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C.I.A. and the Campuses

The National Student Association begins its 20th National Student Congress at the University of Maryland on Sunday. Robert Amory Jr., former deputy director in the Central Intelligence Agency, will be one of the panelists in a discussion of "Secrecy in a Free Society: the CIA." More than 1,500 delegates from 330 campuses are expected to attend. In its own publicity, NSA suggests that heated debate will arise over Vietnam and the NSA connection with CIA.

The word early this year that NSA, the largest and oldest and probably the most respected student association in the United States, had been subsidized for years by the Central Intelligence Agency, created a stir in public thought. It triggered a series of disclosures, some of them by a former CIA insider, that traced a huge pattern of subsidy to private groups here and abroad. But all the heat seems not to have hurt the NSA. "We're a lot stronger than we were before," says W. Eugene Groves, NSA president. "More people know about us and we have some new sources of financial support."

A strong minority may argue at the mid-August conference that the NSA should disband and begin anew. According to Richard Stearns, international-affairs vice-president, some will argue that NSA officers still maintain covert ties with the CIA. And Mr. Amory, the man who will tell the CIA story at College Park, said recently that he feared the people who have cooperated in foreign countries with U.S. organizations in the past may be in danger of arrest, harassment or worse.

Considerable criticism was visited on the intelligence community by the disclosures early this year. Nevertheless, subsidizing NSA was probably worth the recriminations. For the students did much throughout the world to counter the openly-subsidized work of students of non-democratic societies.

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