The C.I.A.: Qualities of Director Viewed as Chief Rein on Agency

Following is the last of five articles on the Central Intelligence Agency. The articles are by a team of New York Times correspondents consisting of Tom Wicker, John W. Finney, Max Frankel, E. W. Kenworthy and others.

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WASHINGTON, April 28 — As copious evidence of a Soviet military build-up in Cuba, including the installation of anti-aircraft missiles, poured into Washington in the summer of 1962, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, John A. McCone, had a strong hunch about its meaning.

He believed such an arsenal half-way around the world from Moscow had to be designed ultimately to protect even more important installations — long-range offensive missiles and nuclear weapons yet to be provided.

Mr. McCone told President Kennedy about his hunch but specified that it was a personal guess entirely lacking in concrete supporting evidence. He scrupulously refused to impose his hunch on the contradictory documentary and photoanalysis evidence being provided by the intelligence community over which he presided. He continued to pass to the President and his advisers reports and estimates—based on all available evidence—that the Soviet Union was not likely to do what he believed in his heart it was doing.

When the evidence that the Russians had implanted offensive missiles in Cuba did come in, Mr. McCone was among those around the President who argued for quick, decisive air action before the missiles could become operative. But when the President decided on his blockade-and-ultimatum policy, Mr. McCone loyally supported it and helped carry it out.

In 1963, Mr. McCone was personally in favor of the proposed limited nuclear test-ban treaty. He had backed such proposals since his years as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission in the Eisenhower Administration.

Nevertheless, because of his desire that the facts should be known as fully as possible, he furnished a C.I.A. staff expert to assist Senator John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, chairman of an Armed Services subcommittee and an opponent of the treaty. This angered the White House and the State Department, but it was consistent with Mr. McCone's view of the C.I.A.'s role in informing the Government as fully as possible.

It is in this kind of intel-

Continued on Page 18, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5

lectual effort to separate fact from fancy, evidence from suspicion, decision from preference, opinion from policy and consequence from guess that effective control of the C.I.A. must begin, in the opinion of most of those who have been surveyed by The New York Times.

And it is when these qualities have been lacking, the same officials and experts believe, that the C.I.A. most often has become involved in those activities that have led to widespread charges that it is not controlled, makes its own policy and undermines that of its political masters.

Inevitably, the contrast is drawn between John McCone and Allen W. Dulles, one of the most charming and imaginative men in Washington, under whose direction the C.I.A. grew to its present proportions and importance.

A Gambling Man

Digging a wiretap tunnel from West to East Berlin, flying spy planes beyond the reach of antiaircraft weapons over the Soviet Union and finding a Laotian ruler in the cafes of Paris were romantic projects that kindled Mr. Dulles's enthusiasm. Sometimes the profits were great; sometimes the losses were greater.

To Allen Dulles, a gambling man, the possibility of the losses were real but the chance of success was more important.

A 20 per cent chance to overthrow a leftist regime in Guatemala through a C.I.A.-sponsored invasion was all he wanted to give it a try. He charmed President Eisenhower with tales of extraordinary snooping on such rulers as President Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic and with accounts of the romantic derring-do of Kermit Roosevelt in arousing Iranian mobs against Mohammed Mossadegh to restore the Shah to his throne.

As long as his brother, John Foster Dulles, was Secretary of State, Allen Dulles had no need to chafe under political "control." The Secretary had an almost equal fascination for devious, back-alley adventure in what he saw as a worldwide crusade.

Personal Judgments

Neither brother earned his high reputation by taut and businesslike administration. Both placed supreme confidence in their personal judgments.

Colleagues recall many occasions on which Allen Dulles would cut off debate about, say, the intentions of a foreign head of state with the remark: "Oh, I know him personally. He would never do that sort of thing."

Allen Dulles was also an accomplished politician. Throughout his regime he maintained the best of relations with the late Clarence Cannon of Missouri, who as chairman of the House Appropriations Committee was the key figure in providing C.I.A. funds.

Mr. Dulles kept personal control of the selection of other members of Congress with responsibility for overseeing the C.I.A., with the result that he invariably had on his side those members of the Congressional establishment who could carry the rest of Congress with them.

Thus, in the Dulles period at the C.I.A., there was a

peculiar set of circumstances. An adventurous director, inclined to rely on his own often extremely good and informed intuition, widely traveled, read and experienced, with great prestige and the best connections in Congress, whose brother held the second-highest office in the Administration, and whose President completely trusted and relied upon both, was able to act almost at will and was shielded from any unpleasant consequences.

Kennedy Kept Him in Office

When the Eisenhower Administration came to an end in 1961, Allen Dulles's reappointment was one of President Kennedy's first acts. Mr. Dulles, like J. Edgar Hoover, who was reappointed head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation at the same time, had great prestige and was thought to lend continuity and stability to the new Administration.

In fact, Mr. Dulles's continuance in office set the stage for the Bay of Pigs and the great crisis of the C.I.A.

In that incredible drama of 1961, it was Mr. Dulles's weaknesses as C.I.A. director — rather than, as so often before, his strengths—that came to the fore. He was committed to the Cuba invasion plan, at all costs, against whatever objections. The advocate overcame the planner.

As President Kennedy and others interposed reservations and qualifications, Mr. Dulles and his chief lieutenant, Richard M. Bissell, made whatever changes were required in order to keep the plan alive. For instance, they switched the landing site from the Trinidad area to the Bay of Pigs, to achieve more secrecy, thereby accepting an inferior beachhead site and separating the refugee force of invaders from the Escambray Mountains, where they were supposed to operate as guerrillas, by 80 miles of swamp.

Above all, lacking his old rapport with President Eisenhower and his brother, lacking a coldly objective approach to his plan, Mr. Dulles never realized that President Kennedy suffered from more than tactical reservations.

These misgivings—in reality a reluctance to approve the invasion — forced the frequent changes in plans, each weakening the whole, until whatever chance of success there might have been was gone.

At a Critical Hour

It was John McCone who replaced Allen Dulles at the C.I.A.'s most critical hour. After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, it had barely escaped dismemberment, or at least the divorce of its Intelligence and Operations Divisions. There were also new cries for greater control, and the men around President Kennedy were suspicious of, if not hostile to, the agency.

Like Mr. Dulles, Mr. McCone devoted much energy to resisting a formal Congressional watchdog committee, to courting the senior members of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees on Capitol Hill and to converting the members of a resuscitated Presidential advisory board to his view of intelligence policies.

But those who observed him work believe he also brought a keen intelligence and energy to a tough-minded administration of the agency itself and to careful, challenging study of its intelligence estimates and recommendations.

He broke down the rigid division between operations and analysis that had kept the C.I.A.'s analysts—incredible as it seems—ignorant of the Operations Division's specific plan to invade Cuba. And he began to subject the C.I.A.'s own action programs to vigorous review and criticism by the agency's own experts.

Incisive Questions

The intellectual level of meetings among intelligence officials at the C.I.A. and other agencies improved greatly under Mr. McCone, primarily because he put difficult and incisive questions to those preparing formal analyses and plans, forcing them to challenge and defend their own judgments.

Above all, he set the hard example himself of putting aside personal preference, informed guesses and long gambles in favor of realistic weighing of available evidence and close adherence to administration policy.

He brought specialists and experts into conferences and decision-making at a much higher level of policy than before. Often he took such men with him to meetings at the Cabinet level. This exposed them to policy considerations as never before, and put policy-makers more closely in touch with the experts on whose "facts" they were acting.

As chairman of the United States Intelligence Board — a group that brings together representatives from the Defense Intelligence Agency, the State Department's intelligence unit and others—Mr. McCone won a reputation for objectivity by frequently overruling the proposals of his own agency, the C.I.A.

Some Criticism, Too

His regime was not without its critics. Many officials believe he narrowed the C.I.A.'s range of interests, which was as wide as the horizons under the imaginative Allen Dulles. For instance, they say, he was slow to mobilize the C.I.A. to obtain information about nuclear programs in India, Israel and other nations.

Mr. McCone also tried, but failed, to end interagency rivalries. He spent much time in bitter dispute with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara about divisions of labor and costs in technological programs and about chains of command in Vietnam. He is reported to have feared the growth of the Defense Intelligence Agency as an invasion of C.I.A. territory.

With the State Department, too, rivalry continued—and still does. Much of this can be attributed, on the diplomats' side, to the C.I.A.'s readier access to the upper levels of government and to its financial ability to underwrite the kind of research and field operations that State would like to do for itself.

On the agency's side, there is undoubtedly some resentment at the State Department's recently increased political control of C.I.A. operations. For instance, until April 28, 1965, the day President Johnson ordered the Marines into Santo Domingo, the C.I.A. had reported the possibility of a rebellion and it knew of three Communist-controlled groups functioning in the Dominican Republic, but the agency had not suggested an imminent threat of a Communist takeover.

When the President and his advisers became persuaded that there was such a threat, however, C.I.A. agents supplied confirming intelligence — some of it open to challenge by an alert reader. C.I.A. officials seem a little red-faced about this compliance, and the intimation is that the C.I.A. may have gone overboard in trying not to undermine but to substantiate a political policy decision.

Within the Bounds of Policy

Mr. McCone's pride and the fierce loyalty to the agency that he developed made him resentful of Congressional and public criticism, not always to his own advantage. Nevertheless, as a result of his single-minded efforts to control himself and his agency, other former members of the Kennedy Administration—many of whom opposed his appointment—now find it hard to recall any time when Mr. McCone or the C.I.A. in his time overstepped the bounds of policy deliberately.

Thus, they are inclined to cite him as proof of the theory that in the process of government men are more important than mechanics—and in support of the widespread opinion among present and former officials that the problem of controlling the C.I.A. must begin with men inside the agency itself.

The far more general belief is that Congress ought to have a much larger voice in the con-

trol of the agency. This belief is reinforced by the fact that the Congressional control that now exists is ill-informed, in the hands of a chosen few, subject to what the agency wishes to tell even these few, and occasionally apathetic.

There are four subcommittees of the Senate and House Armed Services and Appropriations Committees to which the director reports.

Mr. McCone met about once a month with the subcommittees. The present director, Adm. William F. Raborn, meets with them somewhat more often.

Conflicting Views

There are conflicting opinions on the value of these sessions. Some who participate say that they are "comprehensive," that the director holds back nothing in response to questions, that he goes into "great detail on budget and operations" and is "brutally frank." Others say that "we are pretty well filled in" but that the subcommittees get no precise information on the budget or the number of employes and that the director reveals only as much as he wants to.

These conflicting views probably reflect the composition and interests of the subcommittees. Those on the Senate side are said to be "lackadaisical" and "apathetic," with some Senators not wanting to know too much. The House subcommittees are said to be "alert, interested and efficient," with members insisting on answers to questions.

Representative George H. Mahon, Democrat of Texas, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, has warned the Administration it must itself police the C.I.A. budget more stringently than that of any other agency because he and other Congressmen believe they should protect the sensitive C.I.A. budget, as it comes to them, from the Congressional economy bloc and the agency's more determined critics.

As a result of this and other Congressional representations, the C.I.A. "slush fund" for emergencies has been reduced below $100-million. And—much to Mr. McCone's annoyance—President Johnson's economy drives resulted in an Administration reduction in the agency's general budget.

Three things, however, are clear about this Congressional oversight.

No Real Control

One is that the subcommittee members exercise no real control because they are not informed of all covert operations, either before or after they take place.

The second point regarding Congressional oversight is that a handful of men like Mr. Cannon and Senator Russell, with their great prestige, do not so much control the C.I.A. as shield it from its critics.

Finally, even these establishment watchdogs can be told just as much as the C.I.A. director thinks they should know. In fact, one or two of the subcommittee members are known to shy away from too much secret information, on the ground that they do not want either to know about "black" operations or take the chance of unwittingly disclosing them.

For all these reasons, there is a large body of substantial opinion—in and out of Congress—that favors more specific monitoring of intelligence activity.

The critics insist that Congress has a duty periodically to investigate the activities of the C.I.A. and other intelligence arms; to check on the C.I.A.'s relations with other executive departments, study its budget and exercise greater and more intelligent oversight than the present diffused subcommittees, which operate without staff and with little or no representation from members most concerned with foreign affairs.

A Fountain of Leaks

But the overwhelming consensus of those most knowledgeable about the C.I.A. now and in the past, does not support the idea that Congress should "control" the C.I.A. A number of reasons are adduced:

¶Security. Congress is the well-known fountain of more leaks than any other body in Washington. The political aspirations of and pressures on members make them eager to appear in print; they do not have the executive responsibility weighing on them, and many C.I.A. operations could provide dramatic passages in campaign speeches.

¶Politics. Any standing committee would have to be bipartisan. This would give minority party members — as well as dissidents in the majority — unparalleled opportunities to learn the secrets of the executive branch and of foreign policy, and to make political capital of mistakes or controversial policies. Republicans, for instance, armed with all the facts and testimony that investigation could have disclosed, might well have wrecked the Kennedy Administration after the Bay of Pigs.

¶The Constitution. The C.I.A. acts at the direction of the President and the National Security Council. If a Congressional committee had to be informed in advance of C.I.A. activities, covert and overt, there might well be a direct Congressional breach of the constitutional freedom of the executive branch and of the President's right to conduct foreign policy.

¶Control. If a carefully chosen committee conscientiously tried to avoid all these dangers, it could probably exercise little real "control" of the kind critics desire. At best, for instance, it could probably do little more than investigate some questionable operations in secrecy and after they had taken place, and then report privately to the President, who might or might not respond.

¶Ideology. Congress is full of "professional anti-Communists" and has not a few "professional liberals." In its worldwide activities, the C.I.A. regularly takes covert actions that would profoundly offend either or both—for instance, supporting some non-Communist leftist against a military regime, or vice versa. To report this kind of activity to Congress would be certain to set off public debate and recriminations and lay a whole new set of domestic political pressures on the agency.

¶Policy. Knowledgeable men in Washington do not accept the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy as a desirable model for oversight of the C.I.A. They point out that the Atomic Energy Committee has developed its own staff of experts in its field, in some cases abler men than those in the Atomic Energy Commission, and these Congressional experts now have a vested interest in their own ideas of atomic policy and projects.

An Empire Foreseen

This, these sources fear, would be the outcome of a joint committee on intelligence—a new intelligence empire on Capitol Hill that could in time exert a direct policy influence on the C.I.A., separate from and challenging the President's policy decisions. This would diffuse rather than focus power over the agency and confuse rather than clarify the problem of control.

Other recommendations for a Congressional intervention have been advanced. The most drastic—and in some ways the most interesting—would be to legislate the separation of the C.I.A.'s intelligence and analysis function from the operations or "dirty tricks" function.

President Kennedy, after the Bay of Pigs, rejected a proposal to create a new and autonomous intelligence and analysis agency. This plan would have covert political operations under a small and largely anonymous section of the State Department.

Efficiency Drop Feared

If accepted, this plan would

have had the great advantage, in terms of control, of divorcing "black" operators and their schemes from the source of information on which the decision to act must be made. Thus, the covert operators would have no more information than anyone else in government, no power to shape, color, withhold or manufacture information, and could, in effect, do only what they were told to do by political authorities.

It would also reduce the sheer size and power of the C.I.A. within the Government, much of which is based on its combination of functions—providing information, proposing action and having the ability to carry it out.

On the other hand, as Mr. Kennedy concluded, such a divorce might well lower the total overt and covert efficiency of

the intelligence effort. Those who favor the present combined agency insist that intelligence and action officers must be close enough to advise one another—with analysts checking operators, but also profiting from the operators' experiences in the field.

Moreover, they point out that so-called paramilitary operations are more easily transferred on paper than in fact to the Defense Department. They note that the department, for instance, can by law ship arms only to recognized governments that undertake certain obligations in return, and cannot legally arm or assist, say, rebel groups or mercenaries, even for laudable purposes.

Nor could the Defense Department easily acquire the skill, the convenient "covers," the political talents and bureaucratic flexibility required for quick, improvised action in time of crisis.

As evidence of that, there is the case of the successful political and military organization of hill tribesmen in Vietnam carried out by the C.I.A. some years ago. When the Army won control of the operation in a bureaucratic in-fight, the good beginning was lost in a classic bit of military mismanagement, and the tribal project collapsed.

As for the State Department's taking over covert operations, the opponents ask, how could the department survive the inevitable exposure of some bit of political skulduggery in some other country, when it is supposed to be the simon-pure vessel of the United States' proper diplomatic relations?

A Less Drastic Plan

A far less drastic but perhaps more feasible approach would be to add knowledgeable Congressional experts in foreign affairs to the military and appropriations subcommittees that now check on the C.I.A.

Along this line is the idea backed by Senator McCarthy—that a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should be added to the existing watchdogs.

Such men as J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mike Mansfield of Montana, the Senate Democratic leader, and George D. Aiken of Vermont, a Republican member of the Foreign Relations Committee, might bring greater balance and sensitivity to the present group of watchdog subcommittees.

Most of those interviewed in the New York Times survey for these articles also believed that the C.I.A. should have no influence on the selection of members of the subcommittees.

While the excuse for giving the agency a voice is to make sure that only "secure" and "responsible" members of Congress are chosen, the net effect is that the agency usually manages to have itself checked by its best friends in Congress and by those who can best shield it from more critical members like Senator McCarthy and Senator Mansfield.

Fund Slash Proposed

Finally, many observers consider that it might be useful for some select, nonpermanent committee of independent-minded members of Congress to make a thorough, responsible study of the whole intelligence community. Such a group might set out to determine how much of the community's activity is actually needed or useful, and how much of the whole apparatus might be reduced in size and expense—and thus in the kind of visibility that brings the C.I.A. into disrepute overseas and at home.

One former offical said quite seriously that he was not sure how much the nation would lose in vital services if all the activities of the C.I.A apart from those dealing with technological espionage—satellites and the like—had their budgets arbitrarily reduced by half.

A number of others suggested that it was possible for a great many of the C.I.A.'s information-gathering functions and study projects to be handled openly by the State Department, if only Congress would appropriate the money for it.

But the State Department is traditionally starved for funds by members of Congress who scoff at the "cookie-pushers" and the "striped-pants boys." The same members are often quite willing to appropriate big sums, almost blindly, for the secret, "tough" and occasionally glamorous activities of the spies, saboteurs and mysterious experts of the C.I.A.

As another example of what a specially organized, responsible Congressional investigation might discover, some officials expressed their doubts about the National Security Agency. This Defense Department arm specializes in making and breaking codes, spends about $1-billion a year—twice as much as the C.I.A.—and, in the opinion of many who know its work, hardly earns its keep.

But to most of those interviewed, the question of control ultimately came down to the caliber and attitude of the men who run the C.I.A., and particularly its director.

The present director, Admiral Raborn, is a man who earned a high reputation as the developer of the Navy's Polaris missile but who had no previous experience in intelligence work. Nor is he particularly close to President Johnson or to other high Administration officials.

Inauspicious Start

The admiral took office on a bad day—the one on which Mr. Johnson dispatched the Marines to Santo Domingo last April.

Admiral Raborn and his predecessor, Mr. McCone, lunched together in downtown Washington that afternoon, unaware of the imminent intervention. As they parted, Admiral Raborn offered Mr. McCone a ride to the Langley, Va., headquarters of the C.I.A But Mr. McCone said he was going home to pack his clothes.

Those who know of this exchange have a hunch that if Mr. McCone had accepted the invitation and returned to the turmoil that quickly developed in his old office, the history of the intervention might have been different. Many are inclined to blame Admiral Raborn, in any event, for the mishmash of hasty evidence the C.I.A. contrived to justify the State Department's claim that there was a threat of a Communist uprising.

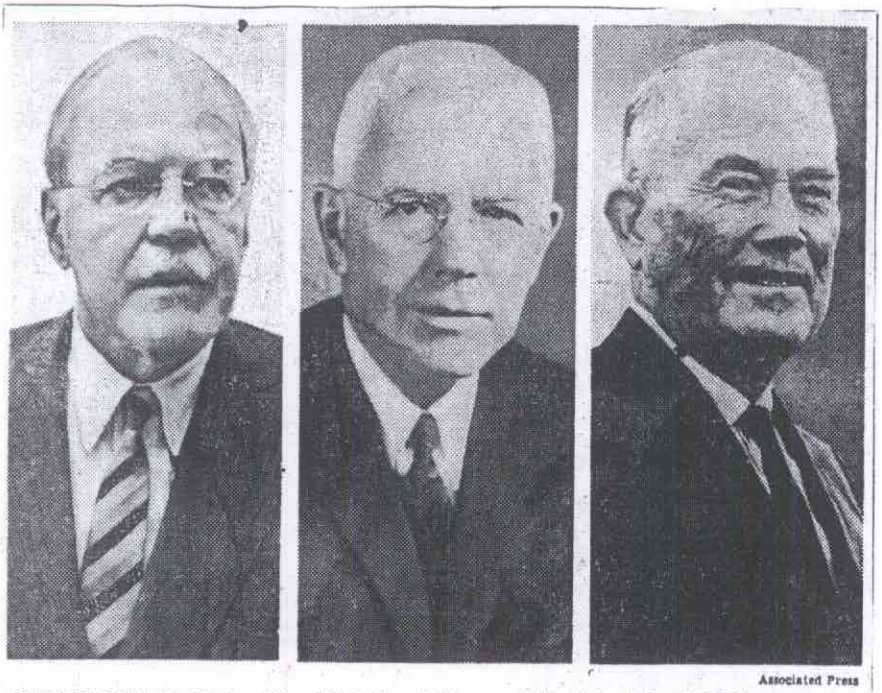
One reason the admiral was chosen, after President Johnson had searched for six months for a successor to Mr. McCone, was that as head of the Polaris project he had shown great ability to work with and mollify inquisitive Congressmen.

Another was that his military background made him an unlikely target for charges of being too "soft" or too liberal for his post. The same consideration influenced President Kennedy in choosing the conservative Republican John McCone, and it is notable that no leading figure of the Democratic party, much less one of its liberals, has ever been the agency's director.

Because of his lack of experience in intelligence and international affairs, it is widely believed among present and former officials that Admiral Raborn was chosen primarily as a "front man." Ironically, the Congress that he was supposed to impress is actually concerned—interviews disclosed—because he has not seemed to have the sure grasp of the agency's needs and activities that would most inspire confidence in it.

Raborn Defended

Knowledgeable sources say the C.IA. itself, in its day-to-day business, is a bureaucracy like any other, functioning routinely whatever the quality of its leadership. These sources argue that the experience and



Associated Press

CHIEFS OF THE C.I.A.: Allen W. Dulles, left, was replaced by John A. McCone, center, in 1961. Present director, Adm. William F. Raborn, right, has held the post for a year.

professionalism of its staff are so great that any lack of these qualities in Admiral Raborn is scarcely felt.

But they do not agree that "Red" Raborn is just a front man. He is different—as would be expected—from any director who preceded him, but there is evidence available to suggest that he may not be such an unfortunate choice as has been suggested in a number of critical articles in the press.

The admiral is said to have President Johnson's confidence, although in a different way from the confidence President Kennedy placed in Mr. McCone. The latter was a valued member of the group that argued out high policy and influenced the President's decisions, not with facts but also with opinions and recommendations.

Admiral Raborn is said to to make little effort to exert such an influence on policy. Partly, this is because Mr. Johnson apparently does not want the C.I.A. director in such a role —and among those interviewed by The New York Times there was a belief that one reason John McCone left the post was that he could not play as influential a role as he had in the Kennedy Administration.

The main reason for the admiral's approach, however, is his Navy background. He regards himself as having more of a service and staff mission than a policy-making job.

He believes it is his duty to lay the best available facts before the President and those other high officials who make or influence policy, so that their judgments may be as informed as possible. To enter into policy discussions as an advocate, in his view, would inevitably compromise his role as an impartial and objective source of information.

Among knowledgeable officials, moreover, Admiral Raborn is credited with at least two administrative developments within the agency—both stemming, again, from his Navy background.

Long-Range Planning

He has installed an operations center, not unlike a military command post or a Navy ship's "combat information center." In it, round-the-clock duty officers constantly monitor communications of every sort. They can instantly communicate with the White House, State Department, Pentagon and agents in the field, by means of the agency's wizardry with machines and electronics.

This represents primarily a drawing together and streamlining of capabilities the agency already had, but it is rated as a positive advance in C.I.A. efficiency.

The other Raborn innovation is a Navy-like system of long-range management planning. He has assigned a group of officials to "look ahead" for decades at the shape of the world to come.

Out of this continuing study, the admiral hopes to be able to make more precise plans for the agency's needs in manpower, money, equipment and organization in, say, 1975, so that it can be planned for right now.

There persists among many interested in the C.I.A., however, a reluctance to accept the idea that the agency should be headed by anyone other than an experienced, strong executive with a wide grasp of international affairs and intelligence work, strong ties to the Administration and the knowledge and determination to keep the agency's work within the limits of policy and propriety.

This concern has been heightened by the departure from the White House of McGeorge Bundy, now president of the Ford Foundation. As Mr. Johnson's representative on the 54-12 group, he was probably second only to the director of the C.I.A. in maintaining "control" and took an intense interest in this duty.

Thus, if the White House replacements, Bill D. Moyers and Walt W. Rostow, prove either less interested or less forceful in representing the White House interest in C.I.A. operations, and if Admiral Raborn's alleged lack of experience in intelligence and foreign affairs handicaps him, effective control of the agency could be weakened without any change at all in the official processes of control.

Promotion Debate

Some people concluded even before the end of the admiral's first year that the difficulties of finding a succession of suitable C.I.A. directors made it advisable to promote impressive professionals from within the agency.

The most widely respected of these is the deputy director, Richard Helms, who was said to have been Mr. McCone's choice to succeed him.

Others argue, however, that intelligence is too dangerous a thing to be left to professional spies and that a loyal associate of the President's with the political qualifications for a senior Cabinet position should hold the post.

Whatever his identity, however, the prime conclusion of

The New York Times survey of the Central Intelligence Agency is that its director is or should be the central figure in establishing and maintaining the actual substance of control, whatever its forms may take. For if the director insists, and bends all his efforts to make sure, that the agency serve the political administration of the Government, only blind chance or ineptitude in the field is likely to take the C.I.A. out of political control.

Conclusions of Study

A number of other conclusions also emerge from the study:

¶Whatever may have been the situation in the past, and whatever misgivings are felt about Admiral Raborn, there is now little concern in the Johnson Administration or among former high officials, and there is even less evidence, that the C.I.A. is making or sabotaging foreign policy or otherwise acting on its own.

¶When C.I.A. operations acquire a life of their own and outrun approved policy, they often follow a pattern well known also in less secret arms of government. Diplomats frequently say more than they are told to say to other governments or otherwise exceed their instructions. Foreign aid and propaganda operations, though "public," can commit the United States to practices and men in ways not envisioned by Washington. Military operations can escalate by their own logic, and when things go wrong the Pentagon has at times been more reluctant than the C.I.A. in producing the facts.

¶Nonetheless, while the C.I.A. acts as the Government's fountain of information as well as its "black" operating arm, while it is the C.I.A. that both proposes operations and supplies the facts to justify them, the danger of its getting out of control of the Administration exists and ought to be taken seriously within and without the Government. The Bay of Pigs stands as enduring testimony to that fact.

¶The task of coping with this danger is essentially that of the President, his highest officials and the director of the C.I.A. It can only be met peripherally by Congressional oversight, and then with increased danger of security leaks and domestic political pressures on the agency.

¶The charges against the C.I.A. at home and abroad are so widespread and in many ways so exaggerated that the effectiveness and morale of the agency may be seriously impaired. In particular, there could ultimately be a problem in recruiting and keeping the high caliber of personnel upon whom the agency must rely both for doing useful work and for keeping that work within proper bounds.

Crucial Questions

Thus, there must be in this and in any Administration a tight, relentless, searching review and analysis of the C.I.A. and its activities, meeting squarely and answering honestly at least these questions:

Is any proposed operation or activity likely, on balance, to make a genuine and necessary contribution, in the long view as well as the short, to legitimate American interests and aspirations in the world, or is it merely convenient, expedient and possible without regard to its wider implications or to the real necessity for it?

In sum, is the government of a proud and honorable people relying too much on "black" operations, "dirty tricks," harsh and illicit acts in the "back alleys" of the world? Is there some point at which meeting fire with fire, force with force, subversion with subversion, crime with crime, becomes so prevalent and accepted that there no longer remains any distinction of honor and pride between grim and implacable adversaries?

These questions are a proper and necessary concern for the people of the United States. They are a proper and necessary concern for Congress. But in the nature of the case, neither the people nor Congress can easily learn the answers, much less insure that the answers are always the right ones.

The President's Task

That can only be done within the executive branch, by the highest authorities of the Government. Controlling the C.I.A. is a job that rests squarely upon the President of the United States, the director of the agency and the officials appointed by the President to check its work. And if these men are to insist that they do control the agency, then they are the ones who must be blamed if control fails.

"Those who believe that the United States Government on occasion resorts to force when it shouldn't," Richard Bissell, the C.I.A.'s former deputy director, once said, "should in all fairness and justice direct their views to the question of national policy and not hide behind the criticism that whereas the President and Cabinet generally are enlightened people, there is an evil and ill-controlled agency which imports this sinister element."

The New York Times study of the C.I.A. suggests that it is not an invisible government but the real government of the United States upon which the responsibility must lie whenever the agency may be found "out of control." For if that responsibility is accepted, there can be no invisible government.