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Ex-NSA Chief Recalls Quizzing

Journal Special Correspondence

MADISON, Wis. — A former president of the National Student association recalled Wednesday that NSA observers at a Communist sponsored conference were later interviewed by agents for the central intelligence agency.

Donald A. Hoffman, 830 Shadow Lawn dr., Elm Grove, recalled the incident in light of the disclosure that the CIA for many years gave money secretly to the NSA.

Hoffman, who served as NSA president in 1959 and 1960, recently returned from duty as an aide in the Paris embassy and is studying law at the University of Wisconsin.

Hoffman said he had several contacts with CIA personnel, while he was president, but at no time did they try to force his position on any issue, foreign or domestic.

He recalled that CIA agents

contacted him after the 1959 Vienna youth festival, sponsored by the Communists, and asked permission to talk to NSA observers sent to the festival. He recalled that he said he had no objections as long as it was all right with the students.

Hoffman said the student observers, including Miss Isabel Marcus, then NSA international president, told CIA agents how Communists controlled the meetings to make it appear that all the delegates were on their side. Miss Marcus was then a student at Barnard college, New York city.

The state department and CIA were also interested in the NSA's exchange trip with Russian student leaders, Hoffman said.

He said the association worked out standards with the federal government to insure that Soviet delegates coming to the United States were indeed students, not spies.

Hoffman agreed that only the highest NSA officials knew their group was getting secret funds from the CIA. He said the secret about the CIA was handed down from president to president with word to keep the information to themselves.

Only two people knew about the CIA," he said. "The national president, myself, and my international president."

The first Hoffman heard about CIA funds was about two months after he took office in September, 1959. He said the outgoing president informed him that he could "dispel his fears" that the federal government looked unfavorably upon NSA for its frequent liberal viewpoints.

The outgoing president told Hoffman that NSA had contacts with the state, justice and commerce departments and the CIA. Hoffman said "security clearance" was apparently needed before one could be told about the federal connections of NSA

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