

Saxbe Assails Some FBI Practices Under Hoover

Washington

Attorney General William B. Saxbe said yesterday that the FBI engaged in improper practices as part of a counter-intelligence operation approved by the late J. Edgar Hoover.

The former Ohio senator also said that "it was fun" airing barbs at President Nixon before he joined the Administration, but that now, "regardless of what my personal opinions are, I have to have, and will have, a loyalty to the leader of this country."

"If I felt called upon to directly criticize the President," he said, "I'd feel also called upon to resign."

Saxbe complained of Hoover's one-man control of the FBI and commended the current director, Clarence M. Kelley, for his effort to open the agency to public scrutiny.

The attorney general's remarks came on the NBC radio program "Speaking Freely."

Saxbe said that during Hoover's tenure "various practices were brought up there . . . that were just not right."

Without specifying incidents, Saxbe said the counter-intelligence operation "meant that Hoover was taking active measures to stop the violence on campus and the racist activities, and what he considered Communist activities."

Asked if the operation involved "improper conduct," Saxbe replied "I'm afraid so."

Saxbe said that under Hoover, the FBI developed such independence that "the Presidents were actually patronizing to Mr. Hoover, . . . the attorneys general had little or no influence and sometimes not even contact."

Under Kelley, the attorney general said, "you're going to see an openness, and you're going to see that they do operate with great regard for our Constitution and the rights of individual people."

Saxbe noted that he has assigned a Justice Department committee, which includes Kelley, to determine the extent of Hoover's counter-intelligence operation, and "I expect to take it before Congress and to tell

Congress exactly what happened."

Questioned about his habit of controversial statements, the former senator acknowledged that "I've had to learn to keep my mouth shut on a lot of things."

"You know, as a senator, you can have opinions on everything whether you know anything about them or not," Saxbe said. "Here I had to watch . . . it does cramp my style to some degree. But I think it's good for me."

When an interviewer remarked that as a senator Saxbe had "said some pretty juicy things" about Nixon, the attorney general replied: "Yeah, and it was fun."

Associated Press

Acadian Coast

New Orleans

St. James and Ascension parishes in South Louisiana form the Acadian Coast, named for the historic settlement of that area along the Mississippi River by Acadian exiles from Canada.

United Press