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ALSO GULLIBLE

New Spy Man? He Loves Roses

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WASHINGTON—The nation's new master spy is a gullible fellow, by his own account.

In the spy business, this is not the best of traits, and in the case of Vice Adm. William F. Raborn Jr. (ret.) it might give a leg up to the opposition.

It might, that is, if this weakness of the director-designate of the Central Intelligence Agency extended beyond his hobby, which is growing roses.

Fortunately for Raborn, and the country, such is not the case.

As any hobbyist can attest,

gullibility in pursuit of the ultimate is no vice.

Raborn, who soon will take over command of the cloak and dagger corps, bit once and bit hard in his zeal to coax a crop of champion rose blossoms into bloom.

It seems someone told him (with happy malice, it later developed) that spading old fish-heads into the soil would work wonders.

Raborn promptly paid a call upon a seafood eatery and from its perplexed management ordered two barrels of leftover fish heads, then hired three workers to help with the fertilizing.

It was a hot day. The aroma got worse the longer they toiled. Two of the workers, overcome with nausea, retired to the alley. Raborn and the other finished the job.

The admiral went to bed that night dreaming of rosebuds, but rest was not to be his lot.

Growling and snarling, a pack consisting of all the neighborhood dogs descended on the rose garden, digging up the fertilizer, and Raborn's prized bushes with it.

It was not only the end of an experiment but the emergence of a wiser rose gardener as well.

Native of Decatur

Raborn, a native of Decatur, Tex., tells the yarn on himself. The fact that he can, and does, tells quite a bit about this seadog who became an aviator, then a submariner and now, No. 1 snooper.

In a profession well larded with pomposity, Admiral Raborn achieved an early reputation as a good-humored nice guy, but one who could still get things done.

Although he gained distinction as a brave and gallant World War II flattop commander, his biggest naval achievement was the Polaris submarine, which remains one of the prime deterrents to all-out nuclear war.

It was Raborn who was chosen late in 1955 to head the Navy's special projects office, which was charged with developing an undersea ballistics missile.

Raborn brought to the project not only zeal but a persuasion technique that came to be known as the "Raborn rededication treatment."

He delivered pep talks throughout the country, at every plant and subplant that had anything to do with the far-flung program.

The treatment and a managerial system he evolved, it is

used widely throughout industry, got results. The first Polaris submarine became operational in 1960, three years ahead of schedule.

"He had the knack," one of his subalterns of this period recalls, "of getting people to do things because they wanted to."

"It never occurred to any of us that we were not working on the most important project it was possible for us to be working on on this earth."

Says another, "We worked all the harder just to prove you don't have to have an S.O.B. running a program like this."

Set of Talents

Gregarious and down-to-earth, Raborn will bring this same set of talents to his new assignment, and at the very outset his manner will stamp a sunnier image on the CIA, in contrast to the somewhat dour impression left by his predecessor, John A. McCone, who is retiring.

But just how well Raborn's acknowledged abilities will serve him in the spy field has led to some criticism.

He has had no significant experience in intelligence activities, and there are those who feel a military man should not have charge of the CIA, although there is precedence for this. (Gen. Walter Bedell Smith occupied the post in the early 1950s).

On the credit side, in addition to his eminence as a "can do" man, Raborn was responsible for maintaining the secrecy of the Polaris program and the studying of foreign nuclear weapons development.

Besides, his mind is inventive and open to suggestion.

"I am not the kind of man," he has been quoted as saying, "who when he puts his pants on in the morning thinks the whole world is dressed."

In the end, though, it reports