

Rosenberg Sons Get Big Legal Costs

Washington

The Justice Department has agreed to pay \$195,802.50 to the sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg to cover legal costs they have incurred to date in their long suit to obtain information about the government's espionage investigation of their parents a quarter of a century ago.

According to Justice Department officials, the payment — largest ever made under the Freedom of Information Act — was agreed to Friday in U.S. District Court here, and signed by U.S. District Court Judge June L. Green.

The payments were authorized under an amendment to the Freedom of Information Act which permits the government to pay the "reasonable" and "legitimate" legal fees of persons who have "substantially prevailed" in their suits against the government.

In short, it permits such payments in cases where the government has required individuals to go to court in order to obtain such information, and where the courts have determined that the individuals had a legitimate right to it.

The two sons, Michael and Robert Meeropol, have been trying since July, 1975, to obtain materials through the Freedom of Information Act that might show that their parents were framed.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (the sons use the name of their adoptive parents) were electrocuted on June 19, 1953, after being convicted of espionage in a case in which they allegedly sought to transmit atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.

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