

Peace group probe mars FBI integrity

The federal government has been caught meddling again in the legal activities of U.S. citizens. This, of course, is nothing new. What is new is that the FBI investigated, harassed and intimidated those who opposed the Reagan administration's foreign policies toward Central America.

The disclosure is reminiscent of the FBI's Hoover era, in which the bureau illegally used surveillance, including wiretaps, to harass those protesting the Vietnam War.

According to bureau documents obtained by the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York civil rights group, the FBI conducted a six-year investigation involving the use of surveillance, informants and undercover agents into legitimate organizations that have opposed the Reagan administration's foreign policies in Central America. The investigations were directed against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and more than 100 other organizations.

Such conduct by a government agency against American citizens represents nothing less than a great step backward for democracy.

Furthermore, there seems to be no legal justification for such an investigation, only a political rationalization. The FBI claims the investigations were initiated because CISPES allegedly supplied illegal military aid to rebels in El Salvador. However, these allegations have never been proved by the FBI.

"Needless to say, the FBI never had, nor ever found, any information to support that premise," the Center for Constitutional Rights said according to the New York Times. The Center for Constitutional Rights has obtained about 1,200 pages of documents from the FBI under the Freedom of Information Act.

But The FBI said, "The predication for and focus of these investigations is alleged criminal activity rather than the motives and beliefs of those being investigated."

However, considering the lack of substantiation the FBI has for such a claim, it seems that it investigated — and in some cases harassed for political purposes — U.S. citizens who held views contrary to the government's official stance.

Lawsuit against board should proceed as planned

In an unfortunate move, the Coalition for the Reform of Higher Education has decided to drop a lawsuit it was planning to bring against the State Board of Higher Education for alleged violations of the state open meetings law.

The Coalition for the Reform of Higher Education decided to drop legal action because it said it believes the state board has mended its ways with regard to the open meetings law.

Although the group said the state board has been following the state's open meetings laws, it is still possible that the board did violate the meetings law while it deliberated over the retirement of University President Paul Olum.

If the lawsuit were to proceed, it would force the board to be accountable for possible violations of the open meetings law. It would also be a constant reminder to the state board that back-room politics is unacceptable to the community it serves.

GARY MACKSTEIN
CHRISTIANE NEWSPIZZ-12
CORLEY NEWS SERVICE



HEY, YOU! WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF THE CANDIDATES? HOW DO THEY STACK UP? WHO'S THE FRONT-RUNNER?...HUH?...HUH...?

Letters

No villain

After reading the article in the Jan. 19 Emerald concerning the University's School of Education admissions process and the opinions expressed by two education students concerning this process, I felt as though the other side of the story needed to be expressed. Please remember that just as for Ms. Harrington and Ms. Thomas, this is my opinion only.

I began the Allied Professional Courses, the classes that must be completed before entry into TEEM, fall 1986. On the advice of the Student Services personnel I attended an advising seminar for pre-education majors fall term 1986. I learned that many changes were happening at the state level that would directly affect the education program in the near future. I was told that these changes coupled with rapidly increasing attendance in the pre-education classes were going to result in a tightening of the criteria for entry into TEEM. This would cause increased competition for available TEEM positions.

It was my experience that the advising faculty made every ef-

fort to inform students of the impending "squeeze" and of any other changes as soon as they were informed by the state agencies. If I had any questions or concerns regarding the education program all I had to do was to make the effort to ask and my concerns were dealt with in a professional, honest and supportive manner. At no time did I feel deceived or defrauded by the education department.

I in no way wish to minimize the hurt, frustration and inconvenience that many pre-education students have suffered because of this situation. What needs to be considered is that this situation may have no villain.

B.J. McCoy
Senior, elem. education

No more draft

Volunteer Day, Wednesday, Jan. 28, marked the 15th anniversary of the military's All Volunteer Force. On Jan. 27, 1973, that great enslavement of America's young people, the draft, ended as an active threat.

The past 15 years have provided ample evidence that AVF works. Military leaders have been pleased by the quantity and quality of volunteers. Yet politicians repeatedly call for a reactivation of the draft, and even for its extension to civilian work, under the name of "National Service."

The AVF allows young people to choose a career path that is consistent with their abilities and values. A draft is bureaucratic job assignment that hurts our economy.

The AVF is consistent with America's ideal of individual choice. A draft is "slaves defending freedom."

The AVF is much less likely to lead to war. A draft lets politicians imagine they can fight a war that the public does not support.

Young people have repeatedly shown that they are ready to defend their freedom when it is

threatened by foreign enemies. They must be just as ready to defend their freedom if their own government ever again tries to enslave them.

Joseph W. Dehn III,
Libertarian Party,
Chairman, Lane County

Dismal failure

Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Hazelwood case that school officials may censor student papers on substance. This is a dangerous and disturbing action.

As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of our Constitution, we realize that its genius lies in the guarantee of the world's largest measure of personal liberty. These rights are not come by cheaply. They have cost the lives of some one million noble sons and daughters of America on battlefields around the globe. That fact makes the ruling even more upsetting.

The process of socializing America's young people into obedient subjects of the all-mighty state is in full swing.

Denying students the right to express themselves on serious issues they face seems to me a most odd way of teaching the great role of citizens in our system of governance. One generation of cultural illiterates is enough to allow those seeking tyranny to obtain all they desire. Culturally illiterate people don't value their rights and, for order and lucre, they will joyfully give them up.

Ours is an inheritance of liberty. Can we cheat our posterity of a similar heritage? To us is given the challenge of defending for present and future generations the rights found in that "sacred" document, the Bill of Rights. If Hazelwood is any indication, we are, sir, failing dismally.

William Reece Gaskill
Political science
Friday, January 29, 1988

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, Oregon 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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