

# Saxbe's Swipe at J. Edgar Hoover

Washington

Attorney General William Saxbe said yesterday that J. Edgar Hoover might have used Henry Kissinger as an unwitting front for Hoover's own wiretaps of White House enemies.

Two senators said Saxbe might be right — a conclusion which, if it were endorsed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, would exonerate Kissinger of charges he was a major instigator of the 1971 wire-tappings.

Saxbe was the first witness in the committee's hearings on whether Kissinger testified accurately at his 1973 confirmation hearings that he did not order wiretaps by the White House "Plumbers" and did not even know the secret investigation unit existed.

Kissinger had demanded the hearings be held to clear his name of suggestions to the contrary, and he threatened to resign otherwise.

Saxbe told reporters he had brought all the Justice Department's files on the wiretapping operation and

the Plumbers investigative unit, most of them "narrative forms" written by the late Hoover when he was FBI director.

Saxbe said he thought Hoover might have used Kissinger's name as the "initiator" of some of the wiretaps of reporters and White House aides without Kissinger knowing about it.

"It would be entirely reasonable for Mr. Kissinger not to know he was being used in this manner," Saxbe said. "Hoover could have been acting on his own initiative."

Senators Clifford P. Case (Rep.-N.J.) and Charles Percy (Rep.-Ill.), both Foreign Relations Committee members, supported Saxbe's theory.

Percy said, "No attorney general or secretary of state ever told Hoover what to do."

Said Case: "The fact that a statement on an FBI record said that so-and-so requested a wiretap did not necessarily prove where that request originated."

*United Press*