

Ex-Army Agent Tells of Spying On Student Political Meetings

By John S. Lang
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS, Jan. 22—Former Army intelligence agents say they spied on student political meetings addressed by such liberals as Sen. Walter Mondale and ex-ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith.

The recently discharged agents say they took note of what the speakers said and described crowd reaction in reports to Army Intelligence Command headquarters at Ft. Holabird, Md.

All six former agents interviewed by the Associated Press said they did not consider the surveillance of civilian meetings as assignments to spy personally on Mondale and Galbraith.

Earlier disclosures by agents in other parts of the country have fueled a growing controversy over military surveillance of civilian activity. Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.), who is heading a congressional probe, said last month agents had spied on such Illinois politicians as Sen. Adlai Stevenson III.

According to the former agents—all enlisted men—interviewed in Minnesota, a half dozen Army men were in the audience when Mondale (D-Minn.) spoke to a rally of Macalaster College students in October, 1969.

And last spring, they said,



GEORGE LEWIS

... tells of army spying

two disguised Army agents mingled with students, taking pictures of Galbraith and the crowd when the noted economist appeared on the University of Minnesota campus.

The six former agents said 95 per cent of their work with the 113th Military Intelligence regional headquarters involved routine security checks on military personnel and defense contractors.

However, the agents said their superiors were intensely interested in civilian protest activities.

The 113th, they said, built card files on between 5,000 and 8,000 individuals and

groups in the Minneapolis region. They also gained ready access to the University of Minnesota admissions office to check student character references and financial records without first obtaining university authorization.

Former agent George Lewis, 24, said he protested when his commanding officer ordered him to infiltrate the moratorium day rally addressed by Mondale.

"I said something about it's only a speech by a senator on Vietnam, a peaceful meeting, and he said, 'You're ordered to go.'"

Lewis said he went to the meeting but slipped away after noticing five other Army agents mingling in the crowd, including Lt. Col. Donald E. Mattson, the region commander.

The former agents say direct surveillance of civilian activities has been sharply curtailed during the past year. But several report the Minneapolis office of the 113th has not destroyed some files on groups and individuals despite orders to do so.

One agent said he did destroy between 5,000 and 8,000 index cards on personalities and groups.

"Three waste baskets full were burned," he said. "But this was not because of disclosures on snooping. We needed more storage space for other files."