

William Colby, New Director of the CIA: He's Changing the Agency's Image

by Lloyd Shearer

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The Central Intelligence Agency is suffering from a badly tarnished image, and its new director, William Egan Colby, 54, is charged with bur-
nishing it.

This is no easy job, since over the years the CIA has generated on the domestic front a closed, mysterious, excessively secretive and sinister image. It has also violated the legislation of its origin.

Created in 1947 specifically to gather "Foreign Intelligence," it has inter-
vened in American student organiza-
tions. It has trained about 50 police of-
ficers from a dozen American cities in

intelligence theory and technique.

And worse yet, from a public rela-
tions viewpoint, it has stupidly involv-
ed itself in the domestic scandals of the
Nixon Administration by furnishing
equipment to E. Howard Hunt Jr. to
help break into and burglarize the Be-
verly Hills office of Dr. Lewis Fielding,
psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg of Pen-
tagon Papers notoriety.

The CIA also provided Hunt with
false identity equipment so that he
could fly to Denver and try to talk Dita
Beard into denying that she ever wrote
the infamous ITT memo, coupling a
favorable anti-trust Justice Department

ruling with the promise of a \$400,000
contribution to the Republican cam-
paign fund of 1972. Moreover, it al-
lowed its personnel to prepare a psy-
chological profile on Ellsberg for the
White House.

Leading participants

And two of its former employees, E.
Howard Hunt and James McCord, were
leading characters in the Watergate
fiasco, to say nothing of the four Cu-
ban-Americans who were hired to do
the actual dirty work.

Overseas, of course, where most of
its clandestine as well as overt activities

take place, the CIA has hired merce-
naries in Southeast Asia, overflowed the
Soviet Union, dropped agents into Red
China, structured its own airline out of
Taiwan, conspired to overthrow various
regimes in various parts of the world
from Iran to Cambodia to Cuba, and in
general, has consistently intervened in
the domestic affairs of foreign nations.

With that agency background of con-
troversial hits and misses, Director
Colby has his image-changing work cut
out for him. He is approaching it with
care and vigor. He is inviting newsmen
to lunch with him, to ask questions, to
visit CIA headquarters in Langley, Va.,



William Colby and his wife Barbara are the only children in their respective families. As a result of childhood loneliness, they opted

for a large family. They had five children, four of whom are still living: Jonathan, 27; Carl, 23; Paul, 18, and Christine, 14.



Colby served two tours of duty in Vietnam. There, his involvement in the pacification program turned out to be the most controversial segment of his intelligence career.

where the access road now bears a sign, plainly lettered CIA. It used to say Bureau of Public Roads. He even allowed PARADE to interview his wife, the former Barbara Heinzen, a delightful woman with printer's ink in her blood who helped put him through Columbia University Law School by working as a department store copywriter and editor of a New York State labor publication. Soft-speaking and low-key, Colby, a 24-year unpretentious veteran of the spy business, believes in opening up the CIA without disclosing its secrets.

He is allowing the TV networks to take a guided tour of the agency. He is permitting his men to identify themselves over the telephone instead of switching the caller to an extension number. He is preparing succinct intelligence summaries instead of ponderous, bulky reports and forwarding them to interested parties with a phone number to call in case they need more detailed information.

Conscious of public opinion

He is aware of the mounting public criticism which holds that his 16,000-man agency is spending approximately \$750 million of the taxpayers' money each year without enough public accountability through the various Congressional subcommittees charged with tracking the CIA. And he is mindful of inadequacies in the agency's recruiting program, especially of minorities.

"What we're looking for," he explains, "are young men and women who are interested in intellectual and technical pursuits. Intelligence is technical these days. We're in the market for something like 130 specialist disciplines, running all the way from nuclear physicists to financial economists. We need every kind of specialty to help in our total intelligence process.

"We especially need women and blacks. We don't have enough of them as professional intelligence officers. A few months ago I gathered together all the middle managers in the agency and I gave them a very direct talk. I told them I wanted to see the number of blacks and the number of women in

responsible jobs rise sharply.

Opportunity and challenge

"We also need," Colby concedes, "some fellows who will run some clandestine operations for us. They have to be fellows with a little bit of adventure in their spirit and frequently quite a lot of courage. But I'm not going around saying, 'Join the CIA instead of the Fish and Wildlife Service.' And I'm not going around saying, 'Join the CIA and save the world.' People who want an interesting, fascinating challenging career can find it in the CIA, and that includes those who are more student than activist, those who are more ac-

tivist than student, those who are more the engineer than liberal art buff. We're wide open for the person who believes we have an essential function to perform."

According to Colby, the primary function of the CIA is apple-pie simple: "We gather information from all over the world in order to learn as much as we can about foreign problems so that we can decide what to do about them.

"We have various ways of gathering information—reading newspapers, taking photographs, listening to electronic noises in the atmosphere, and employing clandestine activity where it's essential. We gather the information, analyze it, think about it, come to some judgment or estimate the situation and relay it to the national leadership, executive, legislative, and indirectly, even to the public so that the U.S. can make informed judgments and decisions."

Colby, who will finish his first year as director of the CIA on Sept. 4 this year, believes the agency is indispensable, "because I do not think the U.S. today can afford the luxury of being blind in the world or of hoping to learn enough of what's going on through the public press and other media."

He knows, he says, that the U.S. has no intention of invading the Soviet Union and is sure the Soviet Union has no intention of invading us. "But I think the Soviet Union has a philosophy which holds that America is run by an



Colby was sworn in as director of the CIA on Sept. 4, 1973. He is the second career intelligence officer to achieve that rank. The first was Richard Helms who is now our ambassador to Iran. Looking on at the

White House ceremony are President Richard Nixon, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Thomas Moorer, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, and Colby's wife.

imperialist conspiracy, a class society and that there must be, according to their doctrine, a revolution, a change in our society.

"It's a religious belief, and from time to time the Soviets have engaged in the process of trying to encourage it along.

"America has gotten into several wars in this century, started by people who thought we either would not or could not stand up to them. Kaiser Wilhelm thought we would not join World War I. Adolf Hitler was quite certain that we would stay out of World War II. Josef Stalin thought we would not fight in Korea and Ho Chi Minh certainly felt we could not stop his effort to take over South Vietnam. Where people realized we not only could but would fight—for example, in the Berlin Crisis, the Cuban Missile Crisis—we have had no war. Having a CIA is like having insurance. You pay for it, but hopefully it's worth it."

Head of 'black operations'

Bill Colby, 5 feet 11, thin, trim, with pale blue myopic eyes helped by glasses, is a lawyer by training. He looks like a lawyer, also like a teacher, a minister, a banker, a doctor, anything except what he is—the nation's chief spooksmen who for years was deputy director of the CIA's clandestine or "black operations" directorate.

He was born in St. Paul, Minn., in

1920, the only child of Elbridge Colby, an Army officer. He was reared at various Army posts, spent three years of his youth (1929-32) in Tientsin, China, entered Princeton in 1936 and was graduated four years later. He entered Columbia University Law School but left after his first year to join the parachute corps.

"He had to memorize the eye chart in order to get in," his wife reveals. "But he memorized one line backwards. When he took the eye test, he cited the letters incorrectly. He wanted so badly to get in, however, that they looked the other way and the examining officer said, 'So long as you can see the ground we'll take you.'"

Colby served as a staff lieutenant in the 462nd Parachute Artillery Battalion (he had attended the ROTC at Princeton) and was fired when a new commander joined the 462nd and replaced the old staff with a new one. Lieutenant Colby found himself in a replacement pool, which he didn't like. When an officer came through, looking for volunteers for an overseas operation, code-named JEDBURGH, he quickly volunteered, thus becoming a member of Gen. William Donovan's intelligence service, the Office of Strategic Services. As a member of the JED's, Colby parachuted in uniform to help resistance groups in France during the weeks following the Allied landing.

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He was so cool and outstanding in action that he was chosen despite his young age, 24, to command a group of Norwegian-American paratroopers charged with sabotaging German railway operations in Norway. According to Harris Smith, an historian of the OSS: "The drop was finally made from American aircraft staffed by inexperienced crews in late March, 1945. Two of the planes crashed and ten OSS men were killed. Colby and those OSS men who did reach their destination were forced to operate with a minimum of supplies; the American planes had dropped their equipment a bit off target—in Sweden."

College sweetheart

Discharged from the Army as a major, young Colby married Barbara Heinzen whom he'd dated in 1941 when she was a junior at Barnard College and he a first-year law student at Columbia.

They were married in St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, and then Colby reentered Columbia Law. Before he was graduated he went to work for Maj. Gen. Bill Donovan's prestigious New York law firm, Donovan, Leisure, Newton, Lombard and Irvine, many of whose members had served with him in the OSS.

In 1949 after a two-year stint with the Donovan firm, Colby joined the National Labor Relations Board in Washington. He wasn't particularly happy or fulfilled as a lawyer, and one evening he remarked to his wife, "I don't know. I just don't want to go through life saving \$100,000 a year for American Can

—or some other corporation."

Call of the CIA

When the Korean War broke out, Bill Colby, an adventurer by heart, joined the Central Intelligence Agency. Under one guise or another he has been with the agency ever since, generally fighting communism.

In Stockholm from 1951 to 1953 he was listed as a foreign service attaché. In Rome from 1953 to 1958, where he was unofficially known as "one of Clare Boothe Luce's boys," he was officially carried as "first secretary and special assistant to the ambassador." In Rome where his wife recalls, "we lived five of our loveliest years," Colby worked underground to prevent the Italian Communist Party from winning a majority in Parliament.

Came next his first three-year stint in Vietnam, ostensibly as first secretary of the American Embassy in Saigon, his first assignment in Asia. Colby was, of course, much more than that. He was probably the shining light of the intelligence community, performing so well in his situational assignments and various cloak-and-dagger assignments that he was brought back to CIA headquarters in Washington and appointed chief of its Far Eastern Division.

The most controversial segment of William Colby's intelligence career concerns his involvement in the Vietnamese pacification program known as "CORDS," an acronym for "Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support." One part of this program was the operation code-named Phoenix.

Just as he was about to become chief of the CIA's Soviet operations in 1968, Colby was sent back to Vietnam on the request of Robert Komer, a former CIA man, and given ambassadorial rank. He was placed in charge of South Vietnam's overall pacification program, supposedly designed "to win the hearts and minds of the people."

Abuses during Phoenix

The Phoenix portion of the program, which aimed to neutralize the Vietcong infrastructure, involved the capture, imprisonment, defection, and murder of the Vietcong. There were abuses in its execution, and as Colby conceded in February, 1970, to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "... I would not want to testify that nobody was killed wrongly or executed in this kind of a program. I think it has probably happened, unfortunately." But there are excesses in all wars, and it seems manifestly unfair to brand Colby a "mass murderer and war criminal" which was done by those in the intelligence community who last year opposed his appointment as CIA director. No one ever called him such names in World War II when he was killing Germans. And few people realize how chaotic "Phoenix" was until he took it over.

Legendary on posters

Colby does not look or act like an exquisitely sensitive man, but during the period of his Senatorial confirmation, when posters bearing his photo with the legend, "mass murderer and war criminal," were tacked to posts and walls in Washington, D.C., he was

deeply hurt. One night he drove home to the unpretentious house he owns in Springfield, Va., a capital suburb, plaintively asked his wife, "How does it feel being married to a war criminal?"

A wife's feelings

"My heart went out to him," Barbara Colby recalls, "because if ever there was a good, decent man who has served his country and his family—Bill has served every President from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Nixon—well, it's Bill."

Although Colby is a Nixon appointee, he, unlike so many others, is not about to follow orders blindly or to traffic with White House types like Ehrlichman and Dean who sought to compromise the CIA in the Watergate coverup.

"I will do the proper and legitimate things under the statute that CIA has been charged to do," he says. "And if I'm asked to do something beyond that legal authority, then I won't do it. I'll resign."

In line with that, Colby recently supported an amendment to the National Security Act of 1947 which originally authorized the founding of the CIA. The amendment was introduced by Sen. William Proxmire (D., Wis.) to protect the CIA from abuses emanating from the political system. It limits the CIA to its basic mission of collecting foreign intelligence and closes a loophole in the 1947 act which permitted the agency to get itself so disastrously involved in domestic intelligence.

Under Colby's regime the CIA is not only projecting a more open and candid image, it is undergoing a structural transformation. Colby has abolished the 10-man Board of National Estimates founded in 1950 and replaced it with a group of national intelligence officers, each charged with preparing a series of short-term intelligence assessments of their special areas. He has reduced the number of covert, so-called "black operations" largely because satellite equipment is so sophisticated today that it can photograph and relay far more reliable information than that provided by an agent dropped by plane or landed by submarine on foreign land.

A practicing Roman Catholic, a pillar in community affairs, a hard-working (Saturdays until 3 p.m.) civil servant who earns \$42,000 a year, a good and understanding father to his four surviving children—a fifth died early this year of epilepsy—a loving and dutiful husband, William Colby has been a professional intelligence officer for half his adult years.

No flag lapel pin

The United States is indeed fortunate in having him. As a lawyer he could be earning three times in civilian life what he earns in government service. "But it wouldn't give me the satisfaction," he says, "that I find in this job." Colby wears no flag pins in his lapel to demonstrate his patriotism. It goes much deeper than that.