

Get the Truth!

Inquirer - 6/9/71

'Cover Stories' Are Still in Use

From the UPI Reporter

Don Michel, a broadcast journalist who operates Radio Station WRAJ in Anna, Ill., was left more angry than surprised by the recent disclosure that the CIA provided most of the financing for Radio Liberty and its special broadcasts to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Michel got to wondering back in 1964 whether Radio Liberty was sustained by more than individual or corporate contributions. His station had been using a series called "Communism on the Spot" produced by the Radio Liberty Committee. Mr. Michel wrote the committee on Aug. 24, 1964, to report on his usage and to ask how Radio Liberty was financed.

The answer came back on Sept. 2 on a committee letterhead that listed Herbert Hoover, Harry S Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower as honorary chairmen.

"Radio Liberty's funds," the letter said, "come largely from foundations and corporations, though we also receive contributions from the general public." Then, after naming the officers and calling attention to the distinguished men serving as trustees and chairmen, the letter added:

"We are an autonomous station and operate entirely on our own and have no connection with any agency, though every now and then someone tries to tie us up with the government or a governmental agency."

Mr. Michel regarded the response as less than categorical; he thought that "contributions from the general public" might be a euphemism for tax revenues. So on Oct. 12 he pursued the matter in another letter that asked: "Does Radio Liberty receive any funds, directly or indirectly, from the U. S. Government or any of its agencies? The question at first glance may seem to have been an-

swered by your letter but I would appreciate a direct reply as stated."

The response, dated Oct. 15, 1964, said: "Replying to the query contained in your letter of October 12, the answer is 'no.'"

In a recent letter, Mr. Michel recalls other instances—the U-2 episode, the Bay of Pigs and some incidents in the Indochina war—where the truth has been denied on grounds that a half-truth or even a falsehood best serves the national interest. Noting that this has happened, during both Democratic and Republican administrations, Mr. Michel says:

"At any rate I imagine the policy of allowing falsehoods has not done much to sustain respect for authority in our country, and it reminds me that there is absolutely no substitute for the truth. . . . I believe one of our foremost concerns in news should be to continually seek to expose those falsehoods for what they are, regardless of from whom they come."