

AGENCY BACKGROUND SHOWN

CIA Grew from Wartime Civil, Military Intelligence

(Editor's Note—The Central Intelligence Agency's funding of the National Student Association and other private groups has raised controversy over the government's spy machinery. This story looks at the background of the CIA.)

By LEWIS GULICK

WASHINGTON (AP)—In the furor over Central Intelligence Agency handouts to students, no one is questioning the CIA's legal authority to spend large amounts of the taxpayers' money in secret.

The 1949 Central Intelligence Agency act says the CIA director may spend money "without regard to the provisions of law and regulations relating to the expenditure of government funds." He can do this on a voucher certified by him alone.

NOR DOES CIA have to report to Congress or to any federal department. It is an independent agency responsible to the President. It does give some information about its activities to a designated group of Congress members.

The secrecy laid down by law and practiced by the CIA is in the tradition of the spy business: for espionage to succeed, it must be kept quiet.

Thus the spreading disclosures about CIA payments are not to CIA's liking. And the publicity in each case means that even without the presidentially ordered investigation, CIA would probably want to end that operation.

IN HISTORICAL perspective, CIA is the postwar embodiment of government intelligence activities that date back to the earliest days of the Republic.

The main U.S. intelligence work was, until World War II, carried on by the armed services and by the State Department. The first four CIA chiefs after the war were admirals or generals.

But during the war, intelligence mushroomed into a huge and complicated business. New cloak-and-dagger outfits sprang up, most notably the Office of

Strategic Services.

WITH THE end of the hot war and the beginning of the cold, the intelligence functions outside of those that were strictly military were lumped in 1947 into a new agency, the CIA.

Today CIA is one of the federal government's biggest operations. Because of the secrecy, few people know just how large it is. Its subsidies for overseas student activities are only a fraction of the total.

By general acknowledgment CIA's annual budget runs into hundreds of millions of dollars, most of it hidden in the multi-billion-dollar appropriations Congress votes for defense.

IT PROBABLY employs several thousand persons, though here again the numbers are secret. The CIA law provides for secrecy on "titles, salaries, or numbers of personnel employed by the agency."

CIA's headquarters in nearby Langley, Va., is one of the largest modern government buildings. It is identified from the adjacent highway only by a sign saying "BPR"—for "Bureau of Public Roads."

Proportionately, only a small percentage of CIA men are overseas in spy roles—although there is hardly a country around the world without some sort of CIA presence.

MANY personnel are at work on such projects as research on

foreign economic and scientific developments, monitoring and analyzing foreign propaganda broadcasts, compiling data on foreign political personalities and organizations.

For instance, CIA runs what is believed to be the world's single most comprehensive system of information storage and retrieval. It has translation computers that can convert Russian texts into English at 30,000 words an hour. Its global radio listening service relays important foreign broadcasts to Washington almost instantaneously.

Against this broad range of intelligence gathering, the recently-disclosed CIA subsidies to student and other private groups have been a relatively small operation undertaken in the first instance at White House orders—not on CIA initiative.

THERE IS some indication that former President Truman opposed CIA getting into actions to achieve political goals, as distinguished from merely collecting intelligence.

Writing in 1963, the year after the CIA-linked Bay of Pigs fiasco, Truman, who was president when the CIA was created said:

"I never had any thought that when I set up the CIA that it would be injected into peacetime cloak-and-dagger operations. Some of the complications and embarrassment that I think we have experienced are in part attributable to the fact that this quiet intelligence arm of the President has been so removed from its intended role that it is being interpreted as a symbol of sinister and mysterious foreign intrigue — and a subject for cold war enemy propaganda.

"I, THEREFORE, would like to see the CIA be restored to its original assignment as the intelligence arm of the President, and whatever else it can properly perform in that special field — and that its operational duties be terminated or properly used elsewhere."

The White House now says, however, that CIA support of American private organizations was started by the Truman administration under policies set by the National Security Council in 1952 and continued thereafter. The National Security Council, composed of the top federal government officials

with foreign affairs-defense responsibilities, is the President's senior advisory body in this field.

Subsidies to the National Student Association began at a time when government officials and some internationally minded students were concerned about the global Communist campaign to take over nongovernment international groups and use them for the Kremlin's ends.

SOME American students willing to travel to internation-

al meetings to contest the well financed Red delegations lacked funds. Government officials decided the money for the overseas U.S. student activities should be paid secretly, so as to avoid opening the Americans to propaganda charges of being government agents. Hence the job went to CIA.

This is the official version. Another reason for CIA involvement, according to some who recall the circumstances 15 years ago, was the uproar over the communism-in-government charges by Sen. Joseph McCarthy, R-Wis.

American collegians then as now tended to criticize U.S. foreign policy, and some were far left by McCarthy's standards. Open government subsidies of students who strayed from official policy could have come under McCarthy's attack. CIA's secret payments were hidden from him.

THE NATIONAL Student Association and some other groups getting CIA aid have, in fact, taken some positions critical of U.S. policy. Defenders of the subsidies say, however, that the students did a highly effective job overseas when they found the anti-yankee drive led not by "liberals," but by hard-core Reds.

A variety of undercover methods of payments have been developed by CIA. Foundations, trusts and special funds have been pipelines for CIA payments to nongovernment organizations.

One version works this way: Foundation X is set up under control of a person working for

or trusted by CIA. CIA becomes an anonymous donor to Foundation X, which in turn gives directly to Private Organization Y or gives indirectly through some other group which makes donations.

THIS WAY the source of the funds is concealed and the number of persons knowing about it can be kept to a minimum. In some cases even the officers of the private organizations were unaware, they said, that money their organizations received really came from CIA. Rank-and-file members of the organizations generally knew nothing about it.

Calls for closer supervision of CIA have erupted again in the wake of the latest disclosures, but it remains to be seen whether they will have much effect.

Last July the Senate — after a rare secret debate — voted 61 to 28 against a move to widen the select panel of seven Armed Services and Appropriations Committee members which had been privy to CIA matters. However, the chairman of the group, Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., broadened the membership last month to include three Foreign Relations Committee members.

WITHIN the executive branch, CIA is supposed to be supervised by the National Security Council and by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Its budget comes in for a budget bureau review as do those of other agencies.

Presiding over the far-flung intelligence operation is a 53-year-old former newspaperman, Richard M. Helms, a Navy lieutenant in World War II who rose through the ranks in agencies which developed into the CIA.

He was deputy director of CIA when Johnson promoted him to the directorship last June. The job pays \$35,000 a year.