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| SUBJECT | CATUSK: UTILITY Tenure and Succession | | |
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| <p>1. During his talk with CATUSK's @PETERSEN on 27 March 1967 <i>EL</i> also raised the question of UTILITY's tenure and eventual succession. PETERSEN as usual was not very complimentary about UTILITY.</p> <p>a. To our first question whether the current extension might be repeated a year from now he said first "I fear so" and then "I hope not". He said the current situation was absolutely untenable, he likened UTILITY to a "lame duck" President. He considered that a years extension had been necessary because the new Government had simply not had time to find a successor. Further extensions he said would be disastrous for the organization. As long as the senior officers expected UTILITY to retire he could not provide effective leadership. From his vantage point as a Base chief, he said, UTILITY appeared to be no longer in command, at least not operationally. PETERSEN said that there is so much infighting and jockeying for positions in CATUSK that by default the effective leadership such as it is has fallen to the Chief of Administration, @STEIN (presumably identical with <i>EL</i> whom we last carried as Chief of Finance). PETERSEN explained that in the absence of true operational leadership and as a result of the internecine warfare among the senior officers at CATUSK only the bureaucracy continues to function.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>ALL INTELL OFFICERS</u> <u>CIT W/EGNA/97</u></p> | | | |
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b. To our next question on succession PETERSEN had no direct answer only opinions. When we dropped the name of General Wessel, he said that unfortunately Wessel was no longer a candidate. He said he would have loved to have Wessel get the job five years ago, to quote PETERSEN, "he would have really cleaned that pigsty thoroughly". For some reason PETERSEN completely discounted the possible candidacy of Wessel. He implied that Wessel was too old but actually Wessel is only fifty-four and would have at least five years active duty left if he were appointed next year. We then spoke of the type of man who might replace UTILITY. PETERSEN, as an Air Force Colonel on active duty, would of course prefer a military man. He was of the opinion, however, that the politicians in Bonn would want a civilian. His estimate was that WAGNER would be replaced by a military man but the top job would go to a political appointee. He elaborated by saying it would be best if the new chief came from without the organization since anyone now in the organization would either be too much encumbered by UTILITY's past policy or would create great enmity from his colleagues by attempting to change the policies. Only an outsider PETERSEN thought would have a chance to establish his own policy. PETERSEN also brought up the matter of age in grade stating that a large number, he said, over ten percent, of the CATUSK senior officers who aspire to the top job are either already over age in grade or are within a few years of retirement age. To be effective the new man would have to have a prospective tenure of at least five years. Since military retire at sixty, civilians at ~~sixty~~ ~~five~~ this would mean a military man under fifty-five or a civilian under sixty. In order to get that type of man from within the organization a fairly young man would have to be promoted over the heads of at least several dozen of his superiors. That in itself would be a great handicap for a new chief in PETERSEN's opinion.

3. Asked whether these were just his own opinions he said the topic was most current at all levels of CATUSK and he thought he had given us a consensus of a great many officers who themselves do not consider themselves as likely candidates for the job.

APPROVED: _____