

## Cord Meyer Jr. Leaving

# CIA Star's Retirement Is Puzzling to Insiders

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Cord Meyer Jr., one of the most senior CIA career officials, is retiring this week after nearly 30 years service, according to informed sources.

The 57-year-old Meyer could not be reached for comment on why he is leaving the agency at a time when it is demoralized by drastic personnel cuts and a continuing flow of disclosures about former illegal or questionable CIA practices.

Some sources said they believed Meyer was fired by Adm. Stansfield Turner, the new and controversial CIA director, but others said Meyer was leaving of his own volition.

Meyer was CIA station chief in London before his most recent assignment at the Langley, Va., headquarters of the spy agency. Informed sources said Meyer's most recent duty has involved interagency liaison.

THE JOB WAS described as hardly commensurate with his high-level GS-18 rank or past positions he has held, such as being deputy to Thomas Karamessines, former director of clandestine operations. It is in the directorate for operations, or "dirty tricks" department, that Turner has been cleaning house. Turner has fired more than 200 senior officials, including eight CIA station chiefs around the world.

Meyer has long been regarded as one of the CIA's stars. An Ivy Leaguer from a wealthy New York real estate family, Meyer was a World War II hero. He fought on Guam as a Marine lieutenant, lost an eye and his twin brother was killed at Okinawa. When the war ended, the young Yale honor student married Mary Pinchot, niece of Gifford Pinchot, former governor of Pennsylvania, and embarked on what seemed to be a crusade for mankind.

He was an aide to Harold Stassen at the San Francisco conference where the United Nations was born. He wrote a book called "Peace or Anarchy." He was one of the founders of the American Veterans Committee, an organization that set out to be that rarity, a liberal group of war veterans. And he was president of United World Federalists, an organization dedicated to saving the world from atomic destruction through limited federation.

But by the late '40s, Meyer lost any hope he may ever have had in the

United Nations' ability to prevent war. In what his friends have called a 180-degree turn, Meyer joined the CIA and, in effect, disappeared from public view. He was personally recruited by the late CIA Director Allen Dulles.

HE AND HIS WIFE were divorced. In 1964 Mrs. Meyer, then a widely known artist and Georgetown resident, was shot to death by a robber on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal towpath. Her sister, Toni, is the former wife of Washington Post Editor Ben Bradlee. The weekly newspaper, the National Enquirer, reported last year that the late Mrs. Meyer and President John F. Kennedy carried on a two-year romance while he was in the White House and on one occasion smoked marijuana there together.

Meyer surfaced only once in any major way since his recruitment into the CIA. That was 10 years ago when it was disclosed that he was the "spook" in charge of covertly subsidizing the overseas activities of the National Student Association and other youth, labor and professional associations for the CIA.

Once in the CIA and rising professionally there, he became just as dedicated to the aims of the agency as he had been to the United Nations.

More than 200 senior officers have been summarily dismissed from the CIA's clandestine service, including Deputy Director for Operations William W. Wells. Wells got the axe, informed sources at CIA said, after himself sending out the first 211 dismissal notices.

HIS DEPUTY, Theodore Shackley, CIA chief in Miami during the Cuban missile crisis and later in Southeast Asia, is being transferred to a new and less-important job on a crisis-management staff that has no direct responsibilities until a world emergency arises.

Wells will be replaced as DDO by John N. McMahon, Turner's acting deputy for intelligence and a 25-year veteran of CIA service. Insiders note that McMahon is well liked and professional, but that his background has been almost entirely technical and scientific. McMahon, for example, was closely linked with the U-2 high altitude spy plane program that worked so well for the U.S., but he has had almost no experience at clandestine operations involving people or the running of agents.