

# AF General In Line for Moorer Job

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Air Force Gen. George S.

Brown is the current choice of top Defense Department officials to replace Adm. Thomas H. Moorer when Moorer's term as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff expires in July, according to Pentagon sources.

Brown, 55, would become the first Air Force officer to hold the nation's highest-ranking military job in 14 years.

His appointment—if approved—would be part of a major realignment of top military officers who will be guiding their services for the next several years.

The current four-year term of the Navy's top man, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, also ends in July and reliable Pentagon sources say the front-runner in the hard-fought contest for that job is Adm. James L. Holloway III.

The Army's current chief of staff, former Vietnam field commander Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, had been viewed as a likely choice to succeed Moorer.

However, Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger is known to consider Abrams' continued presence in the Army job as vital to improving the Army's combat capabilities while cutting back on some of the overloaded support and headquarters units.

Schlesinger, in an obvious challenge to the other services, has recently been praising Army efforts before Congress in such areas as phasing out anti-bomber missile sites as useless in the missile age, in closing down six Army commands—including ones in Alaska and the Panama Canal Zone—and in reducing the overall "teeth-to-tail ratio" of combat to support forces.

Abrams still has about 2½ years to serve in his four-year term as Army chief.

Brown's nomination to the chairman's post would also

See BROWN, A8, Col. 2

## BROWN, From A1

open up the top Air Force job again so that three key posts—the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the top Navy and Air Force jobs—will all change hands around July.

Brown is a relative newcomer to the top military councils, having been named Air Force chief only six months ago. He is said, however, to have impressed Schlesinger, who has had only about seven months' experience as the Pentagon's civilian boss.

Brown flew bombers during World War II, was operations director of the 5th Air Force in Korea, and commanded the 7th Air Force for a while in Vietnam. Most recently, he was head of the Air Force Systems Command where much of the development work on new weapons is centered.

No formal Pentagon recommendation on Brown has been sent to the White House yet. President Nixon must approve the choice before the nomination goes to the Senate for confirmation.

Though one or two other senior officers most prominently the U.S. European commander, Army Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster are still in the running for the chairman's job, top Pentagon officials say Brown is the leading candidate.

There had been some speculation a few months ago that

Moorer, who—at 62—is serving his second two-year term, might be asked by Mr. Nixon to remain for another year.

The prospect that Holloway will replace Zumwalt at the Navy's helm is widely viewed as an attempt to achieve a compromise between the controversial reform movement set in motion by Zumwalt and the objections raised to that moment by some senior Navy men.

Zumwalt has won considerable acclaim for his efforts to improve the lot of enlisted man, relax regulations on hair styles and dress that are an annoyance to young men today, and improve communications between the seaman and the Navy's hierarchy.

All the changes, he said, would help and not hurt the Navy's performance in battle.

Yet a number of senior officers and some petty officers felt the relaxation went too far and hurt discipline and morale. Zumwalt was stung by a House Armed Services sub-

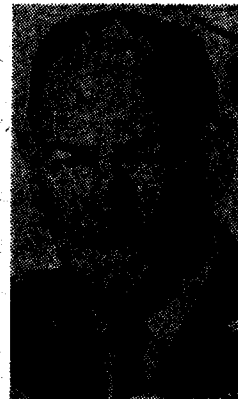
committee report last year on racial disturbances aboard Navy carriers which echoed the view that permissiveness had eroded discipline.

Some hint that the Navy would begin to steer a more cautious course on reform and stress "traditions" came in a

recent letter to a flag officer selection board from Navy Secretary John W. Warner.

Warner also will be leaving soon, so that the Navy within the next few months will have new men in both the top civilian and military service posts.

Though Holloway is the front-runner, the chief of naval operations sweepstakes is not yet closed. Others included are: Adm. Isaac Kidd, chief of the Navy Material Command; Adm. Noel Gayler, chief of all Pacific forces; Adm. Worth Bagley, chief of naval forces in Europe; Adm. Stansfield Turner, president of the Naval War College; Adm. Ralph Cousins, chief of Atlantic forces, and Adm. Maurice Weisner, Pacific Fleet commander.



GEN. GEORGE BROWN  
... Pentagon's choice