

Security Chief Who Shuns Publicity

Lew Allen Jr.

By DAVID BINDER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—As a teen-ager, Lew Allen Jr. wanted to be a newspaperman like his father, but now, as a lieutenant general heading the highly secretive National Security Agency, he feels compelled to avoid the press. "Anonymity is something we treasure," he told a reporter crouching beside him as he left the Senate's Russell Office Building this noon after two hours of testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Before reaching his automobile for the drive back to agency headquarters at Fort George G. Meade in Maryland, the career Air Force officer remarked only that his hobbies included "white water canoeing, scuba diving and keeping up with technical literature in physics."

General Allen is something of a phenomenon in the United States armed forces—he is the holder of a doctoral degree in nuclear physics and his career has confined him entirely to posts within the continental United States.

A Late Entrance

His entry into the Government's intelligence operations came relatively late, although he was involved in some of the nation's most heavily classified technical programs from 1954 to 1973. He participated in the Atomic Energy Commission's nuclear test series from 1954 to 1975 as a scientist studying the effects of high altitude nuclear explosions for ballistic missile defense and experimenting in the design of hydrogen bombs. From 1961 to 1971 he was involved in Air Force space programs

as they related to satellite and missile systems.

In March, 1973, after he had been chief of staff for Air Force Systems Command for only one month, he was appointed deputy to the Director of Central Intelligence, James R. Schlesinger.

It was a period when United States intelligence services were undergoing their first major reshuffle in more than a decade.

Considered 'a Natural'

Lieut. Gen. Daniel O. Graham, a classmate from West Point and an intelligence associate from those days, recalls General Allen as "a natural" for the intelligence community because "he has been involved in reconnaissance technology, knew the management business and was good at improving the community's resources—he understood everybody's requirements."

General Graham said it was also natural to move General Allen over to the security agency in August, 1973, even though it was not the Air Force's turn to run the huge operation that monitors and intercepts communications all over the world.

Lew Allen was born Sept. 30, 1925, in Miami. He moved to Gainesville, Texas in the nineteen-thirties after his parents separated and graduated in 1942 from the local high school with a record of A-plus, A or A-minus in every subject.

The Leopard, the high school yearbook he edited, said he intended to go to the University of Texas to study journalism. Instead he spent a year at a local junior college and then won an appointment to West Point through Representative Ed Gossett.

Finishing the military

academy 147th in a class of 835. Cadet Allen was remembered in the 1946 yearbook as "a natural hive" of beelike diligence. "No one enjoys life as much as Lew," the capsule biography said. "Not even these cold walls could chill his spirits." At West Point he played lacrosse, skied and participated in the debate and camera clubs.

With pilot's wings from the first West Point class to get flight training, Lew Allen was assigned briefly to the Strategic Air Command, where he flew B-29 bombers. But the Air Force soon recognized his scientific bent and gave him four years at the University of Illinois as a student officer. He earned his doctorate under Prof. Alfred O. Hanson with a dissertation on "Photo Disintegration of Deuterium [a rare form of hydrogen] by 95-Million Electron Volt X-Rays."

In 1949 he courted and married a war widow, Barbara Frink Hatch of Washington, D.C. There are five children: Mrs. Frank Miller a daughter by Mrs. Allen's first marriage; Lew 3d; Marjorie; Christi and James.

Mrs. Allen politely refers even casual questions about her family to the office of the security's agency's director. A call to that office produced as only the information that General Allen was the son of a newspaperman and was appointed to West Point from the 13th Congressional District of Texas.

However, associates in the



The New York Times

A pilot's wings and a doctorate in physics
(General Allen at a Senate hearing yesterday)

intelligence community to provide other details of General Allen's nonofficial life: that he canoes in the rapids of northern Virginia's Goose Creek, that he scuba dived off Yucatan last year, and that he has what passes for a sense of humor in the military. Asked to explain the latter, a civilian intelligence officer said: "If a joke walks by, he salutes it."

On the serious side, another intelligence officer credited the trim six-footer with having "developed some of

the best technical systems" of the United States armed forces. "I can't tell you which because they're classified," he added.

In his appearance before the Senate committee he looked very much the military man, with a brace of old ribbons on his chest and three Silver Stars on his epaulets. But the service awards were earned outside combat, and with his rimless glasses and his rapid speech he could also have passed for the professor he might have become.