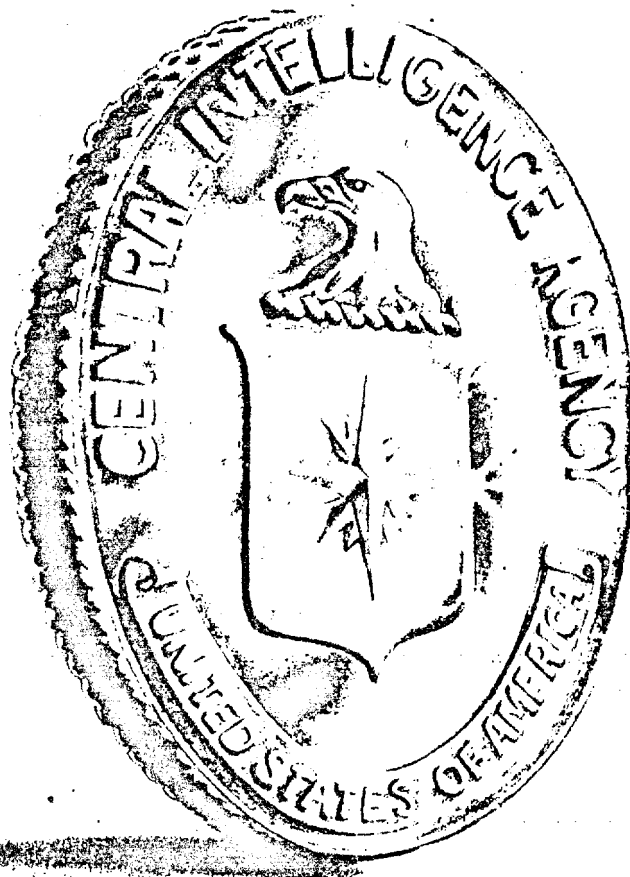


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Dark side up

# Colby of C.I.A.—C.I.A. of Colby



**By David Wise**

A few weeks ago, a Norwegian who had served in the anti-Nazi underground saw a newspaper photograph and thought he recognized an American O.S.S. officer he had worked with during the war and had known only as "No. 96."

The photograph was that of William Egan Colby, 53, a career covert operator for the Central Intelligence Agency, and chief of its supersecret Directorate of Operations, sometimes known as the "Department of Dirty Tricks." As part of the high-level game of musical chairs touched off by Watergate, President Nixon had just named Bill Colby to be head of the C.I.A.

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And there is an interesting fact about Colby in the files at C.I.A. headquarters in Langley, Va. His official C.I.A. biography relates that he served in the O.S.S. during World War II and contains this sentence: "Shortly before the end of the war in 1945, he led a team dropped in northern Norway to destroy a rail line used for transporting German reinforcements." The Norwegian man who read about Colby's appointment and thought he recognized his picture got in touch through an intermediary with an American woman who lives in Kensington, Md., and who is a close friend of the Colbys, particularly of Colby's wife, Barbara. Could the woman find out whether Colby was his old comrade in arms, No. 96?

"I tried to find out," the woman in Kensington told me. "And I'm still trying. Bill wouldn't say, and Barbara doesn't know, or at least she says she doesn't know."

The story illustrates something about Colby that should not be entirely surprising in a man who has spent most of his adult life as—well—a spy. A State Department official who had worked with Colby in Vietnam put it this way: "He's soft-spoken, with a casual style. He has a forthright manner, but there's also a private Bill Colby. He's a very private person."

Indeed, there are really two Bill Colbys; given his covert background there would almost have to be. There is William Egan Colby, the quiet, young "Foreign Service officer" in the American Embassy in Stockholm and Rome in the nineteen-fifties, who was simultaneously William Egan Colby of the C.I.A., an up-and-coming "black" (that is, secret) operator working in the C.I.A.'s Clandestine Services under State Department cover. Later, there was Bill Colby in Saigon in 1959, listed in the official Biographic Register of the Department of State as a "political officer," and later as "first secretary" of the embassy. In fact, he became Saigon station chief for "the Agency" during this period. Then, in 1962, he turned up at Langley as chief of the Far East Division of C.I.A.'s covert side.

There was Bill Colby back in Vietnam again in 1968, heading the "pacification" program, building roads and schools and performing good works. There was also Bill Colby who supervised the Phoenix program, designed to "neutralize" the Vietcong, which its critics have charged was a program of systematic assassination, murder and torture—an accusation that Colby has vigorously denied, under oath. According to figures Colby provided to a House subcommittee in 1971, however, the Phoenix program killed 20,587 persons between 1968 and May, 1971. That's right: 20,587.

Now there is Bill Colby in 1973, a devoted family man, a good husband and father of four children, a devout Roman Catholic who regularly attends mass at the Little Flower Roman Catholic Church in Bethesda, Md., and who lives in an unpretentious white-brick house in Springfield, Md., a Washington suburb that is not as fancy as, say, Chevy Chase. *Bill Colby? Why, he was neighborhood chairman of the Boy Scouts.*

"Bill's always been involved in the Boy Scouts," his wife said. Had he actually been one? "He was a Boy Scout in China when his father was assigned there as an Army officer."

It is a long way from the Boy Scouts to the C.I.A.'s Directorate of Operations, a euphemism that encompasses "dirty tricks," although perhaps there are some similarities, too, if one is to judge by the activities and style of E. Howard Hunt Jr., the most famous recent graduate (if he did graduate) of the C.I.A.'s covert division.

As the agency's Deputy Director for Operations, Colby—when tapped by Nixon to be C.I.A. chief—was the man directly in charge of America's global espionage and dirty tricks. C.I.A. is a bivalve; one half, the Directorate of Operations, collects information and engages in secret political operations. These are the spooks. The other half, the Directorate of Intelligence, staffed by scholarly types, analyzes

what comes in. Colby's counterpart there was Edward W. Proctor, an economist.

It is the operations directorate, the cloak-and-dagger side, where Colby has spent his entire C.I.A. career, that on occasion overthrows governments, bankrolls foreign political parties and guerrilla movements, has subsidized foundations in the United States, and, so it is rumored, has even engaged in the assassination of foreign political leaders. It is covert political operations that have gotten C.I.A. into hot water over the years, from the Bay of Pigs to the "technical support" provided to the burglars of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. The Directorate of Operations is the foreign political-action and espionage arm of the United States Government; until this year, it was known as the Directorate of Plans. Colby, of course, is not that "demmed elusive" Scarlet Pimpernel; he has chiefly dealt with Vietnam during the past 15 years, and, as Deputy Director of Operations for only three months, he can hardly be held accountable for everything that the Department of Dirty Tricks has been up to since 1948. The C.I.A. was created by Congress in 1947, but secret political action was not approved by the National Security Council until the following year. Since then, the operations directorate has, among other things:

- Air-dropped agents into Communist China in the early nineteen-fifties. Two C.I.A. agents captured in 1952, Richard G. Fecteau and John T. Downey, have now been released; Downey was freed by Peking in March after more than 20 years in Chinese prisons.

- Overthrown the Government of Premier Mohammed Mossadegh of Iran in 1953, thereby keeping the Shah on his throne. Not accidentally, when Nixon replaced Richard Helms as C.I.A. director in December, 1972, he sent him out as his Ambassador to Iran, one of the few countries in the world where a former C.I.A. chief could comfortably serve as ambassador.

- Toppled the Communist-dominated Government of President Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954.

- Attempted, unsuccessfully, to overthrow President Sukarno in Indonesia in 1958 with C.I.A. pilots and B-26 bombers. One of the C.I.A. pilots, Allan Lawrence Pope, was captured, imprisoned, and later released through the intervention of Robert F. Kennedy.

- Flown high-altitude U-2 spy planes over the Soviet Union to photograph strategic missiles, an operation that came to a crashing halt when C.I.A. pilot Francis Gary Powers was shot down on May 1, 1960. A summit meeting in Paris between President Eisenhower and Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev collapsed after the U-2 affair.

- Invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 with a brigade of Cuban exiles in an attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro. Nearly 300 Cubans and four American pilots flying for the C.I.A. died and some 1,200 men were captured. It was the Kennedy Administration's worst disaster.

- Set up a secret base at Camp Hale, 10,000 feet high in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado,



where Tibetans were trained to return home and fight against Communist China. The operation, begun in 1958, almost surfaced in December, 1961, when armed troops protecting the C.I.A.'s Tibetans roughed up some civilians at gunpoint.

- Advised and worked closely with the generals who staged a coup against President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam in 1963. (While there is no evidence that President Kennedy or the C.I.A. expected Diem to be killed, on this point, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor has declared: "... the execution of a coup is not like organizing a tea party; it's a very dangerous business. So I didn't think we had any right to be surprised when—when Diem and his brother were murdered.")

- Spent tens of thousands of dollars—some reports say millions—in Chile in 1964 to elect Eduardo Frei, the Christian Democratic candidate over Marxist candidate Salvador Allende. Negoti-

ated with I.T.T., and made some unsuccessful efforts to prevent Allende from becoming President in 1970.

- Trained and supported a secret army in Laos of at least 30,000 men—a figure acknowledged by the C.I.A. in August, 1971—at a cost of more than \$300-million a year.

- Subsidized the National Student Association, the nation's largest student group, and many other business, labor, church, university and cultural organizations through dozens of willing foundation conduits—a scandal that erupted in 1967.

- Provided Watergate star E. Howard Hunt Jr. with his famous red wig (invariably described in the press as "ill-fitting"), his miniature Tessina camera in a tobacco pouch, his false credentials and "a speech alteration device," which, according to those who have seen it, resembles a set of

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## Colby of C.I.A.

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dentures. The equipment was provided by the Technical Services Division of the C.I.A., and the C.I.A. claims it had no idea that Hunt would use it to burglarize the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

This listing of accomplishments is necessarily incomplete, both for reasons of space and because the directorate's work is not always well-publicized. The Directorate of Operations does not covet publicity, except about feats like the Berlin Tunnel, which enabled the C.I.A. to wiretap conversations in 1955 between Moscow and the headquarters in East Germany of the Russian Army and the K.G.B., the Soviet secret intelligence organization.

But the list could also include C.I.A. operations in Albania, Singapore, the Congo, Vietnam, Egypt and several

other places. The C.I.A.'s black operators helped to spirit Svetlana Alliluyeva out of India, and, according to former agent Patrick J. McGarvey, they stole the Soviet sputnik for three hours while it was on a world tour, dismantled it, photographed it and put it back together without the Russians finding out.

The operations directorate is no small-beer enterprise: It has its own air force in Indochina, known as Air America; it had its own navy during the Bay of Pigs (five ships leased from the Garcia Line Corporation in Manhattan); it has had its own radio stations (Radio Free Europe and Radio Swan, to mention two of the better-known ones), and it does a bit of book publishing on the side. For example, the publishing firm of Frederick A. Praeger said in 1967 it had published "15

or 16 books" at the suggestion of the C.I.A.

Under James R. Schlesinger, who succeeded Helms as C.I.A. head (and under Helms as well), word was put out in Washington that the C.I.A. was trimming down its covert political operations. The human spy is being replaced by reconnaissance satellites, electronic intercepts and technology. Black operations are no longer very important, or so it is said. As a result, Nixon's designation of Colby to a post requiring Senate confirmation raises the question of whether a career clandestine operator is the appropriate choice to head the C.I.A. at a time when—so it is claimed—covert political action is becoming a less significant tool of American foreign policy. The Director of Central Intelligence wears two hats. He is director of the C.I.A. (at \$42,500 a year) but he is also chairman of the board and coordinator of all United States intelligence agencies, including the Pentagon's powerful Defense Intelligence Agency, the F.B.I. and the ultrasecret National Security Agency, which eavesdrops on

worldwide communications and makes and breaks codes. The purpose of this vast intelligence "community" is to provide the President with the information and assessments he needs to make foreign-policy decisions. The Director of Central Intelligence basically serves as a manager and analyst. One of his most important functions is to interpret intelligence to estimate the course of future events. These are responsibilities that do not necessarily require skill in clandestine political operations.

Another question might be asked about whether Colby, who has himself figured at least peripherally in the Watergate investigations, is the proper man to head the C.I.A. at a time when the C.I.A. itself—and particularly its covert side—has been ensnared in various aspects of Watergate. The C.I.A.'s entanglements are complex and varied, but they include the fact that both Howard Hunt and James W. McCord Jr. worked for the C.I.A. for more than 20 years; that the Cubans caught inside Democratic National Committee offices in

the Watergate building also have ties to C.I.A.; that Frank Sturgis, one of those arrested in the Watergate, had C.I.A. credentials that had belonged to Hunt in the name of "Edward V. Hamilton"; that the C.I.A. provided the disguises and equipment used in the burglary of Dan Ellsberg's doctor's office; that the C.I.A. prepared a "psychiatric profile" of Ellsberg—and, finally, the disputed accounts of how the White House sought to enlist the C.I.A. in the Watergate cover-up.

Colby's name first cropped up, virtually unnoticed, in the Watergate investigation on May 15 when Senator Stuart Symington issued a long statement about various conversations among the C.I.A.'s Deputy Director, Lieut. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, Helms, H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman and Patrick Gray. Walters has claimed the White House wanted him to block the F.B.I. investigation of the Watergate burglary and of the campaign funds laundered in Mexico, on the grounds that the investigation would compromise C.I.A. operations in Mexico. Symington summarized Walt-

ers's testimony on this point. Symington also said Walters had testified that in February, 1973, John Dean called C.I.A. Director James Schlesinger and asked whether the C.I.A. could retrieve a "package" of documents from the F.B.I. The documents spelled out, in embarrassing detail, the espionage equipment given to Hunt and used in the Ellsberg break-in in 1971. "He [Walters] testified that he, Mr. Colby and Dr. Schlesinger discussed the matter and agreed there was no way this could be done," Symington declared. Colby, in other words, by this account, sat in on a top-level C.I.A. meeting at which it was considered whether the agency's duties might extend to snatching back a package of incriminating documents from the F.B.I., at the behest of the White House. Walters testified that the C.I.A. would not play.

That seemed to be a relatively marginal involvement of Bill Colby, but two weeks later, a little disagreement developed between Gen. Robert E. Cushman Jr., former Deputy Director of the C.I.A., and John Ehrlichman, concerning just who had asked the C.I.A. to provide Howard Hunt with that wig and camera before the Ellsberg burglary.

In a sworn affidavit executed on May 11, General Cushman, who left the C.I.A. at the end of 1971 to become Marine Corps Commandant, said that "about July 7, 1971, Mr. John Ehrlichman of the White House called me and stated that Howard Hunt . . . would come to see me and request assistance which Mr. Ehrlichman requested that I give." But on May 30, Ehrlichman said he could remember making no such telephone call to Cushman. He did not, Ehrlichman said, have even "the faintest recollection" of placing the call.

General Cushman, who served for four years as Vice President Richard M. Nixon's national security aide, then held a press conference on May 31 to announce that minutes of a high-level C.I.A. meeting on July 8, 1971, showed that he had specifically named Ehrlichman as having called on Hunt's behalf the day before. In December, 1972, Cushman explained, Earl J. Silbert, the Watergate prosecutor, asked if he would be kind enough to write a memo describing just how Howard Hunt had come to his attention. In the memo, Cushman fingered Ehrlichman. Here things get a little fuzzy,

but Cushman said at his press conference that he sent the memo to John Ehrlichman, which seemed an odd route to get it to Silbert, who had asked for it in the first place. Moreover, Cushman said he sent the memo to Ehrlichman at the suggestion of an official of the C.I.A.

Cushman's office said it had a tape recording of the press conference, but parts were not clear, and they could provide only an unofficial transcript. But this transcript includes the following questions and answers:

Q. And the C.I.A. suggested to you that you first submit that memo to Mr. Ehrlichman?

A. I think yes, but I don't know why. You'll have to ask them [unintelligible]. . . .

Q. Did you at any time communicate directly with the prosecutor?

A. I don't think I've ever talked to the prosecutor, no.

Q. So you submitted the paperwork for the prosecutor through Mr. Ehrlichman?

A. I think I did. . . .

Q. Who in the agency suggested that you submit the memo to Mr. Ehrlichman?

A. Mr. Colby, as I recall.

Q. Bill Colby?

A. Yes.

Cushman said Ehrlichman asked him to tear up the memo because he, Ehrlichman,

did not recall making the phone call about Hunt. Since his own memory was hazy, Cushman said (he had apparently not yet discovered the minutes of the July 8 meeting) he and Ehrlichman agreed that it would "not be very fair" to name Ehrlichman in the memo. Cushman said he agreed to write another memo, which he did, omitting Ehrlichman's name.

Perhaps the most troublesome, recurring problem in Bill Colby's long career, however, is the Phoenix program, which keeps rising, Phoenix-like, to haunt him. If there are two Bill Colbys, it is also true that there were two pacification programs in Vietnam. The very word "pacification," of course, has rather ominous, Orwellian overtones. It is part of the loathsome jargon of the Vietnam war—a war that did violence to the English language, as well as to human beings. Phoenix flapped into Colby's life through the window of "pacification."

The link to both programs was Robert W. Komer, a former C.I.A. man (from the Intelligence side) whom Lyndon Johnson sent to Vietnam in May, 1967, to head up the pacification effort. Komer is a voluble Colby booster.

"I caught a rare tropical disease in Vietnam," Komer  
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Colby testifying before Congress in 1971. Did his Vietnam "pacification" program entail murder or torture? No, he said.

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says, "so I started looking around for the ablest American I could find to replace me." As a special assistant to Johnson in the White House, Komer had been impressed with Colby during their frequent contacts in 1966, when Colby was the C.I.A.'s top covert official in Washington for the Far East.

On a trip back from Saigon in November, 1967, Komer related, "L.B.J. kept asking me, 'What do you want? What do you need?' I said I wanted a deputy in Saigon. 'Who do you want?' Johnson asked. I said, 'Mr. President, I have my eye on a fellow named Bill Colby.'"

As Komer tells it, Johnson picked up the telephone and called Walt W. Rostow, his assistant for national security.

"Call Helms," he barked at Rostow, "and get some guy named Colby for Komer."

Komer adds: "The next thing I heard was Dick Helms blowing a fuse. Helms was really p—— off. I don't blame him. The first he had heard about it was Rostow calling for the President. But Dick calmed down later."

Until he was suddenly tapped for Vietnam, Colby, it was whispered in the cloak-rooms of Langley, was slated for the hottest clandestine field job of all—station chief in Moscow. In the operations directorate, that post is the major leagues; a C.I.A. agent putting his head in the bear's mouth, as it were, operating in the very midst of the Committee for State Security, the Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti, the K.G.B.! Colby must have thought he was

going, because his kids bought him a fur hat.

It was of little use in Saigon. Colby had broken an ankle ice-skating on the canal that runs along the Potomac, but by March, 1968, after the Tet offensive, he was in Saigon as Komer's deputy in CORDS, the over-all pacification program for South Vietnam. In November of that year, Colby took over the top job; Komer was dispatched as ambassador to Turkey.

One of Colby's former deputies in the pacification program said — gagging only slightly over the phrase—that it was designed "to win the hearts and minds of the people." The task was, of course, enormously complicated by the fact that American planes and troops were simultaneously destroying the country. But, said the aide, "we had a road program, a village improvement program, health programs, agriculture — we brought in new strains of rice." Perhaps significantly, however, Colby, as head of CORDS, reported to the military, to Gen. Creighton Abrams, not to Ambassador Fillsworth Bunker.

Phoenix, the other face of pacification, was also under Colby. It had begun in its earlier stages as a C.I.A. operation, and it was a joint United States-South Vietnamese program designed to identify and then "neutralize" the Vietcong "infrastructure." The enemy was "neutralized" by being killed, jailed, or "rallied," a word that meant persuaded to defect. During Colby's period with the pacification program, 28,978 persons were captured or jailed, 17,717 "rallied" and 20,587

killed, according to the figures Colby provided in 1971 to the House Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee, headed by Rep. William S. Moorhead. Earlier, in February, 1970, Colby had tried to explain Phoenix to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Chairman J. W. Fulbright asked whether captured Vietcong were "executed," prompting the following exchange:

MR. COLBY: Well, let me say they are not legally executed, no... Now, I would not want to say here that none has ever actually been executed, but... the Government's policy and its directives are that these people when captured are placed in detention centers....

SENATOR CASE: This is not properly then defined in fact as a counterterror operation?

MR. COLBY: No, it is not, Senator.

SENATOR CASE: You swear to that by everything holy. You have already taken your oath?

MR. COLBY: I have taken my oath.

A bit later, Colby told the Senators: "... I would not want to testify that nobody was killed wrongly or executed in this kind of a program. I think it has probably happened, unfortunately."

The following year, in testifying to the Moorhead subcommittee, Colby said that "the Phoenix program is not a program of assassination." The Vietcong, he said, were killed as members of military units, "or while fighting off arrest," although there had been "some unjustifiable abuses."

But one witness, K. Barton Osborn, a former military-intelligence agent, told the subcommittee that suspects caught by Phoenix were interrogated in airborne helicopters. Some prisoners, he said, were pushed out, to persuade the more important suspects to talk. He said he had been on two such flights and saw two prisoners killed by being thrown out the door. Interrogations in Vietnam, the witness testified, also included "the use of electronic gear such as sealed telephones attached to the genitals of both the women's vagina and the men's testicles, and [the interrogators] wind the mechanism and create an electrical charge and shock them into submission."

Osborn also described other interrogations, which he said he had personally witnessed: "The use of the insertion of the 6-inch dowel into the..."

canal of one of my detainees' ears and the tapping through the brain until he died." The witness also said a U.S. Army captain shot and killed a Chinese woman who had been working as Osborn's interpreter. According to Osborn's testimony, the officer said "that the woman was only a 'slope' anyway, and it doesn't matter."

Osborn declined to name any individuals who had been involved in these alleged episodes. The Pentagon investigated his charges and submitted a classified report to the Moorhead subcommittee discounting the testimony. Staff members of the House panel were astonished to find that the document said Pentagon investigators could find no records of a Chinese woman killed during the time period Osborn described. "Do you really think," a staff member asked one of the Pentagon officials, "that an American Army officer who shot a civilian under these circumstances would report it?"

A central point of controversy over Phoenix is whether Vietcong were killed during capture, as Colby has sworn, or during subsequent torture and interrogation. Robert Komer says that "90 per cent of the Vietcong infrastructure were killed in fire fights by the South Vietnamese military, in normal combat operations. Ten per cent were killed by police and the P.R.U. [Provincial Reconnaissance Units]." How many were killed under interrogation? "I would say relatively few. It must have been way under the 10 per cent figure," Komer replied. "The number killed by torture would be very, very little."

A second point in dispute is whether suspected members of the Vietcong were killed resisting arrest, as Colby testified, or whether substantial numbers were simply shot on the spot as soon as they were found, as Osborn has charged. In a recent interview, Osborn called Phoenix "an indiscriminate murder program."

Certainly there is evidence that Phoenix claimed some innocent victims. During Colby's testimony to the House subcommittee, Representative Ogden R. Reid of New York asked whether persons captured had the right to counsel. No, said Colby, they did not. Then it was a "kangaroo trial"? Colby replied that the interrogation procedure "probably meets the technicalities of international law but it certainly does not meet

our concepts of due process." Then this exchange occurred:

MR. REID: My question is: Are you certain that we know a member of the VCI [Vietcong infrastructure] from a loyal member of the South Vietnam citizenry?

AMBASSADOR COLBY: No, Mr. Congressman, I am not.

Congressman Reid observed that, "...there is the possibility that someone will be captured, sentenced or killed who has been improperly placed on a list." Colby did not disagree; he said he would like to see the legal procedures improved because "I do not think they meet the standards I would like to see applied to Americans today."

Some months ago, Osborn and a few other former intelligence agents formed the Committee for Action/Research on the Intelligence Community. CARIC opposed Colby's designation as C.I.A. chief, calling his rise within the intelligence agency "nothing more than rewards for his having been the C.I.A.'s apologist for Phoenix to Congress." In language considerably less polite than that used by members of the Moorhead committee, CARIC's statement added: "Mr. Colby's professional qualifications as a mass murderer are not in question here; his appointment to a powerful Government position is."

While charges of torture in the Phoenix program remain unproved, a directive issued in May 1970, to Phoenix personnel indicates that Phoenix was not for the squeamish. The directive, signed by Maj. Gen. W. G. Dolvin, emphasized the "desirability of obtaining these target individuals alive" and contained the peculiar phraseology that American personnel were "specifically unauthorized to engage in assassinations." However, the directive said, "*if an individual finds the police-type activities of the Phoenix program repugnant to him, on his application, he can be reassigned from the program...*" (Italics added.)

Two Bill Colbys and two pacification programs. Not one of Colby's friends or neighbors, or even his critics on the Hill, would, in their wildest imagination, conceive of Bill Colby attaching electric wires to a man's genitals and personally turning the crank. "Not Bill Colby. . . . He's a Princeton man!"

But at the House hearings, Congressman Paul N. McCloskey Jr. kept asking niggling, Nuremberg-type questions. "How far up in the

command structure does the intelligence-collection procedure—how far up in the command structure is the torture, the brutality, the assassinations fully known to those in command and in charge of completing the mission? Does it go up to the captains, the majors, the colonels, the generals, the Ambassador?"

These are very difficult questions, and by mid-1971, Colby no longer had to deal with them in Vietnam. He came back to Washington, in part, friends say, to be with his seriously ill daughter, Catherine, who died this April at the age of 23. Colby was named Executive Director of the C.I.A. by Dick Helms early in 1972, and became head of the operations directorate under Schlesinger a year later.

"Bill behaves in a calculatingly colorless manner," one covert operator who worked with him for years said. "It's the way he chooses to deal with the world."

One former agent, Patrick McGarvey, ruefully concedes that he experienced firsthand just how unobtrusive Colby can be. McGarvey was working in the Saigon station. "This guy walks in. An innocent-looking little man with glasses. Mr. Peepers. He asked us what we do. 'Christ,' I said, 'we spend eight hours a day trying to figure that out.' He sat down and we talked about an hour and a half. I really vent my spleen. I bitched about all the Mickey Mouse detail. Then he says, 'By the way, my name's Bill Colby.'" At the time, 1964, Colby was chief of the C.I.A.'s Far East division, and there were, McGarvey said, "quite a few reverberations." (Later, McGarvey quit the agency and wrote a book, "C.I.A.: The Myth and the Madness," which he submitted for clearance and which the agency, after some deletions, permitted to be published.)

Most officials who have known Colby, not only in the C.I.A., give him very high marks as a person, and for his professional abilities. Some, however, criticize him as an inflexible cold warrior, frozen in attitudes learned in more than two decades as a spook. By all accounts, he was a true believer in American policy in Vietnam. (Although not in every detail; associates who served with him in the C.I.A.'s "black" Far East division in the early nineteen-sixties say that he opposed the coup against Diem and considered it a mistake.) One former covert

agent complained that Colby was "an adequate technician but not in a class with Allen Dulles and Bedell Smith. The agent added that C.I.A. personnel were fairly dancing with delight when Schlesinger left, "but I wonder if Bill Colby is getting in over his head."

Other associates strongly defend Colby as a persuasive, articulate bureaucrat who inspires personal loyalty in his subordinates. Although a graduate of Princeton and Columbia Law School, Colby, unlike many of the Old Boys who have traditionally dominated the higher echelons of the C.I.A., does not come from a wealthy, upper-class background. He is not, as they say, "St. Grottlesex"—he did not attend one of the prestigious Eastern prep schools. Rather, he went to high school in Burlington, Vt.

His wife, the former Barbara Heinzen, is a short, outgoing brunette who shares her husband's Catholic faith. Very unassuming, no airs, but a well-educated, sophisticated woman. Their oldest son, John, 26, is married, has worked for Henry Kissinger on the staff of the National Security Council and, as a classmate at Princeton of Edward Finch Cox, was a groomsman at Tricia Nixon's White House wedding in 1971. The Colbys have three other children, Carl, 22, Paul, 17, and Christine, 13.

Colby is the third chief of "Dirty Tricks" to be named head of the C.I.A.—the two others being Allen Dulles and Helms. Dulles was put in charge of spying and covert action in 1951. He was succeeded by the late Frank G. Wisner, a tall, Mississippi-born, dedicated cold-war operator who ran the coup in Guatemala. Wisner was followed by Richard M. Bissell, one of the fathers of the U-2 program and chief planner of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Beached after that, Bissell

was succeeded by Helms. After President Johnson named Helms C.I.A. director in 1966; Desmond FitzGerald took over the plans directorate. He died in 1967 and was succeeded by the "blackest" and least-known of the operations directors, Thomas Hercules Karamessines, a New Yorker and Columbia graduate who served in the O.S.S. and worked for the C.I.A. in Athens, Vienna and Rome under embassy cover. "Tom K.," as he is known among the operators, was retired last March in the Schlesinger shakeout, along with several other big-name spooks, like Bronson Tweedy and Archibald B. Roosevelt Jr., both former London station chiefs. Very prestigious station, London, and Cord Meyer Jr. has been selected for the post. That's fine, of course, for Cord Meyer, but not so fine for some of the old Grotonians with the reversible names who have been put out to pasture while Bill Colby made it to the top. Which Bill Colby?

But the question is unfair. Perhaps there has been, all these years, only one Bill Colby and two United States Governments. One that publicly adheres to the highest moral principles in the conduct of its foreign affairs, and another that uses dirty tricks and Bill Colbys to fight what Dean Rusk once called a "back-alley" war.

With Colby designated director of the C.I.A. and moving out of the operations directorate, the secret show must go on. Along the intelligence grapevine the word is out that Colby's choice for the new Deputy Director of Operations would be William Nelson, who until recently was director of the C.I.A.'s Far East division, the job Colby used to have. When Colby was named chief of the operations directorate, he moved Nelson up to be his deputy. Like Colby, Nelson is a career clandestine operator. He is said to be of medium height, with light brown hair, and wears horn-rimmed glasses. There is a William E. Nelson listed in the State Department's Biographic Register. He is 52, Columbia and Harvard, and, it says, was a researcher for "Dept of Army," then a political officer in Tokyo in 1950, and turned up in "Dept of Navy" on Taiwan from 1959 to 1965. It also says he has been back at the State Department since 1968. But for some reason he isn't listed anywhere in the department's phone book. ■