

## 400 F.B.I. Agents To Handle Demands For File Information

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WASHINGTON, March 17—The Federal Bureau of Investigation, besieged by thousands of citizens who want to know what the bureau has in its files about them, will summon 400 agents here this summer in an effort to eliminate a backlog of Freedom of Information requests.

In a statement today that referred to "an avalanche" of paper work, "massive waves" of requests and a "multimillion dollar effort" to answer the queries, F.B.I. Director Clarence M. Kelley said that two groups of 200 agents each would be assembled here from across the nation to deal with the matter.

Mr. Kelley said that the project would cost about \$6.5 million and would last six months.

In his own statement, Mr. Kelley dropped several hints that the project might hinder the bureau's crime-fighting functions. "Aside from the cost factor, we cannot ignore the fact that by diverting these field agents from their normal duties, we will be losing about 85 man-years in investigative effort," he said.

Several staff members of Congressional oversight committees were quick to challenge this, however, saying privately they had understood that agents who had been involved in domestic security work before it was severely curtailed by former Attorney General Edward H. Levi, would be able to handle the backlog of information requests.