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RECORDS ON HISS RELEASED BY F.B.I.

Data Indicate House Panel Got Evidence First

WASHINGTON, Sept. 3 (UPI)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's records of its Alger Hiss investigation show its agents often were at a disadvantage in gathering evidence because a Congressional committee got it first.

Competing with the F.B.I. for evidence linking the former State Department official with a Communist spy ring was then Representative Richard M. Nixon, whose anti-Hiss efforts won him national prominence in 1948, four years before he was elected Vice President.

The F.B.I. made public today a first 330-page collection of records on the Hiss case, released under mandate of the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Hiss hopes the records will clear his name after 26 years. He was convicted of perjury in 1950 and served 44 months in jail.

Mr. Hiss, now 70 years old, has always denied charges by the late Whittaker Chambers, a confessed former Communist spy, that Mr. Hiss was a member of a Soviet spy ring.

Details Released

The released documents gave details of F.B.I. agents trying to get a step ahead of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, now defunct, and Mr. Hiss's chief accuser, Mr. Nixon.

The volume consists mostly of memorandums between J. Edgar Hoover, then director of the F.B.I., and various F.B.I. agents during the 1948 investigation.

It appears from the memo that Mr. Chambers was prone to give leads to Mr. Nixon's investigators before the F.B.I. heard about them.

For its part, the F.B.I. was sharply criticized in the press, which used articles about the bureau's inability to get the evidence. These articles were apparently supplied by the committee, and in at least one case by Mr. Nixon.

All the released documents were carefully screened, and information exempted under the Freedom of Information Act was blotted out in the photocopies made public.

Fragments of Clipping

The opening paragraph of one news article was partly blotted out, apparently because the clipping was damaged and not because of censorship. The fragments that could be read said:

"Rep. Richard . . . E. Calif., today criticized the Federal Bureau of Investigation . . . for its inability . . . Alger Hiss and Whittaker Chambers, key figures in . . . years of investigation."

A memorandum dated Dec. 2, 1948, said F.B.I. agents were tipped by a reporter for The New York Sun that Mr. Chambers had given a New York court "leaking documents extremely damaging in their nature to Hiss's civil suit against Chambers." At the time, Mr. Hiss was suing Mr. Chambers for libel.

The memo said the court "impounded" the documents and it noted, "This ties in, of course, with information received from Congressman Nixon yesterday."