

MAR 30 1971

HAVERFORD COLLEGE

PROVOST

March 29, 1971

To: All faculty, students, and staff

Subject: Governmental and other checks on members of the College community

News stories this past week tell of F.B.I. attempts at monitoring the activities of a faculty member at some other local college through the undercover help of certain college employees.

To the best of our knowledge, these stories do not involve Haverford College. Moreover, we have no confirmation at all of the New York Times story of March 29 which asserts that there has been F.B.I. surveillance of "radical activities" here.


The news stories do make me realize however how important it is that everyone on our campus know and understand our policy in dealing with governmental investigative bodies such as the F.B.I. or C.I.A.

From time to time, the F.B.I. conducts a security investigation as a step in the employment of a student, alumnus, or faculty member in government work. Our policy is to cooperate fully in such an investigation. The F.B.I. agent routinely tells our security office that he will be on campus for this purpose. While I obviously do not know what each interviewee tells the agent, my hope is that whatever is told is something the interviewee is also prepared to say directly to the student, alumnus, or faculty member being investigated. This type of investigation should be an open matter. (I have attached to this memo brief excerpts from the Faculty Handbook, which speak effectively to this issue.)

But we will not condone or participate in any undercover investigation of a College community member, except where the President or his deputy is shown reasonable grounds for linking that member with a specific crime and where no alternative way exists of gathering the necessary facts about the crime. In particular, we will not be involved in any undercover searching into the thoughts or teaching of a professor, student, or staff member.

To make this College policy effective, it is imperative that there be a check with the President's office before any positive action is taken on a request for confidential information about a person at Haverford. Anyone on campus who is asked, in his role as a member of the College community, for information to be provided on a covert basis on another member of the community should immediately report that request to the President. Any failure to do so will be considered a violation of College policy.

JRC:jc  
Attachment

  
John R. Coleman  
President

ABI

FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF:

As a result of an interesting open meeting last night, it seems clear that the question of our individual and corporate response to various activities of the F.B.I. and other investigatory agencies is of general concern. It involves some of the same issues of free speech, academic freedom and professional responsibility as our case against the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Act.

In that case (which we are arguing again this week before the federal court), the College concluded that the role of informer was improper for members of an academic community, and that in asking us to be informers that state agency was violating its constitutional authority. It seems evident that the F.B.I. and military intelligence agencies, in inquiring into people's opinions and political activities, have gone beyond their constitutional authority. It also seemed evident to most of us last night that an academic community has an obligation to oppose such inquiries into people's opinions and political activities. And, as in the Pennsylvania case, it seemed to us that members of this community have a special responsibility to guard the confidence and trust upon which our relationship with one another must depend, and that the role of informer undermines that relationship.

Do you agree with these points? Are there other principles to be considered? What action is called for? Since it is often difficult to distinguish between routine inquiries relating to security clearances for persons seeking government employment, proper police investigations of particular crimes, and invasions of people's freedoms, don't we need some guidelines that deal with the particular problems that may arise? A number of people last night urged us to review the whole matter of security investigations to see if they should be accepted as "routine". Some proposed that the College policy be that cooperation in such investigations depend on the prior consent of the person being investigated.

Last night we agreed that all of us -- staff, faculty and students -- should consider these issues, separately and together, and try to agree upon a common set of guidelines.

As we proceed with this joint and several consultation, which may well continue into next fall because of the little time remaining in this academic year, I suggest that if any question arises you talk with me or with one of the deans. Meanwhile, I would also appreciate it if you would inform us about any contact with an investigatory or police agency relating in any way to the College community. For security clearance inquiries, a simple written memorandum reporting to me that such an inquiry has been made should presently suffice; in any other instances, I request that you consult directly with me or one of the deans before any discussion with an outside investigator. According to current practice, cooperation on security clearance inquiries is a matter of individual choice, and cooperation in investigations of particular crimes may be legally required. But under the Constitution, no one should be expected to cooperate in an investigation into other people's opinions or political activities, or in any other violation of the Bill of Rights.

Harris Wofford

April 13, 1971