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March 18, 1967

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH OFFICIAL WHO QUIT

Larry Rubin: Full NSA-CIA story

By Jack A. Smith

HOW DOES IT FEEL to be informed that the outfit you're working for is subsidized by the Central Intelligence Agency? "I think I was slightly sick and more than slightly angry," said Larry Rubin, the educational affairs director of the National Student Association who resigned March 8 because he did not believe the liberal student organization had made a "clean break" with the CIA.

Rubin, a 24-year-old Antioch College senior and former SNCC worker, appears to be the first ranking NSA staff member to quit in protest following disclosure of the CIA-student relationship.

In an interview with the GUARDIAN the day before he handed in his resignation to Eugene Groves, NSA president, and Edward Schwartz, national affairs vice president, Rubin declared that he did not believe NSA was capable of making reforms "to assure that NSA in the future would be nobody's front group—except the students who belong to it."

"The NSA-CIA relationship could exist only because of the tightly controlled hierarchial nature of the association, where only a few people determine programs," he said in his resignation. "What is needed is basic structural reform allowing the majority of students to share in the real decision-making power."

AT ISSUE is whether—at this time of ferment on the American campus—NSA will be able to transform itself from an elitist-controlled association of student governments, heavily dependent on business and government funding, into a representative vehicle of student expression. Rubin, among others, thinks not, regardless of whether the CIA connection is severed completely.

"The philosophy behind NSA," Rubin said, "is close communication and cooperation with the government and business. This is NSA's conception of how to be influential." Money from government and private foundations funded by business interests constitutes about 90% of NSA's budget, he pointed out. In this situation, Rubin said, it is impossible for the organization to devise and

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still untold



Yardley in the Sun, Baltimore
The Spy Who Came in From the Cold

effectively carry out programs relating to such student demands as education reform and student power.

Rubin's departure from NSA was based on his belief that NSA "does not want to make a clean and open break with the CIA." He did not imply that the student association leaders still maintain a covert relationship with the spy agency, or that CIA would consider a continued relation with NSA, since the student group is obviously no longer a credible "cover" for Cold-War intrigue. Rubin indicated, however, that he thought the CIA and NSA had agreed between them to reveal only part of the details of their connection—when forced to do so by an im-

pending exposé by Ramparts magazine—and that as long as the full story is withheld NSA is compromised.

It may be recalled that on Feb. 19 a spokesman for the CIA announced that NSA officers would not be charged with violating national security regulations for having acknowledged a relationship with the agency. However, the CIA continued, "we certainly don't mean that the decision not to prosecute gives these people carte blanche to discuss anything further they may know that is of a confidential nature. There is some information we think they should plainly not discuss."

RUBIN, WHO was named educational affairs director last November, is convinced there was a deal between NSA and CIA to withhold the information. This agreement, he said, was reached during a series of meetings between NSA officials and CIA and State Department employes during the weeks leading up to the public disclosure of the relationship in an advertisement Feb. 14. He maintained that NSA's first public statement, made in response to the Ramparts advertisement, was written in consultation with Robert Kiley, director of the CIA's Covert Action Division No. 5.

The statement contained this paragraph: "Individual employes or officers of the association did at no time, and we state this emphatically, serve any 'intelligence' function. No information of any sensitive nature was ever made available to any government agency." This denial was a lie, as NSA was forced to admit several days later due to pressure from the NSA staff, which had been lied to by the officers several times before, and NSA's National Supervisory Board.

The first intimation of a NSA-CIA relationship was made to the staff during an emergency meeting Jan. 30 at NSA headquarters in Washington. Groves and Schwartz disclosed that Ramparts was going to publish an article "alleging that NSA was a CIA front." Asked by a staff worker whether the story was true, Groves replied (according to Rubin, who was at the meeting): "We [the officers] are not sure. We are checking it out." It later was apparent, Rubin said, that not only had the officers known it was true, but that Groves and Schwartz knew of the relationship when they ran for office in NSA at last August's convention. Also, he said, Groves, Schwartz and other past and present NSA officers met with the CIA and State Department about the matter prior to the Jan. 30 meeting.

At another staff meeting a week later, Schwartz was forced to "come out with some of the truth," Rubin said, after more details of the Ramparts article became known to the staff.

AFTER THE FIRST LIE was exposed Feb. 7, the officers agreed to hold meetings with the staff every day. During these meetings, Rubin said, the officers told the staff that the final statement to the press would be put out as a result of discussions between the staff and of-



Herblock in the Post, Washington, D.C.
'After looking into this matter carefully...'

ficers. This, Rubin said during the interview, was not the case. "The Feb. 14 statement," he said, "resulted from a process of collusion between the officers of the NSA and certain past officers and an agent from the CIA." It happened this way, Rubin charged:

"After a staff meeting Feb. 13, Groves got a call from the New York Times saying that Ramparts was going to place an ad saying they were going to expose the NSA-CIA relationship. Gene rushed out of the building, telling people he was going to lunch, and would try to figure out what he was going to write in a statement to the Times. He then called back the office and said he couldn't tell anybody where he was but if there was an emergency to call a certain number. Well, one of the staff members checked on the number and it turned out to be the home of Bob Kiley, a CIA agent. . .

"After the conference with Kiley, Gene and Rick [Richard] Stearns, international affairs vice president [Schwartz was out of town], phoned in the state-

ment to the New York Times and Washington Post. I'm not saying that Kiley and Gene actually sat down and figured out the exact wording. It might have been that Gene and Rick brought the final copy to Kiley and Kiley approved it. But through some kind of process there was an agreement between Kiley and the NSA about what kind of statement would be issued."

Contacted in Washington March 10, Stearns said of the visit to agent Kiley: "We were merely informing them of the contents of a statement which was already written." Stearns said, however, that "prior meetings with them may have influenced" the writing of the statement.

IN ADDITION to denying any role in gathering intelligence, the statement virtually accused Ramparts of blackmail; acknowledged that "it is true that a relationship between NSA and the CIA has existed for a considerable period of time," but stated that NSA officers "over the past two years" has sought to "terminate this relationship," and flaunted the organization's liberal credentials.

When the initial statement was published Feb. 13, Rubin said, "mostly everybody on the staff was angry because it slandered Ramparts, justified the CIA-NSA connection and lied when it said NSA was not used for spying purposes." Groves agreed to a new press release, Rubin said, "but insisted it had to contain a statement implying good will on the CIA's part originally and a statement that NSA had ended all subsidy in 1967. When I pointed out that this was a lie, Groves said that although the CIA had given us a grant for 1967, and was still paying the [\$18,000-a-year] rent on the NSA building, this was not a subsidy in a technical sense."

The second statement issued the next day did not mention intelligence gathering at all, was not critical of the CIA, and said "all subsidy was ended in 1967," ignoring the rent, a grant given by the CIA to an NSA staff member for a journey to South Vietnam in January and a \$50,000 grant Groves negotiated from the CIA in late December for 1967.

Explaining the fact that NSA sought and received CIA money this year, despite seeking "for two years" to terminate contact with the agency, Stearns told the **GUARDIAN**: "Under the circumstances you must understand that NSA needed some transition period until it could become financially independent." It is said NSA returned about half the grant, but the CIA is still paying the rent.

AFTER CONFERRING with the CIA, State Department officers and staff members, NSA officials finally called in the National Supervisory Board, Feb. 15, which began a secret three-day investigation of the affair. One of the first questions raised at the meeting was

whether the officers should be criticized in a public statement for holding meetings with the CIA to discuss a common response to Ramparts. The board voted 7-3 against condemning the officers and, in a final statement issued Feb. 17, pledged "absolute confidence in the present officers."

The new statement revealed many but not all of the facts. Omitted was any mention of the meetings and the nature of any agreement that may have been reached as to what would be kept secret.

On Feb. 27, Rubin said, he demanded that Schwartz tell him about what happened in the series of meetings. After a discussion, Rubin said, "I told him that I felt strongly that these meetings should be revealed in order to dissociate NSA with its past covert activities. Schwartz screamed, 'You're a moral puritan, which makes you a moral pervert.' He accused me of wanting people to lose their draft deferments and creating a situation where we'd be sentencing NSA staff to die in Vietnam. 'If keeping the CIA meetings secret means I'll save one person's draft deferment, I'll keep the meetings secret.'"

Rubin thinks one aspect of the agreement was that in return for secrecy about "some information we think they should plainly not discuss" (said the CIA spokesman), the government may have offered to continue granting NSA officers and staff members draft deferments. Since—according to Rubin—some staff members have recently been reclassified 1A, one of the terms may have been that NSA should not strongly condemn the agency, which the student group was forced to do in the days following the disclosure, despite evident reluctance.

RUBIN DID NOT claim any knowledge of the agreement between NSA and CIA, but said "I think the CIA would like NSA to keep quiet about the way the CIA was in actual control of the organization and about the specific programs the CIA ran, including the names of people involved." Rubin said in this regard that it was entirely possible that some persons who worked with the CIA are still on the NSA staff.

In addition to possibly offering draft deferments, Rubin believes that the government will seek to provide the liberal student group with alternative sources of revenue to compensate for the withdrawal of covert funds, either through an open government subsidy or by getting business corporations to contribute.

In his resignation Rubin wrote: "You have continuously told me that if the association was completely open about its dealings with the CIA, it would lose government funds and favors, and be destroyed. You have also said that people who have worked with the association in the past would suffer reprisals. However, I still believe that the only way out is finally to give a full and open disclosure of the . . . relationship."

Rubin told the **GUARDIAN** he be-

believes that the present administration made "sincere efforts to reduce" dependency on the CIA, but that it moved much too slowly, especially in accepting a grant for this year. "What I'm calling for," he continued, "is not only a clean and open break with the CIA—which, in my opinion, cannot be accomplished until the true nature of the talks between the CIA and NSA is revealed—but a break also with dependence on the government and rich corporations for funds.

"As long as most of NSA's funding is from these sources—even without a CIA subsidy—the organization will continue to devote the bulk of its attention to government- and business-approved 'research' programs and seminars, with occasional liberal political pronouncements that are not followed up by action. Liberal students need a movement they can participate in, not just read about, a movement devoted to issues on the campus and world issues that relate to them."