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at the Stanford University-connected think tank, a place that even its harshest critics concede is one of the most influential organizations of its type on the planet.

Like all Hoover Fellows, Meese reports to work whenever he chooses. There are no expectations about showing up at the office every day, or even every month, as long as Meese does what he is paid to do: namely, think and write. While Hoover's fellows occasionally do take on a research assistant or two to help with special projects, for most, the job is a solitary pursuit, with progress measured by the number and quality of publications produced or by the degree to which society and, in particular, government officials adopt the views proffered by these Thinkers of Big Thoughts.

Like Meese, Bunzel, Shelby Steele, and former San Jose police chief Joseph McNamara, to name a few—most of Hoover's Fellows are just that. There are only six women, compared to roughly 80 men, who currently hold the gender-specific title.

Originally founded by Herbert Hoover in 1919 to serve as a specialized collection of documents on the causes and consequences of the first world war, Hoover has grown today into a \$20 million-a-year operation housing approximately 86 resident and 50 visiting scholars, all of whom are encouraged to work on virtually anything they care about. "One of the best things about this place," notes former Nixon adviser and Reagan administration official Martin Anderson, a Hoover senior fellow, "is that, for most of the people here, if they suddenly received say \$10 million in tax-free money, they would go on doing exactly what they are doing right now."

To its critics, and they have been legion, that sounds more of a threat than a promise. At the height of the Reagan years, for example, a number of petitions were circulated on campus demanding that Stanford sever its ties with the controversial think tank. "It is a partisan political operation," charged English professor Ron Rebholz shortly after Hoover released a report that boasted about the number of its personnel who were then employed by the Reagan administration. "It's an embarrassment to this campus." Last summer Rebholz and political science professor John Manley renewed their criticisms in a letter to the editor of the university's employee newspaper in which they again demanded that Stanford's faculty be given some role in deter-