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Rutgers prof hits CIA method

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A RUTGERS University professor, who unknowingly conducted research for the Central Intelligence Agency in 1957, said Thursday night it was "reprehensible" that the agency apparently obtained research information through intermediary organizations.

Richard M. Stephenson, a professor of sociology at Douglass College of Rutgers, said he was unaware until a few weeks ago that the research he did at the university in 1957 was used and funded by the CIA.

Stephenson's comments came after the university confirmed Thursday earlier reports that the CIA funneled \$5,000 through a cover organization for a sociological study of Hungarian refugees who fled their country during the uprising of 1956.

STEPHENSON said he believed at the time the funds were being provided by the Society for Investigation of Human Ecology associated with Cornell Medical Center in Ithaca, N.Y.

The knowledge of CIA involvement "places me in a bad position in my own eyes, if not in the eyes of others," he said, "because the people I interviewed also were unaware that the CIA was involved."

"As a responsible social scientist, I feel I owe it to the people I interview to be open and frank," he said.

A Rutgers spokesman said the university had obtained from the CIA an agency memo dated March 19, 1957, which designated the Rutgers study as "Subproject 69 of Project MKULTRA."

The CIA memo did not name the cover organization, but other published reports confirm Stephenson's identification of the organization as the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology.

Stephenson said he interviewed refugees at the ecology center in New York and at Camp Kilmer near New Brunswick to study their reaction to stress. He said he received no direction from anyone during the study, that none of the information was classified, and that there were no restrictions on publication of the findings.

The CIA memo describes the project as 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 with the specific aim of collecting background information on the revolutionary setting and on the groups within Hungary who are already known to be particularly advantaged or disadvantaged within this setting," the memo reads.

Rutgers was one of 87 organizations and institutions recently notified by the CIA that it was involved in some aspect of project MKULTRA, designed to identify materials and methods useful in altering human behavior patterns.

Stephenson said he was convinced that the university also had no prior knowledge of the CIA involvement.

"We receive all kinds of grants from all kinds of organizations," Stephenson said, "and we accept them with the belief that they are coming from the people who are offering them."