

Guidelines for FBI Informants

Washington

Attorney General Edward H. Levi yesterday ordered the FBI to keep a close check on its informants, telling the agency it cannot cover up an informant's crime.

The guidelines say the FBI must warn all informants they must not take part in violence or use any illegal techniques such as burglaries, mail tampering or illegal surveillance and must "discourage" violence by groups they belong to.

Left-wing groups have accused FBI informants of supporting actions that turned peaceful demonstrations into violent clashes with police, resulting in injuries, damages and criminal charges.

FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley said Levi's 5½-page order places "in one document many of the long-standing FBI policies and procedures relating to the handling of informants." A spokesman said

this was not a response to any single problem, but just another step in Levi's plan to draft guidelines for all FBI activities.

Earlier ones concerned domestic security, civil disorder investigations, background checks on political appointees, foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence.

While Levi's directive strictly limited the FBI's use of informants, the Justice Department said the guidelines were drafted in cooperation with the FBI, and an agency statement said Kelley was "pleased with these new guidelines" and "feels they will be helpful in the future management control of informants."

Generally, the FBI is forbidden to allow informants to commit any action it could not authorize its own undercover agents to take, and it must report findings outside its jurisdiction to state and local authorities.

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