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## Why Mr. Helms left CIA

By Benjamin Welles

The Central Intelligence Agency — bellwether of the six federal agencies comprising the intelligence "community" — is changing the guard.

Richard M. Helms, director for the past six years and the first career intelligence officer to reach the top, has been named United States Ambassador to Iran. James R. Schlesinger, a Nixon protege who has been head of the Atomic Energy Commission for the past 18 months, will soon replace Mr. Helms.

The ouster of Helms reflects President Nixon's determination to reorganize the vast, costly federal bureaucracy. No single fiefdom has been more elusive than the intelligence community—not only because of the entrenched power of its barons but because of their skill in hiding their size, budgets, and activities from the public behind a veil of "national security."

The ever-smiling Helms, for example, has long been viewed by veteran Washington bureaucrats as a peer. Named director of Central Intelligence in 1936 by Lyndon Johnson, Helms quietly set to work consolidating his own power and repairing the damage done the CIA's image by the Bay of Pigs and other fiascos.

He began trimming "fringe" activities, cultivating columnists and newsmen, and developing a power-base in Congress — notably among the aging hawks in control of appropriations and armed services. He even won praise from a frequent critic of the CIA — Chairman Fulbright of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Such adroit maneuverings might, in the Kennedy-Johnson era, have won White House approval and, simultaneously, a measure of autonomy. In the hypersuspicious Nixon entourage, however, they merely aroused suspicion.

"In this administration," remarked a veteran intelligence expert, "the guy who works for Nixon and who gets on well with Fulbright is rare."

There were other signs that Helms was not regarded, and possibly did not wish to be regarded, as a member of the Nixon "team." When he and his socially active wife began appearing frequently in the society columns there were grumbles that the President's chief intelligence adviser was hobnobbing with the "Georgetown cocktail set." In contrast to the Johnson days when Helms was virtually always invited to the policy-setting White House Tuesday lunches along with Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, and Gen. Earl "Buzz" Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs under Nixon, Helms has been reporting through Kissinger. Moreover, there has been criticism of Helms's "perfunctory" handling of major intelligence problems in White House meetings.

All this has gradually confirmed President Nixon's suspicions that what was needed was a tough-minded "manager" to pull together the huge, sprawling intelligence community. Besides the CIA with its \$600 million budget and its 15,000 employees the community includes the Defense Department's Defense Intelligence Agency; the code-cracking National Security Agency; the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research; the Atomic Energy Commission and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Pentagon spending on intelligence — which includes electronic intercepts and spy satellites — approximates \$3 billion yearly. Add to this \$2 billion more spent every year by overseas commanders who insist on aerial reconnaissance, local code-cracking and even some 'spy running to ascertain what's "over the hill" in front of their forces. Meager intelligence before the 1970 irruption into Cambodia, before the abortive Sontay raid, and especially before Hanoi's offensive last March, has led the administration to charge that the intelligence mountain too often labors and brings forth a mouse.

Soon after taking office President Nixon had his OMB assign one of its key officials, James Schlesinger — a former Rand systems analyst — to survey the whole field of intelligence and propose reforms. His key recommendation was to separate the director of central intelligence (DCI) from day-to-day operations and move him into, or near, the White House as an intelligence "czar." However, Henry Kissinger saw this as a threat to his position; while Helms, a veteran of clandestine operations, saw it as a maneuver to cut him off from his "troops" and turn him into a senior paper shuffler.

The upshot, announced by the White House Nov. 5, 1971, in a communique so opaque as to defy comprehension, was a characteristic bureaucratic compromise. Helms was given "enhanced" authority — but no greater control over resources.

"Presidential authority means nothing in government without control of resources," Helms once told an interviewer. "The CIA spends 10 percent out of every intelligence dollar and the Pentagon 80 cents. I can't order the rest of the intelligence agencies how to spend their funds. I can only lead by persuasion."

Evidently Mr. Nixon disagrees. He has already shown that he means business by naming "managers" to trouble spots: Elliot Richardson as Secretary of Defense; Kenneth Rush as Deputy Secretary of State; Roy Ash as director of OMB; Caspar Weinberger Secretary of HEW.

By naming Schlesinger, the man who drafted the reforms, as head of the CIA — and by implication of the entire community — Mr. Nixon appears to be implying that he wants action.

The next article will discuss some of the major problems facing Mr. Schlesinger.

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