## Colby Plans Changes In CIA Evaluation Unit

By Laurence Stern Washington Post Staff Writer

Acting Central Intelligence Agency Director William E. Colby has acknowledged that 'some changes will occur" in operations of the agency's topevel evaluative body, the Ofice of National Estimates.

But he maintained that the office's highly refined and prestigious product, the National Intelligence Estimate, will continue to be produced under the aegis of the CIA as it has for the past two decades.

Colby's assurance was conveyed internally through the CIA's employee bulletin in response to an Aug. 19 news story asserting that he had made a "firm decision" to abolish the office.

The National Intelligence Estimate (known among practitioners as "the NIE") is U.S. intelligence community's most classified and seniorlevel assessment on major international issues. It has been relied upon by presidents for guidance on a variety of mat-ters, such as Soviet missile capability and Vietnam war prospects.

There have been growing indications within the past year that influential members of the Nixon administration, notably Secretary of State-designate Henry A. Kissinger and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, were unhappy Schlesinger, were unhappy with the CIA's strategic intelligence estimates.

During Schlesinger's directorship of the CIA early this year he was reported to bave initiated action to overhaul the Office of National Esti-mates, with the endorsement of the White House. Colby is currently working out the de-tails of the high-level intelligence reorganization.

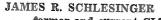
The notice to CIA employ-ees issued with Colby's author-ization alluded to news reports suggesting that senior administration officials were disillusioned with the National Intelligence Estimates and that the CIA was under attack from the administration "for having failed to produce the kind of intelligence estimates that would support its policies."

It asserted that the NIEs would continue to be published and that "the objectivity of the National Intelligence Estimates will be sustained."

He was assigned to the CIA as an aide to Schlesinger with responsibility for the military component of national intelligence estimating.

Because of the sensitivity of







WILLIAM E. COLBY former and current CIA chiefs involved in changes.

the production of National In-CIA. telligence estimates with cergence community functions," of Schlesinger's cost-efficiency the bulletin said, without policies while he commanded further elaboration.

The fate of the office has important symbolic, if not practical, consequences in the intelligence community.

The stratetgic estimates of the CIA were criticized from within the administration for their pessimism on the Viet-nam War, for underestimating Soviet military buildups, for failing to predict the intensity of the North Vietnamese 1972 spring offensive.

Although there was no open criticism of the CIA by administration officials, there was a steady dribble of anonymous though official displeasure with the CIA's performance in news stories and partiularly in the syndicated columns of Joseph Alsop last February.

Also last April the former deputy director of the Penta-gon's Defense Intelligence Agency, Gen. Daniel O. Graham, called publicly for the reassertion of the military's "traditional" role over civilian analysts in strategic intelligence assessments.

A month after Graham's article was published, with pre-sumed official clearance, he was assigned to the CIA as an

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conserve resources and main- cratic drama now taking place tain efficiency by combining in the upper echelons of the

Within the agency's old-boy tain other agency and intelli- network, which felt the impact the CIA, the rumored abolition of the Office of National Estimates is regarded as a serious blow to the independence and integrity of the intelligence-estimating process.

Schlesinger is known have viewed the intelligence products of the CIA's career analysts as verbose in style and dubious in content. He did wield the executive firing broom more vigorously than any director in the agency's history, and his policies were viewed with dismay by the hierarchy of old-timers who had operated together since World War II days as alumni of the wartime Office of Strategic Services.

Colby is now the man in the middle. His ties are to the old boys through his life-time association with the CIA. His responsibility is to the administration, which seems deter mined to purge their influ-ence, starting last year with the dismissal of Helms.

That is why, rightly or wrongly, the final decision on the Office of National Esti-mates is being watched keenly by both sides.

## Congolese Premier

BRAZZAVILLE, Aug. 27 (AP)—Henri Lopes, a writer and former Cabinet However, the "structure" of the Office of National Estimates is under review, the bulletin said, and some changes would occur. "The goal is to because of the sensitivity of the agency and ultra-secrecy of the subject matter with which it deals, officials are reluctant to speak out openly on the quiet but intense bureau-