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PRECEDE DES MOINES DAY (A140DC) (500)

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JACKSON, MISS., DEC. 10 (AP)-THE USE OF WIRETAPPING AND ELECTRONIC EAVESDROPPING EQUIPMENT INCREASED DURING ROBERT KENNEDY'S STINT AS U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL, FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER SAID IN A LETTER RELEASED TODAY.

HOOVER, IN A LETTER TO REP. H. R. GROSS, R-IOVA, PLACED FULL RESPONSIBILITY ON KENNEDY, NOW DEMOCRATIC SENATOR FROM NEW YORK.

SEN. KENNEDY, IN A STATEMENT ISSUED THROUGH HIS WASHINGTON OFFICE, SAID "APPARENTLY MR. HOOVER HAS BEEN MISINFORMED."

HE QUOTED A FORMER FBI OFFICIAL, WHO WAS THE LIAISON OFFICER BETWEEN THE FBI AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AS SAYING THE ONLY WIRE-TAP AUTHORIZATIONS WHICH WERE SUBMITTED TO KENNEDY WERE IN THE SERIOUS NATIONAL SECURITY CASES.

GROSS WAS IN MISSISSIPPI VISITING RELATIVES WHEN HE RECEIVED THE LETTER FROM HOOVER. THE STATEMENTS WERE ALSO QUOTED IN NEWS STORIES TODAY BY CLARK HOLLENHOFF OF THE DES MOINES REGISTER AND MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU.

"MR. KENNEDY, DURING HIS TERM OF OFFICE, EXHIBITED GREAT INTEREST IN PURSUING SUCH MATTERS, AND WHILE IN DIFFERENT METROPOLITAN AREAS, NOT ONLY LISTENED TO THE RESULTS OF MICROPHONE SURVEILLANCE BUT RAISED QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO OBTAINING BETTER EQUIPMENT," HOOVER WROTE TO GROSS.

GROSS HAD WRITTEN HOOVER EARLIER IN THE WEEK QUESTIONING WHETHER THE FBI HAD ACTED WITH AUTHORITY FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN A NUMBER OF INSTANCES, INCLUDING EAVESDROPPING ON SEVERAL LAS VEGAS GAMBLING FIGURES AND ON FRED B. BLACK JR., ONE OF THE BUSINESS ASSOCIATES OF ROBERT G. (BOBBY) BAKER, FORMER SECRETARY TO THE SENATE'S DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY.

HOOVER SAID WIRETAPPING AND ELECTRONIC MICROPHONE SURVEILLANCE WERE ALWAYS HANDLED IN A "CAREFULLY CONTROLLED MANNER" BY THE FBI, BUT HE ADDED THE USE OF THESE DEVICES "WAS OBVIOUSLY INCREASED AT MR. KENNEDY'S INSISTENCE WHILE HE WAS IN OFFICE."

HOOVER SAID HE HAD A CONFERENCE WITH THEN ATTORNEY GENERAL NICHOLAS KATZENBACH ON MARCH 30, 1965, AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS "SIMILAR TO THOSE I HAD MADE TO EACH SUCCESSIVE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOLLOWING THE ADMINISTRATION OF ATTORNEY GENERAL TOM C. CLARK."

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HOOVER SAID "SUCH RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNED STRONG, SIMPLE CONTROL BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF PROCEDURES AFFECTING ELECTRONIC DEVICES UTILIZED BY ALL FEDERAL INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES.

"PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON ON JUNE 30, 1965 ISSUED A MEMORANDUM TO ALL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES PROHIBITING WIRETAPPING IN ALL CASES EXCEPT THOSE RELATED TO THE INTERNAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

"THIS PROHIBITION INCLUDED THE FACT THAT NO INTERCEPTION WAS TO BE UNDERTAKEN OR CONTINUED WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE APPROVAL OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

"THIS OF COURSE, IS THE PRACTICE WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN FOLLOWED BY THE FBI."

HOOVER SAID THESE ELECTRONIC DEVICES HAVE "NEVER BEEN OPERATED IN AN IRRESPONSIBLE, UNAUTHORIZED OR UNCONTROLLED MANNER."

IN WASHINGTON, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FBI, CONFIRMING THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HOOVER AND GROSS, WOULD ONLY SAY THAT HOOVER'S LETTER "SPEAKS FOR ITSELF."

THE FBI DIRECTOR ALSO SENT TO GROSS A COPY OF LETTER ON MAY 25, 1961 TO SEN. S. J. ERVIN JR., D-N.C., A MEMBER OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, WHICH SAID THAT AS OF FEB. 8, 1960, THE FBI MAINTAINED 78 WIRETAPS AND 67 ELECTRONIC LISTENING DEVICES, "THE MAJORITY IN THE FIELD OF INTERNAL SECURITY WITH A FEW USED TO OBTAIN INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO ORGANIZED CRIME."

GROSS IN RELEASING THE LETTERS SAID HIS ONLY INTEREST WAS TO DETACH "THE STIGMA THAT HAS FALLEN ON THE FBI" AS A RESULT OF WIRETAPPING CHARGES.

GROSS SAID FURTHER ACTION ON HIS PART "WOULD DEPEND ON DEVELOPMENTS.

REP. JOHN BELL WILLIAMS, D-MISS., ACCOMPANIED GROSS TO THE MEETING WITH NEWSMEN AND SAID THE IOWA REPUBLICAN "HAS RENDERED A VERY FINE PUBLIC SERVICE IN BRINGING THIS TO LIGHT."

(NO PICKUP)

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JACKSON, MISS. -- FIRST ADD FBI-WIRETAP, A ZERN X X X THIS TO LIGHT."

IN HIS STATEMENT, KENNEDY SAID HOOVER SHOULD HAVE CONSULTED WITH COURTNEY EVANS BEFORE WRITING THE LETTER TO GROSS.

KENNEDY SAID EVANS SERVED WITH THE FBI 21 YEARS AND WAS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR "WHILE I WAS ATTORNEY GENERAL."

"HE (EVANS) WAS APPOINTED BY MR. HOOVER AS THE LIAISON OFFICER BETWEEN THE FBI AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND IN THAT CAPACITY WAS PRESENT ON EACH OCCASION WHEN ANY MATTER WAS DISCUSSED WITH ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FBI INCLUDING THE MATTERS REFERRED TO IN MR. HOOVER'S STATEMENT.?"

THE SENATOR THEN REFERRED TO A COPY OF A LETTER TO HIM BY EVANS, NOW A WASHINGTON LAWYER, AND WRITTEN FEB. 17 OF THIS YEAR.

THE LETTER WHICH EVANS SAID WAS SENT TO KENNEDY "IN LINE WITH YOUR REQUEST AND IN CONFIRMATION OF OUR CONVERSATION" REFERRED TO "INFORMATION FURNISHED TO YOU (KENNEDY) DURING YOUR TENURE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL BY ME AS AN OFFICIAL OF THE FBI ABOUT THE USE OF TELEPHONE TAPS AND MICROPHONE SURVEILLANCES."

THE LETTER SAID KENNEDY WAS GIVEN A MEMORANDUM JAN. 10, 1961 "FURNISHING A SUMMARY ON THE USE OF WIRETAPPING BY THE FBI IN SERIOUS NATIONAL SECURITY CASES."

KENNEDY THEN WAS ATTORNEY GENERAL-DESIGNATE.

"THEREAFTER, INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS IN THE SERIOUS NATIONAL SECURITY CASES FOR WIRETAP AUTHORIZATION WERE SENT TO YOU BY THE FBI FOR APPROVAL," THE EVANS LETTER CONTINUED. "THESE WERE THE ONLY WIRE-TAP AUTHORIZATIONS WHICH WERE EVER SUBMITTED TO YOU."

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EVANS WROTE KENNEDY THAT "PRIOR ATTORNEY GENERALS HAD INFORMED THE FBI THAT THE USE OF MICROPHONES AS CONTRASTED TO TELEPHONE TAPS, NEED NOT BE SPECIFICALLY APPROVED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL."

BECAUSE OF THIS, EVANS TOLD KENNEDY, "I DID NOT DISCUSS THE USE OF THESE DEVICES WITH YOU IN NATIONAL SECURITY OR OTHER CASES, NOR DO I KNOW OF ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL THAT WAS SENT TO YOU AT ANY TIME CONCERNING THIS PROCEDURE, OR CONCERNING THE USE, SPECIFIC LOCATION OR OTHER DETAILS AS TO INSTALLATIONS OF ANY SUCH DEVICES IN LAS VEGAS, NEV., OR ANYWHERE ELSE."

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