

# U.S. Officials Confirm CIA Aid to Students

## NSA Officers Describe Aid Given by CIA

By Andrew J. Glass and Gerald Grant

Washington Post Staff Writers

Officers of the National Student Association said yesterday that the Central Intelligence Agency recruited agents from the student organization's top echelons over a period of 14 years.

These officers, who declined to be quoted by name, also revealed that the CIA placed other student leaders from their group in posts with private foundations that serve as conduits for CIA-sponsored activities.

None of the NSA sources would divulge the names of the past presidents and other high-ranking officers of the organization who had joined the CIA's ranks after one or two years' service with NSA—the largest student group in the country.

"Every year," one NSA source said, "the CIA picked out a man or two that it could trust and told them about the undercover funding" of the student organization. Some of these young men would later join the CIA, often acting as liaison agents to the student group.

In some years, the CIA contribution to NSA has run close to \$400,000 annually — about half the student organization's budget in those years.

### Few Knew of Role

The CIA's hand-picked student leaders, all in their early 20s at the time of their recruitment, were sworn to secrecy under the CIA's charter. Since the early 1950s, when the link with the CIA was

formed, fewer than 100 student leaders knew of the intelligence agency's role in a group whose ranks run in the many thousands.

Yesterday, the NSA convened an emergency meeting of its ten-member National Supervisory Board in an effort to deal with the crisis. An NSA spokesman said the group would issue no further statements until its full governing body confers here today.

In the wake of the controversy, serious consideration was being given to folding the 20-year-old NSA and to restructuring the student group under a new name and a new charter.

Some NSA officials also favored speedily removing the group from its headquarters at 2115 S st. nw., which NSA uses under a 15-year rent-free agreement through funds ultimately provided by the CIA through Boston's Independence Foundation.

### President Disappears

The scene at NSA's national headquarters yesterday was one of total dismay that verged at times on panic. W. Eugene Groves, 23, NSA's current president, read a statement several times for the television cameras and then disappeared.

"Where's Gene?" an attractive NSA staff member attired in a miniskirt inquired at one point. "He's probably throwing

See NSA, A4, Col. 1

up in the men's room," a youth told her.

Robert Amory Jr., who was deputy director of the CIA at the height of the agency's relationship with the student organization, acknowledged in a telephone interview that "there was support to organizations like this. It would have been nonsense for there not to be. If we hadn't done this, we could have just been run over by the Commie front organizations" during the cold war years.

Amory said the CIA had given American students "the wherewithal" to attend international student conferences such as the Helsinki World Youth Festival in 1962 and the Vienna Youth Festival in 1959. The student organization was not officially represented at either meeting. Amory stressed that he was not among the officials primarily responsible for liaison with NSA.

Paul Potter, a vice president of NSA for national affairs in 1961, said in a telephone interview from Boston that NSA officers "collaborated more and more with the State Department and the CIA and became known as people who were willing to work in some sense as covers for CIA."

Potter, who is also a former president of the left-leaning Students for a Democratic Society said NSA's international arm was a key front in student cold war politics.

He noted that the NSA became the principal force behind the continuing Coordinating Secretariat of the International Student Conference, headquartered in Leyden, the Netherlands. The Leyden group served as the Western counterpart to the Communist-dominated International Union of Students in Prague.

Edward Garvey, a former president of NSA, went to work for the Pentagon and then resigned to serve as the top officer of Leyden group, Potter said. Garvey, currently a student at the Wisconsin

Law School, could not immediately be reached for comment.

NSA's current leadership, while stressing that the ties with the CIA have been "terminated," acknowledged that the organization's immediate past president, Philip Sherburne, had procured their present headquarters and furniture in 1965 through the CIA.

"There are a lot of people who say let's haul the filing cabinets out on the street and get out of here," Robert Kunter, NSA's, chief of student exchanges, said. "We still may."

In Boston, Paul Helmuth, the trustee for the Independence Foundation, which holds the mortgage on the four-story building, was not available for comment.

"Nobody's getting anything," his secretary at the Boston law firm of Hale & Dorr, said.

Sherburne, in an interview with The Washington Post, noted that the NSA's elected supervisory board under his leadership knew nothing of the CIA's connection with the student group. Other officials said this was also true of the present board.

The former Student Association president denied that the CIA had obtained draft deferments for officers of the organization. Sherburne was expecting such charges in the forthcoming 10,000-word Ramparts article.

He pointed out that some half-dozen of the organization's full-time staff members held 1A classifications and "were in jeopardy of being drafted." In January, 1966, Sherburne recalled, he went before the Presidential Appeals Board of the Selective Service System to successfully plead that the young men be granted deferments. (Sherburne had already won his own exemption, he said.)

Sherburne said he based his appeal upon the fact that NSA's male staff and officers were all of draft age and that

the group "would be destroyed" unless exemptions were granted.

One source within NSA expressed grave concern that the exposure of his group's long-standing ties to the CIA would lead to a wave of political arrests—and possibly executions — abroad. "People are going to be killed as a result of this," the source said.

He reasoned that foreign students who had been granted NSA-financed scholarships to study in the United States would now be generally accused of being espionage agents for the CIA.

NSA Sources asserted that in 1957 and 198, the CIA had financed the education of hundreds of Algerian students at American schools.

At the time, an ultimately successful guerilla effort to drive the French out of Algeria was under way. Paris responded by expelling Algerian students from French schools. The Algerian student program is now being run openly, through NSA, by the State Department.

## Funds Supplied For 14 Years, State Dept. Says

11/19/67  
By J. Y. Smith  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Administration admitted yesterday that for 14 years the Central Intelligence Agency gave secret financial support to the National Student Association.

A brief statement issued by the State Department merely confirmed that the covert aid had been given, that for two years NSA officials had been trying to terminate it, and that longer ago than that Government support of the Association's international activities had been "tapering off sharply."

Asked if the support was now ended, U.S. officials referred newsmen to an NSA statement that it would not receive any funds from the CIA in 1967.

Initial Congressional reaction to the disclosure was, for widely differing reasons, critical of the CIA-NSA relationship.

### Investigation Urged

In a letter to President Johnson eight Democratic Congressmen called for an "immediate investigation at the highest level," and charged that the CIA "has compromised and corrupted the largest student organization in the largest democracy in the world."

U.S. officials went to elaborate length to explain the rationale behind CIA help for NSA, which was estimated in various quarters to total up to \$400,000 since 1952, when the project began at the end of the Truman Administration.

What they said boiled down to this: during the Cold War tensions of the early 1950s, the Communists were subsidizing student delegates to international youth forums.

U.S. students lacked funds from private sources to enable them to counter this propaganda activity. So the CIA stepped in with money.

Administration officials readily conceded that if the financial support had been public, the credibility of NSA stu-

dents would have been destroyed on the ground that they were agents of the Government. For this reason, officials said, the support had to be secret.

In fact, the officials maintained, NSA delegates have been wholly free of any Government influence. They said this was shown by the fact that only two NSA officers a year knew of the CIA support and that the organization's views have frequently differed sharply with those of the Government.

### Paid Through Fronts

The money was paid to the NSA through five philanthropic organizations which were acting as fronts for the CIA. The agency is barred by law from operating within the United States, although it has in the past. The most notable example of this was

See CIA, A4, Col. 5

Official comments on  
CIA support of National  
Student Association.

Page A4.

the staging of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

In making its brief formal announcement, the State Department gave the clear impression that it was merely acting as a spokesman in the effort to get the CIA off the hook. Administration sources said the statement had been drafted with the help of CIA officials.

Officials disclaimed any knowledge of whether the CIA had provided secret funds for organizations besides the NSA.

Asked if the termination of the program meant that the threat of Communist subversion around the world had diminished, they said that the world has changed since the early 1950s and that the threat was possibly less acute than formerly. Moreover, they said, the NSA might now have private sources of income to finance its activities.

Officials said that Congress had been informed of the CIA-NSA hookup and that "all other segments of Government" had also been informed, presumably including the White House.

Rep. George H. Mahon (D-Tex.), the chairman of the

House Appropriations Committee, declined to comment on the disclosure. As Chairman of the Committee, Mahon is one of the few Congressional leaders who has any detailed knowledge of CIA activities. It is to him and a few of his colleagues, meeting in closed sessions, that the Agency justifies its budget requests.

"I have got to be a good security risk," Mahon said.

Rep. William H. Bates (R-Mass.), another CIA watchdog in the House, said he had not read of the State Department statement and that he was about to take his wife out on the town. "It's Halloween. I mean Valentine's Day," he said.

The eight House Democrats who protested the CIA's action in a letter to President Johnson were George E. Brown Jr., Phillip Burton and Don Edwards of California; John Conyers Jr. of Michigan; John G. Dow, Benjamin S. Rosenthal and William F. Ryan of New York; and Robert W. Kastenmeier of Wisconsin.

Declaring that they were "appalled" to learn of the CIA subsidy to NSA, they said that it "represents an unconscion-

able extension of power by an agency of Government over institutions outside its jurisdiction. . . . It raises again basic questions concerning the adequacy of oversight of the CIA.

"This disclosure leads us and many others here and abroad to believe that the CIA can be as much a threat to American as to foreign democratic institutions. . . .

"In allowing this to happen,

he American Government owes an apology to the American people, and, more important, to an American generation."

Other Congressional leaders also expressed surprise at being told of the CIA-NSA relationship, but they declined to comment. They included Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana and Sen. George Aiken (R-Vt.). They were among 25 Congressmen who were in Mexico City to attend the annual U.S.-Mexican Interparliamentary Conference.

Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was also in Mexico but could not be reached. He has expressed concern in the past that the CIA was attempting to use student groups.

## Statement on CIA Aid to NSA

*Following is yesterday's State Department statement on CIA support of the National Student Association:*

We have confirmed with the Central Intelligence Agency that, as stated by the National Student Association yesterday, its leadership has been working over the past two years to terminate the financial relationship concerning support of NSA's international activities which began in the early '50s. Even prior to that time (ed. note: two years ago), the degree of governmental support for those activities had begun tapering off sharply.

*U.S. officials added these comments:*

1. There was in the cold war tension of the early '50s a spread of Communist subversive activity in international youth organizations and student groups, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

2. American students, notably the National Student Association, felt the need to counteract this subversive and propaganda activity and to express effectively their own free ideas abroad. The Communist students were well financed from official sources. The American students, however, were deeply handicapped by lack of funds for overseas work.

3. Private contributions were insufficient, here the agreement between NSA and the United States Government that the Government would help support the NSA effort.

4. Governmental support for a institution such as NSA obviously raises difficult and delicate problems. No matter how complete the

freedom of decision and action retained by the students, such support is bound to raise the legitimate question of whether the purse does not influence the policy. We understand and appreciate this, but at an earlier time the alternatives were limited.

5. Overt governmental support for these NSA activities abroad would have destroyed their utility, because NSA would hence have been subjected to attacks as a instrument of government. Its credibility as a free spokesman, which in fact it consistently has been, would have been impugned at the outset. Indeed, such attack would have come precisely from those students who in fact were paid agents of Communist governments.

6. Therefore, if support were to be given at all, covert support was the only feasible alternative. The very fact that the support was covert and thus known

only to two NSA officers a year guaranteed the integrity of the views expressed by the many other NSA members who participated in international sessions. But because it was covert, it also exposed the NSA and the Government to all of the associations which go inevitably with that word.

Next, it would be grossly unfair now to accuse the students of having been propagandists or agents, or to accuse the Government of attempting to influence what were independent, free decisions and views — and the NSA's decisions, policies and actions have been free — as surely is evidenced by the fact that the organization has frequently and sharply differed with the Government. The purpose of the Government support was to provide free students with the means to do the things they would have done unaided had they had the funds.