More Files To Open on Rosenbergs

Reuter

Attorney General Edward H. Levi has told the Federal Bureau of Investigation to open a larger portion of its files on the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg case to their sons.

The Rosenbergs were convicted, in one of the most sensational trials of the era, of having furnished U.S. atomic secrets to the Russians. They were electrocuted on June 19, 1953, after espionage convictions.

The sons, now grown, have for the past year been waging a campaign to open the government files in the case, contending the records will show their parents were innocent.

In letters to the sons, Robert and Michael Meeropol—the name of the family that adopted them—Levi said he had decided to modify positions taken by FBI Director Clarence Kelley and U.S. Attorney Paul J. Curran of New York rejecting a substantial part of their requests. The FBI file is said to amount to 46,000 pages.

Levi said he has ordered Kelley and Curran to begin an inspection of all of the records in dispute. If refusal to disclose their contents cannot be justified under the Freedom of Information Act, they are to be made available to the Meeropols.

Kelley already had granted the sons' request for records specifically concerning the Rosenbergs, but had turned down their requests for materials on other persons connected with the case.

Levi's aides had advised Kelley that Kelley's grounds for keeping the records sealed would not stand up under the Freedom of Information Act. They also said Curran's reason for denying part of the Meeropols' requests—that he had insufficient staff to screen the material and determine what could be released—was inadequate.

Last month Levi told Alger Hiss, who was convicted of perjury in 1950, he may have access to certain documents that played a role in his conviction. Hiss, now 70, is seeking to prove he did not lie 25 years ago when he denied being a Soviet spy.