

Widening C.I.A. Debate

Government's Right to Influence Role of Private Group Held Key Question

By MAX FRANKEL
Special to The New York Times

18 FEB
1967

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17—The disclosures in recent days about the Central Intelligence Agency and its links to foundations and youth groups form only a small part of the debate that has been provoked here.

That the agency underwrote the propaganda, the organizations and the travels of non-Communist leftists and liberals the world over was known to many persons, suspected by many more and written about by some. So, too, was the fact that the financial support was distributed through real and dummy philanthropic foundations and business organizations.

At least some Government officials, including C.I.A. officials, have periodically wondered about the effectiveness of these programs. The support of some groups was transferred long ago to legitimate foundations. Some activities were curtailed, but others were expanded. Most just went on and on for lack of challenge or independent review.

Suddenly, however, the spark has been set to this explosive problem by the implication of the National Student Association, with its more than 300 chapters embracing the student governments of most major colleges and universities. More dramatically than ever before, it has been shown how the private deals of two or three association leaders with the C.I.A. can compromise the views and reputations of hundreds of thousands of citizens.

Similarly, the direct implication of philanthropic foundations has cast suspicion upon thousands of unwitting recipients of their legitimate largesse.

There is thus discussion not only about the value of foreign propaganda and infiltration activities or about the wisdom of secret government support for them. Clearly posed now is the question of whether government has a right to influence, support, organize or sustain any activity that its citizens serve, deal with, use, or join on the assumption that it is private and unofficial, as advertised.

The faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology faced this question a few years ago and demanded a severance of all ties to the intelligence agency. Scholars found that innocent missions abroad had been tainted and jeopardized. Harvard's administration said it faced the issue when it decided to permit individual scholars to serve the agency but to prohibit institutional involvement.

President Johnson, responding to the crisis of confidence in the academic world, has instructed three high officials to review all programs that jeopardize the "integrity and independence" of educational organizations and to recommend alternate procedures for confidential operations aboard.

This order went to a group that is well versed in the problem—Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, the Under Secretary of State and former Attorney General; John W. Gardner, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and former president of the philanthropic Carnegie Corporation, and Richard Helms, the Director of Central Intelligence.

It is not yet clear whether the panel will limit itself to the practical problems posed by the continuing disclosures and the desire of the Government

to continue to combat Communist groups and ideas abroad or whether it will take on the issues of public policy and civil rights implicit in the criticism.

But even if the group assumes the broader task, the mandate to study educational organizations will leave untouched the many other questions raised in studies of the intelligence agency in recent years.

For instance, how can the taxpayer and Congress ever be assured that the agency is not channeling public funds to organizations and individuals that work among the American people? The United States Information Agency is explicitly barred from propaganda work at home; yet even this relatively public agency, often with C.I.A. backing, has been caught paying for material circulated domestically.

How can the citizen be protected against campaigns that solicit financial contributions to Radio Free Europe, an intelligence agency operation represented as a private nonprofit enterprise?

When officials have thought about acknowledging the radio's official sponsorship, however, they have faced the paradoxical fact that many independent scholars critical of Washington's policies would be lost to the Government because they would refuse to accept a frankly governmental position.

Much of the agency's secret involvement in youth groups, labor unions, business concerns, universities and foundations is being vigorously defended by officials with memories longer than those of the young people who now protest.

The older folks remember how menaced they felt by a Soviet-directed Communist machine and how anemic the non-Communist leftists and liberals seemed in Europe and elsewhere.

Overt responses at the time were judged ineffective, partly because liberals at home were often being driven from official life in the forties and fifties into refuge at the intelligence agency. The habits then developed persist as new anti-Communist programs are mounted in the weaker nations, though the basic fear of Communism has diminished.

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International Group Lists Units Linked to the C.I.A.

By CLYDE H. FARNSWORTH
Special to The New York Times

LEIDEN, the Netherlands, Feb. 17—The International Student Conference acknowledged today that one of its contributors was the Foundation for Youth and Social Affairs, an American philanthropic group that has been named by American student leaders as a recipient of funds from the Central Intelligence Agency.

The conference itself has been mentioned as a depository for C.I.A. funds and influence.

The organization, representing national unions of university students from more than 60 countries, said in a statement prepared by its permanent secretariat, that it had "received funds from this as from other private philanthropic organizations, in response to specific requests and subject to no pressures or conditions."

It denied that it had received funds from the C.I.A.

Ram L. Lakhina, an Indian, who as secretary-general of the conference receives \$500 a month, said that only one other American philanthropic foundation had donated money during the last financial year. It was the San Jacinto Fund of Houston, Tex.

This fund has also been named by American student leaders as a recipient of funds from the C.I.A.

Mr. Lakhina refused to produce financial statements and was reluctant to discuss any matter beyond the press statement at a meeting with newsmen at the group's headquarters. His group has no relationship with the University of Leiden.

In its statements, the student conference said it "knows of no evidence to suggest that any of its funds have ever come from clandestine bodies in any country."

"Nor have any of the I.S.C.'s funds been used at any time for purposes other than those determined democratically by the constitutional organizations of the I.S.C.," it said.

The National Students Association of the United States, one of the conference's affiliate organizations, has conceded that it received funds from the intelligence agency.