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THE FACELESS CIA

Is a magazine which lends itself to the purposes of the CIA in any different position from a university which does so? The question arises from the controversy over a leading article published in the April issue of *Foreign Affairs*. The article, "The Faceless Viet Cong," undertook to support the State Department's contention that the National Liberation Front in South Viet Nam is entirely a creature of the Hanoi government and without any "indigenous roots" in the South.

Some well qualified experts on Viet Nam disagree with this analysis, but whether it is right or wrong it should, we think, have been identified as a CIA analysis. The author, George A. Carver Jr., was described by the magazine only as a "student of political theory and Asian affairs" and a former officer of the U.S. aid mission in Saigon. Later the press disclosed that he is also an officer of the CIA. Surely that particular bit of background was highly pertinent and worthy of being shared with its readers by the magazine.

Hamilton Fish Armstrong, editor of *Foreign Affairs*, says he would have preferred to let his readers know who Mr. Carver is, but the CIA has a general rule against divulging the identity of its staff members. For an undercover agency the rule is understandable enough, but if the CIA wishes to remain "faceless" then it ought to be denied the opportunity to influence public opinion in a faceless way through a non-governmental journal supposedly devoted to articles of independent scholarship. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.