

Gulf Report's Director

N/Times John J. McCloy DEC 31 1975

By RICHARD PHALON

Being president of the World Bank, or chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, or chairman of the Ford Foundation, or a senior partner in one of the nation's

Man in the News most prestigious law firms would represent a lifetime of achievement for almost any man. John J.

McCloy, who directed the committee that investigated the Gulf Oil Corporation's political slush funds and whose report was released yesterday, has held all four of those posts—and a good many other important ones as well in a career spanning more than five decades of public and private service.

To his friends and neighbors on East 79th Street, however, he is not a "super establishment figure," but a "warm, wonderfully knowledgeable individual."

"He's a beautiful man," says Mr. Edith Fisher, chairman of the Community Planning Board that covers the district in which Mr. McCloy resides.

"A beautiful man?" chuckled Mr. McCloy from his desk in the 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza offices of Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy, the law firm of which he is a senior partner. "I've never heard the term used to describe a man before. I am neither beautiful nor handsome."

Low-Keyed Bargainer

Mrs. Fisher was not thinking so much of the physical presence so much as the character, interest and low-keyed bargaining skills she says Mr. McCloy brought to a neighborhood effort aimed last year at keeping the Off Track Betting Corporation from expanding its string of parlors into East 79th Street.

"He doesn't have the stride of a 40-year-old," Mrs. Fisher says of the 80-year-old Mr. McCloy, who was born on March 31, 1895, "but the high sense of intelligence is there and he is warm in a way that transcends all the stereotypes of high-level civil servants."

Low-key is also the way Paul Screvane, president of O.T.B., describes the presentation Mr. McCloy made just about a year ago—alone with a group of neighbors—in the community effort to keep the betting parlors out.

"He said his piece and after about 15 minutes he phased out," Mr. Screvane recalled yesterday. "Very frankly, he didn't come on as strong as I thought he

would. The others continued talking."

Mrs. Fisher sees Mr. McCloy's willingness to get involved in the O.T.B. fight as one more manifestation of the lawyer-statesman-administrator's renaissance personality.

"I have a sort of catholic attitude," Mr. McCloy said yesterday of his own range of interests—"a lower case 'o'," he added with a laugh, "or else my Scotch Presbyterian forebears will stir in the graves."

People close to Mr. McCloy and his work on the Gulf report say some of the old line Presbyterian morality is evident in the way he feels about illegal political contributions. Yesterday he would say only that "the whole area needs reform," partly because enforcement has been given only lip service.

"I hope we have produced a report everyone will think is honest and that it will help," Mr. McCloy added.

Mr. McCloy, who has done some legal work in the past for Gulf and other major oil companies, said he was asked to take on the job of directing the investigation by all three of the parties involved—Gulf's outside directors, the courts and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Man in the Middle

"They were looking for an independent figure and I guess I was the only person they could find in a short time they could all agree on," Mr. McCloy said.

Friends say that Mr. McCloy's skills at mediation are one of the reasons why he has been called on to be the man in the middle so many times in a career that encompassed such difficult diplomatic posts as United States Military Governor and High Commissioner for Germany from 1949 to 1952 and co-ordinator of disarmament activities from 1961 to 1963.

Friends say that a capacity for hard work is part of the McCloy formula, too. He was born on what he calls "the wrong side of the tracks" in Philadelphia and put through prep school by the efforts of a mother who was widowed when young John was 6. Mr. McCloy worked his way through Amherst by waiting on tables, graduated cum laude, and went on to the Harvard Law School and service as a captain of artillery during World War I.

"The most extraordinary thing about him, if I had to pick it out, is his energy,"



Often called on to be the man in the middle.

John J. McCloy 2d, Mr. McCloy's son, said yesterday. "I think his feeling is that he has so little time left and there is so much he wants to do."

"I'm 38 and I wish I had half his energy," the younger McCloy continued, "but of course, I'm prejudiced." The elder McCloy, he said sits at his desk at Milbank Tweed "every morning at 9 o'clock, or earlier, and doesn't leave until well after closing, and he usually has two or three business dinners a week."

The elder McCloy says he "hasn't worked so hard on a case" as he did on the Gulf investigation "in a long time." His sons agree.

"There are only two times I've seen father so tired" and when there was so much pressure in the situation," the younger McCloy continued.

"One was the Gulf situation," and the other was during his service on the Warren Commission that investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Besides John J. 2d, a manager at Brown Brothers, Harriman Company, an investment banking firm, the elder McCloy has one other child—a daughter Ellen. She is named after her mother, the former Ellen Zinsser, whom Mr. McCloy married in 1930.

His son says that Mr. McCloy brings the same kind of concentration to everything he does. "He can be working on the Gulf case and bring the same sort of absorption a couple of hours later to fishing for trout."

Fishing is one of Mr. McCloy's favorite sports, and so is bird hunting. "I like anything that adds zest to walking," he says.

Mr. McCloy said yesterday there had been a "lot of stress and pressure" in getting out the Gulf report, but guessed that was all part of the game. "I've been very busy," he said. "I've had a busy life and a very interesting one."