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The New Look

Things are looking up for the CIA.

Admiral Stansfield Turner, President Carter's new head of the Central Intelligence Agency, was in town the other day for a speech. He had some good things to say.

The CIA's morale had been low because of a series of revelations that made the agency look sometimes like a combination of Murder Inc. and the Keystone Kops. That was bad for the image. The agency's over-all performance was forgotten in the welter of stories about assassination attempts, efforts to make Fidel Castro's whiskers fall off, and mad scientist experiments on unsuspecting American citizens. Congress and the general public began to ask who, if anybody, had final control of CIA operations? Could it do anything it wanted; no questions asked? Could it keep even the President in the dark as to what it was up to? Were congress-

sional "oversight" committees actually overseeing, or simply looking the other way?

Adm. Turner said the CIA is turning the corner on the morale problem. The American people know full well that we must have a good, competent Central Intelligence Agency, and that includes some covert operations.

But the CIA is after all an agency of government, not the whole show, and it should be accountable. Adm. Turner assures us that it is accountable. The President, for example, has ordered an end to assassination attempts against anybody, anytime, anyplace. And while Turner sees risks in the additional congressional oversight imposed in recent years, he admits the oversight process is needed. So is the recognition that the agency cannot serve the country well unless it understands and is in tune with the attitudes, values, morals and ethics of the American people.