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Matloff: This is an oral history interview held with Gen. David C. Jones in Arlington, Va., on August 26, 1987 at 9:30 a.m. The interview is being recorded on tape and a copy of the transcript will be sent to Gen. Jones for his review. Representing the OSD Historical Office are Drs. Alfred Goldberg and Maurice Matloff.

Gen. Jones, as we indicated in our letter of April 1, 1987, we shall focus in this interview particularly on your service as Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, 1974-78 and as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1978-82. I should first like to direct your attention toward certain factors in your earlier background and experience relevant to the history of OSD and national security policy in the post-World War II era. These are in general categories. First, by way of background, what were your reactions to the movement for unification of the services after World War II? How did you view the National Security Act of 1947 and subsequent legislation, and were you consulted on your views?

No, in 1947 I was a first lieutenant and made captain in that time. The whole focus was on how great it was that the Air Force became a separate service. Within the Air Force that was the motivation. I had no real thoughts about it beyond that. I was in Japan at the time, 1945-48. There wasn't a lot of debate or news on the subject.

Matloff: Let me take you to Vietnam, the period before you were Chief of Staff, do you have any conclusions about the operations of unified command in the theater and relations with the Defense Department?

Jones: You have jumped from the '40s to the '60s and '70s. I developed my first insight into some of the problems in the joint arena when I was an aide to Gen. Curtis LeMay, from the end of 1954 to mid-'57 on the national scene, dealing a great deal with the Pentagon and with the Congress. At that time, I think my my conclusions were that it was a very

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cumbersome process and that there must be a better way, but I didn't really understand the system. In Vietnam I was deeply concerned about the whole operation. First, that we had air power so badly divided. It wasn't being used all that effectively. We had the navy in the eastern part of Vietnam the Air Force run out of PACAF and the western part we had the Seventh Air Force running, basically, the air war in the south. The Marines were essentially independent. There as some coordination in targeting, but they were independent. The Vietnamese air force never gave it an important mission. You got so tied up day to day in what was going on it was hard to reflect on the bigger problems, but they were always in the back of the mind.

Goldberg: A great deal of time had to be spent just on coordination.

Jones: Coordinating, knowing what others were doing, and trying to work a lot of problems out.

Goldberg: It was like the Korean war period, too.

Matloff: Did you have many dealings with officials in OSD during that period of your service in Vietnam?

Jones: There were a few visits over there when I was director of operations, and I had some discussions then. The main interface was when I was brought back to the U.S. to give a briefing. I briefed the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mr. Packard, and had some limited interface with Mr. Laird. It was on our interdiction mission at that time, 1969.

Matloff: During that period did you believe in the domino theory?

Jones: I really don't recall. I've never been a great advocate of the domino theory, even though there is some spillover from one area to another. I have always felt that we were stronger than we were sometimes given credit for, and it was a greater attractiveness of

the west, and the idea was that if one country would fall, everything else would crumble.

That was never really in my belief, but I don't think I thought about it at that time.

Matloff: How familiar were you in this period, down to when you became Chief of Staff, with trends in strategic theory; notions about the buildup, use, and control of nuclear weapons, tactical and strategic; flexible response versus massive retaliation; counterforce versus counter-city doctrine, limited war in the nuclear age; those kinds of questions?

Jones: Where I really got exposed to it was when I was aide to General LeMay. It was a time of a maturing of much of the thought in America on our strategic forces. We were just entering into the missile age and the Strategic Air Command was a dominant military force at the time. I can recall many discussions. General LeMay was very good at bringing me into the discussions. When I first went to work for him he said, "Your first job is to learn, the second, to serve." He selected aides, not to perform perfunctory functions, but to learn, people he thought had potential for future leadership positions. Therefore, he wanted me in the room on every conversation he had with people, and he would throw me out if he didn't want me in there. He encouraged a lot of discussion on the strategic area. I remember one time, John Foster Dulles and Herbert Hoover, Jr., who was head of CIA at the time, came to Omaha, and there were only four people in the room. Two of them were LeMay and me. I didn't engage in the dialogue, I was there to learn, but I can remember meeting with Herman Kahn, Edward Teller, many people who were developing the systems and thought on strategic weapons. Up until then I had gone to weaponeers school, learned about how atomic bombs operated and how to use them, and had been in SAC and the operational side of the house. Starting late 1954 I got very interested in the whole strategic

equation and have been ever since. I've been a participant, been interested, and been part of the dialogue.

Goldberg: Did LeMay participate much, or did he just get them going, and listen?

Jones: He participated in a very active way but with very few words.

Matloff: You mentioned Herman Kahn. Did you have much contact with the theorists at Rand during this learning phase? If so, which of their studies or thinkers were especially influential in your thinking about strategy?

Jones: There were some Rand people that came to Omaha and talked with Gen. LeMay. I can't name any one as a real catalyst of strategic thinking, but there was very good thought at Rand at that time.

Goldberg: What was Gen. LeMay's attitude toward these theorists?

Jones: Some of them he thought were wild and off the wall, and others he thought had a good handle on the problem. It varied.

Goldberg: Discriminating.

Jones: But he listened to all of them.

Matloff: Let's go to the period when you were Chief of Staff for the U.S. Air Force, from July 1974 to June 21, 1978. What was the background of the appointment, the circumstances of the appointment who recommended you, and what instructions or directives were given to you and by whom?

Jones: George Brown was Chief of Staff of the Air Force. When he became chief he said I was his replacement. He was only chief for one year before he moved up to be chairman. I was head of USAFE at the time. At that time George Brown wanted to bring me back to command Systems Command to get some exposure in the R&D business in preparation

for being Chief. But Secretary of Defense Jim Schlesinger was concerned about the NATO environment and wanted to put a lot of emphasis on NATO. He told George to leave me at USAFE. Schlesinger came to Europe. I got word one Sunday that the secretary of defense would be in sometime in the next week and would spend a couple of hours. He ended up staying five days with me. He went on some trips and did some bird watching, but we had a lot of dialogue. I found out later he was there to check me out as a candidate to be chief of staff of the Air Force. Not long after that I was notified to come back to Washington for a discussion. At that time I met with Al Haig, chief of staff. Nixon was wrapped up in Watergate. Later I met with President Nixon when it was announced that George would be chairman and I would be chief of staff of the Air Force.

Matloff: How well did you know President Nixon and President Ford?

Jones: I didn't know President Nixon too well, I had been the acting commander of Seventh Air Force when he visited Vietnam, in 1969, and we had considerable discussion then. I had a few meetings with him, but I didn't have at that time any great opportunity to meet with President Nixon. I had had some limited dialogue with President Ford when he was a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, and when he was president we had considerable interface. He had a very warm spot in his heart for the military. He invited them to White House functions; there was a fair amount of interface there with President Ford.

Matloff: Your meeting with Mr. Schlesinger, was that your first?

Jones: Yes.

Matloff: Had you known Secretary McLucas well, before this?

Jones: Yes, I knew John McLucas well. I came to know him first probably when I was commander of Second Air Force. I came up and talked with him about some youth programs. I'm not too sure what his position was at that time. Then I worked for him when he was under secretary of the Air Force.

Matloff: Were any conditions asked of you on taking the appointment, or did you assert any conditions at that time?

Jones: No. Schlesinger and I did not discuss, when he was in Europe, my becoming chief, at all.

Matloff: What in your background proved useful in this capacity as chief of staff?

Jones: There are two things. One, having a great exposure to the strategic issues. My time with General LeMay, many years in SAC, commander of the Air Force. I was well steeped in the strategic side. When I left the Pentagon in the mid-'60s--

Goldberg: What position had you held when you left?

Jones: I had had a number of jobs in the strategic division of Air Force Operations. Up until that time my career had been basically in SAC or strategic, including four years at the Pentagon. I then had the opportunity to go out and command a B-52 wing, which would have been the surest way to quick promotion to colonel at the time, because I had had a lot of experience with B-52s. I had flown them; had been a deputy for maintenance, which was very critical for the airplane at that time; had had a lot of operational experience, and it would have been a fairly easy job to be a wing commander and get a fast promotion. General Sweeney called me up and offered me the opportunity to command a brand new wing to be activated at England Air Force Base, F-4 Phantoms. I had never been in fighters, and so it was the fairly high risk choice of going to fighter operation or the easy

route of going into SAC. I knew the commanders, and everyone in the system. I took the fighter route.

Goldberg: What inspired Sweeney, do you think?

Jones: I had known him well when he was a commander of 15th Air Force and then when he was commander of 2nd Air Force. So he had confidence in me. Part of the plan was to send me through the fighter preparation school. So I went out to Luke AFB in Phoenix and went through their F-100 fighter lead-in training. I did very well, because I was older and had a sort of spotlight on me. I found out later that every day a report went from the wing commander to General Sweeney as to how I was doing. I sensed that was happening, so I worked very hard and did well. Then I went through the F-4 training and activated a wing at England. That led to my assignment to USAFE and IG, chief of staff, and deputy for operations, and prepared me on the tactical side to go to Vietnam and be in tactical operations over there. Then I came back to SAC and 2nd Air Force and went to USAFE. It gave me a very diversified experience.

Goldberg: Do you think this was part of a larger Air Force effort to diversify the experience of its officers, give them both tactical and strategic experience?

Jones: That came later, during the Vietnam War. My diversification came in 1964 and it was a personal choice. I don't think at that time it was any plan for diversification.

Goldberg: But Sweeney himself represented something of that sort.

Jones: But I had the strategic, tactical, Pacific, Europe, four years in the Pentagon as an action officer. I can tell you it is a very difficult job to understand the Pentagon and how it operates unless you have been an action officer. So many people come in at top levels

and never understand what it's like to walk around trying to get people to coordinate a paper and get people going in the building, it's a mysterious place.

Goldberg: I worked for many years in Air Force plans in one capacity or another.

Jones: So you can understand that you need to be an action officer to know where the points of influence are. They aren't where the rugs are outside the door, or who has the titles; it's who you can count on for information, what sort of network. The networking is the most important thing that I found in the Pentagon. A lot of people never understand that. So I had a wide experience in the Air Force and it stood me well when I became Chief and Chairman.

Matloff: When you became chief of the Air Force, what problems did you face when you took over? What priorities did you set for yourself or were set for you by a higher authority, in handling your functions?

Jones: I think the biggest problem we had was the wrap-up of Vietnam and the post-Vietnam syndrome. You recall, the time in 1974 pulling out of Vietnam at that time. I was on a trip to the Far East in 1975 and received a message from Brent Scowcroft that President Ford would like me to go to Saigon and reassure President Diem of our support. You could smell the defeat in the air. In retrospect, I should have been a little more perceptive. When senior military people would say, "If Saigon falls, how do I get my family out?" There was more thinking on that than how to cope with the enemy. And Saigon fell, not too long after.

Goldberg: That was just before it fell, 1975.

Jones: The smell of defeat was there, even though some of them put up a brave front. It was in that post-Vietnam period where we had the disillusionment by our country in what

the military had done, and the defense budget was being cut. We had still some of the social problems of the late '60s in the area of discrimination and dealing with the human problems. It was a period of turmoil and it was to try to get some stability, to get the system back operating well, to try to get some of the weapons systems approved, to reestablish confidence in ourselves and the confidence of the American people.

Matloff: How serious a problem was interservice rivalry for you and the Air Force?

Jones: I have never used the term. It's as though there is something nefarious going on, that people are parochial, competing with each other in the wrong sense. I fault the system. To this day, it's improving, but we set up separate departments. We fought World War II as a separate services. The European was primarily Army, with Eisenhower working for Marshal. There was an important Navy component over there, particularly the landing at Normandy, but essentially it was an Army war, with the air force a part of the Army. In the Pacific, there was a MacArthur Army war and there was a Navy war out there. There were some good operations, like Normandy, and some almost tragedies like the Gulf of Leyte. Only stupidity and the Japanese prevented a terrible loss at Leyte. The reorganization in 1947, which I think Secretary Forrestal came to realize, was a bandaid on the problem. We've never developed a system that had the proper integration of effort. I'm not an advocate of any single service or general staff. The system basically worked vertically, with a very thin horizontal overlay. In that context, over the years a live and let live attitude has developed from service to service. I will not attack your programs if you don't attack mine. That is the best thing under the current that could happen. You don't want the services at each others' throats, undercutting each other and going behind the scenes. Therefore, I don't fault the people for having a system that tolerates the others. There was competition,

but it was not head to head competition. It was trying, with the secretary of defense and the president, to convince them to support your programs. Not in the context of saying, "This bomber is more important than this aircraft carrier," but to try and present your case so well that in the limited resources they would decide to support your program rather than another. It was a different kind of competition.

Matloff; How about your views of roles and missions? Did you find any differences there?

Jones: Roles and missions were etched in marble in the late '40s, down in Key West, Florida. There have been very few changes, and most of the changes that have taken place have been prompted by external events. We went into space and somebody has to give the space mission or peace mission, or new weapons. But generally the roles and missions etched in 1948 were the same as they are today. Shy Meyer used to call this the "too hard box." Too hard to open. There was a great difficulty when you tried to step across the line. The Air Force had been great advocates of sea surveillance. But it was a navy mission and there were people in the air force who wanted to take the mission away from the Navy. The Navy said there was no way to let the Air Force into this mission. Adm. Jim Holloway, chief of naval operations at the time, and I sat down and came to a handshake agreement that the Air Force would undertake some sea surveillance training but under a number of conditions. The training would be against our navy, because we couldn't train much against another navy. Number one, in our sea surveillance, as we approached the fleet, and flew by it, we wouldn't claim that we sank all the ships, and they would not claim that they shot down all the airplanes. Two, we would not use this as an entree to anything in the force structure argument. We wouldn't try to justify more bombers, and they wouldn't try to justify that the bombers weren't useful, and so on. We were able to

do it. We each had, from time to time, zealots saying that the leadership in the Navy wasn't protecting their interests enough, and we'd bring them back in line. Tread lightly on the roles and missions area. If you open that box without a strong horizontal system and a lot of interest at the political level, it would degenerate into a bitter interservice fight, as we had in the late '40s between the Air Force and the Navy over bombers

Matloff: Did this arrangement that you made with CNO Holloway come to the attention of the secretary of defense, or was it made at lower levels?

Jones: We made it ourselves. I mentioned it to the secretary and he was very much encouraging this sort of thing.

Goldberg: There were precedents for this sort of thing, going back to the '50s and even the '40.

Matloff: On questions of budget, how were the budget figures for the Air Force arrived at during your chief of staff tenure? Did you feel that the Air Force was receiving its fair share of the defense budget?

Jones: It was the typical process of debate within the system and the White House determining what the overall defense level would be. It was cut and paste. There wasn't any real smooth way of going about it. Every service always thought that they had not received their fair share, that whatever you got was ingrained in the system. Because whatever the budget level was, even those days in the early '80 when it was increasing sharply, there were always major service programs that had to be deferred or canceled that the service was convinced were really more important than the programs of other services. That didn't mean an interservice fight over it, but there was always a feeling that if the country put a little more money in your service the country would be better off.

Matloff: What about the role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a corporate body in the formulation of the budget?

Jones: Major players from an institutional standpoint of making inputs, frankly, not a great deal of influence. The influence, where it was, tended to be personal as opposed to institutional. The Chiefs would go in with papers saying "Support the service programs, you are not giving them enough money." They would seldom get in at the cutting edge of priorities. So there was not a great deal of influence to the joint system.

Matloff: Let me ask you about relationships with various agencies in and out of defense during your period as chief of staff--starting at the top with OSD. Do you recall your relationships with the secretaries--Schlesinger, Rumsfeld, and Brown?

Jones: I had a particularly close relationship with secretaries Schlesinger and Brown. When Schlesinger started on his trip to Europe, very frequently on Saturday morning he would call me to come down and we would sit for a couple of hours just talking about things. One Saturday morning we had a discussion on a lightweight fighter. At that time the F-15 was in production. It was the number one priority in the tactical area for the Air Force. We had flown the YF-16 and 17 but there had been no plan to make it a fighter airplane, it was more experimental. There had been great resistance in the Air Force to a lightweight fighter, particularly because most people were concerned that that meant the F-15 production would be cut. Jim Schlesinger, I recall, one Saturday said, "What would it take to get the Air Force aboard in supporting the lightweight fighter?" I said, "Four additional tactical fighter wings." He reached across the table and we shook hands. We had a need for additional tactical fighter wings, and he realized that unless the Air Force got aboard in support of the lightweight fighter it would never happen. The result was that the F-15

production continued, we got the F-16, and now there are thousands of F-16s around the world.

I had known secretary Rumsfeld when he was in the White House. I was never able to develop quite the relationship that I did with others because he was there a short time, it was a period of a presidential election. It was a close relationship, it just didn't have as much time. I also had a very close relationship with Harold Brown. I had known him when he was a brash young whiz kid, head of DDR&E, and as secretary of the Air Force. We got along well, even though we had a great battle over the B-70 when he was DR&E. We developed a good rapport on opposite sides of the issue, and when he became secretary of defense it was an easy transition. I worked very closely with him.

Goldberg: You were his selection.

Jones: To be chairman, yes.

Matloff: How about with deputy secretaries of defense--Clements, Ellsworth, and Duncan, what were your relationships with them and how often did you meet with them?

Jones: I got along well with Bill Clements. The problem was that he and Schlesinger didn't get along. I got the impression that at times he thought I was too close to Jim Schlesinger. Ellsworth was never really deputy secretary of defense. He may have been acting for a period.

Goldberg: He was the second deputy, but for a limited time.

Jones: He was running ISA and he and I were good friends, but not in that number two position. Charlie Duncan and I became close friends. We played racquetball together frequently, and there was a very close relationship there.

Matloff: Were there any other people on the OSD level, the assistant secretaries?

Jones: There were lots of them that I got along with very well. I got along very well with Bob Komer, and a lot of people didn't.

Goldberg: He had a very high regard for you.

Jones: I think the world of Bob Komer. He and I tried to support NATO a great deal against the resistance of the bureaucracy to a great extent.

Matloff: Bob Komer left a manuscript in the Army historical office on his experiences in the Mediterranean in World War II. We are very anxious to get that one out. On relationships with other members of the Joint Chiefs and its chairmen when you were serving as chief of staff--how much time did you spend on JCS business?

Jones: About what an average chief spends on it. It was an important part. We met three afternoons a week. I had enough business in my own Air Force, so I paid as much attention to the joint system as a typical chief did, but knowing the limitations of the system--for example on inputs on budgets--it was more of a "protect your interests" as opposed to having any real influence. It could have a negative influence, but not a positive. I thought we did quite well in the joint arena, but it was not the real high priority you might think it was in everyday activities.

Matloff: Were there many splits in the Joint Chiefs that the chairman or the secretary of defense had to get in on?

Jones: There were few splits when a paper finally came out. In lots of papers coming to the chiefs there were differences, and usually the differences were resolved, often by a compromise making them ambiguous or the lowest common denominator, so there were very few splits in the final. There were splits going in on the paper in almost every case.

Matloff: Do you recall that the secretary of defense ever went below the paper given to him to get at the original views of the chiefs?

Jones: As far back as I know, the secretaries of defense have been very good at spending one afternoon a week with the chiefs. The secretary would occasionally bring a paper down for discussion that the chiefs had sent to him. I remember one time that Harold Brown, at the end of the discussion said, "I haven't heard anyone express the views that are in this paper." That was true, because it had been a compromise, and when you heard each individual you got a different view than the compromise position. He understood that well.

Goldberg: That's inherent in our system.

Jones: Definitely.

Matloff: How about the fact that the chairman was a member of your own service? Did this ease or complicate your relationship with him?

Jones: It eased the relationship with George Brown, because I was his choice to be chief, and had worked for him in Vietnam. On the other hand, George was not parochial Air Force. He had worked for McNamara a few years before, and he was trying to work the problem of being chairman without trying to push the Air Force position.

Matloff: In the case of some of the Navy people we interviewed the same question came up. The Navy chief felt that he had had more trouble because the chairman was a member of his own service.

Goldberg: You mean Carney? That was different. Radford was trying to run the Navy at the same time he was trying to run everything else.

Jones: George never tried to run the Air Force; he was good about it. If he wanted to bring something up with me on the Air Force he did it as offering his thoughts but that it would be my decision. I never felt obligated to do what he had said, if I didn't believe in it. You are first among equals, but in the context of running your service, he doesn't, unless he wants to back door you with the secretary of defense.

Matloff: Did you regard McLucas, Reed, and Stetson as strong secretaries in their dealings with the secretaries of defense and OSD?

Jones: I think all three were good secretaries. There was a great deal of difference in approach. John McLucas had been in the system a long time, understood the programs, and so forth. He didn't have the close personal relationship with Schlesinger that I had, for some reason or other, but I was very careful not to use that to back door him, so we had a good relationship. Tom Reed had very definite special interests. He was a very competent, knowledgeable young man. I had come down from the command control business in the department of defense, had a lot of political connections, and was effective in that job while I was there, and I had a particularly close relationship with John Stetson. John approached the secretary of Air Force job in the ideal way. That was to say, service secretaries normally aren't going to be around all that long, and if we try to impose too many things on the system, we know that it will outlast us and when we are gone it will be changes. How can we have some influence and help make it better without the confrontational approach? It evolved in our relationship into a thing where we would keep each other very much informed of what we were doing and neither would do anything to which the other had real strong objections. We would work out something rather than the secretary of the Air Force imposing on me.

Goldberg: He made the comment that the service secretaries were really more dependent on the chiefs than vice versa. Would you agree with that?

Jones: They are heavily dependent on the services, yes. John Stetson also wanted to work hard on long-term issues. Secretaries tend to want to tinker with near term issues. They may have some immediate impact, but they don't have much long-term impact. He was working the broad, long-term issues of the Air Force.

Goldberg: What sort of things?

Jones: The public perceptions of the Air Force and Defense within the government; trying to advocate Air Force positions in a way that put it in a broader context of the future and the national interest rather than parochial; developing good relations on the Hill.

Matloff: Did you ever get a sense of frustration on their part in their dealings with the secretary of defense?

Jones: I think it's part of the job as secretary of a service to have some degree of frustration, because the real power lies with the secretary of defense.

Goldberg: The service secretaries are caught in between, aren't they?

Jones: Yes.

Matloff: Secretary Zuckert once said that he viewed himself as a group vice president. Did you have any dealings with Secretary of State Kissinger or Vance in that period?

Jones: I wasn't there all that long as chief of service when Kissinger was secretary of state. And chiefs of service don't have much interface, except as acting chairman a few times. I knew General Brent Scowcroft, who became the National Security Adviser, quite well, so it wasn't as frequent or as close as I developed with Secretary Vance when he was secretary

of state and I was chairman, or with Ed Muskie or, initially, with Al Haig, where I had more frequent meetings and contacts.

Matloff: Did you have the impression, from your perspective, that they understood the role and uses of airpower?

Jones: I think so. They all were experienced and knowledgeable. Vance had been secretary of the Army and deputy secretary of defense; Al Haig had been commander of NATO, and they had a good idea. Maybe not as much as the purists would say, but generally good.

Goldberg: Scowcroft, for instance.

Matloff: How about presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter, did you feel that they understood the uses and role of airpower?

Jones: It varied. The backgrounds were so diverse. Nixon had been in office a long time and been involved in the Vietnam war and had a great strategic vision. He probably had one of the best minds in the world at looking at the world as a globe, and not airpower as separation. I think he understood the use of airpower in putting the B-52s over Hanoi and the rest. President Ford had not been a strategist or been involved in that global situation anywhere near like President Nixon, but his service in the Congress had exposed him to the issues, so I think he understood. When President Carter came in, he had had military experience, but it had been in a narrow technical area. As governor you don't have really any except peripheral involvement internationally. But he was very smart and learned quickly. We weren't able to convince him on the B-1 to start with. I think that if the decision had come much later we may have been successful. We were unfortunate that the most critical decision on the B-1 came within half a dozen months after he took office. If there

hadn't been the most critical milestone, which was production, at that time, maybe it would have been different a couple of years later. He learned quickly and we were able to convince him to increase growth percentage while he was in office. There were some external events, as Afghanistan, and he gained experience in office that helped a great deal.

Goldberg: Did Secretary Brown give you strong support on the B-1 up to the end?

Jones: He made sure that we were able to present our story to the president and that our story got out. Harold Brown was intensely loyal to the president. He had seen so many cases of disloyalty, backbiting self-serving people who would publicly say they supported the president's decisions but really didn't. He kept his counsel to himself as to what he told the president behind closed doors. I know he told him we ought to go ahead. He knew it would be counterproductive to Defense for the president to decide against it and for him to be on the opposite side of that issue publicly when there was a congressional fight to overrule the president. He said "I made my recommendation to the president in all confidence, and the president made his decision and I support it." I admire that approach, it is not the easy approach.

Goldberg: In that particular instance you followed it also, I presume--the same approach.

Jones: No. There's a difference between the military and the civilian in congressional actions. Civilians are expected to support the president in every way or resign. The military are supposed to support the president, but when asked for personal views are obligated to give their personal views whether or not they agree with the president.

Goldberg: Most civilians don't resign, either, even when they are overridden, do they?

Jones: No, but my point is that once they are overridden, they are expected to fall completely in line. Military is expected to support the decision, in the sense of implementation, and salute smartly. When Secretary Brown was asked what his personal views were, he said it was confidential, without any intent to override. In the military, when they'd ask, "What did you recommend to the secretary of defense?", I'd recommend a production. There's a difference between trying to undercut the president and end-run him, as some people in the Congress wanted us to do, and being in formal testimony telling them what the position was.

Goldberg: Didn't some people in the Air Force want to do that, also?

Jones: Yes. And I was asked by some members of Congress to help end-run the president, and I said I wouldn't do it. He was recently elected, I was not elected, who was I to undermine the president?

Goldberg: You were criticized for that, too, weren't you?

Jones: Yes. I told the Congress that I had recommended a positive decision on the B-1. I had strong objections if I had never been able to make our case. We were able to make our case, and we were unsuccessful. He's president, I'm not. He's commander in chief, I salute smartly, even though I had recommended a different action.

Goldberg: This is a classic chief of staff response in such a case.

Jones: People said maybe I should have resigned over it, and I think that is arrogance to think of something like that. I remember when I was Air Force chief, one of the senior officers once said that he would resign if the aircraft carrier were disapproved. Sort of tongue-in-cheek, I said, "Maybe I should resign if the aircraft carrier is approved." You

know, in the context of each thinking that the whole country depends on this approval decision whether it's a carrier or a bomber.

Goldberg: The Navy feels more deeply about these things than any of the other services.

Jones: I don't know. The Air Force felt very deeply about the B-1, but the issue was who was commander in chief at the time.

Matloff: This has anticipated my question of how did you handle the problem of appearing before congressional committees when your view differed from that of the SecDef or the chairman of the Joint Chiefs?

Jones: I expressed my personal views at all times, when asked. I didn't volunteer them; I didn't try to undercut the decision; I made it clear when I had made a recommendation different from the decision.

Matloff: What was the dominant attitude toward the Soviet threat, or any other threat facing the country, that you found in JCS and OSD when you assumed office, and did you agree with it?

Jones: I think most of the knowledgeable people in the defense business have an appreciation of the threat, even though it might vary in some specifics. I think Schlesinger, Rumsfeld, Harold Brown, Cap Weinberger, the four secretaries I worked for, had an appreciation of the threat. Some were much more knowledgeable than the others, but they knew what the overall threat was. The problem tended to be one of national perception of the threat--the congressional perception, the political leadership of the country as to priorities among the competing demands--the social demands, etc. But within the Pentagon I think there was generally a recognition of the growing threat to the country.

Matloff: Did you and your colleagues view Communism as a monolithic bloc or threat?

Jones: I've never felt that it was a monolithic threat. It's a threat, and I've learned a great deal more about it, having been to the Soviet Union now four times. Certainly the PRC breaking out of the Sino-Soviet bloc showed that it is not a monolithic threat. We don't consider the Chinese communists any more to be a threat. They are almost allies now. There is a cohesiveness within much of the communist area. There is some monolithic aspect of it, but not in the sense that they have the whole world figured out and exactly how they are going to move ahead is well thought out. I've had too many dealings with governments around the world to believe that any of them are well organized in their strategic thinking, in where they are going, and I would say that of the Soviet Union as well as of the United States. There are lots of different factions pulling

Matloff: How about in the realm of strategic planning? Who in DoD, from your perspective, was primarily influential in strategy-making? The JCS, the services, the SecDef?

Jones: I would say in general the secretaries of defense had the greatest influence, as individuals and as head of the institution of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The JCS had some influence on it; it varied from administration to administration, from groups of chiefs to groups of chiefs. I would say it is the secretary of defense and his principal advisers, sometimes including some military people.

Goldberg: Would you say that that as much of it under Weinberger as Brown? Was Weinberger involved as much as Brown?

Jones: I avoid comparing personalities. Harold Brown had a very extended background in the whole strategic area. Not only in DDR&E, but in the SALT talks. SALT I, SALT II, secretary of Air Force, secretary of defense; knew the issues; knew the weapons system; knew the issues and had a lot of discussion with the Soviets. Secretary Weinberger had

more of a visceral feeling that the Soviet monolithic threat was growing and we had to do something about it. But both were concerned about the growing threat.

Goldberg: Did you feel that Weinberger exaggerated the threat to any extent?

Jones: I think there was, just as his administration came in, an exaggeration, as happens so often, of the window of vulnerability. The window now has supposedly been closed, but things aren't that much different. In the whole political debate there tends to be extremes, with one side thinking the problem isn't as great as was thought, and the other side thinking everything is going to hell in a handbasket. So our political system tends to pull us to extremes.

Matloff: How influential was the Air Force in strategic planning during this period, the Schlesinger-Rumsfeld-Brown eras?

Jones: I think we had a reasonable amount of influence, probably as much as the Navy had on the naval business. John Lehman, in the early days, had more influence than almost anybody except the secretary of defense and the president on then aval issues.

Matloff: Had your views changed about brushfire wars and counterinsurgency planning, as a result of the experience in Vietnam?

Jones: I don't know. If they changed, as long as I can remember I had an instinctive feeling that we aren't very well prepared for anything other than major East-West confrontation. Even there we have problems. Our main focus, our main development of strategy, our main teaching in that is East-West, and we haven't done very well. As time goes on that feeling has been reinforced as we have more and more problems in the third world and the less direct East-West confrontation. Even though there is an east-west component to it, it is not the dominant issue. For example, in the Persian Gulf there is a U.S.-Soviet

component, but it isn't the dominant issue there. So there is a greater awareness of our deficiencies in this area.

Matloff: Do you recall PD-18, calling for essential equivalents in nuclear competition with the Soviet Union, which Carter signed on August 24, 1977? Did you plan any role at all in that? Were you consulted on that?

Jones: I remember it. We were involved in it. I was chief of staff of the Air Force at that time and we were working it. Very frankly, the services work things to a great extent to support their weapons systems. I remember in that we were trying to couch the PD not in a parochial way, but in the conviction that it should have been stronger in certain areas of the need for strategic forces. Even though we didn't quarrel with the area that in an arms control environment that equivalence has to be basically the standard if you are going to have an agreement. Now, what is that equivalency and how do you measure it, there was some disagreement there.

Matloff: We've been touching on the problems of weaponry and buildup of planes, the impact of the Schlesinger era in Defense on the Air Force programs and policies, buildup and modernization of planes and weaponry. Did the Air Force fare any better under Rumsfeld than under Brown?

Jones: The national circumstances were so different from time to time, because of the Vietnam war and the cutback in Defense, and so forth, that it was not personality involved, but dictated by outside events.

Matloff: Regarding the F-15, Secretary Schlesinger's problem with Ford over the question of arming them with nuclear weaponry for NATO--did that issue draw you in at all?

Jones: It was a big issue of the moment, but it wasn't a big issue in the longer context of things. It was strictly a NATO issue for the perception of NATO. I personally would have preferred not to have nuclear weapons and that's the way it came out on the F-15.

Matloff: How far did you get involved with NATO problems when you were chief of staff?

Jones: More than most others did, because I had that extensive time in Europe. The system tends to be unilateral, go it alone. Bob Komer and I worked closely on trying to work the NATO issues.

Matloff: Were you disturbed by the role of French, one foot in the alliance, one foot out?

Jones: I had been in Europe when the French pulled out, so I fully understood it. I didn't like it, but there was nothing I could do about it, so I didn't think much about it.

Matloff: Did you favor helping the British to maintain their independent deterrent?

Jones: Yes, but it was never a major issue. We said we'd give them help, and that was it.

Matloff: Did the Cyprus issue draw you in at all? There was a difference between Schlesinger and Ford on the handling of that question.

Jones: We weren't a major player in that.

Matloff: How about the Middle East problems, following the 1973 Yom Kippur war, the aftermath of it; were you and the secretary consulted during the negotiations between Israel and Egypt about the return of the Sinai and the stationing of American civilian technicians in the buffer zone?

Jones: As a member of the chiefs, we developed recommendations. I know the Army was more deeply involved than was the Air Force in that, because there would be more Army involved. Again, it may have been a major issue at the time, but it got resolved in a reasonable way.

Matloff: Had you agreed, by and large, with the foreign and military policy toward Vietnam during the Nixon administration and the military withdrawal in early 1973?

Jones: I was in Europe in 1973 and I wasn't thinking about it other than what I read in the paper or saw in a few intelligence reports. I had enough to do over there.

Matloff: How about the final withdrawal of American personnel in 1975, were you drawn in on that question?

Jones: Yes, but from an operational standpoint it was clear that withdrawal was needed. We supported it and George Brown was an active player in that from an operational standpoint.

Matloff: Did the United States fail in Vietnam, and if so, why?

Jones: We failed in that the Communists now control all of Vietnam. In reflecting on the whole issue, I think we made one major error which resulted in a lot of other errors and problems. This to a great extent was political, although the military played a great role in it, in that we made it our war. It should have been a Vietnamese war. We should have told the Vietnamese we would provide training, support, more than the Chinese and Soviets would provide to the Viet Cong, but that it was their war and they would have to win it. They had a greater population, greater base to work from, an opportunity to provide the people with a feeling of participation and freedom. Under those conditions we thought they could have won it and reduce corruption and provide a better forum for people. If they couldn't win under those conditions they didn't deserve to. I think we would have had a very good chance for them prevailing under that by using all the leverage we had for them to clean up their act. We slipped the other way, and that was a political-military problems. We ended up doing everything hard ourselves. In Vietnam, if we had a tough mission we wouldn't give

it to the Vietnamese air force, we did it ourselves. The same way with the Army, they had a few good Vietnamese divisions, but there were a lot that were corrupt and ineffective, and there wasn't enough emphasis saying that it was their war. We took it on as our war. This came home to me clearly on that visit in 1975 where we left them with lots of equipment; we left them, on paper, better off than the North. But they lacked the self-confidence, the cohesiveness and the discipline to do it. There were mistakes of President Johnson in the White House selecting military targets and all that, but that was subsumed in a much bigger problem of having made it our war and we all fell into that trap.

Matloff: How about the failure to call up the Reserves? Did you see that as a major problem?

Jones: We called them up. We could have called them earlier, but there was no mission for them. A guard outfit sat out at Andrews for a long time doing nothing because there was no place to send them. It was more of a political decision. I don't think that was the problem, I think the problem was that we made it our war. I'm not saying we shouldn't have used any military; maybe a little here and there, but it should have been essentially their war.

Matloff: How about the Mayaguez, that was seized in May 1975 in international waters off the coast of Cambodia. How did you first learn of that?

Jones: I was acting chairman and I got a call. Someone said there was a report on the radio that the ship had been seized. I went to the Pentagon and tried to get some information and called Secretary Schlesinger. A meeting was called later that day in the White House and we talked about options, then tried to work a plan. There was quite a debate in the government at that time as to whether all the effort should go to retrieving the

crew in the airplane or should there be punitive action taken against Cambodian. The intelligence information was so poor we didn't know whether the Cambodian government has unsupported it; if this was a renegade pirate outfit; we had no idea where the crew was kept, or where the ship was. It was a very confused situation. We lucked out, we didn't do as well operationally as we should. It was one of those problems where in the aftermath, the command relationship was not what it should have been. Adm. Noel Guylar, CINCPAC, was in town, and he and a few of his people sat down and developed a basic plan. When we realized that command arrangements hadn't been worked out in Thailand to the extent between the Marines and the Air force and there hadn't been the working together ahead of time. It worked out that we were lucky, the crew was released, and the ship; there was some loss of life there. I was the acting chairman during the first part and then George Brown came back into town and took over the operational part. It kind of opened my eyes. I hadn't been chief of staff for too long; I had been acting chairman only a few times; I really didn't know the people in the Joint Staff well or understand the networking in the Pentagon. We got a lot of bad information to start with, on which we based some plane, and then had to change them. It brought home to me many of the weaknesses we had in the system at the time.

Goldberg: The whole national military command system?

Jones: Yes.

Matloff: Ford's book, A Time to Heal he spoke of "some high-level bumbling in the Defense Department" that disturbed him about the handling of the whole affair. Apparently he and Schlesinger didn't see eye to eye on the surgical airstrikes in Cambodia.

Schlesinger apparently opposed them. In his book Ford makes quite a point about the jettisoning of the bombs; that two of the strikes never came off.

Jones: I think much of the criticism is deserved, not from a personality standpoint.

Schlesinger wasn't responsible for jettisoning the bombs; the White House was calling and reversing orders; the whole mechanism wasn't functioning that well. The intelligence operations--we got conflicting instructions, and the rest. We were lucky, but it wasn't a shiny time.

Matloff: Were you drawn into any other foreign area crises during your period as chief of staff?

Jones: There were other crises from time to time, but none in which I was acting chairman or that were really major.

Matloff: How about arms control and disarmament, were you drawn into any of those discussions?

Jones: There was the Vladivostok understanding. There was quite a bit of it going on in the whole area of arms control during that time period. In the broader issue of treaties, there was the Panama Canal treaty, which was not arms control but was in that same general area of agreements. I was involved as a member of the chiefs, but not as involved as when I became chairman, just by the nature of the jobs.

Matloff: Your successor, Lew Allen, did the secretary of defense or the secretary of the Air Force consult with you on that succession?

Jones: The secretary of the Air Force and I talked about it a number of times, well ahead of time. We discussed the possible candidates and what would be best, and came to the agreement that it should be Lew Allen. The two of us stuck with Harold Brown, who had

known Lew Allen well from his previous experience. It was all agreed, there wasn't any disagreement on that.

Matloff: What do you regard as your major achievements during your tenure as chief of staff, as you look back on it; and, conversely, what do you regard as your major disappointments or frustrations, if you will, in that post?

Jones: I think he was emerging from the post-Vietnam syndrome of bringing some cohesiveness in the Air Force. We were able to have programs to modernize our strategic force, although the B-1 decision was a great disappointment with the M-X was foreseen, we were proceeding with the cruise missile. In the tactical area, which had been long neglected, we had the F-15, which had started previously the F-16. Very importantly, the AWACS, to which we were hanging on by our fingernails a lot and I put a lot of effort into that. From a weapons system program we were generally proceeding in a fairly good way, we were making progress on cost control and efficiency in that area. We emphasized considerable readiness of the force, although we were still having great difficulty. We didn't have the spares and the support, but at least we were getting recognition of the need and putting some additional money into that area. I had worked a great deal in personnel issues in the Air Force. Some with difficulty, some with considerable success. We had had a lot of personnel problems in the Vietnam War, nowhere near what the Army had, but there had been a lot. Retention rates were on the upturn; across the board there were some efforts in reorganization, but we generally were perceived to be in the service that best had its act together.

Goldberg: What is your reaction to the charge that most of the services for a long time now have emphasized weapons systems at the expense of support, in terms of spares, maintenance, repairs, and all that goes with it?

Jones: All elements of the government are guilty of that. The services, the Department of Defense, and the Congress, are guilty over a time period. When the budgets increase a great deal, as they did in the early '80s, more effort is put into this, but when things get tight, as they are now, supplies, spare parts, munitions, are cut back. It's being cut back now, proportionately more than other areas, even though it's better funded now, because the levels are higher. I think all are guilty of that. It's the degree of guilt. For example, if a service in the environment of the '70s heavily put in spare parts and supplies well above the other services, it was one of the first things to get cut. So that there was no sense in sacrificing. We did somewhat better than the other services, but we are not a free agent and there is a danger to try and crusade too much in that direction. We set the groundwork for the increase and we are flying a lot more now and we're in better shape than we were.

Goldberg: There's always some degree of imbalance.

Jones: There's one thing that came home clear to me. As we judge how well people do, it is my observation, from secretaries of defense through the chiefs and the rest, that individuals don't have major impact on the system. There are exceptions--John Lehman, for example, stayed long enough in the Navy to have considerable impact, both good and bad, in my judgment. And you had the political crowd in the background and he was sort of an independent fellow. There are constraints the system on both the civilian and military sides. The system, the authority, and the responsibility are so badly divided that very competent people, working very hard, can improve the system somewhat. The only saving

grace is very incompetent people have only marginal downward impact on the system. It is so much a consensus within the executive department, and then within the Congress, that the authority and responsibility are being so badly diffused. They talk about the diminution of the influence of the chiefs since World War II, I think there is a great deal of truth to that. In the middle of a major war, your military leaders are going to have major impact, in peacetime they will not. I will submit that under the Department of Defense, since DoD was established and there was great authority in the secretary of defense if given a style, much of that power has moved upward. But even at the secretarial level it is very difficult to make major changes that stick.

Goldberg: Without a considerable degree of consensus.

Jones: Yes. Even when you get the consensus, a lot of times that's disrupted the next time. Somebody destroys the consensus and changes it. Each secretary does some reorganization, but I submit that for the last years there hasn't been a reorganization that has had much impact and has stuck.

Goldberg: Probably not since 1958.

Jones: Now we have the JCS reorganization, which I think is a great step forward, but I think it's going to take a long time before it's fully implemented.

Matloff: We are now at the point of shifting over to the chairman's role. Let me start this if I may. Again, the same question about the background of the appointment--what instructions or directives were given to you and by whom?

Jones: I got a call one day to come down and have lunch with Harold Brown and Charles Duncan. After lunch they said they would like to nominate me to be the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff. The president agreed, and I accepted, and there were no conditions

on the job at all. George Brown was sick and I took over as acting chairman rather than on a rotational basis. I was the acting chairman until I was confirmed and continued on in that job.

Matloff: Any instructions from President Carter or Secretary of Defense Brown?

Jones: No.

Matloff: Maxwell Taylor wrote in his book, Plows and Plowshares, "The Chairman should be a true believer in the foreign policy and military strategy of the administration he serves." Do you agree with that view?

Jones: I think to a great extent I do. I don't think I would go as far as he did. First, foreign policy and national strategy of every administration evolves and you are never quite sure what it is to start with. You have a vision of what it might be. Clearly, when President Reagan came in he had a vision of an administration that thought we were behind the Soviets and that arms control to date had been a disaster. As to how they were going to work it, I would say that it would be a mistake to have a chairman who was completely out of step with what was going on. Very frankly, in my own feeling, I was, I would say, halfway between the broad objectives of the Carter administration and the Reagan administration. I had more reservations on some of the arms control areas and on some of the thoughts, particularly early in the Carter administration, but not a believer that we'd gone to hell in a handbasket and that the Soviets were way ahead and that arms control had been a disaster. Very frankly, I think the American public has been looking for that middle, and have jumped from one end to another, because the choices are generally one end or the other. I have found most of the military people in top responsibility positions tend to move more, even though it's generally a conservative part of the society in the relations there is a

realism that tends to put you more in the middle. Therefore, I would prefer a chairman who is at neither extreme.

Goldberg: Most administrations try to move toward the middle, also.

Jones: Administrations come more toward the middle, and therefore, I would much prefer a chairman who generally had middle instincts and helps that evolution of pulling to the middle. Frankly, I felt that was where I stood and what I tried to do.

Goldberg: The military services and the Joint Chiefs over the years have always tried to find out what the policy and strategy was and always tried to get it in some form which would be meaningful for guidance. Sometimes they did, and sometimes they didn't.

Jones: It's true to the extent that you have a chairman who tries to undermine what's going on. He should give his independent views, whether they differ or not, but once a decision has been made he should support that decision. Not to say that that was recommendation and answered candidly any questions of Congress. I wouldn't want someone who was absolutely in locked step in every way. Then, when you had an election, you would almost have to make the term of the chairman coincide with the term of the president. Frankly, I think that would be a disaster. I can point to one National Security Council meeting on a subject, and a week or so later going to another meeting on the same subject and the same issues, and I was the only person in the room with . It was a new administration and everybody had gone and they were starting from scratch. The chairman was the only one there with that continuity. I think he should be non-political and non-ideologue in the sense of extremes.

Goldberg: I think Taylor's remark may have been a rationalization, in the sense that he was criticized for being too much a follower of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, going

along with everything they wanted even when he knew the service didn't want to. It's possible that that was really the outcome of his experience.

Matloff: Were you briefed by your predecessor, General Brown, who preceded you in both spots?

Jones: George and I were very close. He became very ill and was concerned; we had lots of discussion, but I wouldn't say briefed, as such.

Matloff: What problems did you face when you took over? What major issues were you confronted with in this role?

Jones: I think as chairman it's to get the chiefs working together and the system working together, and there is just a lot of grinding work at that time. It was to convince the president and the Congress of the need for support of defense and an adequate defense budget. There was a myriad of things to do to try to get the system moving along.

Matloff: Did your functions or your role change in any way by the succession of SecsDef Brown and Weinberger?

Jones: It changed in some ways. First, I had been very close personally with Secretary Brown, and I don't think has been given enough credit for the job he did as secretary of defense and how hard he fought for additional defense effort. The fact that he was not insubordinate, and didn't backbite everything, gives the impression that he didn't fight hard, but he did. Secretary Weinberger and I got along, he's a very cordial person, but we never established a close personal relationship. I met with him every day, and we had a one-on-one meeting at least every day. It was a more formal relationship, but he was available, he listened, and I have no complaint in that regard. It was understandable, we hadn't known each other before.

Goldberg: You were regarded as a holdover from the previous administration, weren't you?

Jones: Yes. There was some suspicion to start over whether to keep me on. There must have been a feeling that somehow I was politically pliable, because how could a red-blooded American support the Panama Canal Treaty and SALT II if he wasn't a good military man. Not in recognition that there was a real consensus in the senior military leadership on supporting SALT II and the Panama Canal Treaty. I think it was a surprise that I wasn't totally pliable when issues came up with SALT II which we fought tooth and nail on not to undercut in 1981 and Al Haig and Bob Inman and I were the ones that led the fight not to undercut SALT II. MX basing; we had a real donnybrook on that. The secretary did not appreciate my actions to get the JCS reorganization underway. I tried to work it internally, and was getting nowhere, and figured I had to go public. I wanted to do that before the end of my tenure, so I started the effort about the time of my second appointment. But I think that after a period of time there was greater confidence and rapport established; never quite the closeness, but in the White House with the president and others, there tended to be initially in the administration a very closed group that would go into the president's office after an NSC meeting. I was initially kind of excluded from that, but later on brought in to that.

Matloff: Was this in both administrations?

Jones: It was in the Reagan administration. It was only an 18-month period, and Secretary Weinberg said nice things about me at my retirement. We had some disagreements on some issues, but I think we got along within those conditions quite well.

Goldberg: That probably was the most difficult period, the changeover is always awkward.

Matloff: Were there any differences in the role of the chairman and the Joint Chiefs in budget formulation from one administration to another?

Jones: No real difference in the role. There might be some difference in the influence. Much more decentralized under the Reagan administration, where the services had a much greater say unless it was a politically sensitive issue like MX basing, where the Air Force was overridden on it. If it wasn't some highly politically sensitive issue, there was a lot more delegation to the services of decisionmaking on what to buy. There's a lot of good about that.

Goldberg: Did you approve of that?

Jones: I think the more you can decentralize the better off you are, as long as you have a good understandable beat of the drum as to where you want to go and insistence on following that beat and the priorities. What happens is that decentralization without a real set of priorities and goals brings fragmentation, gaps, and duplication in the system. I would like to see more decentralization, but a better road map as to where we want to go.

Goldberg: It's interesting to hear the differing views of Harold Brown and Graham Claytor on this particular point. Claytor wanted much more decentralization, he thought there was far too much centralization in OSD. Brown didn't feel that way about it. Claytor, of course, had the experience both as secretary of the Navy and secretary of defense.

Matloff: What led, in your view, to the departure of the Carter administration from its early emphasis on curtailing the defense budget?

Jones: First, the budget had been cut. It was the momentum of further reductions initially. I think it was a combination of factors--recognition of a lot of the problems and deficiencies within the military capability; recognition of the threat; some of the world situations, as

Afghanistan, had considerable impact--there were a lot of things we were working on very hard to bring to the attention to political authorities. We didn't say that the Soviets were 10 feet tall and that things were going totally against us, it was a balanced way. My worry about extremes is that we tend to ride on a roller coaster. We get America cranked up that there is a real problem in defense and we shoot up in our defense budget, with items that are well justified but it can't be sustained. The support disappears or wanes and we have the cuts we have now. In congressional testimony in 1982 or '82 I said something that wasn't very popular, that I would prefer sustained growth over very rapid growth that couldn't be sustained. We learned it was the right way to go. I think we could have sustained public support for it rather than a big spurt up; now we're being cut.

Goldberg: The trouble with the middle course is that you get shot at from both sides.

Matloff: How often did you meet with the secretary or deputy secretary of defense?

Jones: Every day I would go down in the later morning and meet with the secretary of defense, normally one-on-one. Maybe the deputy would come in from time to time, when I was chairman. Then we had the DRB meetings, the one afternoon a week meeting with the secretary of defense and the Chiefs. There were a lot of meetings, NSC, other White House meetings. On the average I would see the secretary of defense multiple times each day. But there was always one private meeting with the secretary. I felt, particularly with Harold Brown, that that was the time when I had the greatest influence. Not that I would say anything different there than I was to the Chiefs and colleagues, but we could have a good dialogue without getting institutional issues involved.

Goldberg: This is very significant because Brown was mostly a paper man, wasn't he?

Jones: Yes, he put things down on paper. But Harold Brown has matured a great deal. He was much more that way in his early days. He became much more interested in the human aspect of it as time went on.

Matloff: How did you handle the problem of split views within the JCS, with reference both to the SecDef and the president?

Jones: We were generally unanimous when we had a difference. When I was chief, the other services played an inactive role, didn't fight the Air Force on the B-1, and kind of gave lip service to support of it, but I know their heart wasn't in it. If asked if we should have a carrier B-1, I know what the Navy would have said and that type of thing. In weapon system issues like that the services kind of play an inactive role other than the service involved. On things like issues in SALT II, the case generally had unanimous views that at times were at odds with the administration. In quite a few cases we were successful and in some cases we were unsuccessful in some of the areas. There may have been some disagreement on details among the chiefs, but, for example in support of SALT II, there was unanimity saying that it was modest but useful. Those were words that we all used from time to time. That it was a step forward, it wasn't a great accomplishment, but it led to a dialogue to go on to further actions. There were great limitations within it, it didn't put a cap on certain things, made things more predictable, didn't mean much in the sense of change of the overall strategic equation. Those things the chiefs generally agreed on. Earlier when I was chief we agreed on the Panama Canal treaty. As long as there was a second treaty, which Harold Brown and George Brown crafted, that gave us some involvement in perpetuity, all the chiefs could support it. It wasn't just one chief off on his own. Very frankly, there is no way that if a chief or other chiefs feel strongly about an issue that the chairman is going to

intimidate them in any way into supporting a position. There is a lot of pressure for consensus within the chiefs, the feeling that there is strength in unanimity, and therefore people will tend to compromise in order to get that.

Goldberg: But according to the secretary and the president, if the chairman disagrees with the other chiefs, he is certainly free to express an opinion.

Matloff: Did you have to go through the president's assistant for national security affairs to get to the president, or could you go directly to him?

Jones: You could go directly to the president, but there was no reason to go to the president, because you had an opportunity in the meetings now called the NSPG to go over to the Situation Room in the White House and sit around the table with about the same number of people as in a National Security Council meeting but less formal, with fewer back benchers.

Goldberg: But not with the president.

Jones: The president is there. There may be a meeting where the National Security Adviser chairs it, but most of the meetings are chaired by the president or the vice president. There you would have the debates on the major issues, so on any critical issue you had the opportunity to express your views. And you had the opportunity to write to him, if you wanted.

Matloff: Was there any difference in the relationship between your relationships with the two presidents?

Jones: I would say a sharp difference in relationships. I had been picked as the Chief by Nixon and stayed under Ford and then picked under Carter, so I was therefore not the kind of an outsider to Carter that I was to President Reagan when I came in, but Reagan treated

me well and listened to me and we had a good relationship when I was chairman. I don't have any fault to find there. It didn't become a real close relationship, but we had frequent meetings. By style, also, there was somewhat less interface. President Reagan was much more of a delegator and less involved in a lot of the issues than President Carter.

Goldberg: Carter was involved in issues, presumably in great detail.

Matloff: On what Defense issues did you find Congress most sensitive in this period?

Jones: During the Carter administration there was not a good relationship between President Carter and the Congress, particularly with the armed services committees, which tend to be considerably more conservative than the Congress as a whole. There was a lot of respect for Harold Brown, but there were a lot of real problems even though the Congress was Democratic, particularly in the House. There wasn't that good a relationship, and therefore it was more difficult to deal with the Congress. When President Reagan came in, he came in with such a strong mandate on defense that in his first term almost anything he wanted to do in Defense he could do. It was an easy task on the Hill for the first few years because of the consensus, rather than the basic argument and opposition of earlier times. And there weren't the contentious issues at the time. There wasn't a treaty up for ratification, that tended to divide things in the first administration.

Goldberg: "They almost choked the cow," as George Marshall put it. In both World War II and the Korean War, early on Marshall actually asked the Congress not to give them so much money because they couldn't handle it.

Matloff: May I assume that there were no changes in your view of the threat facing the country in this period from what you had seen in the period as Chief of Staff?

Jones: I don't see any major changes, and it was evolutionary, because I got all the information as Chief of Staff of the Air Force--the intelligence information, all the discussions, and so forth. The events may have changed my view on certain things as opposed to my changing positions.

Matloff: How about in your strategic outlook, any changes in that area?

Jones: No, when you become chairman you put yourself in a broader vision, with broader responsibility, and less of an institutional need to push your own system. You tend to look at things in a broader view. I think that's true of most chairman down through history. But it isn't a startling change.

Goldberg: What was your feeling toward the intelligence people, as to their estimates of the threat during this period? Did you have high confidence in them?

Jones: I had high confidence in the technical intelligence and low confidence in the human intelligence.

Matloff: Who was primarily influential in strategic planning in Defense in this period? the secretaries of defense, the JCS, the services?

Jones: Clearly, when Harold Brown was secretary of defense, he had the greatest influence. The same thing was true earlier with Jim Schlesinger. Both had a lot of experience in this area. As I mentioned before, under Secretary Weinberger it was more of a visceral feeling and conviction that the Soviets were way ahead and we had to do a lot as opposed to having been deeply involved in all the issues.

Goldberg: Did Komer exercise influence under Brown?

Jones: Komer had quite a bit of influence under Brown. I think it was instrumental in helping Brown implement some of the things he had set up.

