



A Pro for CIA

The Central Intelligence Agency, which tries not too successfully to stay out of the news, makes it big when it has something that it wants to tell. So it was last week when Richard Helms was named to replace Admiral William Raborn, 61, as director of the CIA. And, as usual, there were countless cloak-and-dagger theories to explain the switch. President Johnson compounded the conspiracy theories by burying the news in a clutch of routine personnel announcements.

FOIAb3b

Actually, Raborn had an understanding with Johnson, when he took the job 4 months ago, that he would stay only a year or two; thus his departure was not unexpected. A retired line officer with a flair for administration, he brought to the sprawling spookery in Langley, Va., modern management techniques for analyzing, projecting and distributing the inchoate mass of information that pours in on the agency from every corner of the world.

CPYRIGHT

Unlike his immediate predecessors, John McCone and Allen Dulles, Raborn sought no policymaking role, was far less concerned with the substance of intelligence, and his detached air drew criticism.

Dick Helms, 53, has made his career in what Washington calls the "intelligence community." A Williams College graduate and a newsman before joining the Navy in 1942, he served as an OSS officer during the war and signed up with the CIA at its founding in 1947. He rose to become deputy director for plans—meaning covert operations—under McCone, and has since handled the agency's delicate relations with Congress while simultaneously directing most of the CIA's pure-intelligence functions as Raborn's first deputy. He thus became the first professional ever to head the agency, and about that at least there was no mystery.

