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Who Will Control the CIA Outsiders or the Old Boys?

William J. Casey has survived as CIA director, at least for the moment, but the wrong conclusions will probably be drawn from the Senate investigation of his activities and the pratfall from power of his spymaster, Max Hugel.

The moral of the story, some will assume, is that the CIA should be left to the professionals. That, of course, is precisely what the powerful network of Old Boys, both inside and outside the CIA, would like the public to think. The intelligence professionals, the career spies, prefer to regard "the agency" as their private preserve. Outsiders are poachers.

While the controversy may have appeared on the surface to be a struggle between the Senate intelligence committee and Casey, the real struggle was over who will control the CIA. Arrayed on one side were Casey and the president, who gingerly supported his CIA director. On the other side were the Old Boys, the present and former CIA professionals, and their allies on Capitol Hill.

It was an old battle played out again with a new cast of characters. Back in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson appointed Adm. William F. Raborn Jr., the man responsible for the development of the Polaris missile, as CIA chief. The Old Boys were annoyed. Within weeks, stories found their way into print reporting that at CIA meetings Raborn was a muddle of confusion, "so unlettered in international politics," as Newsweek put it, "that he could not pronounce or even remember the names of some foreign capitals and chiefs of state." Six months later, Raborn was out as CIA director. With the admiral piped ashore, Johnson named a professional, Richard Helms, to the post.

Besides Raborn and Casey, at least two other outsiders who served as CIA directors were targeted by the professionals. President Nixon named James A. Schlesinger to the job in 1973. Schlesinger fired a number of Old Boys, arousing much ire within the agency. Under Jimmy Carter, Adm. Stansfield Turner managed to survive as CIA chief, but many old agency hands refer to him mockingly as "the Admiral."

The current flap had its unobtrusive beginnings late in March when Casey quietly moved John McMahon out as deputy director for operations (the CIA's covert side) to head intelligence and analysis. Then, on May 11, Casey tapped Hugel, who had worked with him in the Reagan campaign, to be the DDO.

Only four days later, on May 15, Cord Meyer, the covert-operator-turned-columnist, surfaced Hugel's name, revealing the appointment of "a rank amateur" to head the agency's cloak-and-dagger directorate. The drama had begun.

Two brothers, former business associates of the Brooklyn-born Hugel, went to The Washington Post. On July 14, within hours of the newspaper's publication of charges of improper or illegal business activities by Hugel, he had resigned. There were those who argued, albeit not seriously, that the disclosures only proved Hugel's superior qualifications for the job. According to the Hugel tapes and other revelations in The Post, the spymaster had threatened to kill a lawyer who got in his way, warned his business associate that he would hang him by the testicles and admitted (in his unpublished autobiography) that he was a liar, informer and a bunko artist. To top it all, he beat the CIA lie detector. What finer background could anyone have to head the CIA's dirty tricks division?

But Hugel went quickly down the tube. Perhaps, one anonymous White House official speculated, with some help from "former intelligence officials." Whether anyone, inside or outside the CIA greased the ways for Hugel's fall, remains, like so much about the agency, clouded in mists. But it is very clear that Casey's appointment of Hugel, a one-time sewing machine manufacturer, rankled the CIA professionals like nothing in recent memory.

From the tree-shaded lanes of Langley to the Federal-style homes of Georgetown, the sputtering could be heard wherever old spooks gathered. It was as though a busboy had suddenly been made a Member of the Club. Unheard of!

On the very day that Hugel resigned, stories mysteriously surfaced noting that a federal judge—two months earlier on May 19—had ruled that Casey and others had "omitted and misrepresented facts" to investors in Multiponics, Inc., a company that owned farm acreage in the South. In succeeding days, Casey's image came to resemble nothing so much as a series of ducks in a carnival shooting gallery. One duck carried a sign reading "Multiponics." Others read "Vesco," "ITT," or had similar labels of cases in which the CIA director's name had figured in the past. No sooner would one duck be shot down than another would pop up.

Casey had concealed a \$10,000 gift, said one story. Casey had links to a New Jersey garbage man who might have links to the Mafia, said another. Soon Barry Goldwater and other influential Republicans were calling for Casey's resignation. In the midst of it all, Samuel and Thomas McNell, Hugel's accusers, vanished.

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