

# Washington Star-News

Tuesday, January 7, 1975  
Section C

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## What'll You Have, Rocky? Why, Blue Ribbon, Of Course!

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It is the Central Intelligence Agency's role in life to spy on people. As new countries kept popping up after World War II, the CIA expanded to keep tabs on them. Soon there were no countries left—other than the United States. Naturally, the CIA went to work. After all, spying is like any other growth industry: The need to penetrate new markets becomes compulsive.

It is Nelson Rockefeller's role in life to head up blue-ribbon commissions to look into things. He began with a comparatively modest commission to look into foreign aid for the Truman administration. That one only lasted two years. But bigger blue-ribbon commissions lurked on the horizon. Ike assigned Rocky to take a look-see at government efficiency. That commission ran from 1953 to '58 submitting a total of 14 government reorganization plans, the most prominent of which created the Department of Health, Education

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### Dowling's View

and Welfare — widely hailed since its inception as the most unmanageable organization in the whole world.

**STILL**, blue-ribboning, like spying, becomes a habit, a kind of obsession, a hunt for new and more dangerous quarry. So, having run out of free government commissions to head, Rocky founded his own personal commission to look into critical choices for America. Having footed the bill, he expected big things from this blue-ribbon panel — though not, apparently, anything as lowly as the vice-presidency. Ah well, none of Rocky's commissions has been perfect.

Rockefeller and the CIA — the biggest looker-into in America and the biggest thing worth looking into in

America. Here was a natural, a marriage made in heaven, like Holmes and Moriarity, Batman and the Penguin, James Bond and SMERSH. Except, of course, there'd be no Conan Doyle, Bob Kane or Ian Fleming to tilt the scales for justice. This time Rocky would have to do it on his own, without any forgivable loans for his gun-bearers.

Not that this is enough to deter a man hooked on Blue ribbons. Indeed, Rockefeller is already on the phone conducting what his press secretary calls a "talent hunt" for a commission staff. This maneuver is for Rocky what visiting Abercrombie and Fitch to buy an elephant gun and a pith-helmet is for a bit-game hunter.

And Rockefeller's quarry? Well, the CIA is already retreating deep into the jungle, depositing false spools, setting snares, shedding paperwork faster than CREEP.

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**SOME ARGUE** that tracking the CIA with a blue-ribbon safari of CIA boosters — and amateur hunters, at that — suggests a preordained whitewash. Why shouldn't Jerry Ford himself lead the expedition? Especially since as president he can tell his CIA employes to come clean, lest he appoint a special prosecutor to acquaint them with the tender mercies of John Sirica's judicial temperament.

But this solution is perhaps more simplistic than it would appear. For one thing, the bureaucrats at the CIA are the government-wide masters of the "Who me?" shrug and blank look, backed up by filing cabinets filled with encoded, uninitiated documents written in invisible ink. Their life style lays primary stress on duplicity, deniability, the Chekhov cat fade-out.

Nor would a straight order from Ford demanding the CIA to confess all make the best use of Rockefeller's known abilities. No, far better to send Rocky off to trudge into the trackless wilderness with his band of blue-ribbon hunters and hired gun-boys. No matter that they know not what they are hunting, whether the beast is to be brought out dead or alive, or even, given their backgrounds, whether the CIA is a trophy worth bagging at all. The lack of such information has never hindered Rockefeller in the past, not to mention his No. 1 Bwana, Reagan the Great White Hunter of California.

**THERE IS** an old calypso song that advises: Always marry a woman uglier than you. Jerry Ford was said to have ignored this principle in making Rocky his help-

mate. Jerry was too dumb to recognize his own peril, it was said.

But Jerry is smart enough to know a better mouse-trap when he sees one — especially when it's baited with the one delicacy Rocky can't resist: A blue-ribbon commission. The upshot is that Rocky is gearing up to hunt the most elusive prey in the most impenetrable jungle in town — and with Ronald Reagan creeping along one step to the rear.

They've got three months to bring their report out alive. Which, as I calculate it, makes April Fool's Day their target date for delivery. They'll probably make it, killing at least two birds with one stone.

## Inquiring Into the CIA

One can quibble about some of the people appointed by President Ford to look into charges of illegal domestic spying by the Central Intelligence Agency. The eight-man, "blue-ribbon" panel is made up largely of well-known Establishment figures, of a conservative bent. Its chairman, Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, has for years been a member of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, a singularly impotent "watchdog" over various intelligence agencies. He has also had a long association with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who, as chairman of the so-called "40 Committee" supervising CIA activities, is presumably a central figure in the investigation.

The choice of former governor Ronald Reagan has also drawn fire because of his image as an arch-conservative Republican presidential candidate. Other members of the panel include a retired Army general, two former cabinet members, a for-

mer solicitor general, a retired university president and a top labor leader.

Quibbling aside, however, this is a highly distinguished group of citizens, entirely qualified to investigate charges that the CIA exceeded the terms of its charter by keeping tabs on anti-way protesters and such dissident radicals as the Weathermen some years ago. The commission has been charged by the President to report within three months on whether the CIA acted illegally in spying on Americans in this country, and if so, to recommend safeguards against future abuses. As a basis for its investigation, the panel will be furnished with a 50-page report on the allegations submitted the other day to the President by CIA Director William E. Colby. According to White House sources, his report substantiates at least some of the published charges.

Whether the appointment of the commission will succeed in heading off a number of congressional investi-

gations of the CIA, however, is doubtful. At least two committees of the House and Senate, charged with oversight of the agency, are apparently prepared to press ahead with their own inquiries. It is fervently to be hoped that these investigations will be kept as far as possible on a non-partisan plane.

Although the CIA has come in for rather more than its share of unfavorable publicity lately, its intelligence-gathering functions remain essential to the national security. The purpose of the various inquiries is to correct the possibility of abuse in the future and restore public confidence in the integrity of the agency. Any other result would do enormous — and quite unnecessary — damage to the nation as a whole.

# CIA Gets Hold-Down Notice

By Seymour M. Hersh  
New York Times News Service

The Central Intelligence Agency has been told by a Senate committee that it must heed new legislation calling for an immediate end to most foreign CIA operations not solely aimed at the gathering of intelligence.

The new restrictions on the agency's foreign activities, cited in a letter released yesterday by Sen. John J. Sparkman, D-Ala., acting chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, came amid growing concern over the make-up of the Presidential panel

named Sunday to investigate charges of CIA spying on U.S. citizens.

Some liberal members of Congress, joined by such groups as the American Civil Liberties Union, expressed doubt over the objectivity and independence of the eight-member commission and specifically challenged President Ford's decision to name Vice President Rockefeller as its chairman.

MEANTIME, high officials of the Justice Department met late yesterday to plan their investigation into possible illegals arising

from the CIA alleged illegal domestic activities.

Justice officials said that the investigation would be conducted jointly by law enforcement divisions, under the direction of Laurence H. Silberman, deputy attorney general.

One official source said that the department's investigation would be governed by federal statutes prohibiting those acting under the color of law, which includes agents of the CIA, from conspiring to deprive citizens of their civil rights.

The new limitations on the CIA's foreign activities were approved late last year by the House and Senate with little public fanfare.

The amendment provides that no appropriated funds may be expended by or on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency for operations in foreign countries, other than activities intended solely for obtaining necessary intelligence information until the President finds that each such operation is important to the national security of the United States.

UPON MAKING that determination, the bill says, the President must report as much in a written statement to the appropriate committee.

The legislation means that pending specific presidential approval, the CIA would be unable to mount clandestine political operations against foreign governments or in other ways manipulate other countries. The amendment thus would have barred the widely publicized destabilization program begun in 1972 and 1973, whose target was the elected government of the Salvador Allende Government.