

# FBI orders restraint on domestic spying

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Pressured by members of Congress and a federal judge, the FBI has ordered its agents to interpret narrowly the bureau's expanded authority to investigate domestic political groups.

Last month, Attorney General William French Smith issued looser guidelines for FBI domestic security investigations. They replaced those set during the Ford administration by Attorney General Edward Levi to prevent a recurrence of abuses uncovered by Congress.

The congressional probes found that in the 1960s and 1970s the bureau spied on and harassed citizens legally dissenting from government policy on Vietnam and civil rights.

FBI Director William H. Webster said the new guidelines were aimed at new terrorist groups and were designed to improve the bureau's ability "to detect violence before it occurs."

But even before the new guidelines took effect, they kicked up a flurry of

protests and questions from Congress and civil liberties groups.

Sens. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt.; Joseph Biden, D-Del., and Walter Huddleston, D-Ky., wrote Smith to question the intent of his proposals to authorize, for the first time, the use of infiltrators and informants during preliminary inquiries where "there is not yet a reasonable indication of criminal activities."

The senators also questioned Smith's authorization of "full investigations" of those who purportedly advocate crime in their public statements.

Ten days after the new rules came out, Webster sent a teleprinter message to FBI agents around the country explaining them. Webster's interpretations took a narrow view of the new investigative powers, but they have not quieted the dissatisfaction.