

Post 12-25-68

Mollenhoff Considered to Head USIA

Clark R. Mollenhoff, a Washington correspondent with a reputation as a hard-nosed investigative reporter, is high on the list of those being considered to head the United States Information Agency, it was learned yesterday.

Mollenhoff, correspondent for the Des Moines Register and Tribune, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1958 for his stories on labor union abuses. He has been an ardent critic of government secrecy.

Asked about the possibility of his appointment in the Nixon Administration, the reporter said, "I just couldn't get into any discussion. I can't talk about it."

Mollenhoff is familiar with the agency from his three

years' service on the U. S. Advisory Commission, on Information, overseer of the USIA.

The information agency director runs a variety of the Government's overseas propaganda and education programs, including USIA libraries in foreign countries and the Voice of America. The current director appointed by President Johnson is attorney Leonard Marks.

Other names being mentioned as possibilities for the sensitive job are: Henry Loomis, who served seven years as director of VOA, and Frank Shakespeare, CBS vice president who has been President-elect Nixon's adviser on television appearances.

Loomis, deputy commissioner of education after his USIA tenure, is currently executive director of Nixon's 21

task forces. "I don't pay any attention to these rumors," he said. "You can hear everyone from Jesus Christ to Mohammed."

Others on the rumor list include: Mark Evans, Washington TV personality and co-chairman for Nixon's inaugural balls; John Daly, who quit as Voice director in June after a spat with Marks, and Abbott Washburn, deputy director at USIA during the Eisenhower years.

Being mentioned for another high Nixon Administration job is California assemblyman John Veneman. He is a likely candidate for Under Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to serve with California's Lt. Gov. Robert Finch who will be HEW secretary.

Veneman reportedly can

have the post if potential political problems can be worked out. One is having two Californians at the top of the department. Another is the complication for California Republicans if they lose another seat in the State assembly where they hold a slim majority.

A moderate Republican, Veneman has worked closely with Finch on legislative issues and has been at odds with Gov. Ronald Reagan on occasion. Veneman chairs a legislative committee that studies health problems and he has criticized Reagan's cutbacks in the state Medicaid program.

Others being considered for high posts in HEW are James Farmer, former director of the Congress of Racial Equality, and Dr. Frank Rose, president of the University of Alabama.