

JANUARY 26, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary  
-----NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President today awarded the National Security Medal to William E. Colby, outgoing Director of Central Intelligence. Mr. Colby's career in intelligence began during World War II when he served with distinction in the Office of Strategic Services. He parachuted behind enemy lines in France and Norway to organize resistance groups, and for his achievements was awarded both the Bronze and Silver Stars. After the war, Mr. Colby received a law degree from Columbia University and practiced law in New York with the firm headed by William Donovan, the wartime head of OSS.

Mr. Colby went back into the intelligence profession in 1950 and since that time has held a series of senior positions here and abroad. In 1968 President Johnson requested that Mr. Colby join the pacification program in Vietnam. Mr. Colby was detailed from the CIA to become the Deputy to General Creighton Abrams for Civil Operations and Rural Development Support, with the personal rank of Ambassador.

In October, 1971, Mr. Colby resumed his career with CIA. He was named the Agency's Executive Director-Comptroller and, in early 1973, was appointed head of its Directorate of Operations.

Mr. Colby was nominated to become the Director of Central Intelligence on May 10, 1973, and was sworn in on September 4, 1973. The President said: "Mr. Colby has led the CIA and the American Intelligence Community through the most troubled period in its history. His performance under extremely difficult conditions has been nothing short of remarkable. In addition, he has made innovations and improvements in the Community's procedures that have greatly increased its effectiveness and made American intelligence truly the best in the world.

If ever there was 'especially meritorious service performed in a position of high responsibility' and distinguished achievement (and) outstanding contribution in the field of intelligence relating to the national security, 'it is reflected in the career and contributions of William Egan Colby.'