

The Africanist Positions on Military and Intelligence Funding and Service in the National Interest in African Research, Service, and Studies

The concern about military and intelligence funding of African studies first arose in the African Studies Association in the late 1960s, coming to a head at the ASA's annual meeting at Montreal in 1969. As a result of alleged intelligence linkages of some ASA members and officers, the association distanced itself from Washington and security agencies of government.

In 1982, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) approached four Title VI African centers to explore their willingness to receive large annual budget supplements in exchange for being on call to develop reports and undefined services. The directors of the four centers consulted and agreed to not accept the funding until they had consulted with the wider Africanist community. After that consultation, they concluded that it was not in U.S. interests to link with the DIA which could compromise their collaborations and linkages in Africa.

In 1991, Senator Boren and the Congress established the National Security Education Program (NSEP), authorized by the *David L. Boren National Security Education Act of 1991* (NSEA, Title VIII of P.L. 102-183), providing "...aid for international education and foreign language studies by American undergraduate and graduate students, plus grants to institutions of higher education." Various area and scholarly associations objected to this act and urged that federal support for language and area studies be routed through the U.S. Department of Education and its Title VI Higher Education Act programs.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the **directors of African Studies Title VI centers** periodically reviewed their policy about not accepting military funding. In 2001, under challenge from the right, the directors passed a resolution on "*Military and Intelligence Money in African Studies*" in which they "reaffirm[ed] our previously stated position to oppose the application for and acceptance of military and intelligence funding of area and language programs, projects, and research in African studies." They continued to note that, "We believe that the long-term interests of the people of the United States are best served by this separation between academic and military and defense establishments. Indeed, in the climate of the post-Cold War years in Africa and the security concerns after September 11, 2001, we believe that it is a patriotic policy to make this separation." (see below)

The Association of African Studies Programs has supported the Title VI African Studies directors in motions passed in the 1980s, reaffirmed in 2002, and choosing not to review or change that policy in 2006 or 2007. On March 31, 1993, they adopted a position "reaffirm[ing] our conviction that scholars and programs conducting research in Africa, teaching about Africa, and conducting exchange programs with Africa should not accept research, fellowship, travel, programmatic, and other funding from military and intelligence agencies or their contractual representatives - for work in the United States or abroad." At meetings of the AASP in most years since the mid 1990s and most recently in November 2006, AASP members and Title VI directors have been asked if they wanted to revisit, amend, or reconsider this resolution, and the membership declined to reopen the issue, allowing the 1993 resolution to stand.

A. Text of Resolution by the Directors of Title VI Africa National Resource Centers, 2001

We, the directors of the African Studies Title VI National Resource Centers, at our meeting during the 2001 annual meetings of the ASA, vote to reaffirm our previously stated position to oppose the application for and acceptance of military and intelligence funding of area and language programs, projects, and research in African studies. We note, too, that the African Studies Association has taken a similar stance.

We believe that the long-term interests of the people of the U.S. are best served by this separation between academic and military and defense establishments. Indeed, in the climate of the post-Cold War years in Africa and the security concerns after 9/11/2001, we believe that it is a patriotic policy to make this separation.

This separation ensures that U.S. students and faculty researchers can maintain close ties with African researchers and affiliation with and access to African institutions without question or bias. Such separation, we believe, can produce the knowledge and understanding of Africa that serves the broad interests of the people of the United States, as well as our partners in Africa. We continue to welcome, in our classes, language training, and programs where we promote knowledge about Africa, all students and visitors from all private and public organizations and all agencies of the U.S. government.

(Passed unanimously November 17, 2001, African Studies Association, Houston, Texas)

B. Text of Resolution by the Association of African Studies Programs (1993)

"We, the members of the Association of African Studies Programs (AASP) at our 1993 Spring Annual

Meeting, unanimously join the African Studies Association, Middle East Studies Association, the Latin American Studies Association, the South Asian Council of the SSRC, the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars, the Association of Asian Studies, the Boards of the Social Science Research Council and American Council of Learned Societies, and other scholars in seeking to separate foreign language and area studies in the United States from military, intelligence, and other security agency priorities and programs. We believe that long-term interests of the peoples of the United States are best served by this separation.

“Specifically, we reaffirm our conviction that scholars and programs conducting research in Africa, teaching about Africa, and conducting exchange programs with Africa should not accept research, fellowship, travel, programmatic, and other funding from military and intelligence agencies or their contractual representatives - for work in the U.S. or abroad. We are concerned especially about the Department of Defense National Security Education Act (NSEA, "the Boren Act") and the new Central Intelligence and National Security Agencies Critical Language Consortium. We call on our colleagues to abstain from these and similar funding initiatives and consortia of security agencies. These military and intelligence programs violate the integrity of the scholarly process and will hinder our relationships with African colleagues and collaborators, embarrass African universities and governments, and, thereby, decrease U.S. access to scholarly information in African studies.

“We also believe that the broader interests of the people of the United States are served best by Africanist scholarship and programs oriented to goals, issues, and regional foci which are determined openly using academic and broader public priorities, not in secret or for the narrower priorities of military, foreign policy, and intelligence agencies.

“We are not opposed to U.S. government funding of African studies. Indeed, African studies by far is the poorest of the world area studies and urgently needs an increase of funding for activities in the U.S. and in Africa. Therefore, we urge the U.S. government to increase its funding for African studies and linkages through agencies and institutions outside the security agencies.” *(Passed unanimously by all members in attendance, March 31, 1993, Washington, DC and reviewed annually at meetings of the Association.)*

C. The Board of Directors of the African Studies Association, which supported the stance of the Title VI directors and the AASP, formalized this position at a meeting at Rutgers University in April 2002, “...voted to support the language and sentiment of the Title VI African Studies Center Directors on November 17, 2001.” In November 2008, the Board also voted unanimously “...to reaffirm its April 7, 2002 motion endorsing the November 17, 2001 resolution of the Directors of Title VI National Resource Centers for Africa.”

D. Michigan State University Faculty Guidelines for Scholarly and Professional Cooperation with Colleagues in Africa

We, the Core Faculty of the African Studies Center at Michigan State University (MSU), establish the following guidelines for collaboration with African colleagues. These guidelines are offered as a guide to all those from MSU who construct agreements for research and cooperation or who work in Africa, including faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and all persons under MSU auspices or associated with MSU projects and programs in Africa. MSU faculty and students are expected to respect the laws, regulations, and customs of the African and U.S. governments and of funding agencies governing research and administration of projects in Africa, including "human subjects" regulations. These guidelines are not legally binding and do not supersede other MSU, state, federal, or scholarly rules and regulations guiding external linkages and collaboration. Rather, these guidelines are an attempt to establish parameters for cooperation and trust, which we want to grow between our university, its faculty, students, and staff, and the peoples and institutions of Africa.....

When we engage in research in Africa, we shall notify our African colleagues of the sponsors, funders, and potential uses intended for the information to be collected. We shall not engage in any research which we know or believe is funded secretly, is likely to be used for covert purposes, or has potentially negative consequences for our colleagues. *We shall make every effort to keep all of our research, instructional, and service activities free of sponsorship, direct funding, or secret uses by military and intelligence agencies of all governments. We shall not knowingly engage or participate in projects which could be reasonably construed as sustaining or strengthening the powers of political leaders or states guilty of violations of human rights.* Furthermore, we are committed to keeping in the public domain all work completed under any government sponsorship. *(Passed unanimously by the Core Faculty of the MSU African Studies Center, 1992)*