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Future Management of the CIA

Three of the men who have been mentioned as possible heads of U.S. intelligence under Jimmy Carter have all agreed, in conversations held during the past week, that major reforms are inevitable. All three deny, of course, that they are candidates, but they have the qualifications for the job.

James Schlesinger, the former Secretary of Defense and Director of CIA, is being mentioned for both posts, but some of Carter's advisers say that they would be most surprised if he got the Pentagon job. They would find his return to the CIA less disconcerting.

Tom Hughes, the State Department's head of intelligence in the Johnson administration, is now president of the Carnegie Peace Endowment. He would no doubt prefer to be the next Secretary of State—but he has just published a pamphlet describing how the next head of the CIA should handle his job.

Ray Cline, the CIA's former deputy director, resigned as Henry Kissinger's head of intelligence at the State Department because he disagreed with his boss. Cline also says that he has "no plans" to return to the government—but his book on reforming the CIA was published at the very time that Carter began to consider how to fill the post.

Schlesinger began a major reorganiza-

tion of the CIA during the Watergate scandal, but was then transferred to the Pentagon. Even so stern a critic as the Senate Committee on Intelligence concluded that if Schlesinger had remained at the CIA, he would have assumed a more vigorous role in attempting to control the intelligence community. In his brief tenure, he pensioned off some 2,000 CIA men, mostly in the "department of dirty tricks." His primary concern, the Senate committee concluded, was with raising the quality of intelligence analysis—which is something that any head of intelligence under Carter would be expected to concentrate on.

It is impossible to summarize in this space the six hours of conversation with the three men, and conversations with other candidates who did not wish to be quoted, but they all agree that a way must be found to separate covert activities from the broader, more important task of analysis. When Schlesinger was at the CIA, he tried to improve the quality of intelligence by breaking down the wall that divided the covert and the analytical parts of the agency. But he now says that public reaction to the recent revelations about covert activities makes it necessary to rebuild the wall, so that analytical intelligence can be seen as the quite separate and respectable pursuit that it is.

Ray Cline goes so far as to propose the setting up of what he calls the central institute of foreign affairs research, a body which would carry out much of the analytical work now done not only at the CIA, but also at State and Defense. He says in his new book, "Secrets, Spies, and Scholars," that much of the institute's work should be freely published. When pressed, he concedes that something like 75 per cent of the intelligence product now could be adapted for publication.

What would these men tell Carter if he were to interview them for the job? Cline believes that the new organization should be headed by a man who is by training a scholar in social sciences, preferably one with experience in government, best of all in intelligence work—a description which, not unnaturally, happens to fit him quite closely. Schlesinger says that the right man ought to be familiar either with intelligence analysis, or with technology which now plays so important a part in intelligence work, but not necessarily with "operations"—the synonym for dirty tricks, which happens to be the area in which he has no experience.

Tom Hughes said that "you would look for someone who does not have widely known, strong views on policy." A man with such views, he fears, would

"manipulate the intelligence community" in behalf of the policies he favored.

Other experienced Washington figures suggest that Carter should beware of Schlesinger's ideological bias, which, they argue, was clearly evident both at the CIA and at the Pentagon. But Schlesinger himself insists that the intelligence product should be as free as possible from ideological bias. The higher the degree of ideological bias, he says, the greater will be the blind spots. He sees himself as an analyst, "as unbiased a type as you can find." When pressed for examples, he will recall, for instance, that he did not want the U.S. to become involved in Vietnam. "I anticipated that this was going to end as a bloody war," he says, "in which we would inherit the mantle of colonialism."

This is not the picture of Schlesinger which most people have, but it still does not make him quite as unbiased as he believes himself to be. Schlesinger's qualifications as the man who could reform the vast conglomerate of U.S. intelligence agencies are recognized by some of the most outspoken—and most knowledgeable—critics of the intelligence establishment. But they also believe that any tendency he may have to impart his own bias to intelligence conclusions could be even more disastrous

for U.S. policy and the CIA than anything that happened in recent years.

The danger could, perhaps, be averted by a reorganization that would allow several competing centers of analysis to exist side by side. Tom Hughes argues in his pamphlet on intelligence, published by the Foreign Policy Association, against the notion of one grand central intelligence machine, with perfect subdivisions, no overlaps, and therefore no differences. He does not mind duplication, because the same subject may be analyzed differently under different auspices—and the differences could be useful to the policy maker.

Competing centers of intelligence analysis already exist—for instance, at the CIA, the Pentagon, and the State Department—but their rivalry has not always been healthy. If Schlesinger could present Carter with a workable proposal which would bring all the intelligence agencies under one umbrella, as most reformers advocate, while at the same time insuring that they are free to develop their own conclusions without ideological bias, his own or any other, he may deserve the job of "intelligence overlord." But if he cannot satisfy Carter on that, the post may well go to another candidate—and there are more than the three named in this article.