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**FBI's Probe of
Top IRS Man**

Washington

The FBI is making a preliminary investigation of allegations involving Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Donald Alexander, already the focus of inquiries by two congressional committees.

An FBI spokesman Saturday said the investigation was undertaken at the request of the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

He would not discuss its scope, but other sources said Treasury Secretary William Simon had referred the matter to the Justice Department.

Alexander has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing in his job as the nation's chief tax collector. He has been accused of frustrating enforcement of criminal tax laws by some present and former IRS agents who are upset about

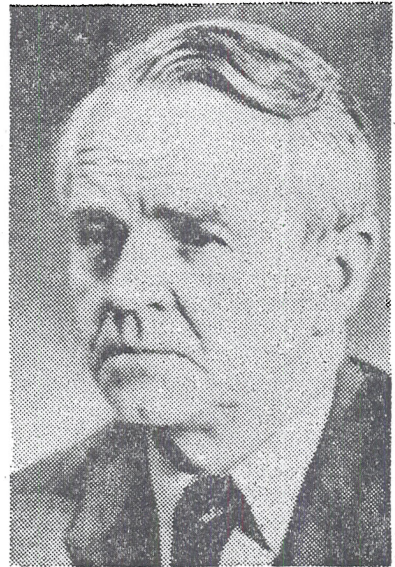
his curtailment of the agency's intelligence division operations. The intelligence division investigates criminal tax cases.

The FBI is seeking to determine whether there are any federal violations involving Alexander. A Justice Department official described the inquiry as "a preliminary matter."

"It's under study," he said. "We are aware of the allegations, as is the bureau (FBI)."

Simon has also ordered a separate Treasury Department investigation of published reports that Alexander and other high IRS officials blocked an audit of tax returns of Senator Josepn Montoya (Dem-N.M.), chairman of a subcommittee which handles the agency's appropriations.

In addition, a House govern-



DONALD ALEXANDER
Another Investigation

ment operations subcommittee headed by Representative Benjamin Rosenthal (Dem-N.Y.) and a House Ways and Means oversight subcommittee headed by Representative Charles Vanik (Dem-Ohio) are conducting broad investigations of the IRS and Alexander.

Associated Press