

'Spying' on Socialists

FBI to Yield on Informants

New York

The FBI agreed yesterday to surrender data on three former government informers in the Socialist Workers party after the party filed an affidavit detailing the informers' activities in three cities.

The party had asked for disclosure of FBI files in connection with its three-year-old, \$7-million damage suit against the federal government. The suit claims the FBI harassed the party and used illegal methods for spying and gathering information on members.

The government fought surrender of its files on the three informers on grounds disclosure would be a threat to national security.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney John Siffert told U.S. District Judge Thomas Griesa at a pre-trial hearing yesterday that the FBI's objections were being withdrawn "in the light of developments this morning."

He referred to an affidavit filed by the party that revealed the informers' activities in San Diego, Minneapolis and Washington.

The affidavit said the daughter of John Hollowell told a San Diego underground newspaper in 1973 that her father was a \$200-a-month FBI informer.

"Hollowell was given an opportunity to contest his daughter's charges and chose not to do so. He resigned (from the party)," a party spokesman said.

In a second case, the party said Orrie Norton was a long-time party member who mailed information to the FBI under the code name "Sparrow." According to the affidavit, a letter mailed from Minneapolis was returned to party headquarters and found to be an informer's report to the FBI. The party said Norton confessed his undercover role in 1974 and resigned.

The third case involved Rodney Hertz, who was a member of a party affiliate, the Young Socialist Alliance. A former FBI employee was said to have revealed to party officials Hertz' role as an informer. The affidavit said Hertz first admitted to FBI activities but later, after talking with a lawyer, denied them. He resigned from the Young Socialists in 1968.

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