

Saxbe says FBI didn't always report *F Post 4/18/74* on its counterintelligence program

WASHINGTON (AP) — Atty. Gen. William B. Saxbe said Sunday the FBI apparently failed to report regularly to the attorney general on a counterintelligence program it aimed at radical and extremist groups.

He said a report on the counterintelligence operation, revealed over the weekend, would be discussed Monday but he did not say whether it would be released by the Justice Department.

Appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," Saxbe said there is currently no such program in operation. But he declined to discuss in detail reports that the FBI ran such a program for 15 years.

Asked whether any attorney general had been aware of the program, Saxbe said "I can't be sure As far as direct regular reports, I don't think so."

A copy of the draft FBI report on the program, supplied to The Associated Press by columnist Jack Anderson, indicates the plan, known as Cointelpro, included such activities as forged credentials, sham organizations, anonymous letters and leaking of derogatory information.

According to the report, the program was aimed at the New Left, black extremists, white hate groups, the Socialist Workers party and the U.S. Communist Party.

Although he said no such program is now in operation, Saxbe warned that it could develop.

"It could always develop," he said. "You could have Watergate happen again, you could have all these things happen again if the people in the Congress aren't interested."

But, Saxbe added that the answer is continual vigilance and "I'm not worried about it happening while I'm here."

He said current FBI operations concentrate on criminal intelligence.

According to the report on Cointelpro the first of the operations began in 1956 against the Communists and the last segment of the program was ended in 1971.

The report said several operations were approved by then FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. There were no indications any attorney general or Congress was notified.

Without giving details, the report cited actions it termed "troubling:"

— "Obtaining tax returns of members of a group."

— "Use of 'citizen band' radio, using the same frequency being used by demonstrators, to provide disinformation to disrupt demonstration."

— "Investigating the love life of a group leader for dissemination to the press."

— "Sending anonymous communications to family members ... advising of immoral or radical activities"