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Editorial:

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# The Essence of A University

There are some disgusting occurrences taking place on the Berkeley campus these days—occurrences which could hardly serve to create the "community" called for by our Chancellor. And *this time*, no one can blame the students.

Making student files available to federal security agencies is a dishonorable policy, yet it has been practiced for some time by the campus admissions office and the registrar's office. Apparently nothing is sacred at the University of California, particularly the confidence and privacy of its students.

No amount of rationalization or administrative buck-passing can detract from the fact that groups such as the FBI and the CIA enjoy daily access to personal records without student permission. Even the excuse that the records offer security clearance for jobs does not justify the procedure: if these agencies want a security

check let them ask the student in question to arrange to send the necessary records.

Registrar Clinton Gilliam, defending the right of security people to nose through University files, has said "We trust them." We assume he is referring to those who willingly hand over the private information; he certainly can't include the students in his statement, because they have no voice in this so-called "trust" relationship.

And speaking of trust, what are we to think of the administration's hand in all this student back-stabbing? Executive Vice-Chancellor Cheit has said that his office was not aware of the "open door" policy for security investigators. This, we seriously doubt.

An employee in the Registrar's office has stated that agencies not only had access to files but were even provided with a special room in which to do their "investigating" — a room which was in use by as many as 30 agents a day.

This is quite a commitment by the University, but the Chancellor's office (after an earlier statement denying the availability of records to outside groups) has pleaded ignorance. At this point we wonder which is worse with respect to administrative competence—allowing such a policy to continue or not knowing about such a policy in the first place.

One thing is clear however: No one—whether it be Oakland housewives or federal agents—has any right to research the confidential files of students for other than University matters.

We are informed that the policy is now under review by the admissions office; we strongly suggest that the Registrar's office follow suit. Such a practice on the part of an academic institution is deplorable, and should not be tolerated by students or administrators any longer.