

The Commentary of

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KPFK Los Angeles

WBAI New York

Published by Tld Press, P.O. Box 856, Berkeley, California

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Number 70

May 11, 1967

SUBVERSION AND THE CIA

In 1958, J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, published a book about communism. It was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection and it went through at least 17 editions. Its title was Masters of Deceit, and its central argument was that the Communists were evil. This was so for many reasons but particularly because they practiced deceit. Hoover tried to show how Communists formed front organizations and drew innocent people into them where they were duped into serving the aims of the Communist Party. "The danger of a party front," said Hoover, "rests not on its physical appearance or size but on its ability to deceive."

The willingness of Communists to engage in deception has always been at the heart of arguments made against Communism in this country. You cannot trust Communists, it is said. They will deceive you and use you for their own purposes. The reason they will do this, is that they have no morality. For them, the ends justify the means, and out of this belief has come a political theory that justifies the totalitarian state--a state with a government that is highly centralized, authoritarian, and all pervasive, entering into every part of the citizen's public and private life. This political theory is the very antithesis of democracy, and Communists are the enemies. Such, in rough outline, is the argument of J. Edgar Hoover and other anti-Communist polemicists whose writings fill shelf after shelf in our libraries. Communism is evil they say, because it practices deception, it is immoral, and it is anti-Democratic.

I was reminded of these arguments today when I read an article in the May 20, 1967 Saturday Evening Post by Mr. Thomas W. Braden. Mr. Braden is a former president of the California State Board of Education, trustee of the California State Colleges, and defeated candidate for lieutenant governor. He is also a former member of the Central Intelligence Agency, and his article in the Post is about the CIA. The apparent purpose of Mr. Braden's article was to respond to the criticisms that have been made against the CIA for its having secretly financed the National Student Association, trade unions, and other groups at home and abroad. Referring to these criticisms, Mr. Braden says, "...never have I read such a concatenation of inane, misinformed twaddle as I have now been reading about the CIA.... People who make these charges must be naive. Some of them must be worse. Some must be pretending to be naive."

Mr. Braden's article has created quite a bit of public controversy because in it he discloses that he was the originator of the program for the infiltration of various organizations and that he personally gave \$50-thousand dollars to Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers to use to buy off trade unions in Germany. He also tells how the CIA gave gigantic sums of money to the man who makes foreign policy for the AFL-CIO, Mr. Jay Lovestone. Mr. Lovestone was the former head of the American Communist Party, but left the party to become a professional anti-Communist. He has been for many years the principle foreign policy adviser to George Meany, the President of the AFL-CIO, and for the most part has set the foreign policy posture of the AFL-CIO. It has been a consistently militant, hawkish, anti-Communist, anti-socialist, anti-neutralist posture. In his Post article, Braden says that Lovestone appealed to the CIA for funds. I quote from Braden: "...though Lovestone wanted our money, he didn't



want to tell us precisely how he spent it. We knew that non-Communist unions in France and Italy were holding their own. We knew that he was paying them nearly two million dollars annually. In his view, what more did we need to know?... I appealed to a high and responsible labor leader. He kept repeating, 'Lovestone and his bunch do a good job....'"

If Lovestone had nearly two million dollars annually to pay out in whatever way he saw fit for several years without giving any accounting to anyone, then he must certainly have had a great deal of power at the American tax payers expense. And this, of course, is only the part revealed by Braden. He says nothing about Lovestone's operations in Latin America which are known to be extensive.

Braden tells how the CIA would take over old organizations by bribing officials or by infiltrating. Sometimes it would take months to get a CIA man into a controlling position. Sometimes a completely new organizations had to be set up. At Braden's instigation, one of the organizations that was infiltrated was the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Europe. It published a well-known intellectual magazine called Encounter. According to Braden, the CIA succeeded in making one of its agents editor of the magazine. The tactics used by the CIA are spelled out clearly by Braden: "Use legitimate, existing organizations," he says, "disguise the extent of American interest; protect the integrity of the organization by not requiring it to support every aspect of official American policy."

Braden then raises the question as to whether these tactics of infiltration, bribery, and deceit are immoral. "Was it 'immoral', 'wrong', 'disgraceful'?" he asks. "Only in the sense that war itself is immoral, wrong and disgraceful. For the cold war was and is a war, fought with ideas instead of bombs. And our country has had a clear-cut choice: Either we win the war or lose it.... The choice between innocence and power involves the most difficult of decisions. But when an adversary attacks with his weapons disguised as good works, to choose innocence is to choose defeat. So long as the Soviet Union attacks deviously we shall need weapons to fight back, and a government locked in a power struggle cannot acknowledge all the programs it must carry out to cope with its enemies." So writes Thomas Braden, former president of the State Board of Education of California in the May 20 issue of the Saturday Evening Post. And fittingly, the title of the article is: "I'm Glad the CIA is 'Immoral'." The world immoral is in quotation marks.

Whether what the CIA has been doing in secretly infiltrating and controlling organizations like the National Student Association is moral or immoral is entirely a matter of what your moral standards are. What may be immoral for one man may be moral for another. To say publicly that something is immoral is not to say very much at all unless at the same time you state what your moral standards are. I do not know what Mr. Braden's standards are, but clearly they are not ruptured by the activities of the CIA. But the article does rather clearly project Mr. Braden's political philosophy.

This emerges when Mr. Braden explains why it was not possible to assist organizations like the trade unions and the National Student Association openly with monies appropriated by Congress. "The idea that the Congress would have approved many of our projects," says Braden, "was about as likely as the John Birch Society's approving Medicare." In other words, Braden knew that the Congress of the United States would disapprove of his program. He personally was convinced that it was a good program, and therefore he was justified in doing secretly what Congress would surely have disapproved had they found out what was going on.

Most Americans are taught that if their elected representatives are incapable of pursuing sound policies, the democratic way to get sound policies is to replace the

legislators by voting them out at the next election. It may be that Mr. Braden's program was a good one, and that the Congress was wrong. But then it is quite common in the executive branch of government to have disagreements with the legislative branch. Our system of checks and balances has provisions for working out these disagreements. They are sometimes slow and inefficient, but that is the nature of democracy.

If I understand Mr. Braden correctly, what he is saying is that there are times when members of the executive branch, in this case, the CIA, are justified in subverting the system of checks and balances, and those times are when this nation is in conflict with Communism. The reason for this is that Communism is the enemy of democracy, and when the Congress is too stupid to know how to fight the enemies of democracy correctly, then men like Mr. Braden are justified in subverting democracy to do it for them. I think this is peculiar logic.

There are also overtones in this kind of reasoning that I find disturbing, and I think ought to be examined. One is a fascination with conspiracy. This is common among intelligence agents, for the intelligence craft is essentially a craft of conspiracy. But conspiracy is not compatible with democracy, for democracy can operate successfully only if the people and their representatives know the essential facts. Once you legitimize conspiracy for the CIA then you also legitimize conspiracy for the other agencies of government. And when this is done, then the loyal opposition to the government and to the activities of the CIA are also forced into conspiracy. From then on you no longer have democracy.

The Braden article also contains a note of intellectual arrogance. It seems to imply that Braden and the CIA knew what was good for the country and that in itself was justification for ignoring the ignorant men in Congress. The people who now are criticizing the CIA, learned men like Walter Lippmann, are guilty, in Braden's words, of producing a "concatenation of inane, misinformed twaddle."

As I read of how Braden secretly subverted the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its magazine Encounter, I was reminded of a personal experience. In 1954 and 1955 I was in India doing research, and Encounter was available there. I read it regularly and found it interesting and stimulating. In one issue, I remember, I read an article on Indochina. The main argument of the article was that intellectuals in the Western democracies should oppose the idea of settling the conflict in Indochina by means of a free election, because if such elections were held, the Communists would surely win them, and they, of course, were not democratic. I remember that I disagreed with the article at the time on the grounds that if the people wanted a Communist government and would vote one into power in a genuinely free election, then they should be entitled to do so. I wouldn't want a Communist government myself, but if the Vietnamese did, then that was their business. As I read this article I thought I was getting the argument of a bona fide intellectual who was stating his own point of view. I did not know that the magazine was edited by a CIA agent and that I was being duped by Mr. Braden and his program. Of course things are different now, and a lot of people are less naive. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, Encounter, the National Student Association and a host of other organizations and phony foundations have been discredited.

The sad part of all of this is that a number of legitimate organizations and activities have been discredited too. Indeed, the good name of America has been badly damaged. The day is past when foreign intellectuals will look upon visiting Americans as honest representatives of a free and open society.

The political philosophy manifested by Mr. Braden has gone a long way within the American intellectual community. It can be clearly seen in the recent actions of the American Political Science Association, the professional organization of the American

professors of government and politics. In February of this year, the press revealed that the Executive Director of the American Political Science Association was also the President of a corporation called Operations and Policy Research, Inc. Not much is known about this organization except that it received funds from a CIA-front foundation. The Vice President of this organization is the treasurer of the American Political Science Association.

When the press made all of this public, then the Political Scientists decided that they would investigate and they appointed a Committee which has just published a report saying, "that it would be inappropriate and unjust to respond to anxieties arising from these disclosures by condemning Kirkpatrick and Kampelman", that is, Evron Kirkpatrick and Max Kampelman, Executive Director and Treasurer respectively, of the American Political Science Association, and President and Vice President respectively, of this shadowy CIA-financed corporation. The political scientists, in other words, don't feel that it is necessary to clean house. And this is understandable. A large number of them receive government grants for research, and some even work for the CIA from time to time. When one has access to secret government monies for which one need not make a public accounting, it is very difficult to give this up.

I am afraid that the political philosophy of Thomas Braden, who is glad that the CIA is "immoral", is rather prevalent among the academic intellectuals who make a career of studying government and politics. It is a philosophy with a strong element of intellectual elitism, of arrogance of power, of contempt for the slow and inefficient democratic processes. It is a philosophy that says that the ends justify the means. I find it difficult to distinguish these ideas from those of Lenin, and I don't like either. There is a great deal wrong with democratic government in America today, but I have found no political theories more satisfying than those of Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and James Madison. I do not think that it makes sense to fight Communism on the grounds that it is conspiratorial, immoral, and undemocratic, by using yourself techniques which are conspiratorial, immoral and undemocratic. I am not naive, and I know there cannot be perfection in this regard. But I think Mr. Braden, Mr. Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Kampelman, have gone far beyond what reasonable believers in democracy ought to tolerate. We already have too many Masters of Deceit.

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There are two more broadcasts to this series, #71 and #72. Mr. Windmiller will not broadcast his Commentaries in the months of June, July, and August, however he does expect to resume them in September.