



Department of Justice

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ADDRESS

BY

THE HONORABLE EDWARD H. LEVI
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

AT

THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES
OF
THE JOHN EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING

11:00 A.M.
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1975
J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D. C.

We have come together to dedicate this new building as the headquarters of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is a proper moment to look back to the tradition of this law enforcement organization as well as to look forward to the future it will meet in this new place.

It was under Theodore Roosevelt that the predecessor of the FBI was founded. There was resistance to its creation. For varied reasons -- noble and base -- some feared the idea of a federal criminal investigative agency within the Justice Department. But through the persistence of Attorney General Charles Joseph Bonaparte the organization was formed.

The resistance did not crumble when Bonaparte's idea was accomplished. There were bad years to follow for the Bureau. It did not escape the tarnish of the Teapot Dome era. The Justice Department and the Bureau were criticized for failing to attack official corruption with sufficient vigor. From this period the Bureau emerged with a new beginning under the man to whose memory this new building is dedicated.

John Edgar Hoover was 29 years old when Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone appointed him acting director of the Bureau in May of 1924. Hoover's reputation of scrupulous honesty had been commended to Stone. Such a man was needed.

Hoover set about reforming the Bureau to meet the demanding requirements of a more complicated era. His vision was of an organization full of people dedicated both to the professional standards of law enforcement and to the need for federal law enforcement to be beyond reproach. By the end of 1924, Hoover was named Director.

Harlan Fiske Stone was proud of his appointment of Hoover. And Hoover was proud of the man who appointed him. After being named to the U.S. Supreme Court, Stone wrote Felix Frankfurter that Hoover "removed from the Bureau every man as to whose character there was any ground for suspicion. He refused to yield to any kind of political pressure; he appointed to the Bureau men of intelligence and education, and strove to build up morale such as should control such an organization . . ."

We dedicate this building in a period which again calls for a reaffirmation of the effectiveness, independence and integrity of law enforcement agencies. I believe that the FBI is fortunate that during this difficult period it has the leadership of Director Clarence Kelley. This is a challenging time for the FBI, and I am confident that its dedication to its strong tradition of professionalism and honor will meet the challenge.

This is the heritage we honor today. It is this to which we dedicate ourselves.