FBI involved in burglaries

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley confirmed Wednesday that the FBI was involved in "a limited number" of burglaries against domestic targets as recently as 1972 and 1973.

In a statement issued to reporters, Kelley said he learned of the breakins after officials reviewed files discovered in the FBI's New York office.

The New York files were discovered last March 17, and the FBI notified the Justice Department on the same day that the material concerned relatively recent burglaries, he said.

"The FBI under my direction is cooperating with the Department of Justice in a full and complete investigation to determine all the facts of this matter," Kelley said.

Kelley had said at a news conference last July that the FBI conducted no burglaries against domestic targets after 1966.

"I was speaking with the best knowledge that was furnished me at the time," the director said in the new statement.

He noted the FBI told the Senate Intelligence Committee about 238 burglaries against 14 domestic targets from 1942 to April 1968.

He said the report to the Senate committee also referred to "additional entries which we were then unable to document."

He said he only learned of the more recent burglaries after the FBI launched a nationwide search for files dealing with such operations in connection with a pending lawsuit.

The director referred to recent news reports that the department is investigating burglaries conducted during the past five years to determine whether FBI agents committed criminal violations of the civil rights of Americans.

The five-year period is significant because the law precludes prosecutions for civil rights violations which happened more than five years ago.

Kelley said that when he said there no domestic break-ins after 1966, "I knew of none." He said the July 1975 statement was based on the recollections of current officials at FBI headquarters and on a July 1966 memo in which then Director J. Edgar Hoover banned future burglaries.

Kelley became FBI director in July 1973.