

*Atkinson Commercial Appeal
2/18/75*

Levi Confirms Hoover's Derogatory Files On Lawmakers

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17. — Atty. Gen. Edward Levi confirmed Thursday that he had authorized the FBI to release derogatory information about presidents and congressmen in his FBI office.

In an appearance before a House judiciary subcommittee, Levi said the FBI has 1,500 derogatory files on presidents and congressmen in his FBI office.

Levi said the FBI now has 17 million files, including 1,500 involving congressmen.

Deputy Atty. Gen. Lawrence Silberman told news men that the misuse of the agency included investigation of former Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Lyndon B. Johnson and political work for Johnson.

Levi said that Hoover kept in his office 48 files that included derogatory information on officials, including presidents and 17 congressmen, 2 of whom are still in Congress.

In the most detailed public airing yet, Levi, FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley and Silberman also said that derogatory material has been given to congressmen to use against other congressmen.

And they said the FBI's counterintelligence unit disseminate derogatory information to the press on whomever they considered extremists in order to discredit them.

The FBI files include some allegations on congressmen's "morals or drinking habits," Levi said. He said such allegations are filed but not investigated.

But Kelley said there has not been a single attempt to use the FBI politically in the 19 months he has been director, and Silberman said none of the past misuses appeared criminal.

The testimony was televised by the House civil rights subcommittee, two members of which said the FBI has files on them.

One, Rep. Robert F. Drinan (D-Mass.), who was one of the House's most anti-Vietnam war critics, said the FBI investigated him before he was elected.

The other member, Rep. John F. Seibering (D-Ohio), said the FBI still has a 10-year-old security clearance report on him.

His staff uncovered what he called the abuses and he was publicly confirming them as the beginning steps to "correcting" Congress in preventing them from happening again.

Although Levi gave no names and only sparse details, some of the misuses he had already been disclosed, and Silberman confirmed to newsmen that some of them involved Nixon and Johnson.

Silberman said these included Nixon and Johnson having the FBI "report" on certain activities of members of Congress who were opposed to and critical of his policies.