

# Big CIA Fees for Releasing

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A prominent critic of the Central Intelligence Agency charged yesterday that the CIA is trying to "subvert" the new freedom-of-information law by setting heavy fees for unearthing requested records.

Former White House aide Morton Halperin, who demanded the records under the new law nearly three months ago, said the CIA is now insisting that it will cost "thousands of dollars" simply to find the documents.

Halperin said he was baffled

by the CIA's stance because he assumed that most of the documents had already been found in connection with the disclosures the CIA has already made about its domestic spying activities.

In a letter to Halperin this week, however, the CIA billed him \$964 in "chargeable search costs" and said it would cost \$640 a week for the agency to keep looking from now on.

Now affiliated with the non-profit Center for National Security Studies, Halperin filed his freedom-of-information request in February, asking for 44 categories of records sug-

gested by the public congressional testimony of CIA Director William E. Colby.

In addition, Halperin said Colby and the CIA made other, still-secret disclosures in reports to President Ford and the Rockefeller Commission and in response to requests from the Senate committee on intelligence operations headed by Frank Church (D-Idaho).

"What on earth did they look at [as the basis] for the Colby report [to President Ford]?" Halperin demanded. "Why haven't they found this material? Either they're try-

ing to subvert the Freedom of Information Act with big fees for documents they've already located or they haven't searched their files."

Aside from the discomfiture posed for the CIA by the new legislation, Halperin said he suspected the agency has yet to check all the files that might bear on illegal or improper domestic spying operations.

CIA Director Colby, in disclosing what he described as a few "misses" by the CIA over the past 2½ years, told the House and Senate Appropriations committees that the

## Data Hit

agency had recruited or inserted "about a dozen individuals into American dissident circles..." Halperin asked for "all files" pertaining to the activities of these 12 individuals.

He said he has yet to get more than a few scattered CIA directives and memos in response to his requests, along with a 39-page report compiled in 1968 about worldwide student protests entitled "Restless Youth."

Halperin had asked for a waiver of all search fees under a provision of the Freedom of Information Act allowing this when release of the information would benefit the general public. The CIA denied the request.

Halperin said he is appealing that decision and will seek a review of the CIA's estimated fees for finding the documents.

Meanwhile, Halperin said he has asked the CIA to stop all document searches and to concentrate on reviewing those already found. In a reply to the agency dated yesterday, he emphasized that the Senate-House conference report on the new Freedom of Information Act stated that "fees should not be used for the purpose of discouraging requests for information or as obstacles to disclosure of requested information."