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Abernathy Tells Of Agnew Scheme

Washington

Ralph Abernathy, head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said yesterday that Vice President Spiro Agnew and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover exchanged memos in 1969 agreeing there was a need to "silence" Abernathy.

Abernathy said at a news conference that he was shown the memos when investigators from the Senate intelligence committee interviewed him last weekend.

A committee spokesman confirmed that Abernathy was interviewed, but said the subject of the interview could not be revealed. A committee source confirmed the nature of the memos, however.

Paraphrasing from memory the content of the Agnew memo to Hoover, Abernathy said it read:

"We've got to stop this Ralph

David Abernathy because I have discovered that he is one of the most dangerous of all the black leaders. He is dangerous because he is so very, very effective with the masses.

"Do you have anything in your files that can embarrass him or anything that can embarrass his family in any way to cause him to shut up his mouth?"

He said the Hoover memo in reply, also paraphrased from memory, read:

"I agree with you, Mr. Vice President. Dr. Abernathy is the most effective with the masses."

Abernathy said he couldn't recall the exact words, but the Hoover memo then said "we must silence him or we must stop him or something of that nature."

United Press