

FBI kept file on pres

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Atty. Gen. Edward H. Levi confirmed Thursday that the late J. Edgar Hoover filed derogatory information about presidents and congressmen in his FBI office.

In an appearance before a House Judiciary subcommittee, Levi also cited cases in which he said the FBI was used by presidents and White House aides for political purposes.

Levi said the FBI now has 6½ million files, including 1,605 involving congressmen.

Deputy Atty. Gen. Lawrence Silberman told newsmen that the misuse of the agency included investigation of congressional critics for 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, two 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 did release

derogatory information to the press on what it 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 misuse appeared criminal.

The testimony was delivered to 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 vocal anti-Vietnam war critics, said the FBI investigated him before he was elected.

The other member, Rep. John F. Seiberling, D-Ohio, said the FBI still has a 20-year-old security clearance report on him.

Levi told the congressmen his staff uncovered what he called the abuses and he was publicly confirming them as "the beginning steps" to cooperate with Congress in preventing them from happening again.

"Some abuses have occurred," Levi said, "and we must attempt to find the best remedial steps which will pro-

tect the bureau in its proper mission."

Although Levi gave no names and only sparse details, some of the misuses 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."

They also included the Johnson camp's obtaining FBI information on Republican presidential opponent Barry M. Goldwater's staff in 1964, Silberman said, and Johnson's having the FBI gather political intelligence at the Democratic National Convention in 1964.

Levi testified that the FBI was used to conduct an inquiry "for what might be described as positional purposes" and in some instances provided information which was given to federal agencies to use to discredit their critics.

Silberman said he recalled several instances of the FBI giving derogatory information to congressmen to use against other congressmen.

J. Edgar Hoover had 164 files in his private office, Levi testified, including 48 that "by and large" had derogatory information on public officials.

idents, congressmen

A document in one of the files, Levi testified, indicates that derogatory material on one congressman who had attacked Hoover was disseminated to other federal agencies.

Levi said a name on a file didn't necessarily mean it contained adverse matter on that person.

"In some instances a folder would contain only a record of a contact between Mr. Hoover and a public figure during which derogatory information on another individual was discussed," he said.

Three of the Hoover files were on the Communist party, Levi said, and others involved efforts by people to have Hoover fired, foreign influence in extremist groups and a report that a reporter intended to "expose the incompetence" of a U.S. intelligence official in 1941.

But Levi said very few of Hoover's files could be described as dossiers on people and said many of them contained routine and innocuous administrative material.

He said the 1,605 files involving congressmen included 719 extortion or assassination threats, 85 criminal investigations against congressmen, 24 security violation investigations against them and 466 files on FBI

correspondence with or involving congressmen.

The correspondence files include unsolicited allegations from citizens or enemies including some on morals and drinking habits, Levi said.

He said "vitriolic allegations" can become important later if assassination or extortion threats are made against congressmen but he said some procedure should be devised to screen out and discard useless information.

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