

Mafia bosses 'blackmailed Hoover over homosexual orgies'

MARTIN WALKER IN WASHINGTON; Norton-Taylor, Richard. **The Guardian (pre-1997 Fulltext); Manchester (UK)** [Manchester (UK)] 06 Feb 1993.

Abstract

For [Frank Costello] and [Meyer Lansky], the ability to corrupt key figures was fundamental, Mr [Anthony Summers] says. "The way they found to deal with [JEDGAR Hoover], according to several Mob sources, involved his homosexuality," he adds. Hoover always denied the existence of the Mafia in the US.

Mr Summers also claims that Hoover, who died in office in 1972, aged 77, blackmailed President Kennedy into choosing Lyndon Johnson as his running-mate, and that Hoover was once treated for his homosexuality by a Washington psychiatrist.

Hoover's efforts to smear individuals with whom he disagreed were not restricted to Americans. Mr Summers' book, *Official and Confidential*, to be published in Britain this month, is believed to contain new evidence showing how Hoover was quick to seize on rumours damaging to the then prime minister, Harold Wilson. Allegations linking Lord Wilson to the Soviet Union were being spread in the mid-1960s by a group of MI5 officers.

Full Text

JEDGAR Hoover attended homosexual orgies dressed as a woman and was blackmailed by Mafia bosses with photographic evidence proving he was gay, according to a forthcoming biography of the legendary

head of the FBI.

Hoover is described on one occasion as wearing a fluffy black dress, with lace stockings, high heels and a black curly wig. On another occasion, accompanied by two teenage boys, he wore a red dress "and a black feather boa round his neck . . . dressed like an old flapper".

The orgies at New York's Plaza Hotel are described by Susan Rosenstiel, widow of a liquor magnate who had been an associate of gang bosses Frank Costello and Meyer Lansky since prohibition days.

She is quoted by a British journalist, Anthony Summers, whose biography of Hoover is about to be serialised by the magazine, Vanity Fair. The book is provoking a storm in the US.

Mrs Rosenstiel says she was taken to the orgies by Roy Cohn, the gay lawyer behind the McCarthy witchhunts of the 1950s.

"You've never seen anything like it. I couldn't believe it, that I should see the head of the FBI dressed as a woman," she says. Hoover wore a very short skirt. His face was made up, with false eyelashes.

"In the course of the orgy, he had sex with two blond teenage boys," Mrs Rosenstiel told Mr Summers.

For Costello and Lansky, the ability to corrupt key figures was fundamental, Mr Summers says. "The way they found to deal with Hoover, according to several Mob sources, involved his homosexuality," he adds. Hoover always denied the existence of the Mafia in the US.

The evidence they seem to have acquired was a photograph of Hoover having oral sex with his aide, Clyde Tolson, who later became assistant FBI director. Mr Summers cites a US intelligence official, John Weitz - who worked for the FBI's rival, the Office of Strategic Services - as having seen the photograph.

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Hoover also seized on reports sent by Charles Bates, the FBI liaison man in London, relating to Harold Wilson and his political adviser, Marcia Williams, now Lady Falkender.

Hoover's suspicions and hostility towards Britain was reflected in *Spycatcher*, the memoirs of the former MI5 officer, Peter Wright.

Mr Wright, who was known to Bates, described Hoover as "famously anti-British", a prejudice spawned during the second world war when the British security co-ordination under Sir William Stephenson operated independently of the Americans.

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