

CIA Deputy Chief Cushman

By Michael Getler
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Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman Jr., deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency who was military aide to President Nixon, when he was Vice President, was nominated yesterday to become commandant of the Marine Corps.

Cushman will become the 25th commandant in the Marine's 196-year history, and will succeed Gen. Leonard F. Chapman whose four-year term as commandant expires Dec. 31.

Yesterday's announcement of the nomination by the President provided a surprise ending two months of speculation within the Defense Department and the military services.

Though Cushman was one of three senior Marine generals known to have been under White House consideration, a number of high-ranking officers expected the job to go the Lt. Gen. John R. Chaisson or to Gen. Raymond G. Davis, Chaisson was the most frequently mentioned candidate.

Davis, a Medal of Honor winner in Korea, is currently the assistant commandant and, aside from Chapman, the only other four-star general in the corps.

Chaisson, a Harvard-educated officer with a reputation as a top combat commander and a "defense intellectual," is currently the Marine Corps chief of staff.

Speculation that Cushman might be out of the running increased last month when the White House announced a shake-up of the entire intelligence apparatus. In that action, CIA Director Richard Helms was given broader powers over all government intelligence operation, and Cushman was designated to take on even more of the CIA load as second in command to Helms.

In making the announcement on Cushman yesterday, presidential press secretary Ronald L. Zeigler said he did not know who would replace Cushman at CIA or whether the No. 2 intelligence job would go to a civilian or another military officer. Customarily, the deputy post has been filled from the military.

Cushman, 56, won the Navy Cross in 1944 for his role in the recapture of Guam and was commanding the Third Marine Amphibious Force on Vietnam in March, 1969, when he was nominated for the CIA

post shortly after the Nixon administration took office.

The general, according to his associates, is a close personal friend of the President, a relationship stemming from the four years in the late 1950s in which Cushman served as a special assistant for national security affairs to then Vice President Nixon.

Cushman, who joined the Marines in 1935, is the senior

three-star general in the corps. With his new post, once approved by the Senate, will go a four-star rank and a spot along with the heads of the other three services on the Joint Chiefs of Staff—the nation's top military council that argues the military's case on budgetary and operational matters before the White House.

While the White House took

longer to name its choice for the new commandant than many high-ranking Marines expected, these officers say that the selection process this time was carried out with none of the campaigning that marred that process four years ago. Chapman, who stayed out of that jockeying four years ago, emerged with the prestigious commandant's job.

Named to Head Marines

Cushman, a native of St. Paul, takes over the Marine Corps at a critical time in the service's history.

The Marines have emerged from Vietnam in comparatively better shape than some of the other services, with its leaders anxious to get back to the smaller, more elite force that it was prior to Vietnam. But with the administration

hoping to end the draft by mid-1973, the Marines are faced with attracting men voluntarily into a tough, combat-ready military environment at a time when the other services are seeking to make service life less rigid.

Thus far, the Marines are optimistic about the allure that the corps' spartan ways still holds for a number of young people.

In other announcements yesterday, the president nominated assistant attorney general Shiro Kasahara of Honolulu to become an associate judge of the U.S. Court of Claims.

Nominated to become a member of the Federal Communications Commission was Richard E. Wiley, currently the commission's general counsel.



LT. GEN. R. E. CUSHMAN
... named to 4-star post