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Rutgers Received CIA Funds to Study Hungarian Refugees

By John Jacobs
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The Central Intelligence Agency secretly funneled at least \$5,000 to the sociology department at Rutgers University in the late 1950s to study Hungarian refugees who fled to this country after taking part in the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

Documents the CIA released yesterday relating to its MK-ULTRA behavior-control program of the 1950s and 1960s and an interview with a Rutgers sociologist who took part in the research confirm the details of the project.

The New Brunswick, N.J., university is one of about a dozen universities that have publicly admitted getting a letter from CIA Director Stansfield Turner notifying them that they were among the 86 institutions knowingly or unknowingly involved in the MK-ULTRA program.

Dr. Richard Stephenson, a sociologist at Douglas College, part of Rutgers, said the research was sponsored by the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. The society has been identified as a CIA front, but Stephenson said he did not know that at the time.

Stephenson said the study consisted of interviews with between 40 and 60 Hungarian refugees by sociologists, psychiatrists, medical doctors and anthropologists. Many of the refugees had come from Hungary to Camp Kilmer, then a military base in New Brunswick.

"It was a good opportunity for us to study people who had been through a crisis situation," Stephenson said. "I wanted to find out how they got involved with the activities of the Hungarian revolution."

Stephenson said he was first approached to do research by Dr. Lawrence B. Hinkle Jr. of the society. Hinkle was the "key man," according to Stephenson. Hinkle co-founded the society with Dr. Harold Wolfe, and both were from the Cornell University Medical Center. Wolfe had been a close friend of Allen W. Dulles, then CIA director.

A March 19, 1957, memorandum for the record by Sidney Gottlie, then head of the Chemical Division of Technical Services and in charge of MK-ULTRA, described what the agency wanted from the research:

"The scope of this program will entail an intensive study designed to throw as much light as possible on the sociology of the Communist system in the throes of revolution. The study will involve the interviewing of Hungarian refugees. . ."

The memo goes on to say that a group, whose name was deleted (apparently the human ecology group), would transmit agency funds and "act in the capacity of a cover organization." The agency would supply \$5,000 for one year, and another organization, whose name also was deleted, would supply another \$5,000.

Another letter among the newly released CIA documents, from a writer whose name was deleted said: "Only fragmentary information is available on the social processes through which a totalitarian government secures cooperation or fails to secure it. This means, for example, as you well know, that our U.S. psychological warfare program in Iron Curtain countries is greatly hindered . . . And now Hungary has revolted and the fleeing Hungarians are in our midst. This seems an ideal moment to study a totalitarian system in disruption."

The refugee research was part of

MK-ULTRA subproject 69. CIA Director Turner told Senate investigating committees last month that there were 149 projects. Subproject 65, the details of which also were released yesterday, reveals in more detail what the CIA was looking for.

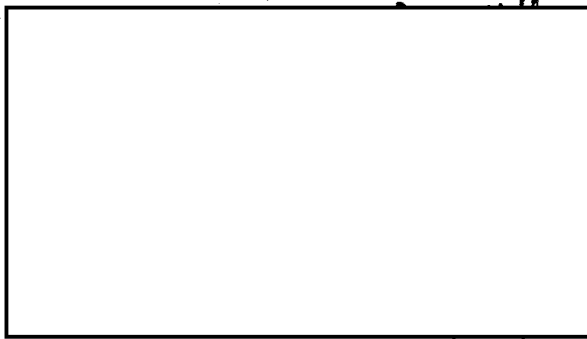
This subproject, with a budget of \$87,621, apparently was concerned with studying refugees from China. Its scope, according to a June 28, 1956, memo, was to look at factors influencing human behavior "that could be used as a means of achieving intelligence objectives."

The goal, according to the memo, was to understand what caused people to "defect, commit treason or change loyalties," to better locate potential defectors and to increase "the chances of defection of various target individuals."

Stephenson said he was not "particularly disturbed" that the CIA would be interested in Hungarian refugees, "but I would object to not being informed that the CIA financed the research."

A public relations official at Rutgers said the university would investigate the matter once it receives documents it has requested from the CIA. Until then, the official said, the university will reserve comment.

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