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Sturdy Stan at the CIA

By Joy Billington
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When Jimmy Carter went out to CIA headquarters at Langley recently to give intelligence agents a pep talk, he urged them to be "more pure and more clean and more decent and more honest" than practically anyone else. They must be as Caesar's wife, he told them.

Such orders, of course, were delivered in the context of a widespread public impression that the agency had been less pure, less clean, less decent and less honest than many might wish.

CLOSE-UP

And, while many of the excesses of the past seem to have been curbed, the agency is currently under new fire — on the fundamental question of how well it is doing its job. Critics now are saying that Washington was caught off guard by the events in Iran, that something is deeply amiss at the Central Intelligence Agency when one of its personnel is found guilty of selling critical information to the Soviets.

At the center of the storm is Stansfield Turner — a 54-year-old admiral who neither smokes nor drinks, a deeply religious man in a world of cunning and stealth — who has been tasked to point the CIA in a more virtuous and efficient direction.

Turner's command began dramatically enough. It started with the so-called "Halloween Massacre." The admiral ordered 212 employees to hang up their cloaks and put away their daggers — the number ultimately would reach 820. That same night, Oct. 31, 1977, as pink slips were carried home all over town, Turner threw "a Halloween party for spooks," and guests ducked for apples.

This twist of Turner humor — to begin the overhaul of the clandestine service on the night of ghosts and ghoulies — must have appealed to the director's sense of irony. For there was much about the tweedy, expensive clothes and the convoluted mindsets of the clandestine people that went against the grain of his own straight-arrow mind.

This year, the Turners' Halloween party featured "graves" of agency enemies, dangling skeletons, and a game for the 60 guests of guessing how many pumpkin seeds there were in a jar. There were 667. Iran's Crown Prince Reza guessed 650 and his prize was a packet of jelly beans. There are those who would argue today that the Crown Prince's jelly beans are more of a reward than the CIA would earn for its Iran estimates.

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"My father left a small mill town in Lancashire called Ramsbottam when he was eight or nine." Turner says. "His older brother and an uncle had emigrated to Chicago and he and his widowed mother joined them." Oliver Turner didn't finish high school. He started out as office boy, worked his way up, and eventually founded a real estate company and did well.

Turner's family were sufficiently well off enough to give their children good educations. Stansfield attended Amherst, Annapolis and Oxford.

He admits to being "more of a cut-up" at Amherst than at Oxford later, although his pranks were clearly in the Good Clean Fun category: "One thing I did that was fun was getting hold of the master key and locking the whole fraternity in their rooms one night."

At Amherst, Turner broke briefly with his lifelong teetotalism. "I was opposed to drinking when I went to Amherst but pretty soon I gave in and went out with the boys for a beer and I was a regular drinker from then until 1949 when my brother was killed in an automobile accident where drinking was involved. I decided then that the dangers weren't worth it and gave it up. I surely never missed it."

As CIA chief Turner is now having "a running battle" — albeit gentlemanly—with the current president of Amherst. "He wants to know what relations the CIA had in the past with Amherst, before we foreswore dealing with campuses. We feel that if we made an agreement in the past and said we'd keep this secret that we won't disclose our past sources any more than our present sources."

His old friend William H. Webster, now head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, laughs when asked if he led Turner astray at Amherst. "Probably! But Stan was a very straight-arrow. His nickname was 'Sturdy Stan'. My wild days were after Stan left. Maybe my role model cut me loose and I misbehaved after he left. . ."

They were both members of The Sphinx Honor Society, and wore the black pork pie hats with purple stripes that marked members of what Webster calls "the epitomy of what was best at Amherst, the junior leaders. I think Stan was president."

The fact that Sturdy Stan was steadily climbing the rungs of the Navy ladder is something Webster would have expected. What neither could ever anticipate, however, is that one day they would head the CIA and FBI respectively — "Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside", as Turner terms them.

Today they meet at Webster's 'shop' or Turner's — a friendship must make J. Edgar Hoover, who resented the CIA, turn in his grave. They see each other at the security coordinating meetings at the White House. And play tennis together regularly. Webster refuses to say who wins. "It's very close," he says tactfully.

At Annapolis, Turner was a guard on the Navy football team. He graduated 25th academically and first militarily in a class of 820. He remembers his fellow midshipman Jimmy Carter as "a quiet, very friendly Southern young man" but they didn't know each other well. "You don't, when you live in a 4,000-man dorm, unless you have clubs in common or live near each other." They came to know each other later when Turner was head of the Naval War College at Newport. He invited the governor of Georgia to lecture, as part of his policy of broadening the education of naval officers studying there.

Turner went to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar in 1948 for two and a half years. There, he says "I was just another blooming Yank." There wasn't much tearing down to London. "We had three very intensive terms, and a lot going on at Oxford. You're supposed to do a lot of your serious studying on your vacation. We Americans would pack up a bunch of books, head for the French Riviera and chase around. We stayed away from England for vacations because right after the war the food was bad, the climate was bad, so as soon as we got out of school we'd grab the boat train and head for the sun."

He found it intellectually stimulating. "Every evening there were so many things you could do: the Anglo-Israeli Club learning one side of what now is the Camp David issue, the next week the Arab Club where you'd hear terrible things about Lord Balfour and his role in setting up Israel. (Then Palestine.) I'm proud of myself, too, because Kenneth Clark was a teacher and I used to go to his lectures. I wasn't taking art. I was reading PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics). But that was the kind of broadening opportunity Ox-

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ford offered. And unlike American universities there was no stigma about wanting to study."

Asked if he did any hell-raising, Turner demurs, and then says: "I pushed the present chairman of Honeywell up a drainpipe to get into his college after hours one night. And one evening after an all-night ball, the former president of the University of Virginia, Edgar Shannon, and I went punting. My friend negotiated a curve in the river very deftly and two couples in another punt applauded his remarkable feat. You have to understand that we're in white tie and tails. And Edgar Shannon, standing in the stern of the punk, bowed to the applause and went right in the river."

A fellow Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, Pittsburgh University Chancellor Wesley Posvar, admits he was was a bit surprised when the Carter administration chose Turner for the CIA. "I was surprised they were that smart! He's was an obvious choice; a balanced internationalist with a military background, a scholar and intellectual and a man who understands national security far better than many others whose names were mentioned."

Posvar calls his old friend "a pretty straight guy. He behaved then, at Oxford, as he does today. The only difference is a little gray hair."

Turner retells an Oxford experience vividly:

"My tutor, Herbert Nicholas, was writing a book about the 1950 election when Churchill unsuccessfully sought to unseat Atlee. I had an automobile and I drove him all around the country to interview politicians. One night we were in the Rhondda Valley — a very poor coal mining area which was very Communist oriented.

"We went to hear Harry Pollitt, the secretary general of the British Communist party, whose constituency it was. We went with my tutor's two sisters who were spinster schoolteachers. Pollitt described Mr. Forrestal, the American secretary of defense, as so typical of the paranoid American capitalist that he'd jump out of a window if he heard a siren go by, thinking it was the signal for the Russian invasion.

"I challenged the statement and he put down a five-pound note and said 'I'll bet you five pounds it was in Time magazine. That's my source.'

Well, later I checked Time and there wasn't a scintilla of evidence that would give Pollitt something to work on. It was just a total lie, which was very illustrative to me of my now-long experience of dealing with communism.

"That was one of my first rubs with it. Here was a man who was willing to lie where he couldn't be proved wrong — in the middle of the night in the Rhondda Valley.

"The next day there was a two-column headline in the Daily Worker: 'Chicago Gangster Invades Rhondda.' It was about me 'invading' with my gun molls . . . my tutor's two spinster sisters. I had a Morris Minor but they accused me of riding in my big black limousine with my molls. It was very, very revealing."

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Stansfield and Pat Turner live in a pleasant admiral-size house on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Observatory. It is the first time a CIA chief has lived in such a "safe house," Pat Turner explains, which makes the CIA security people "very happy . . . we benefit from the security that goes with the vice president living up here."

A comfortable placid woman, Pat Turner says she has little curiosity about "the secrets" her husband carries. This even extends to their son, Navy Lt. Geoffrey Turner, who is presently doing post-graduate work at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, Cal. "I don't know the subject of his thesis. He can't tell me. He and my husband talk but I have to go out of the room," she says. Asked if she isn't tempted to listen at the door Pat Turner laughs: "It's all gobbledygook and code words I couldn't understand."

She has been a voracious reader of spy yarns for longer than her husband has been in the nation's No. 1 spook. While John Le Carre is somewhat complicated, she admits, pointing to "The Honorable Schoolboy" which she is reading, "it gives you a feel for the dreary part of the espionage business which contains so much tedious work."

Pat Turner has instigated the first organized wives meetings in the history of the CIA. Some 28 wives of "top section leaders" now meet for lunch once a month. "A lot of the lesser woman just can't do it because their husbands are not acknowledged as working for the CIA.

"I felt they needed a little togetherness, they've been picked on so much and taken so much criticism. I think they're wonderful, dedicated people who've been unjustly treated by the press."

Pat Turner 'dabbles' at sculpture, painting, collage; she can unstop sinks, garbage disposals and toilets; wire plugs and re-wire lamps; hang wall paper and paint walls. "The hardest thing a Navy wife has face is the change from being very competent while the husband is at sea to giving up the bankbook and the keys and becoming a nice little *hausfrau* when he comes home," she says.

During their marriage they have lived in Washington, San Diego, Newport, Long Beach, Honolulu and Naples, Italy, the last post before the CIA. There, where Turner was in charge of NATO's southern flank, they had a magnificent villa overlooking the Bay of Naples — "the most elegant I've ever lived in," she says calmly, without any note of nostalgia.

They courted in Carmel, Cal., where Pat was secretary to a Christian Science lecturer. Ten years earlier in Highland Park, near Chicago when they were both 12 years old, they had attended the same Christian Science Sunday school class. Their courting ran to dancing on the beach at Carmel, both dreamy after seeing "An American In Paris" and to walking by moonlight along the beach in Chicago.

During their first years together they managed well enough on his Navy salary, together with "what he'd saved at Oxford." She had "a small inheritance" that helped some with the children's education. In 1963 "his grandmother died and left him a third of her estate." Turner's salary today is $57,500.

As an active Christian Scientist—they attend the Sixth Church of Christ Scientist-Pat Turner does not take medications, even aspirin. "I don't need it. I've only had five headaches in my whole life. We do go to dentists and I wear glasses and my father-in-law had hip surgery", she adds as an illustration that they are not such strict Christian Scientists as those who refuse any medical aid. They both pray regularly and read a weekly lesson. Pat Turner says she has found prayer helpful in healing "many physical problems".

Turner is an intensely religious man. "A few minutes of contemplation and prayer at the beginning of the day helps you off to the right start and puts things in perspective," Turner says. "You're not as important as you thought you were."

They like "to be in nature together" and still manage to walk in the woods here in Washington without a security man trailing along. And while they no longer dance on moonlit beaches, now they're in their 50s, there is some frivolity-such as the sled he gave her last Christmas, Pat Turner sledded over the hills of the Observatory compound last winter with their golden retriever Hornblower at her side.

Then, every evening before bed, there's a 23-year-old tradition of the three games of double solitaire. "He gets off all his inhibitions and lets off steam. On mother's day he beat me in 17 games. Hornblower sits under the table and Stan tells him what mistakes I'm making."

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The Director: 'Times have changed'

After having five directors in as many years and surviving a four-year battering that turned into a national debate about what kind of intelligence service Americans want, the CIA is beginning to get its act together again, insists the Director of Central Intelligence. Others are not so sure.

Stansfield Turner thinks the agonizing public debate over the CIA is over. "I think we've turned the corner. And we're on the offensive, not the defensive. We've got an important mission for the country. We're doing it well. We're doing it legally. We don't have to take any more guff."

But to many, Turner personifies a CIA hamstrung with restrictions, a cold depersonalized operation with its own captain but with all orders coming from the White House and Congress. What some would prefer is a skipper who would take the ship down to lie quietly on the bottom while the depth charges exploded above them.

Opinion on Turner varies. A former National Security Council staffer says: "He's intelligent, a good field commander, but he leaves a lot of distressed people in his wake. The main charge I've heard is that he suppresses dissenting views. This makes the material less reliable to the wider intelligence community. And there's the feeling that he'll do whatever the president wants."

Ray S. Cline, director of Soviet studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says Turner is moving in the right direction in analysis of intelligence. "The criticisms you get all have to do with the *other* role of the CIA, the clandestine operations. The impression is that Turner isn't interested in the operations side and that he hasn't been able to counter the deterioration of the last five years and get the clandestine services working again."

"Covert operations," Cline says, "the intervening in political events abroad, are virtually dead, except perhaps for feeding a little propaganda to foreign newspapers to counter Soviet manipulation of the news."

"But I'm not sure anyone could do much better, considering the hamstringing of the agency," he adds. "A new bill containing 250 pages of restrictions and monitoring provisions demonstrates a punitive attitude in the administration and Congress to the CIA. I don't think we can live with that. You have to take some risks. There are a lot of crises coming in the next few years. Turner would say that his intelligence is still very good because of the technical intelligence. But that mostly relates to large countries. It gives no information about the intentions of people. You need human intelligence for that. You can't take satellite pictures of intentions."

Turner disagrees. "Only the newspapers — and Ray Cline — say I rely too much on technical intelligence. Ray's a fine fellow. I like him. He's out of date. He hasn't understood what I was trying to do. But I've fought for the clandestine service. And they're stronger and better than they were a year ago. I have no intention of downgrading them. I'm here to make this a strong clandestine service for 1988 as well as 1978. I'm not playing for just the short run."

Turner denies the agency is being hamstrung. "Having to report to eight committees of Congress on covert action is confining but the rest of these restrictions people are talking about are all involved in the protection of the rights of American citizens and this really is not a major part of our activities. These restrictions, which we all want, are not that hamstringing."

Complaints from the Old Boy net, largely centering on the clandestine operations issue, remain nettlesome to the director.

"I've been a staunch supporter of the clandestine service and have gone to bat for them. Like that speech at the National Press Club. What am I doing there? I'm defending the clandestine service's right not to reveal its sources. I don't do that to promote morale but because that's what's necessary to have an effective clandestine operation. And if they continue to believe they're effective their morale will be good. But it is up much up."

Reductions in the clandestine service "gave the younger clandestine people more opportunity, and that's percolated down. As a result of this we've cleaned out . . . not dead wood, but excess wood. They were good wood, but excess. They had too many of them. So there are more promotions in the clandestine service this year than ever before."

Regarding 'risk-taking' in the clandestine service the Admiral says flatly: "the clandestine service is out of business if it doesn't take risks. Most of the Old boy network is subconsciously upset because covert action is more difficult today. But I've been here 19 months and there's only one covert action I would like to have undertaken that we didn't. In short, there are not many covert action opportunities today that would be useful and effective for our country.

"The times have changed since we could overthrow a government in Guatemala or Iran. The country neither wants to do that kind of thing nor is it really as *do-able* as it was 30 years ago.

"The Old Boys are upset because the elan, the fun of going out and not only finding intelligence but influencing events is over. It was more vibrant here in the past. It was more vibrant in the military in the past! Every time there was a smoke signal we sent the fleet off over the horizon. We don't do that any more. And they're just beginning to learn that here.

"It's interesting because so many experiences here are just five or 10 years behind my military experiences. The attack on this agency came about 1974. The attack on the military came in 1970. The elan of charging off into the wild blue yonder in the military has changed too. But they'll get used to the changes. Because what's left to be done is more important than it was in the past . . . intelligence as opposed to covert action.

"I don't feel circumscribed in taking the appropriate risks. I think we're being more judicious in evaluating those risks. Now maybe the Old Boys also sense that. But I tell you, when you look at the mistakes that have been made here in the past because people didn't ask *'Is it worth it?'* Some of the things for which they were most criticized weren't worth doing. They didn't measure the risk against the benefit. Now we're doing that. And if they think that means we aren't willing to take risks they're full of baloney!

"I sat at that table recently with all CIA professionals around the table and I said 'I want to do this, now vote!' Every one of them voted *no*. I said 'OK gentlemen, you win. I just want the record to show that I — the only outsider — am the guy voting to take the risk.'

"Now I don't say they were wrong and I was right. If I really thought I was right I'd have over-ruled them. But I'm perfectly willing to take risks, that's what I'm paid for. And the whole organization knows that. If I let you talk to the clandestine people they would not produce many instances where they suggested a risk that I wouldn't take. I've turned some down, of course."

Turner refrains from comment on what even President Carter considers a serious intelligence failure in Iran. "His argument is how can we prove we had good intelligence without showing it to you," CIA spokesman Herb Hetu says. And on another current anxiety, the question of whether or not a "mole," a double agent, has worked himself into the top ranks of the CIA, Hetu says: "It would be foolish for the director to be absolutely categorical in denying that a 'mole' exists, but in his best judgment he believes there is not."

A top Pentagon official sees CIA directors as "reflecting what administrations want at any given time. There have been more 'outsider' directors than 'insiders', so Turner isn't unique. Four star admirals like to run the ship from the bridge. The idea of a strong command line never leaves them. He likes everything to fit into that tight little line . . . *bing, bing, bing*. Also he's a systems analyst who likes to condense every-

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thing to a neat statistical matrix. Turner's uneasy with words, which means he has tendencies opposed to those intelligence agents who want to caveat everything."

Retired Admiral Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt recommended Turner for several important Navy posts in the past. But he sees the CIA as "increasingly acting as a propaganda arm of the presidency rather than absolutely ruthless about coming out with objective criteria." This tilting towards presidents began with Henry Kissinger, Zumwalt says, and today "Carter makes public statements and the next CIA analyses lean in that direction."

CIA morale in the field is so low, he insists, "that if you evaluate on a one-to-10 scale in comparison with the KGB, the CIA would have gotten a five at its highest effectiveness. Right now they operate at the level of one. The KGB operates at eight."

Zumwalt blames Carter rather than Turner. "I don't think anyone at the CIA could perform differently given a president who operates from the naive base Mr. Carter operates from, who thinks that the same ideological and theological orientation effective at Camp David with two religious men can be applied to the Soviets. So they're taking him right and left. And Admiral Turner is giving the president exactly what he wants, which is what one should expect from a loyal presidential appointee."

Turner flatly denies that he has politicized the agency's intelligence reports for the benefit of the administration: "What you are seeing is a greater openness regardless of whether it supports or detracts (from administration positions). I'm not in the policy game. I'm declassifying what can be de-classified. Sometimes I'm praised and sometimes I'm damned. I'm not here to undercut the president but I'm not here to support him in a political sense, because I have to be objective."

He also denies the accusation that he restricts dissenting views in CIA analyses. "If there is one thing I have done successfully it is to emphasize minority views in the intelligence reports. You can't find anybody that would deny that I've driven footnotes out because before I came here I never read the footnotes. I assumed they came from some wild guy who had to dissent.

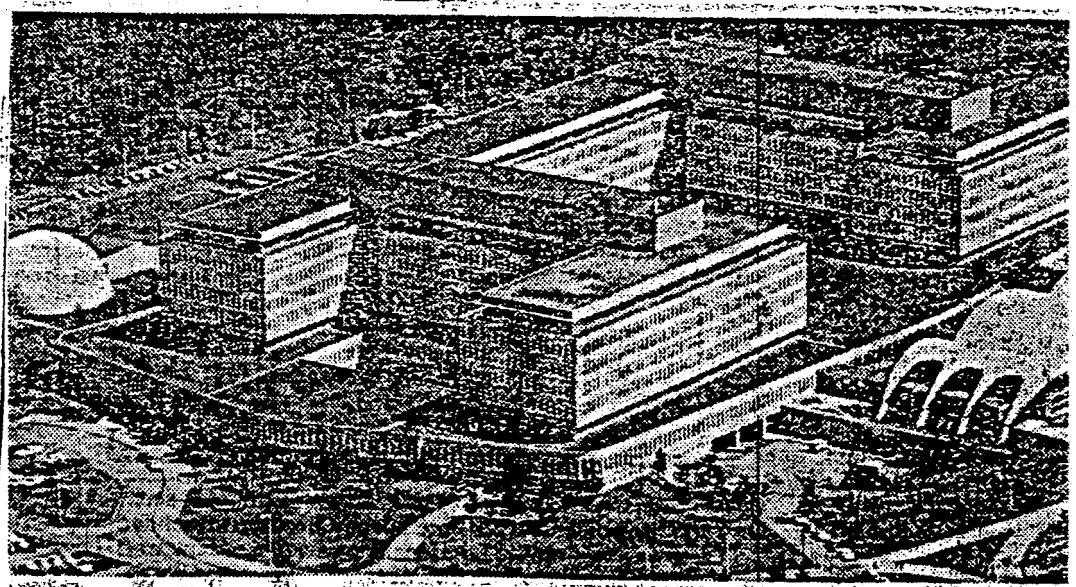
"Today if a dissent is necessary it goes right in the text of the estimate. You *have to* read it. Then the decision maker's got the whole picture. I am just excited what it's done to improve the estimating process and I'm curious to know who accused me of suppressing minority views. If I knew I'd probably hang him up by his thumbs . . ."

He is not embarrassed by the Arkady Shevchenko case in which it was revealed that the former Soviet diplomat had spent large sums of CIA-provided money on a woman. "I don't want to be a prude. I don't approve in my own life of the kind of things Shevchencko was doing. But it's his private life. He's an unmarried man. He has the right to do what he likes with his money and his spare time. We're trying to help him transition into being an American, without invading his constitutional and legal rights to privacy.

"He hasn't done anything criminal. We had no part in his private female companionship relations. We did not pay him to pay her. We paid him what he deserves on the grounds of what he is doing for us. I'm proud we have a country that will attract a man of his high caliber and reputation and promise inside the Soviet Union. I mean, it really shows that when he lived here for a few years . . . He had everything going for him in his country, he was the youngest ambassador they ever had. He leaves everything behind in order to accept our way of life. We all ought to be proud."

However Turner is embarrassed over the case of an employee, William Kampiles, having been convicted of selling satellite secrets to Moscow. "I've tightened security procedures here. I'd like it not to have happened. It's very difficult to establish such tight procedures that it can't happen. All the papers on my desk are highly classified. It's the medium of doing business. If I have to sign for each one we can get ourselves tied in knots. So you have to compromise between efficiency and security. I think the whole government in the past 10 years has leaned a little bit much toward more efficient ways of handling their paper rather than to secure ways of handling them."

— Joy Billington



The CIA in all its awesomeness