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Much FBI Work Held Ineffective

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From News Dispatches

A General Accounting Office review of the FBI's domestic intelligence operation has disclosed that the controversial activity results in few prosecutions and even fewer convictions.

Comptroller General Elmer Staats told Congress yesterday the GAO review found that the FBI's intelligence program has had little impact beyond helping the government identify and gather information on groups and individuals espousing extremist and subversive activities.

Staats told a House Judiciary subcommittee that the GAO reviewed FBI summaries of 676 specific cases out of about 19,700 subversive and extremist investigations by 10 FBI offices in 1974. Only 16 cases, he said, were referred to authorities for possible prosecution and only four of these led to convictions.

Staats also said that his review is not yet complete because the FBI has failed to supply summaries of one-fourth of the 899 sample cases chosen for review and has refused to furnish raw data to demonstrate the accuracy of the summaries it has provided.

The FBI manual of instructions provides for 90-day checks on a subject whose in-

volvement in subversive or extremist activities is unclear, and says that after 90 days the field office should have determined whether a basis exists for a full investigation.

If the investigation is to continue, the field office must

send facts of the case to Washington.

But the GAO preliminary review said field offices had disregarded these rules, and it questioned the need for investigations of persons with only suspected involvement.