

McCone Selection Criticized by Some

By Chalmers M. Roberts
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SOMETIME this week John A. McCone will return to Washington, ready to begin the process of taking control of the Central Intelligence Agency. His appointment has caused surprise and murmurs and muttering, to put it mildly, on some sectors of the New Frontier.



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One member of the Washington in-

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telligence community who deals with the CIA called the appointment "outrageous." A number of scientists-in-Government, likewise, were furious. There have been threats threatening to resign and a number of others are at least in a skeptical mood today.

But public, on-the-record, opposition so far has been minute. Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy (D-Minn.) commented the other day that "there is nothing particular to recom-

mend Mr. McCone as director of the CIA."

But Sen. Clinton P. Anderson (D-N.M.) called McCone "a very able, conscientious public servant," adding: "Though we did not always see eye to eye, he stuck to his commitments to me." Anderson was speaking of the years when McCone was President Eisenhower's Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Senator was Chairman of the Joint Congressional Atomic Committee.

Well informed persons insist that James R. Killian, who now heads the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was so out of sorts over the appointment that he threatened to resign as Chairman of President Kennedy's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. When asked, Killian said there is "absolutely nothing to it." He did say that the board was not asked to pass on the nomination. Other sources say that he and Clark Clifford, Washington attorney and a member of the group, did give their endorsement.

PRESIDENT Kennedy kept his choice so secret until almost the point of announcement that those he knew to

be opposed had no chance to mount a counter-offensive once they realized he was about to tap McCone. There was only time enough for a leak to the press half a day before the appointment.

Killian's successor as President Eisenhower's scientific adviser, George Kistiakowsky, also is reported to be unhappy, as is Mr. Kennedy's science adviser, Jerome Wiesner. Such feelings appear to reflect views of a number of scientists and others who have become involved in the nuclear test ban issue. They have never forgiven McCone for what he did during the 1956 presidential campaign.

After Adlai Stevenson had come out for a test ban, 10 scientists at the California Institute of Technology issued a statement of support. McCone, then a Cal Tech trustee, was outraged. He contended the scientists, among them Harrison Brown and Thomas Lauritsen, were approving a unilateral stoppage of tests by the United States.

He wrote a letter to Lauritsen saying the scientists' statement was "obviously designed to create fear in the minds of the uninformed that radioactive fallout from H-bomb tests endangers life.

However, as you know, the National Academy of Sciences has issued a report this year completely discounting such danger." McCone also accused the scientists of being "taken in" by Soviet propaganda that a test ban would delay the day other nations would get the bomb.

This row brought recurrent rumors that McCone tried to get the 10 professors fired. He was out of the U. S. last week, on a CIA look-see, and could not be asked directly.

SEN. ANDERSON, who chaired the confirmed hearing for McCone's 1958 AEC appointment, then absolved McCone by saying at the hearing that "Mr. McCone took them pretty strongly to task and there were suggestions, which I understand he did not make, that they all be fired." McCone added that "there was no scientist fired from Cal Tech on advice or recommendation from me, sir."

McCone said that he felt the scientists had "used their position as professors of distinction at the California Institute of Technology not to express themselves on a particular technical matter, but, to inject themselves into a political discussion." He said they had "an absolute right" to do that "but not using the university as a platform for so doing, in my opinion."

In reply to Anderson's questions, McCone said he felt that two other other scientists, equally vocal on McCone's side of the test ban issue—Edward Teller and the late Ernest O. Lawrence—had spoken as individuals. McCone did in the end agree that the 10 had signed the statement as individuals rather than as Cal Tech professors.

THE NUB of all this is that at least an important sector of the scientific community felt McCone was infringing on academic freedom and at least threatening to have the 10 at Cal Tech fired for their views.

Hence, it is argued by McCone's opponents, he is not a man with an open mind, with the kind of view toward free inquiry and free expression required to head the Nation's chief intelligence body.

The CIA, they say, must consider even the most seemingly scater-brained idea and get to know even the most obscure personalities. It is outgoing CIA chief Allen Dulles himself, some recall, who likes to tell of his own goof: the time many years ago he went off to play tennis instead of accepting a suggestion that he have a cup of coffee with an obscure revolutionary at a cafe in Geneva, a fellow known as V. I. Lenin.

WHILE THOSE close to the President who favored the appointment are aware of these criticisms, one of Mr. Kennedy's intimate advisers had never heard of the Cal Tech affair until this reporter asked him about it.

This official and others close to President Kennedy privately acknowledge that the McCone appointment has not been greeted with cheers all along the line. But they point out that, as one put it, "there will be so many checks and balances" on his operation of the CIA that his opponents need not worry.

There will be a scientific board, through which McCone's critics will have access to the President, and there also is a newly strengthened, high-level intelligence committee

to oversee CIA's major ventures.

The McCone backers consider him a man who "has a toughness" and who "can make up his own mind," though they say he is "apt to be stubborn." Among his enthusiastic endorsers, it is reported, is Robert A. Lovett, the former Defense and State Department official on whom the President from time to time calls for advice.

Another who played a role in the appointment was Sen. Anderson. He said he was consulted by the President in advance of the appointment and "I did everything I could to get him (McCone) to take it." Anderson's view of McCone is that "he is persuaded strongly that the Russians are not up to any good, that they are deceiving us. He believes they were cheating on the test ban though I don't. McCone is not a neutral; he is against the Russians."

THIS hard-line approach by McCone is no secret. Immediately on taking over the AEC chairmanship, he did his best to persuade Secretary of State John Foster Dulles not to agree to a test ban moratorium, but without success. He later fell in line publicly with the test ban treaty talks, but it was evident he never really had his heart in it.

Some of McCone's opponents, including some within the Washington intelligence community who obviously do not want to be identified, consider this attitude a fault in a CIA boss—Not that he is "against the Russians," but that he is so dogmatic about it that he thinks it could color his intelligence report to the President.

McCone himself no doubt would flatly deny any such thing.

About two and a half years ago, in an interview with an Associated Press reporter, McCone recalled that he had been Air Force Undersecretary in the Truman Administration. "In my Air Force days," he said, "I was devoted to the concept of massive retaliation and I still am." This was the doctrine so strongly fought by Gen. Maxwell Taylor, now President Kennedy's military adviser, who is among those who are unenthusiastic about the McCone appointment.

McCone will go to work, first alongside Dulles and then succeeding him in mid-November, under a recess appointment from the President. He will come up for Senate confirmation next January. But it is unlikely that the Armed Services Committee, which will conduct the hearing and some of whose members control the CIA's secret budget, will raise any real objections.

Despite this, the McCone appointment can properly be called the most controversial of any yet made by President Kennedy to post of major importance. No one doubts McCone's long record of accomplishment in both public service and private industry. But many Administration officials will be watching to see whether he is indeed the man to run the CIA.