRMED BY A MEMBER OF THE FBI.

--IT HAD IGNORED ONE MAJOR CRITICISM OF FBI STATISTICS, BUT HAD REPORTED CRITICISM BY WARREN OLNEY BECAUSE OF HIS "STATURE."

--IT REGRETTED IT WAS MISTAKEN IN SAYING THAT HOOVER HAD NOT SENT ROBERT F. KENNEDY A LETTER OF CONDO

SENT ROBERT F. KENNEDY A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE AFTER HIS BROTHER'S ASSASSINATION.

ELLIOTT SAID LAST NIGHT, AFTER THE LETTER WAS SENT TO TOLSON, THAT HE UNDERSTOOD KENNEDY'S STAFF HAS NOW "UNEARTHED" THE LETTER AFTER A SEARCH PROMPTED BY THE CONTROVERSY.

HE SAID HE WAS INFORMED THAT KENNEDY NEVER SAW THE LETTER UNTIL AFTER THE RECENT SEARCH.

NEW YORK--FIRST ADD HOOVER-NEWSWEEK (A99) X X X SEARCH.

THE TEXT OF ELLIOTT'S LETTER:

DEC. 4, 1954

MR. CLYDE TOLSON

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEAR MR. TOLSON:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 30 CONCERNING OUR COVER STORY ON MR. J. EDGAR HOOVER. NEEDLESS TO SAY, I WAS DISMAYED AT YOUR VIEW THAT THIS REPRESENTED "A NEW LOW" IN REPORTING. AS IT HAPPENS, THIS STORY FOR US REPRESENTED PERHAPS A NEW HIGH IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED FOR A COVER STORY, THE NUMBER OF CRACKPOT CRITICS OF THE FBI IGNORED, AND THE AMOUNT OF LEGITIMATE CRITICISM CHECKED WITH FBI SOURCES. WE WERE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE EXCEPTIONAL KINDNESS AND CO-OPERATION SHOWN US BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE FBI WITH WHOM WE TALKED--ON THE RECORD AND OFF THE RECORD.

OUR STORY CONTAINED CRITICISM OF THE FBI, ONLY BECAUSE THERE IS DISTURBING CRITICISM OF THE FBI ALIVE IN THE LAND TODAY. SOME OF THIS CRITICISM CAME FROM PRESENT MEMBERS OF THE FBI, SOURCES WHICH WE HELD THEN AND NOW IN THE SAME HIGH ESTEEM THAT WE HOLD THE FBI ITSELF. (IN THIS CONNECTION, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE WE EXAMINED WITH PARTICULAR SKEPTICISM ANY INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE KNOWN OR SUSPECTED TO HAVE A BIAS AGAINST THE FBI OR AGAINST MR. HOOVER.)

OUR STORY ALSO CONTAINED MUCH PRAISE FOR THE FBI AND FOR MR. HOOVER, AND SURELY NONE OF THAT DESERVES TO BE INCLUDED IN YOUR "NEW LOW" RATING.

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YOU TAKE SPECIFIC OBJECTION TO FOUR PARTS OF OUR STORY. I PRESUME YOU HAVE SEEN MY BRIEF STATEMENT ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT THE ADMINISTRATION IS ENGAGED IN A DIFFICULT SEARCH FOR A SUCCESSOR TO MR. HOOVER. MR. REEDY SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD HAVE CHECKED WITH THE WHITE HOUSE. I RESPONDED THAT OUR INFORMATION TO THIS EFFECT HAD INDEED COME FROM A MOST RESPONSIBLE WHITE HOUSE SOURCE. THERE IS NOTHING I WOULD ADD TO THAT STATEMENT.

ABOUT THE AGENTS ON LOAN TO MR. ROONEY, OUR ORIGINAL INFORMATION CAME FROM SOMEONE IN THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, AND IT WAS CONFIRMED BY A MEMBER OF THE FBI. THIS WEEK, A DIFFERENT AND AUTHORITATIVE FEDERAL SOURCE INFORMED US THAT SIX AGENTS ARE SO ASSIGNED, NOT FIVE. THE FIRST THREE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE WHOM WE CONTACTED THIS WEEK ALSO CONFIRM THAT THE PRACTICE IS COMMON -- AND ENORMOUSLY USEFUL.

ABOUT THE FBI STATISTICS, I CAN ONLY TELL YOU THAT WE EXAMINED -- AND IGNORED -- THE MAJOR CRITICISM WE FOUND, AN UNPUBLISHED STUDY PREPARED FOR THE BUREAU OF THE BUDGET BY PROFESSOR HARRY MANUEL SHULMAN OF NEW YORK. WE FELT THAT MR. WARREN OLNEY'S PAST AND PRESENT STATURE WAS SUCH THAT HIS CRITICISM DESERVED NOTICE.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO ROBERT KENNEDY, I CAN ONLY ADMIT, WITH SINCERE REGRET, THAT WE WERE MISINFORMED. THE FACT THAT MR. KENNEDY AND HIS ASSOCIATES STILL INSIST THAT MR. HOOVER'S LETTER WAS NEVER RECEIVED, AND THE FACT THAT ALONE OF ALL COMPARABLE LETTERS IT BEARS NO INDICATION OF RECEIPT OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, DOES NOT RELIEVE US OF OUR BLAME.

I HOPE THIS LETTER WILL CONVINCING YOU THAT OUR MOTIVES IN PURSUING THIS STORY WERE PURELY IN THE INTERESTS OF RESPONSIBLY EXPLORING THE NEWS AND ITS MEANING.

VERY SINCERELY,

OSBORN ELLIOTT  
EDITOR

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