

C.I.A.'s Role

To the Editor:

The current debate over C.I.A.'s "evil" influence takes place on a level of sophistication comparable to the Salem witch trials: everyone suspected of dealings with the Evil One and all his works, whether he recognized Lucifer or not, is expected to purge himself by public confession.

In actual fact, the majority of all "secret" information gathered by C.I.A. is in the public domain. Even if it weren't, is it rational to divide Americans into pure-trusting and trusted—and impure?

Is the businessman who talks with a foreign head of state a spy because on his return he gives the C.I.A. full account of the interview? Is he pure when he goes unbriefed, but contaminated when some of his questions are suggested by C.I.A. or State? Does taking money previously touched by the C.I.A. make the recipient unclean?

As Prof. Henry Steele Commager recently told a Senate panel, a persistent trait of the American mind is belief in "Old World corruption and New World innocence." As long as the majority of our people believe in national sovereignty, we must pay for it, and paying is not always a pleasant task.

Under Orders

The C.I.A.'s business is neither nobler nor dirtier than the marine's who under orders takes a fourteen-year-old boy prisoner or sets fire to a straw hut; or the bombardier's who drops his bombs — often without doing harm—sometimes on civilians.

Those who protest today against being "used" are naive in assuming that anyone can live a "pure" life in a complex modern state, and that people can be divided into witches (who have dealt with the devil) and pure souls. Today our friends abroad must be baffled by our lack of guile, our innocence, and particularly by the willingness of so many decent Americans to tell tales out of school, mainly to purge themselves of contamination.

HANS ROSENHAUPT
Formerly Captain
Military Intelligence
U.S. Army

Princeton, N. J., Feb. 23, 1967

Damaging Probe

To the Editor:

Current discussion of C.I.A. subsidies to organizations and foundations is full of sound and fury with little apparent attention being paid to the incalculable and enduring harm such revelations are having, and will continue for a long time to have, on innocent persons and institutions in this country and abroad.

Once uncovered and subjected to investigation by Congress and the Executive, no useful service can or is being performed by the press in delving into every corner for further evidence of the clumsiness already revealed.

I share wholeheartedly the view set forth by The Times' Feb. 20 editorial—that free institutions must remain free. I find, however, that C. L. Sulzberger's comment the previous day was more realistic than your editorial comment that need for help in the most critical phases of the cold war "should have been met openly — by direct public subsidy."

At the time that the National Student Association was trying to hold its own in world conferences where many other delegations, and all those from Communist nations, were heavily subsidized by their Governments, I was in the Department of State and concerned with U.S.I.A. All our efforts to persuade private foundations and Congressional committees to allocate funds to this and similar purposes were in vain.

Unlimited Funds

But the Defense Department and the C.I.A. were able to get virtually unlimited funds from Congress — a situation that seems to have changed very little in the past dozen years.

James Reston on Feb. 17 pointed to the British Council, a Government-supported body which in turn supports projects similar to those which the C.I.A. has been caught aiding. Any one who has had any dealing with Congress on behalf of an Executive branch of the Government remains very skeptical of Congress showing enough wisdom to emulate the British in this field.

Continued publicity without constructive comment can only further injure the thousands of tourists, students, businessmen and newspapermen who have done much over the years for the United States without ever having been connected in any way with the C.I.A.

HELEN K. MILBANK
Nelson, N. H., Feb. 20, 1967

U.S. Students Abroad

To the Editor:

The recent exchange of allegations and denials concerning the implications of the C.I.A.'s secret financing of associations activities must have bewildered and also disturbed many of your foreign readers. My own concern springs from the fact that as chairman of a university department in Britain, I frequently receive applications from Americans wishing

to undertake graduate studies with us.

Those inquiries are welcome and we have always been very glad to accept as far as possible such people because, academic considerations apart, Anglo-American friendship is fostered in this way. Similarly, we have enjoyed many visits for a shorter or a longer period from American members of faculty.

Naturally I should like this relationship to continue so long as we are receiving American students simply as students. But I am worried by the recent disclosures. Do they mean that in addition to the routine checking of an applicant's scholastic references it may be a proper precaution as well to ask if he or she has any known connection with a governmental agency?

KENNETH LITTLE
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of Anthropology
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St. Louis, Feb. 27, 1967