

Post 5/14/66

# The 'Camelot' Capers

## Independent Studies Abroad That Put U.S. On Spot Face Scrutiny at Hearings

By Anthony Cowdy  
The London Sunday Times

Congress will soon open hearings into the sensitive subject of Government-commissioned social research by universities and other independent groups in foreign countries.

Aware of the impending hearings and of recent criticism by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.) and other Senators, the State Department has produced the first report on its screening of research projects, which was undertaken to avoid the embarrassing situations that have precipitated criticism.

Since screening started six months ago, the Department claims to have looked at and cleared 185 proposals on foreign-area research from Government agencies, including 69 entirely new studies. None of them has yet hit an absolute veto, but 23 of the 69 new projects needed "modification" to reduce their sensitivity, and two are still being held up while ways of making them safe are explored.

The State Department has been publicizing these figures as evidence of the success of its "anti-Camelot device."

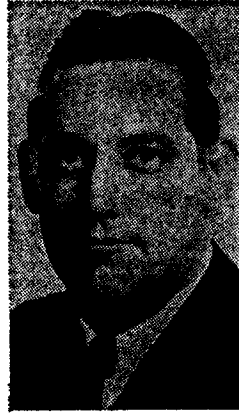
### Embarrassing Study

"Camelot" was the name of an abortive projected study by American University of the chances for revolution in Latin America. Sponsored by the Army, the projective study severely embarrassed the Government last summer. Its discovery in Chile, where neither the Chilean government nor the U.S. Ambassador knew about it, provoked protests that led to its cancellation and caused President Johnson to declare: "I am absolutely determined that no sponsorship of



Associated Press

SEN. KENNEDY



United Press International

SEN. HARRIS

... Critical views on foreign social research.

foreign-area research should be undertaken which in the judgment of the Secretary of State would adversely affect United States foreign relations."

As a result, Secretary of State Dean Rusk set up last October a 15-man "court" of State Department officials—the Foreign Affairs Research Council—with power to examine, and if necessary veto, any research project of a Government agency involving a foreign country and contracted out to non-Government researchers.

The first question the congressional investigators will be asking will be whether Secretary Rusk's Council is doing the best job it can.

### Possible Loopholes

They will be concerned with possible loopholes in the set of rules for "defusing" a sensitive project, which are:

1 — The foreign government should agree to the study.

2 — Maximum participation by the academic

community of the country should be sought.

3—The agency providing the funds should be publicly acknowledged.

4—The agency should try to maintain academic independence.

Several congressional critics already believe more drastic action than any State Department screening is needed. Examining the four "guidelines," they will want to know:

• Whether an agency can ever be allowed to break the rules—for instance, by not informing the foreign government for fear of sensitivity. The answer is that the guidelines are not absolute, and a potentially explosive study could still be approved if the information it sought was of paramount importance to U.S. foreign policy.

• Whether agencies are bypassing the Council altogether by having their sensitive work done by their own employees, possibly even in collaboration with independent academics working on approved stud-

ies.

• Whether suspicious foreign citizens can ever be persuaded not to object to American social research as long as they know the defense and intelligence agencies are behind it.

In his recent Senate speech on Latin America,

Kennedy said that he supported the new policy which brought the Council into being. "But," he went on, "the problem of universities becoming identified with undercover and military agencies will continue as long as those agencies have the great preponderance of foreign research appropriations."

Sen. Fred R. Harris (D-Okla.), who heads a new subcommittee on government research and hopes to start hearings next month, is even more strongly opposed to social research sponsored by any agency

other than the State Department and the Agency for International Development.

"This kind of research must be civilianized," he says. "Perhaps we need a new agency to supervise it, to make the substantive decisions on whether a project concerns a proper subject for spending American money."