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**Nader Alleges Mail Was Monitored**

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WASHINGTON, March 27—Ralph Nader, the consumer advocate, accused the United States Postal Service today of monitoring, and possibly opening, dozens of letters addressed to Public Citizen, an organization, headed by Mr. Nader, that engages in litigation with a variety of Federal agencies.

Mr. Nader's evidence for the allegation, which he conceded was "circumstantial," was made public at a news conference.

It included letters addressed to individual employes of Public Citizen at its downtown Washington office but inexplicably delivered to the offices or post office boxes of other Nader entities here, sometimes after a long delay.

Asked about the allegation, David McLean, a Postal Service spokesman, said that the service had informed Mr. Nader's lawyer, Joseph A. Califano Jr., "that it has no record of maintaining any mail covers on mail addressed to those groups or individuals" who were named in Mr. Nader's request for disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Asked about the possibility that a mail cover had been implemented on Mr. Nader's correspondence but not reflected in the Postal Service's records, Mr. McLean said he was not authorized to go beyond the statement.

He added that William Cotter, the chief postal inspector, also would "not say anything further" on the matter.

Alan B. Morrison, a Nader

associate, told reporters today that the irregular deliveries were first noticed last fall. A request to the Postal Service for an explanation, he said, elicited the response that carrier errors were the likely cause.

When the misdirected deliveries continued, he said, and Mr. Nader filed his Freedom of Information Act request with the Postal Service, the irregularities suddenly stopped.

"As far as the opening of mail is concerned," Mr. Morrison added, "we have some sus-

picious." Some letters had arrived, he said, sealed with two different kinds of tape, and others, had been returned undelivered to correspondents with the flap "ripped open."

Mr. Nader said he was appealing the Postal Service's determination that no mail cover ever existed because none was shown in its files. Mr. Califano said that, after the response to that appeal, he expected to bring a lawsuit against the service to learn which Federal agency, if any, might have ordered such a mail cover.