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CLARENCE KELLEY AT SENATE HEARING
He said unlimited access to files 'could seriously jeopardize' the FBI

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CIA (A)

FBI Would Restrict Access to Its Files

Washington

FBI Director Clarence Kelley urged yesterday that future congressional oversight of his agency's intelligence activities not involve full access to sensitive files.

Kelley told the Senate government operations committee that oversight of the FBI's domestic and foreign intelligence operations and criminal procedures is needed.

But a review that grants unlimited access to the files could seriously jeopardize the flow of volunteered information which is the lifeblood of our investigative organization," he said.

The committee is listening to past and present policy makers this week to develop new controls on U.S. intelligence activities.

Kelley said he is concerned about leaks as more people have access to highly sensitive materials.

Since informants volunteer information to the FBI under promises of confidentiality, Kelley said disclosure of names and types of

information would have a "severe impact" on FBI's operations.

He said there is "no question" that the basic structure of the FBI is sound, but the agency's integrity hinges on the integrity of the director. Kelley advocated a single oversight committee in Congress that would rely on the FBI director's sworn testimony rather than access to files to keep the agency in check. ✕

Kelley said the FBI has reduced the number of domestic intelligence investigations by 64 per cent since July, 1973. The drop — from 21,414 on July 31, 1973, to 7686 by Oct. 30, 1975 — is "solid evidence" of the agency's attempts to eliminate activities of questionable legality, he said.

Although none of the abandoned cases was "actually illegal," Kelley conceded that "under a strict interpretation, they might be considered violations of civil rights, privacy and that sort of thing."

Other cases, he said, simply weren't worth their cost.

United Press

* Single oversight committee is also recommended by David A. Phillips, SFC 23 Jan 76, and by John A. McCone, NYT (TV Guide ad), 19 Jan 76.