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FBI television

By Carl Leubsdorf

Washington, June 2 (AP)-The FBI is running a check on performers hired for a television series about its operations to make sure no communists or subversives take part, a spokesman said today.

Films of completed programs will be reviewed for accuracy, he added.

"We will not permit anyone with a communist, subversive or substantially derogatory background to portray any part in the series," the spokesman said.

The hour-long television program, "The FBI," scheduled to begin on the American Broadcasting Co. network Sept. 19, is now under production at Warner Brothers in California.

"FBI policy is that the series is being handled in the formative stages by ABC and Warner Brothers," he said.

The spokesman said Warner Brothers "gives us the names of actors" hired for the series and the FBI then checks the names against its files. Any derogatory information contained in the files then supplied to the producers, the spokesman said, adding that this applied only to actors, not to production or technical personnel.

He said that "we do not conduct investigations of anyone" and that "the FBI has nothing to say about who plays any role in the series."

The spokesman said he was unable to say how many names had already been submitted to FBI headquarters here but that those passed on so far included the star of the series, Efrem Zimbalist Jr.

Zimbalist spend several days in Washington and at the FBI academy in Quantico, Va., about a month ago, the spokesman said, "to get the feel of the role he will play" as an FBI inspector.

In New York, a spokesman for ABC said that the other principal actors are Stephen Brooks, Lynn Loring and Philip Abbott.

A spokesman for the Screen Actors Guild in Los Angeles said it had come to the attention of the Guild that the FBI was interested in backgrounds of actors playing continuing roles in the series

portraying FBI agents and members of their families.

He said the actors considered for the roles all had been cleared and went on the payroll as of last Friday.

After completion of the programs -- which are based on material in FBI files -- the films will be reviewed at FBI headquarters here "to make certain they are properly done," the FBI spokesman added.

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