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RABORN REGARDED AS IDEAL FOR C.I.A.

He Brings to Job a Blend of Popularity and Talent

By JACK RAYMOND
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 12—The popularity of retired Vice Admiral William F. Raborn Jr., as much as his publicized managerial talents, was a major factor in his appointment today as director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

This and other aspects of the appointment, announced by President Johnson at his Texas ranch yesterday, became known today as Admiral Raborn and his newly appointed deputy, Richard M. Helms, flew back to Washington with the President.

John A. McCone, director of the C.I.A. since November, 1961, had indicated long ago his desire to return to private life. But most of the potential successors were ruled out for various reasons, including in one important instance the fear of Congressional disapproval.

Friends in Congress

When Admiral Raborn's name came up, President Johnson recalled that the 59-year-old Navy man invariably had enjoyed good relations with Congress during the country's crucial weapons development efforts a decade ago.

Admiral Raborn was director of the Special Projects Agency, which produced the Polaris missile. President Johnson was then chairman of the Senate Preparedness subcommittee, which conducted frequent inquiries on missile developments.

Before Admiral Raborn finally was selected for the C.I.A. post, among the leading possibilities were Secretary of Commerce John T. Connor, Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, former Deputy Defense Secretary Roswell L. Gilpatric, Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor, Deputy Defense Secretary Cyrus R. Vance and Secretary of the Navy Paul H. Nitze.

Mr. Connor, it appears, was first brought to the President's notice as a potential successor to Mr. McCone but was named Secretary of Commerce instead. General Taylor was ruled out because of his controversial tenure as Ambassador to South Vietnam.

Mr. McCone, it is understood, proposed that Mr. Helms, a longtime intelligence official and Deputy Director for the C.I.A. Operations, be named to the top job. But the final consideration found Navy Secretary Nitze and Deputy Defense Secretary Vance in the lead.

Mr. Nitze then was ruled out

because it was feared his selection would become controversial. Mr. Nitze formerly headed the Pentagon's Office of International Security Affairs and had been a Truman Administration figure.

But he had encountered opposition in Congress when he was named to the Navy post. Instead of being approved rapidly, as in most such appointments, Mr. Nitze was badgered in the Senate Armed Services Committee to account for some of his past actions.

Mr. Vance's selection to head the C.I.A. was strongly opposed by Secretary McNamara, it is understood. The Defense Secretary said that Mr. Vance was invaluable to him at the Pentagon. This reinforced the belief that if and when the Defense Secretary retires from his post, he will recommend Mr. Vance as his successor.

Secretary McNamara, however, ardently supported the selection of Admiral Raborn and in this case, as in many others, he had the final word with the President.

Admiral Raborn's political attitude undoubtedly served to reinforce his position with the President. During the campaign last fall, the former director of the Polaris missile program appeared on a paid television show sponsored by scientists, engineers and physicians for Johnson-Humphrey.

During the program Admiral Raborn ridiculed the candidacy of Senator Barry Goldwater, saying: "He's just not smart enough to be President of the United States."

Shift of the Deputy

With the selection of Admiral Raborn, it became necessary to return the present deputy director of C.I.A., Lieut. Gen. Marshall S. Carter, to active duty with the Army. Under existing laws, the director and deputy director of the C.I.A. may not both be military men.

Mr. Helms then was considered the natural choice to be named deputy director, both in consideration of his high recommendation by Mr. McCone and to take advantage of his professional experience.

Admiral Raborn, a Navy aviator with many wartime commendations as well as the Legion of Merit he won for his supervision of the Polaris development, has had no significant experience in intelligence activities. He was responsible, however, not only for maintaining secrecy in the Polaris development but for studying foreign developments in nuclear weapons.

A good-humored, gregarious man, Admiral Raborn contrasts with the rather dour public impression given by Mr. McCone. He has more of the joviality of Allen W. Dulles, Mr. McCone's predecessor. At the same time, it is Mr. Helms who is expected to provide the professional touch that Mr. Dulles possessed.

Like Mr. Dulles a veteran of

the country's intelligence operations in World War II days, Mr. Helms joined the C.I.A. in 1947 when it was created.

Although the policy operations of the C.I.A. are secret, it is understood that Mr. Helms was among a handful of men in Government who differed with the final decision in 1961 to support the Cuban rebel invasion of the Bay of Pigs.

Mr. Helms is known among his colleagues as a "sound" man, one who has never permitted himself to be carried away by the glamour of intelligence operations. Mr. McCone chose him in February, 1962, when Mr. Helms was an assistant director, to succeed Richard M. Bissell as Deputy Director for Plans.

Mr. Bissell had been in charge of the ill-starred Bay of Pigs undertaking.

The new deputy director once said that if the Soviet Union could be held within the physical and political confines of their present areas of influence, "there are grounds for believing that a slow process of evolutionary change may have its effect on Russian society."

At the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters, the new appointments are being looked upon as a possible morale builder. It is said that in recent months, especially since Mr. McCone's pending departure became known, officials at the agency were despondent over what they believed to be their failure to get their views across to the President.

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'Master Spy'

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The appointment of Vice Adm. W. F. Raborn Jr., U.S.N., retired, as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency came as the kind of surprise President Johnson loves to spring. Nearly everybody else had been mentioned as the successor to John A. McCone; Admiral Raborn, though a Texan, was a complete dark horse.

A naval aviator, Admiral Raborn is a highly competent officer; his services to the nation in the promotion, management and administration of the Polaris submarine missile program were outstanding. He is the kind of man who enlists and keeps the loyalties of subordinates. He is also a man of sound judgment, well acquainted in Washington and respected both in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill. All these virtues are major.

The liabilities are, however, important. Admiral Raborn has had little intelligence experience; and the job of running the most complex intelligence operation in the world, and of coordinating other intelligence organizations jealous of their prerogatives, is one that requires professional expertise as well as tact, charm and strength. Another liability is Admiral Raborn's age; he is 59.

The C.I.A. post should be a nonpartisan, long-term appointment; it is absolutely essential for continuity and effectiveness that intelligence be kept out of politics and that it be headed by men who will give to it major portions of their lives.

Fortunately, the companion appointment of Richard Helms as Deputy Director of the C.I.A., compensates to a considerable degree for Admiral Raborn's lack of past intelligence experience. Mr. Helms is one of the most respected intelligence experts in the country—if anyone can be called expert in this fantastically difficult field.