

In Washington . . .

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CIA on campus



WASHINGTON (NEA) — The presidents of approximately 50 colleges and universities, including many of the nation's largest and most prestigious institutions of higher learning, are about to be confronted by an especially sensitive political problem.

Those academic leaders will soon be asked by two national organizations to determine whether faculty members, graduate students or administrative officials on their campuses are serving as clandestine recruiters and "talent scouts" for the Central Intelligence Agency.

The schools will be asked to draft new institutional regulations prohibiting not only that practice but also the covert use of academics to aid the CIA in intelligence operations and propaganda activities.

The notion that the CIA still maintains a network of secret operatives on college campuses throughout the country ought to provoke dismay — if not outrage — on the part of those who thought such intrusions were terminated long ago.

But only last year, after a lengthy study of CIA domestic activities, a Senate committee chaired by Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, reached this disconcerting conclusion:

"The CIA is now using several hundred American academics who, in addition to providing leads and, on occasion, making introductions for intelligence purposes, occasionally write books and other material to be used for propaganda purposes abroad."

The committee said it was "disturbed" to find those practices "in over 100 American colleges, universities and related institutes" but recommended no remedial federal legislation because "it is the responsibility of . . . the American academic community to set the professional and ethical standards of its members."

The committee's public report was tightly edited to meet CIA security restrictions. But at Harvard University, one of the few schools to accept the challenge to clean house, a study committee faced no such constraints — and its report included a chilling description

of CIA-inspired invasions of privacy on campuses.

Selected faculty, students and staff members "have an ongoing confidential relationship with the CIA as recruiters," the Harvard committee found. Their job is to covertly identify to the CIA other members of the academic community "who may be likely candidates for an employment or other relationship with the CIA."

That action triggers "a secret background investigation" in which the candidate's past activities and present proclivities are covertly probed without his or her knowledge.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Committee to Stop Government Spying, a Washington organization headed by Morton Halperin, are quietly organizing a campaign to call on college and university presidents to follow Harvard's lead.

According to Halperin, the academic institutions initially targeted are those "where we have reason to believe that there may be some kind of campus recruiter." The still-confidential list includes these schools:

Cornell, Boston, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Fairleigh Dickinson, American, Georgetown, George Washington, Howard, Johns Hopkins, Duke, Atlanta, Florida State, Tulane, Arizona State, Utah State, Stanford, Ohio State, Michigan State, Indiana State, Notre Dame, Southern Illinois, Northwestern and Washington Universities.

The Universities of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Florida, Miami, Texas, Colorado, Arizona, California-San Diego, California-Berkeley, Washington, Michigan, Chicago, Wisconsin and Minnesota; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Brooklyn, Amherst, Smith and Williams Colleges.

Nobody wants to deprive the CIA of access to the talent available in the academic world. But there is no reason why the agency cannot, for instance, recruit graduating seniors in the same manner used by other government agencies and hundreds of corporations — by openly interviewing those who may be interested in employment.

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