EXOTIC LIFE AS AGENT

Mystery Death Hides Student's Ties to CIA

BY STUART H. LOOBY
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WASHINGTON—Before S. Avrea Ingram Jr. of Talladega, Ala., died mysteriously in an out-of-the-way New York hotel room at the age of 30, he spent the exotic last four years of his life living where the action was—in domestic and international student politics.

Ingram was graduated from the ranks of the National Student Assn. to become an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency. He was, in fact, one of the two students who first permanently hitched the two organizations together—creating a relationship that went much deeper than one which merely created pro-American propaganda abroad.

Ingram’s transition tells much about the beginnings of a relationship that eventually wound “around every facet of American life that has any connection outside the United States,” as Sen. Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) put it last week.

Death Conceals Facts

But Ingram’s death conceals much about how the CIA originally got into the business of subsidizing the international programs of private groups, some of which are secondary teachers, academics, and intellectuals.

The NSA-Ingram-CIA link is specific. Ingram was:

—International vice president of the International Student Conference in Vienna, Austria, during the Hungarian uprising of October, 1956. His overt job was to help student-freedom fighters flee Hungary to reassemble and resume their studies in the West. What else he may have been doing is not known.

Then, suddenly, Ingram was dead. He had returned to this country after Vienna and took up residence in the Irving Hotel at 26 Gramercy Park, New York.

At noon on Feb. 5, 1957, a maid called the door to Room 19 in the hotel and found Ingram lying nude on the floor with a leather belt around his neck attached to the knob of a desk drawer.

The New York medical examiner called the death “aphxty by hanging” and said the indications were suicide, some of his friends and his family told the examiner.

The certificate listed Ingram as a research consultant working for the Central Intelligence Agency. He was, in fact, one of the two students who first permanently hitched the two organizations together—creating a relationship that went much deeper than one which merely created pro-American propaganda abroad.

Ingram succeeded Dentzer after his presidency of the ISC.

Helped Hungarian Refugees

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The ISC also received CIA funds according to the disclosures of the past two weeks. In this job, Ingram succeeded Dentzer who left NSA after his presidency to join ISC.

Money Problems

It was not easy for the organization to raise money. Student dues from constituent student governments were certainly not enough to fight the well-organized, highly subsidized, Communist-sympathizing liberal organizations to raise money from private sources. The year 1957 was a bad one for NSA as the delegates did not get our passports back. Sen. William T. Dentzer, who was an executive director of the Foundation, which is now headed by Harry Lunn, another former NSA president.

By the testimony of all concerned, the CIA partnership with the American student movement started innocently enough.

The Avrea Ingamas and William Dentzers were students during the Korean War. They were liberal intellectuals who saw a need to support causes of social revolution both at home and abroad. NSA received condemnation as a Communist front from many quarters because of its liberal stands for civil rights for American Negroes, against the then rampant Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, (R-Wis.), for academic freedom, against colonialism and, finally, against totalitarianism in any form, including communism.

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