

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
VIRGINIAN-PILOT

M - 129,885

S - 184,960

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CIA Admiral

The single reservation expressed about Admiral Stansfield Turner's nomination as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, prior to the Senate's voice-vote confirmation formality, concerned his decision to remain in the Navy. The issue merited more discussion than it received.

Admiral Turner pointed out, in an appearance before the Senate Intelligence Committee, that the law permits a military officer to head up the CIA, and that nine previous directors and deputy directors retained their commissions. He insisted on having the option of moving into another Naval assignment after leaving the CIA. There was no conflict, as he saw it, in a military officer's heading an agency that was established specifically to be independent of the Pentagon.

What is law and what is preferable

in this instance are two different things. The precedent of military figures' serving in nonmilitary offices is not entirely happy. General Alexander Haig's experiences are relevant.

General Haig was shifted from the Pentagon to be President Nixon's chief of staff. With the collapse of the Nixon Administration, he returned to the Army. Military, government, and politics experienced some embarrassment during the exchange.

The CIA is in need of reorganization and reformation. Its director should not approach the assignment with the slightest idea of abandoning it for a return to familiar setting. And anyway, Admiral Turner, having risen to four-star rank, has attained all the military success he needs. It would be to his credit to clear the field of his impressive rank.