

# FBI Director Enjoys Distinction Even President Can't Claim



**HAS DISTINCTION**—FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover enjoys a distinction even President Kennedy can't claim. He is immune from political sniping. No politician in his right mind will attack him openly. They might criticize, but their words are tempered—not from fear but from admiration for a man whose service and integrity have carved him a special niche in the nation's hall of fame. Hoover, (center) is shown with President Kennedy (left) and Attorney General Robert Kennedy in this Feb. 23, 1961, file photo. (UPI)

By **GEORGE J. MARDER**

**United Press International**  
Washington — FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover enjoys a distinction even President Kennedy can't claim.

He is immune from political sniping.

No politician in his right mind will attack him openly. They might criticize, but their words are tempered. This is not from fear but from admiration, perhaps grudging at times, for a man whose service and integrity have carved him a special niche in the nation's hall of fame.

Hoover recently entered his 39th year as head of the country's No. 1 police agency. He celebrated the anniversary without fanfare and worked as usual in his justice department office.

But it was a different story at the capitol. There, congressman after congressman marked the occasion with flowing tributes to the 67-year-old lawyer and crime specialist.

The President also took notice of the date. So did his younger brother, Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy who said he hopes Hoover will still be with the FBI long after he

Robert — leaves the cabinet. On the FBI payroll when Hoover, then a young lawyer, took over were drunks, ex-convicts, politicians, friends of politicians and political hacks.

The agency was a dumping ground for political patronage. Its effectiveness as a crime investigating agency was minus zero.

But Hoover cleaned house in two swoops.

First he fired the ex-convicts. Then the drunks. And he made life so miserable for the political appointees that some quit. Others were booted out.

He then laid down ground rule No. 1 — No political appointments to the FBI. It was not going to be a depository for patronage from either party.

Changes came swiftly. But it took years to wipe out the agency's bad reputation and build up a new one.

Hoover joined the FBI — then known as the Bureau of Investigation — in 1917. Within five years he rose to assistant director. In 1924 a shakeup of the corruption-ridden agency forced the resignation of Director William

J. Burns, the famed detective. Hoover was named acting director while then Atty. Gen. Harlan Fiske Stone searched for "the best available man."

Seven months later Stone called in the hard-driving Hoover to his office and said he had found the man — 29-year-old John Edgar Hoover.

At the time he took over his agents had to use street cars to get around. They were not armed and had no powers of arrest. The bureau had no up to date scientific crime detection equipment.

Public indignation aroused by the Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., kidnaping and rise of the John Dillinger gang helped change all this. Once the public was aware the FBI needed more powers, Hoover and then Atty. Gen. Homer S. Cummings had no trouble

Shatter Resistant Lenses Recommended For Active Boys

New York — Use of shatter-resistant lenses in a safety frame are recommended for the little leaguers who need to wear glasses at all times.

"Don't gamble that an accident won't happen," warns Dr. John W. Ferree, executive director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. He cited the case of a ball player whose glasses shattered as he crashed into a fence chasing a fly ball. Glass particles penetrated the boy's left eye and may cost him its sight, the doctor said.

Headache Object of Improved Research

Washington — Headache sufferers spend an estimated \$300 million each year on popular remedies nationwide, the U.S. Public Health service reports.

For professional treatment, the PHS recommends that headache victims think first of the family doctor. "Research in headache is making such strides today that you need to keep in touch with your doctor to gain the advantage of improved treatment," the PHS noted in a new booklet about throbbing temples.

winning congressional approval. Hoover got money for the best crime laboratory, the best guns, the best automobiles for his agents. In 1934 congress gave him anti-crime laws to blot out gang lawlessness that had swept the country.

In short order the FBI rooted out Dillinger, Machine Gun Kelly, the Barkers, Pretty Boy Floyd and Frank Nash. Then it caught up with Alvin Karpis, who had inherited the title of Public Enemy No. 1. Later, Karpis broke jail and Hoover led the raiding party that captured him in a Chicago apartment.

Hoover's next offensive was against jewel and bond thefts and white slavery. "The job is never done," he said at the time.

His agency went on a war basis long before World War II. The effectiveness of his preparations was demonstrated later by the fact that during the war there was not one instance of foreign directed sabotage.

Eight would-be Nazi saboteurs landed by German submarines were captured before they could cause havoc with explosives they had brought along. Six of the men were electrocuted, the others imprisoned.

Hoover not only directed the roundup but served with then Atty. Gen. Francis Biddle in prosecuting the Germans before a military commission.

The FBI director's next campaign, and the one he still prosecutes most vigorously today, was against the "Red Fascist" menace, better known as communism. In addition he is an arch foe of juvenile delinquency and organized crime. In a recent speech at which he received another of many decorations, Hoover said:

"A tidal wave of lawless tyranny is now surging from the criminal and subversive underworlds. Our national conscience, our heritage of freedom, the entire cause of decency, are being severely tested by these deadly enemies."

In another typical speech he said that "a more despicable person does not exist than a dishonest policeman." And in crimes of violence he favored equal treatment for juveniles and adults. "I can see no difference," he said, "between a 17-year-old who wilfully robs, rapes or kills and a person of greater age who commits the same acts. I am disgusted by misguided sentimentalists who want to pamper and excuse teen-age thugs."

Hoover, who takes great pride in his own cooking, has remained a bachelor, not because he doesn't like women but because his first and only love is the agency he has built into the most powerful, yet perhaps most popular, detective force in American history.

As Look magazine once said, the FBI "has become his living monument."

Hoover's salary is \$22,000 a year. Some years ago congress voted to pay him at that rate until his death.

As usual the FBI chief's current security and crime targets are wrapped in mystery. But it can be assumed that organized crime and communism are at the top of his slate.

He has an operating budget of about \$123 million a year. Even economy minded congressmen agree it is well spent.

Hoover made many changes in FBI methods of ferreting out crime. But he is proudest of something much more intangible than John Dillinger and other notorious criminals he hunted down. This was the spirit of integrity and independence he brought to the

FBI — something unique in politically-minded Washington.

In these later days no politician dares to try to put a political tinge on the FBI payroll or the agency's procedures. The esteem enfolded it was evidenced a few years ago when its files became the subject of a hot dispute.

The U. S. Supreme Court had ruled that secret files must be made available to defendants in criminal trials which involved the FBI.

The files are the most carefully guarded of all FBI secrets. Not even congressmen or cabinet officers are allowed to see them although summaries have been prepared at times in accordance with law.

The FBI did not have to defend itself — or its files. The White House, the attorney general and congress moved quickly to protect the bureau.

There was no concern about the agency having the secrets but no one wanted them opened to public view. The gov-

ernment dropped prosecution of that particular case just to guarantee sanctity of the files.

Congress then took legislative steps to soften the effect of the court ruling. The vote in the House was 315 to 0 and in the Senate 74 to 2.

There is another distinguishing feature of the FBI record under Hoover. The agency has never grabbed for power. Quite the opposite, Hoover has warned repeatedly against giving the FBI jobs it wasn't intended to do. He

fears that wrongly-inspired changes could convert the agency into a national police force.

As of now, his long years of service show no signs of ending. One of the first things President Kennedy did on taking office was to ask Hoover to stay on. Politicians in both major parties were pleased. To them Hoover has made the abbreviation FBI stand not only for Federal Bureau of Investigation but for a Federal Bureau of Integrity.

**SAVE \$\$\$**  
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