Interview with John G. Kester
Part II, April 15, 1998

Trask: This is Part II of an oral history interview with Mr. John G. Kester, taking place in Washington, DC on April 15, 1998. Participating as interviewers for the OSD Historical Office are Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask.

When we ended our session yesterday, we were discussing your working relationships as special assistant with various individuals in the Pentagon. We can start today with your comments on your contacts with the military departments and their secretaries.

Kester: During the time I was there, Clifford Alexander was secretary of the Army and Walt La Berge was under secretary. Graham Claytor and Jim Woolsey were at the Navy. John Stetson was secretary of the Air Force and Hans Mark was under secretary during that time. I probably had more contact on a daily basis with the assistant secretaries of defense than with the military departments. But there was a certain amount of contact with the military departments that would tend to be usually with the secretary or under secretary, not so much with the assistant secretary level people, with a couple of exceptions. The relations with all of the service secretaries, I thought, were quite cordial. Probably Graham Claytor and Jim Woolsey had more access to our office than the others did. This was not so much as a function of our planning it that way, but rather that they were more aggressive. They would not hesitate to come and ask us for things. Cliff Alexander, I think, was not as much in control

of what was going on in the Army except on certain issues that were of particular interest to him--on race and base closing.. In fact he stood in our way to some extent in closing Fort Dix and was not all that cooperative. On a personal level, things were fine. Alexander had very tense relations with Bernie Rogers, who was chief of staff of the Army at that time. I tried to stay out of that as much as possible--figuring that's their problem--we didn't need to try to solve those sorts -wq0of problems. But one result was that policies respecting the Army tended to be made in a chain from OSD to the uniformed Army with the service secretary and his assistant secretaries less involved. Now that's a generalization, it was not always the case. In the Navy Department , Woolsey and Claytor were very much involved most of the time. In the Air Force, Hans Mark was a very capable guy. He took the under secretary job because he was interested in running the NRO (National Reconnaissance Office). He wasn't that much interested in being the under secretary of the Air Force. He focused a lot of his attention on those kinds of issues. John Stetson, secretary of the Air Force, was a very nice, decent fellow but he was not a forceful manager either. So again, somewhat as with the Army, we went around the civilians in the Air Force. Toni Chayes was at that time the assistant secretary for manpower, reserve affairs and logistics. She was more aggressive and active--not always helping us. She pretty much blocked or tried to block the closing of Loring Air Force Base. I can't remember if it ever eventually got closed but she at least delayed the thing. She was interested in women's issues and had connections on the Hill--she was close to Teddy Kennedy. She fairly

flagrantly went around us--although always with a charming enough manner that she could get away with some stuff.

Goldberg: I talked to her last week.

Kester: What's she doing now?

Goldberg: She's with one of the big corporations in Rosslyn.

Kester: Although Harold and I both were always mouthing the mantra that we did not want to go around the service civilians and deal directly with the staff--that was not the right way to run things--we found ourselves doing it frequently.

Goldberg: But then you dealt with the military a good deal or a fair amount at any rate.

Kester: Sometimes.

Goldberg: When you talk about staff you mean the military?

Kester: Yes, I mean the uniformed staff to some extent.

Goldberg: Did you find that they resented you, in your role as special assistant, more than the civilians did ?

Kester: No. I never felt that. I think the military, at least in the military service staffs, were happy if somebody at a high level in OSD was paying attention to them, maybe doing something for them. I don't think they cared about OSD organization, if they even understood it. They just wanted to get something out of OSD. If I happened to be the avenue that was fine. A lot of this sort of thing that we are talking about also would have an assistant secretary of defense involved in the subject matter area.

Goldberg: I ask the question because there are lots of instances, over the years, of this attitude by the military towards civilians, particularly in OSD--to some extent even to their own service secretariats. These civilians are obstructionist--they're not helping us, we don't need them. Of course, there has always been this attitude towards OSD.

Kester: Yes, to some extent. I think that maybe in the services some of the uniformed people may have resented their own civilian secretariats more than they resented us--we were more distant. That's quite a broad generalization. I'd have to think back to try to figure out why I said that.

Goldberg: I was thinking back to McNamara's time and the critical military attitude toward him that, of course you know, was quite strong.

Kester: In dealing with the uniformed people--of course, we had dealt with the JCS too--I think that they may have had more tendency to resent civilians in OSD, because the civilians were around them more and familiarity breeds some contempt. There was also the phenomenon, of course, that the chiefs were two-hatted. They were the JCS and they were also the service chiefs. Harold used to comment that they would get worked up all the time when we had meetings in the tank about personnel issues that weren't supposed to be the subject of JCS responsibility. They always had the habit whenever they wanted to deal with one channel or another to say, " I'm wearing this hat or I'm wearing that hat." It didn't make too much sense. But the JCS spent a huge amount of time thinking about general officer assignments and they spent a lot of time worrying about pay, housing--the kinds of things that mattered to the troops or at least to the career

people. I thought we ought to be paying attention to general officer assignments and Harold really did too. There were a few times when there was considerable fussing. I remember there was a lot of friction about one four star assignment to Turkey. It was freakish--it was a nice assignment. Rogers had somebody he wanted to put in this job. I knew a lot of uniform people that would talk to me off the record about this and that. The consensus was pretty much from anybody you would ask that this guy was way above his mental grade already and shouldn't be there. We tried to derail that and that caused a lot of trouble. Cliff Alexander was of the same view. We were backing Cliff on that. I can't remember whether it was actually a joint assignment rather than just an assignment in the Army and that was an issue. There was an issue about Dutch Kerwin at one point. Dutch, I think, became vice chief. I can't remember if the issue had to do with that assignment or some other assignment. I always thought well of Kerwin. I think there was friction between Alexander and Rogers. I remember once I went down and had lunch with Rogers in his office when some of this was going on. He said that he had thought about resigning but the problem with that is it's a headline for one day and then everybody forgets, so what's the point. How the world has changed. I remember when we were working on some of the budget issues there was a great concern to have the chiefs sign on and say that the funding was there--that the budget was adequate for the next year. It may have been the year after I was gone--there came a time when the chiefs refused to do that. What everybody had always thought would be a huge political catastrophe resulted in a little story that may have been on the left hand side of the front page of the Washington Post. It was a totally ho-hum thing--the

world did not come to an end. In those days, people were a little more worried about that. Did that answer your question?

Goldberg: Yes.

Trask: What about contacts with the White House?

Kester: Yes. That was part of my job. I was supposed to be the contact for the White House. I dealt with all of the political things that affected Defense that came from the White House. Have you ever seen these things the kids have--these Where is Elmer things, with faces all muddled? That was the way the Carter White House looked--just a big muddle. You'd never know who was going to call up. Sometimes they had some idea of what they wanted. To some extent they wanted someone to point them to this or that. There were several issues that came up on that early on, and we managed to work our way through. By and large, they didn't know much. Some of us were sitting there thinking we were making a sacrifice to take a pay cut and go work in the Defense Department, but for a whole lot of people in the White House, it was the best job they'd ever had. These were young kids--a little like the Clinton Administration--the same generation. Most of them didn't really know much about the Pentagon except that it was sort of big and evil. They didn't quite have an idea of what they could get out of it. Eventually, it came to be known that the Pentagon had lots of researchers that they could tap if they knew how. Early on, I dealt with Jack Watson--who was a good guy. His deputy was Jean Harman--she was Jean Frank in those days. She's running for governor of California now.

Goldberg: She's a congresswoman now.

Kester: Yes. I dealt with them a fair amount. They were okay to deal with on one thing or another. There were the personnel people. Jody Powell dealt mainly with Tom Ross. Frank--I can't remember his last name-- from Georgia was the legislative guy in the Carter White House. He would deal with Jack Stempler--there were those chains. I spent a lot of time, off and on, with a guy named Hugh Carter, who was Jimmy Carter's cousin. Hugh Carter was looking somewhat at WACA's huge communications thing--called the White House Military Office. Bill Gully was the head of it. I think he was a retired Marine who had been there for years and years. He had this little empire set up.

Trask: He was paid by Defense?

Kester: Oh, I think so.

Goldberg: A lot of people in the White House were.

Kester: They discovered the arts of detailing people. I was warned, I remember by Herbits or one of my predecessors, that the White House military office was the source of potential big embarrassments because these people--sitting over there in the White House--think they don't work for you. People tell them to do things over there and they do them and they ingratiate themselves by providing stuff they shouldn't. Hugh Carter basically wanted to get a handle on controlling the White House Military Office. I did too. I never had any problems with Hugh Carter. We had somewhat parallel interests. We both viewed it as part of our jobs to keep these people from running wild on extravagant things and nutty ideas--whatever they wanted to do. Hugh was called "cousin cheap" by the White House Staff.

Trask: What were the main functions of the White House Military Office--liaison?

Kester: Logistical support for the White House basically. Gully, over the years, had totally gone around the SecDef's office. We kind of wanted to pull that back in the fold. We had moderate success in that nothing bad happened, as I recall, during that time. I dealt a lot with the White House counsel's office, because they would tend to get possible embarrassments that found their way to the counsel's office. At our end, they would find their way to me--how to get around this or that and things with potential political repercussions.. So I dealt with

Bob and his deputy, Margaret McKenna.

Goldberg: Brzezinski was a presence in the White House then, wasn't he?

Kester: Yes, but I didn't deal with Brzezinski. Basically, Harold dealt with him directly. His deputy was David Aaron, a very liberal person, a Mondale guy. Brzezinski had a strange staff. He had his world view, but the view of his staff, including David Aaron a lot of the time, bore no resemblance whatsoever to his view.

Goldberg: That had happened with a lot of other national security advisors.

Kester: I suspect that is right.

Trask: Were those people there before Brzezinski came or did they come in at the same time?

Kester: I think that they were people who owed their appointments to sources other than Brzezinski; how the timing of it worked I don't know.

Goldberg: There's usually a turnover.

Kester: They weren't leftovers for the most part.

Trask: He didn't really pick them himself?

Kester: He probably picked a few of them. But by and large they were about sixty degrees further left than he was on most issues. I didn't have that much to do with him. Harold, Vance, and Brzezinski had lunch at least once a week. They had a lot of meetings at the White House and tried to stay close. Brown, Vance, and Brzezinski got along well. I think Brown told me that they had a deal with Carter for their positions, they all had to say they were satisfied with each other before the appointments were made or some such thing. They sort of got along. However, as time went along Brzezinski and Vance began to be more and more at loggerheads. Harold never liked to get into the personal backbiting stuff. He sort of tried to stay on the good side of both of them and probably managed pretty well to do that.

Goldberg: Did you have anything at all to do with Jimmy Carter?

Kester: Sometimes I went to cabinet meetings. Yes, I saw him a number of times.

Goldberg: What is your impression of him?

Kester: I thought he was a very strange man--kind of sanctimonious in some way. He was given to issuing platitudinous statements; it was like there were disconnects there. To an extent this is true with all politicians. You could not really rely on Carter doing what he said about things. He, of course, liked to agree with people. He liked to be on the side of truth, good and justice and then could turn around and do something else. I remember one big mess when we were on one of the semiannual NATO trips. Harold had worked out a deal--deployment or something--it was a big issue at the time. Carter had agreed with the DoD position that this weapon was going to be bought or sold or deployed or something. I think it was some missile thing. It could have even been taking some weapons out--some deal.

Goldberg: Was it the neutron bomb issue?

Kester: It might have been the neutron bomb issue. We got over there and Carter completely pulled the rug out and took the opposite positions, sort of anti-defense, anti-what the NATO people wanted. Harold learned about this over the wire while he was at a meeting. He was stuck there trying to explain and justify this to all of these people. It was very bad. I always had the feeling that trying to psychoanalyze people you don't know isn't very useful, especially if you're not experts.

Goldberg: It's easier.

Kester: It's easier, and like all of that stuff they never can prove you wrong. I always had the feeling that Carter, really deep down, did not like the military. He started out in Annapolis in Rickover's program. He got out when he was a lieutenant commander. The circumstances of his leaving the Navy were never totally clear to me. There seemed to be something wrong there. I think that he took a certain perverse enjoyment in having four star people calling him sir and that sort of stuff.

Goldberg: Especially having Rickover calling him sir.

Kester: No, Rickover was another thing. I talked to Rickover a few times on the phone. With his way of talking he always sounded to me like he was totally drunk, but I think it was just the way he talked. Claytor wanted to move Rickover out and Harold signed on to it right at the beginning before I got there. They had talked about this earlier. They were planning to get rid of Rickover, and Claytor was sort of going around greasing the system to do this. But then it turned out that Rickover was the mentor of the president and basically, the president said no. Rickover would call up the president whenever he wanted and he was totally uncontrollable.

By the time of our administration, he was sort of in his dotage. He wasn't really causing any problems beyond those that we were in the habit of expecting him to cause in his budget. There was his two-hatted thing--he was always half in the Navy and half in the Energy Department.

Goldberg: They finally did fire him under Reagan--he gave Reagan hell.

Kester: He was a phenomenon. There wasa sort of cognitive dissonance going on with Carter.

Goldberg: Carter was a very bright man.

Kester: I'm not sure how bright he really was. That's sort of the received wisdom.

Goldberg: We interviewed him. I was impressed with his knowledge, his grasp of the issues. Now, of course, this was after he left the presidency. He had perspective by then. But he came across as a very highly intelligent, well-informed man. And I don't doubt that he was well informed--he spent all of his time, apparently, just soaking up information. The problem was what he did with it after he got it. That's a legitimate criticism. In terms of basic intelligence and ability, I'd be inclined to give him high marks, on the basis, I admit, of just a two hour interview with him.

Kester: That's probably a better basis for assessing that than II had. He didn't strike me as way above average intelligence. To some extent, anybody who is president is likely going to dissatisfy anybody who has in mind a fairly coherent idea of what they should do, because the president has to make all kinds of political compromises all the time. It seems like they all kind of cheat around the edges.

Goldberg: I had the impression that had he had a second term he would have been a much more effective president. I discussed this with Brzezinski, who agreed. Brzezinski said by the end of his term, he was operating a great deal more effectively and significantly than he had earlier on.

Kester: His presidency was fairly disastrous. If you say he would have been better in a second term there wasn't much direction to go with. You remember what the economy was like--you remember the goofy price controls--you remember the hostages and the incoherence in all of his policies pretty much. If he got to be doing more of the same, I'm not sure that would have been an improvement. I did not have high regard for him--there was a phony quality about him, I thought. I was not hanging around him that often.

Trask: Carter brought all of these people in. He didn't know how Washington worked. It's interesting to note that Clinton studied the Carter administration before he became president, but it seems to me he made the same mistakes. He brought in a lot of people who were not Washington insiders.

Kester: Clinton's got quite a number of Washington insiders.

Trask: Well, more than Carter did and he's added some, but at the beginning there were a lot of outsiders.

Kester: Carter brought in a lot of Georgians and some of them really didn't know very much how things worked. I don't know if he tried to imitate Franklin Roosevelt consciously or what, but he didn't have clear lines of authority in his White House. People were just stumbling all over each other.

Goldberg: Roosevelt could get away with it.

Kester: Yes. It wasn't the mob that you have at the White House these days.

Trask: Brown, in our interview with him, complained about Carter's strong interest in participating in Defense decisions. This sometimes put Brown in an uncomfortable position in relationships with Congress and the services. He also complained that Carter went into too much detail studying these issues. Brown said he thought Carter wasn't using his time very well.

Goldberg: That's a generalization.

Kester: Yes--the old claim that he was scheduling the White House tennis courts. I think he was probably inclined to get into minutia but he lacked the big picture. Compare him to Reagan who was just the opposite; he had a few things that were important to him and let other people worry about the details. Carter was the reverse of that. Carter also did things. In the campaign he had said that he was going to cut five to seven billion dollars from the Defense budget. We were scratching around figuring out how in the world that was going to be done. That went on for weeks and months. Ultimately, it did get done because they canceled the B-1 bomber. Harold always behaved as an advocate. He was not somebody who would go against Carter's decisions. He would defend Carter's decisions even if he had not agreed with him when they were being considered. Harold was totally loyal in that regard. Carter, I think, had no sense, or just didn't care, of the position he would put somebody like Harold in. Vis-a-vis the Hill, vis-a-vis the building, if you can't handle the building you shouldn't be the secretary of defense. When something like that happens too many times, basically you probably should resign. I don't know that it happened too many times, but it happened often enough. It was

certainly a difficulty with which Harold had to deal. One had the impression that Carter had no sense of what it was like to be in a job like the secretary of defense where you have many different constituencies pounding on you all the time. Harold would take heat for Carter basically but I don't think Carter ever appreciated it.

Goldberg: Jones took some heat for him too.

Kester: Yes.

Trask: What about congressional relationships?

Kester: I didn't' deal with the Congress that much. I worked on a few things, in particular people issues. I used to talk to Les Aspin a fair amount. One of my big interests was reorganization of OSD, when we were cutting down the number of assistant secretaries and trying to streamline things. Everything we did has all since dissolved and gone in other directions. We did have legislation. I worked on figuring out some of the legislation to eliminate the assistant secretary for health affairs, who I guess is still there. I worked on the organization charts. The health affairs person reported to John White. We were going to get the health affairs job abolished by the secretary's reorganization power. There is a statutory power under which the secretary of defense could abolish jobs or something like that. You send a notice to the committees and they have ninety days to reject it if they wish, under the Reorganization Act. I think he actually sent up a notice on that and it seemed as if it was going to survive. Then something happened--Jack Stempler never had any enthusiasm for it and wouldn't push it. I think we backed off for some reason and never abolished it.. The Hill was involved in that but Stempler sort of jealously guarded relations with the Hill. I had some people I talked to about things.

Goldberg: Did you have much to do with John White?

Kester: A fair amount. He was one of the people who eventually tried to set up his own channel to Charles Duncan and he went around me whenever he could. He was sort of a bureaucratic operator type. I was supportive of him on most issues. I don't think we had policy disagreements. As I recall, he was more enthusiastic about Volunteer Force stuff than I was. I was always the skeptic.

Trask: What position did he have?

Kester: He was assistant secretary for manpower and reserve affairs. We put logistics in there too. It had been assistant secretary for logistics. We made that into MRA&L. I was somewhat instrumental in getting him that job. Carter had an old buddy who had been his campaign manager for Pennsylvania in the '76 election. His name, if I recall correctly, was Sullivan. Sullivan had been a classmate of Carter's at Annapolis, I think. Carter had wanted him to be secretary of the Navy. That had already gone by and Claytor had been approved as secretary of the Navy. Sullivan had been the original choice. Harold told me the president says this guy has to have a big job. Carter's idea, I guess, was to make him the manpower assistant secretary. I interviewed him--it was pretty scary how much he didn't know and it didn't seem like he was likely to learn much either. Harold had been uneasy about this. I went back to Harold and I said you can't do this--that's a key, key job. It's one thing to stick somebody in as head of one of the services. At least he could put figure heads in those jobs--it's not so much that anything bad happens--it's just that good thing don't happen. But In the manpower job a lot of bad things could happen. Eventually we cooked up a deal. I got Harold to go back and tell them that

we couldn't do that. I cooked up a deal for Sullivan to become head of the Federal Railroad Administration, which, as it turned out, was a level three job whereas the assistant secretary was a level four job. So it was actually a better job.

Goldberg: How did it ever get to level three?

Kester: I don't know--a long, long time ago. Probably has to do with railroad lobbying. Sullivan went off to the railroads. White had been at Rand. I can't remember how his name floated in but I talked to him and he seemed smart and seemed to understand what we wanted to do. Basically, he was okay in that job.

Goldberg: He had been working manpower several years before.

Kester: That was his career. It was not like Sullivan who had never heard of any of this stuff. John White may have been recommended by Gene Fubini.

Goldberg: He's gone now.

Kester: I know--a lovely man. He was one of Harold's oldest and closest friends. Gene used to come in and hang around the office. He and I got to be friends.

Goldberg: Herb York also was a friend of Brown.

Kester: Herb York was another old friend. Those were some of the old people--you could go back to Livermore and God knows how far.

Goldberg: Herb was Brown's predecessor's as DDRE.

Kester: I met Herb York a few times. There was sort of that coterie of the old nuclear scientists, a totally new bunch of people to me. You compared the actual personalities of these people to the caricature in Dr. Strangelove. These were sweet, lovely gentlemen. Harold probably would not be categorized as sweet and lovely but certainly Gene Fubini and Herb York and Hans Mark were. Anyway,

Fubini had lots of ideas--some good, some bad--about people. We used to go over names. The funny thing is when you're inside trying to fill these top level jobs, it always seems as if there is hardly anybody out there who you would want and most of the ones you want are not available; you can't talk them into doing anything. If you're on the outside looking for a job, it seems just the opposite--it seems like they have millions of candidates and it's a totally closed deal. I always liked to have political appointment jobs--schedule C, etc. But it wasn't because we wanted to use them to pay off political creditors, it was because we wanted to use it as a total merit system--get the best people in that we could. To a large extent, I think we succeeded in that little Camelot we had going there for a while, with some exceptions. We got a lot of our own picks--we picked them on merit. I remember, Russ Murray came in there and wanted to have Paul Wolfowitz as one of his deputies. Somebody said Wolfowitz, was a Republican rightwing kind of guy. To Russ, I said fine. Part of our job, I always considered, was to do battle with the White House, if necessary, on some of this stuff. But the White House was, most of the time, pretty passive. We had several Republicans. Stetson may have been a Republican--Stetson was a Fubini find.

Goldberg: Tom Brown had been working for Murray as his principal deputy. He was a registered Republican--they ran his nomination through Senator Cranston from California. Brown came from Rand. He spent four years in the Pentagon. Then the Reagan administration came in and they fired him right off the bat. They were told this man is a Republican. It didn't matter, he had worked for the previous administration and they didn't want any part of him.

Kester: Tainted.

Goldberg: He had to go elsewhere and he was a hell of a good man, did a good job.

Kester: We had a number of people that were in that situation. Graham Claytor may have been a registered Republican. Actually, I don't know but Claytor had his own connections to Carter in Southern Railroad and Coca Cola and all of that stuff.

Goldberg: He was also a man of stature, people recognized that.

Trask: Let's go on to some issues during the term discuss what your role. You made some mention earlier this morning about the Defense budget. Can you comment further on the problems relating to the budget and your particular role?

Kester: My role was on the sidelines to a large extent. On the budget we sort of started out in a hole because Carter had permitted the cut. Harold tried to make these decisions on the merits as much as possible and wasn't afraid to say no to the services. He paid a lot of attention to Russ Murray's office, which was somewhat revived. As I recall, that had been dropped down from an assistant secretary job.

Goldberg: Up and down.

Kester: Claytor and Woolsey used to always complain about the systems analysts; that was sort of a little healthy friction that went on.

Goldberg: That was the Program Analysis and Evaluation office.

Kester: PA&E. I think Russ' job was called PA&E. Systems Analysis had that terrible taint of McNamara, Enthoven and all. My impression was that as much as the Carter administration was criticised particularly in the 1980 election, I think the

Defense budget was larger and the programs stronger under Harold than they would have been had there by any number of other people in that job. Harold was able to persuade Carter to do things that I think Carter instinctively was not inclined to do. What I'm saying is I think the budgets were bigger than they would have been had Harold not been there. That's the kind of thing that people like Harold don't get enough credit for because it's very hard to demonstrate. Plus, I've always thought that a lot of the credit for good service of high public officials should be measured in terms of disasters averted, and those never show up. But believe me, there are a lot of terrible things--potential scandals, potential problems--that one in a job like the one I had and like Harold had deals with and deals with successfully, a whole lot of the time, and nobody knows that.

Goldberg: It is now, I think, pretty much acknowledged that the Defense budget and Defense establishment were turned around substantially under Brown and gave the Reagan people a running start when they came in.

Kester: That's good. I think that's probably correct. There were particular issues like the B-1 that were a big issues at that time. I know Harold spent a lot of time working on that himself. He one time showed me a long 40-page memorandum that he had done for the president on the B-1 issue--except it didn't have the conclusion page, whether to do it or not. He didn't want anybody to know what he recommended to Carter on that, probably basically to protect Carter. He intensely analyzed a lot of that stuff.

Goldberg: It hurt Jones with his own service.

Kester: How do you mean?

Goldberg: He went along with the B-1.

Trask: Brown actually favored going ahead with the B-1, didn't he?

Kester: He never told me.

Trask: I had the impression that he favored going ahead with it.

Kester: My conclusion, after reading his memo without the conclusion, was to go ahead with the B-1. However, that also tended to be my own visceral feeling. Of course, he and Bill Perry had started the stealth stuff going on, which was very close-hold. I was never aware of the stealth bomber and had no need to know. There was a lot of stuff going on at that time. In terms of the budget, my contact was sort of episodic except for the overall issues of how big and how it plays out politically.

Trask: You mentioned that you had some significant role in the reorganization. What was the general thrust of what Brown and you wanted to do? Could you comment on some of the details of it?

Kester: There had been a proliferation of assistant secretary jobs and Harold was very much concerned. If you looked at the organization chart as it existed when he came in, there were something like 30+people who supposedly reported directly to the secretary of defense, and that was crazy. As he observed, if you've got 30 people reporting to the secretary of defense, most of them don't report to anybody, because the secretary of defense doesn't have time. He was trying to get a little more structure so he'd have fewer people to deal with, but at the same he was concerned about layering. We stayed away from the system that exists now--four under secretaries. We didn't want that. The DDR&E job was already there at level

three. Harold also wanted to set up the policy job. The concept on reorganization that Harold and I had was to reduce the number of people reporting directly to the secretary of defense while avoiding a layering, which would prevent the assistant secretaries from dealing directly with the secretary. He wanted to be able to deal directly with the assistant secretaries, particularly the ISA. Probably less so Jerry Dinneen's job, which was communications and intelligence hardware. We wanted to pull the Defense agencies in, so that they had somebody overseeing what they did, at least, in a general way, because although theoretically they reported to the secretary, the secretary had no time to worry about the Defense agencies for the most part. The concept of it was developed principally by Harold, and I tried to work on implementation. Gene Fubini fed in ideas from time to time--he was interested in that. So what we came up with was a sort of simplified organization that gave assistant secretaries of what you might call line responsibility over the Defense agencies; that offended purists. It seemed to have worked all right. It was not neat and symmetrical in a sense of having a layer of under secretaries. In connection with the reorganization, we also wanted to reduce the size of OSD by a significant amount. That was a tremendously difficult thing to do.

Goldberg: Brehm had tried that earlier.

Kester: Famous last words. As a matter of fact, I had forgotten that I used to talk to Bill Brehm on this organization stuff. In fact, I was trying to implement some of the same things he had attempted at one time.

Goldberg: You know why he was not successful?

Kester: Why?

Goldberg: Because he created new divisions within his own office that added about 82 people in his own organization.

Kester: Is that so? I tried to cut down the size of the immediate office of the secretary of defense. There was tremendous resistance to this kind of thing. People were always trying to find some way to suggest that somehow I was getting a bigger staff or aggrandizing myself. I knew that was going on. All I had to do was make a misstep there and it would be all over the headlines. There was a lot of resistance, of course, from Doc Cooke. Eventually, he created Washington Headquarters Services, which was a total scam. It was just all of the same people working in a different box.

Goldberg: All of the services did it too.

Kester: Yes, but they all copied it.

Goldberg: Army had already had the Military District of Washington.

Kester: It was interesting. Every time we brought in a new assistant secretary and a service secretary, I'd talk to them and I would say, "we were expecting you to make a significant staff cut." I forget what numbers we were talking about--20-25 percent. They would say, "oh yes--I'm for that--it absolutely makes a lot of sense." And, of course, about 11 hours after they were in the job, they suddenly began having second thoughts about cutting their staff. The first thing the staff does is come to them saying that's a terrible idea. I was consulting last year on some committee that was doing a report on OSD organization and was somewhat appalled to find that it's bigger than ever. It looked a lot larger than it did even when we were there. I

think we actually did manage to streamline a little bit, but the hardest thing to do in the government is try to cut jobs.

Goldberg: I discussed this a number of times with Doc Cooke And I kept saying they don't really reduce. He'd say, "Oh, no, sometimes we manage to do that."

Kester: Doc Cooke was not interested in cutting jobs. He was interested in seeming to cut jobs.

Goldberg: Well, he had a pretty tough job himself. He was always getting into problems with people on the staff. Everybody wanted something--he had to say no every once in a while.

Kester: I liked Doc personally. He's a very talented guy--he's managed to survive in that job for an incredible amount of time.

Goldberg: I think he's one of the most effective government servants.

Trask: It's interesting the power he has. I heard about an assistant secretary who wanted something--office space, I guess-- and Doc Cooke said no to him.

Kester: It wasn't that way when I was there, because I recognized what Doc was doing and what controls he had. He would do what I told him to do, other than the personnel thing where he would play shell games and talk about this civil service regulation and that. Fortunately, I was enough of a lawyer that I could not be flummoxed on some of the stuff that they came up with. In terms of offices moving around, Doc, if directly told to do something out of my office, would do it. But I don't think that lasted. We got along, but I made it clear that essentially he worked for me. And to the extent that I could see what he was doing, he did work for me. To the extent I couldn't see what he was doing, of course, he continued to work for Doc.

Goldberg: He still speaks well of you.

Kester: We got along.

Goldberg: That's a tough job--a very difficult job--considering all of the different elements of it and the pressure on him from both above and below. All in all he handled it very well.

Trask: He survived for many, many years--from administration to administration--so he must be doing something right.

Kester: It has always seemed to me--I can't prove it but for all that one may sit around and complain that the Department of Defense is inefficient, overstaffed, top heavy, etc.--that if you compare it to any other government agency or department in town, there is just no comparison.

Goldberg: But after all, it has more resources than any other government department does and that helps.

Kester: A lot of the government departments are check writing services--transferring funds. An awful lot of them don't do much. Defense has a product, in a sense, it turns out forces that can do things if you want and you can measure that somewhat, unlike most government agencies.

Goldberg: It's also called on to do a lot of things.

Kester: Too much.

Goldberg: Because it's assumed to have the resources.

Kester: Because if they want something done--they get people who can do it.

Goldberg: Where does the White House go when they want something done?

Kester: The other great advantage, I think, that the Defense Department has is the dual personnel system--it's got civil service people and it's got the whole uniformed military that works on a different system. Basically in the Pentagon you see by and large the best uniformed officers coming up there. They are people who are motivated to work hours and hours a day to satisfy their commanding officer. You tell them to do something and they're trained to do it and they do do it. A lot of the work there gets done by the uniformed people who will work day and night if they need to. That's another big advantage.

Goldberg: There were studies launched on organization during your period..

Kester: Oh yes. There was an outfit called the President's Reorganization Project. Harold and I and others had the idea that we wanted to reorganize the Defense Department. I always said, "if you're going to do this, you've got to do it quickly." I still think that, if you come in and you're a new administration, the bureaucracy expects a certain amount of something will be different. If you wait six months, everybody will say, "we've been doing it this way, why should be change now?" You have to move while there's a certain fluidity possible. We wanted to go ahead and organize. Then comes along Jimmy Carter who sets up this thing called the President's Reorganization Project based on some Carteresque notion about how everything is inefficient and not going to change at all. And all they were were a terrible drag and problems. They wanted to have studies--they wanted to second guess us. I took it upon myself to deal with them and sort of make nice with them while we went ahead and did what we wanted without too much interference from them. I think the President's Reorganization Project found the Pentagon an

attractive target, because we, at least, had an organization. Most of these federal agencies were just hopeless messes. The people working on these projects didn't know how to straighten anything out anyway. So you had these people coming around who wanted to wander around the Pentagon and discover how things were done while we knew what to do and wanted to do it right away. We basically did that, somewhat to their irritation. We set up under our control--and I picked the people--two or three study projects to satisfy the President's Reorganization Project people, to come up with ideas on organization, but basically it was working on it's own. Harold and I did a lot of things--we just did them--and let the studying go on. There may have been some stuff that eventually came out of all of these studies.

Goldberg: Don Rice ran one.

Kester: Yes, Rice ran one. They didn't do bad jobs either, as I recall. It takes a long time for that. Some place I have what was done, literally on a little piece of memo paper. Fubini and I wrote down some boxes on it and showed it to Harold. Harold put okay in the margin and that became the organizational chart. There weren't a lot of studies. People like Harold Brown did not require studies to know how the house works.

Goldberg: Did you have anything to do with Net Assessment?

Kester: Only that I was a big fan of Andy Marshall's, when I discovered his existence. He was somebody for whom Harold had a great deal of respect and he would always read whatever Marshall produced. In all of the downsizing I never asked Net Assessment to give up anything; they had only ten people in a tiny office.

Goldberg: They were a small office.

Kester: In terms of the size, they were enormously productive of material that the secretary of defense found very valuable. The amount of respect the secretary had for him was indicated by his marginalia, etc. What's happened on that anyway? Is Marshall's office still there, but with its box moved just like Washington Headquarters Services?

Goldberg: No. He has not moved out. They backed off from moving him out. There was such a big reaction. From your own experience, you know what it's like to try to bring about big changes, because there are constituencies--very strong ones for each of these offices. They took a lot of flak about Marshall and less about C3I.

Kester: I was kind of glad that Marshall got some public support.

Goldberg: He got lots.

Kester: His office is so tiny. I think C3I is an insoluble problem; in a sense, there is no correct answer--whether you pull them apart or you put them together, because intelligence is a combination of gadgets and analysis and how do you solve that.

Goldberg: They are making some changes, but they are not doing away with them. Did you ever handle Washington Headquarters Services?

Kester: Only that I provoked it by saying we had to cut down. It seems there were 2,000 people that were considered in OSD and we wanted to go to 1,600. The way Doc got it down was to have the same people sit at the same typewriter, the same offices and call them Washington Headquarters Services. You know I'm exaggerating--there really were some cuts.

Goldberg: WHS was accepted by Congress. Congress knew what was going on--they understood how this cut came about.

Kester: It wasn't congressionally mandated.

Goldberg: I know it wasn't, but nevertheless, if you tell Congress we're cutting by so many people, then you have to tell them where these people are--that these people are somewhere else--they are just transferred to something called Washington Headquarters Services. There was no big reaction to it.

Kester: The cuts were never congressionally driven in the first place.

Goldberg: Agreed.

Kester: When you set out to cut jobs in the government--any government agency--Congress won't be up there making speeches about efficiency, that we've got too many people and so on. But if you try to make any specific cuts, Congress is going to be resisting that because of their constituents. That's constituent service. They don't want real cuts--most of them. I think that the only impetus there came from our office. Congress wanted, to the extent they cared about that at all, to look good.

Trask: Brown did a lot of work on strategic planning. What was your role or level of participation in that whole area?

Kester: Not a whole lot, if you're talking about strategic weapons.

Trask: Yes, weapons and things like essential equivalence and countervailing strategy. In other words, stragetic theory plus the Triad and other things.

Kester: For a while there was a movement for a dyad instead of a triad. I was involved in it only to the extent of how it played politically. The strategic theorizing Harold did in his interagency and White House meetings and at NSC meetings, and talking with McGiffert, Slocombe and Kaufmann, probably. I didn't play a big role in that. I sort of took the product that came out of Harold's own mind in his

deliberations and thought sometimes about how to sell it, how to package it. I sometimes worked on a speech for him. I use to pay attention to the Annual Defense Report. Bill Kaufmann wrote that. I liked to pay attention to what that said too, which irritated Kaufmann--he considered it a perfect product. He really didn't want to have any changes except from Harold. I had comments and changes here and there--either to Kaufmann or to Harold. Kaufmann was always threatening to quit--he never did. It was kind of his manner.

Goldberg: He'd been around a long time by then.

Kester: Yes. He was always saying, "this is the last year I'm going to put up with this."

Goldberg: He said that ten years before.

Kester: Yes. It didn't take long to figure out that's what was going on.

Goldberg: He was good.

Kester: He was excellent. Again, how people behave personally in a lot of these jobs is often not closely connected to the quality of work that they put out. Most of the people we had were very good.

Goldberg: Kaufmann was one of the good professionals in his field.

Kester: Absolutely. Harold paid a lot of attention to the Defense report too. It wasn't like Kaufmann would give Harold something and Harold would say, "okay, where do I sign off?" I suspect some secretaries of defense do that. It was a statement of policy from Harold. Harold spent a lot of time on SALT issues, and on that, it was basically one to one, he and Walt Slocombe. I use to fuss around to

some extent about whether they were too soft on SALT. I tended to be a little more of a hard-liner but not in a major way.

Trask: Brown was quite strong for arms control, wasn't he?

Kester: Yes. For arms control the only question is how you bargain it as a negotiation--whether you're getting the most you can. He was totally committed to arms control.

Goldberg: Even the hard-liners were for arms control on their terms.

Kester: Exactly.

Trask: That's true, but there is quite a difference between those two groups.

Kester: I suppose you can say there are some people around, who at least in their era, say arms control is a bad idea--we always get taken. The general inclination of some people would be that arms control is probably a good thing and should be encouraged. Harold would be in that camp--certainly. He didn't want to give away the store. He had State Department playing in that and so on. I thought our position ought to at least be towards the hard end of the spectrum.

Goldberg: Even Perle and Wolfowitz were for arms control.

Kester: Certainly. I think Russ Murray probably played in that to some extent too. I don't know the extent to which Bill Perry was involved, but he probably was too and not just in terms of hardware.

Goldberg: He was a well-informed man. Brown had very high regard for him.

Kester: Harold had really not known Bill Perry previously.

Goldberg: Oh really?

Kester: Yes. You take the people who had those key positions in OSD and it's an amazing tribute to Harold, I think, that he was willing to take people he didn't know. He didn't know me either. He hadn't known Perry, he hadn't really known Russ Murray, and he never knew John White. McGiffert, I think, he hadn't had much contact with. I don't think he knew Jerry Dinneen, although he might have. Basically, this was a bunch of people picked, from his point of view, just on merit and reputation.

Trask: He didn't know Duncan either. Of course Duncan was Carter's selection.

Kester: Duncan was not Brown's choice. Duncan came through the White House. I think at least in the time I was there, the amount of intra- OSD fussing, backbiting, back stabbing and that sort of stuff was very, very amazingly small. You have a certain amount of inevitable friction in an organization like that. If the principals don't generate the friction, their staffs will.

Goldberg: You have a lot of egos at work.

Kester: Yes, but considering that, I think people pulledl together pretty well. People had disagreements usually about substance.

Goldberg: Brown told us that he would have liked to have had Perry as his deputy and he considered it after Duncan left. But they decided they were too much alike in their interests and their work. It would be better to have somebody like Claytor who was more on the policy side to handle things, who would be more complementary to him than he felt Perry would be, but he professed great respect for Perry.

Kester: Oh sure. It was certainly the case. I think there is some sense in what he said too. I think that he and Perry would have duplicated to some extent.

Goldberg: Claytor had the breadth for the job.

Kester: Yes, Claytor did an okay job, I think. He was the best of the service secretaries we had. Claytor at least had the experience of having run something. He was a pretty smart guy. He had a concept of how to accomplish something and he could do that.

Goldberg: He was known and had the respect of a lot of people.

Trask: There were a number of area problems and projects that you may not have had too much to do with, but let me just take a few of these to see if you have any comments. First, the whole question of NATO and NATO budgets and other issues. Brown paid a lot of attention to those.

Kester: We paid a lot of attention to it. We set up Bob Komer in that special NATO job. I had a fair amount of involvement in the sense of trying to make sure that the program worked well, trying to make sure that the bureaucracy did not cut Komer out, because he was in the position of having to carve out something from an existing mass that saw no need for him to be there at all. So he needed more support. The NATO thing was very important. I think that was another good accomplishment of the Brown administration. We did get that done. I pretty much found Ken Cooper for Komer's deputy and that helped because Cooper is a very capable guy--less volatile than Bob. They complimented each other well. They ran a good show. When papers came in that I could recognize had NATO implications, a lot of times I might flip them over for Komer to see before they went in to Harold. People had accidentally on purpose kept him off. So I made sure he saw a lot of stuff that he would not have seen otherwise, and basically tried to protect him. At the

same time, I used to get these little whiney notes from Bob late in the day asking when we were going to pay more attention to him--essentially that kind of stuff. We were giving him lavish attention, for Heaven's sake. I went on most of the NATO trips with Harold. I educated myself about what was going on there. So I tried to do what I could from my administrative position to make sure that the NATO initiatives really had some substance and did not get shunted aside in the bureaucracy.

Trask: Next, the Panama Canal treaties, September 1977. That came fairly early in the administration.

Kester: Yes, I had something to do with that although it's hard to remember what. I've got a picture on my wall in my office signed by Jimmy Carter, saying thanks for my help on the Panama Canal treaties. I can't remember what on earth I really ever did on the Panama Canal treaties. I guess probably I tried to get the Joint Chiefs of Staff to agree with us and tried to work stuff with them. But I think that's something I may have gotten credit for, and I didn't deserve any credit. I never really particularly favored the Panama Canal treaties. I always view my role just like a lawyer with a client--the same way Harold did to some extent.

Trask: The Middle East--the Camp David Accords.

Kester: I had no role in that. That was going on while I was there. I think I chatted with Harold about that from time to time. I think his view was that Carter was undertaking a very high risk thing, getting so involved in that. It came out positively, so hats off. That was really Carter's thing. I had no personal involvement.

Trask: There were things going on in Iran too.

Kester: That was after I left.

Trask: Afghanistan was after you left too.

Kester: Yes. All of the excitement came after I left.

Goldberg: We did cover, I think, most of the people you worked with. Do you have any comments on any of the assistant secretaries or equivalent during your time?

Kester: My sense then and now was that they were a capable bunch of people, pretty much. I can' think of anybody I thought was a total pain, and I think I have mentioned most of them.

Goldberg: You did mention McGiffert, of course. You felt that in spite of his occasional fractious behavior he was an able man in the job.

Kester: Oh sure. The ISA office would by dint of close association sometimes begin to resemble the State Department in the way they behaved. McGiffert had some very able people working there. Mike Armacost was there, and Mort Abramowitz. I knew them pretty well too. They were top notch people. He had a good mix echelon of people.

Goldberg: Abramowitz was a carry-over. He had been in OSD before. He was from State.

Kester: He may well have been a carry-over. He was there for quite a while while I was there.

Goldberg: He had been there before.

Kester: When I came my that job the assistant was a lieutenant colonel Air Force-type, a nice enough fellow whose background was public relations. He was a PIO in the Air Force. And they had three or four assistants--one from each service to process whatever paper they processed in those days. I did not like that setup, and

basically told Harold I wanted to fire everybody and start over, not because they were so bad but because I had my own concept, so we did that.

Goldberg: They were working for you?

Kester: Working for me. I thought the Army staff training was the best I'd seen based on my own experience. I thought a good Army colonel was a great asset, the kind of people like Ken Cooper, people who used to work for the front office that I observed over the years. I thought I would get one person from each service, but not people with a public affairs-type background. The guy I inherited there was able enough but my concept of the office was different.

Goldberg: What were these people doing for you?

Kester: They were basically handling paper that came into the office.

Goldberg: So they were the executive secretariat.

Kester: They were in OSD working for the special assistant.

Goldberg: They had an executive secretariat.

Kester: We didn't want to have an executive secretariat, but that's what it's become.

Goldberg: And it's well institutionalized now.

Kester: I'm sure it is. When Elliot Richardson was secretary of defense for a couple of days there once, he had some grandiose plan that this whole front office thing was going to be like a mini-Pentagon. Harold was adamant against it, and I totally agreed. We did not want to have some kind of a central executive secretariat operation, but I wanted to have some people look at the paper and give me a comment now and then when it came in. We asked the chiefs to send up some

nominations. I brought in one guy from the Army, John Devins, who had worked for me; he was a major in those days. I knew his work--he was good. I was looking for some combat arms people--people who had some weight and respect among their peers, who could call on the phone and get things done for me. I got a good guy from the Navy. I got a woman for the Air Force to show diversity--although diversity was not the buzz word at the time--she was okay. I brought in Judy Miller as a civilian special assistant because I wanted somebody to be there to handle things for me that I could delegate in the political arena, particularly with the White House because a lot of stuff I didn't think appropriate for a uniformed person to deal with. So I wanted one civilian and I got Judy, who had just come off a clerkship. She's now the general counsel. All of my alumni have done very well. Colin Powell was the center piece of this thing. I wanted somebody to be a deputy for me and also to deal with these four people, to keep them under wraps to do things for me--somewhat to complement me because I had a lot of the same personal characteristics that Harold had. I tended to like to work on paper. I didn't want to go to a lot of meetings. Colin was a gregarious guy among his other good qualities. He said to me when he started," I think it would be useful to me to kind of walk around the halls and see what's going on in the building." I said, "absolutely." Colin actually came to my attention when we were asking for nominations for the number two military assistant and I said," I want to look at these books and see who you've got there." These are service nominations for that job. So I looked to see what was being offered up and interviewed a number of people. These are the kind of people I wanted who the services thought would be good enough to be working with the

secretary of defense himself. I interviewed a bunch of them. They were some excellent people and I finally picked Colin partly because I wanted to have a black officer somewhere in the front office. My main motivation was I was very much partial to the Army and the Army staff. I didn't know Colin from Adam at that time. I interviewed him and I liked him--we got along. He seemed to understand instinctively my concept of what I was trying to do. He was marvelous help to me from the time he got there. Of course, he was a skilled bureaucratic manipulator in his own right. With him there the place just gained a lot more horsepower. I don't think I could have been more happy with what I had there, so that was another important appointment.

Trask: He was a colonel at that time.

Kester: Yes, I also wanted to make sure I got a bird colonel. I didn't want a lieutenant colonel.

Goldberg: I met him when he was working for you. Doc introduced me to him.

Kester: Colin thought that Doc was somebody he needed to know and needed to massage.

Goldberg: Yes, they've been on good terms ever since.

Kester: Absolutely. He did a great job.

Goldberg: Everybody we've interviewed spoke in the highest terms of Powell.

Kester: It's very remarkable too when you consider the number of people he had to interact with.

Goldberg: That's right.

Kester: Colin never made any enemies. We talked about his relations with the Army and I said, "I expect you to be loyal to me but at the same time I don't expect you to screw yourself with the Army. And I'm not going to feel offended if you talk to people there. You can rely a lot on your judgment as to what's appropriate. You keep on good terms with Rogers and all of those folks if you can." A nice little network was set up there because Carl Vuono, who later became chief of staff, was Rogers' colonel at that time and Colin could pick up the phone and talk to Carl all of the time. In fact, when Colin got there, he was very skillful. He probably helped abate some of the frictions that would tend to develop between me and my office and the Army because he could talk to Vuono and say, "Kester isn't totally crazy, here's what he really wants." A lot times you make some simple straight forward request and by the time it gets gobbled through a couple of layers down, the people down in the services are asking what are these fools in OSD doing now; I didn't want this. The ability of having somebody at a colonel level was important. I also wanted a colonel-level person who wasn't scared of a flag officer either--who could talk on your behalf and explain what a reasonable solution is for this. If this requires 500 people to stay up all night--that isn't what we intended really. Next week is soon enough.

Goldberg: He was always a good emissary in every job that he had.

Kester: I think he grew some in the job too. He had had an offer to go work for Brzezinski at the time. I talked him into coming to work for me. He said after he came he thought he'd made the right pick on that.

Trask: The last thing is to talk about your reasons for leaving OSD.

Kester: Well, as I said yesterday the job was very intense and demanding, so after a couple years I was tired. I thought of going over there as a two to three-year kind of thing. I would have been interested probably in some other job had any looked available. At that time, everything was very much in place. Everybody seemed to be happy in the job they had. I would probably have liked the secretary of the Army job, but I don't know that I would have been able to get that anyway, and Cliff Alexander seemed to have grown roots in that job. I wasn't interested in being an under secretary, and I wasn't that interested in one of the assistant secretary jobs. Basically, I had more power in the job I had, although it didn't look like much in terms of title. I was starting to hurt financially. I had a couple of kids that were just about to start college, so I just decided it was time to go. I guess I should also say I was not that happy with some of the policies in the Carter Administration, but I wasn't about to go fuss about them. I always liked and respected Harold and his judgment. I didn't have the same feeling toward Carter in the White House. My departure was not a big dramatic deal.

Trask: You obviously retained your interest in defense and national security affairs and have done writing and things of that sort.

Kester: Yes, after I left I sort of unburdened myself with all sort of things that I had thought about or that had sort of crystallized in my mind while I was doing that job. Particularly in the first few years afterwards I wrote a number of articles. I was involved in the Goldwater-Nichols stuff. I was involved somewhat with trying to keep the Democratic party from drifting too far to the left. We had a group in the early Reagan administration--several of us who had been in Brown's OSD. Russ Murray

and Komer and others used to have dinner meetings. We talked to people and called ourselves Democrats for Defense. We talked to some senators on the Hill. So I stayed abreast of what was going on then, probably a little less so now, but I still follow it. A lot of the issues, of course, never change; they just sort of evolve into new versions of the same issues.

Goldberg: Is there anything else you'd like to put on the record--any other major aspects of your work? You packed an awful lot into a short two-year period.

Kester: I really did. It was an exciting time, very satisfying. I can't off hand think of anything. Your outline was pretty good. I just thought of one thing I didn't mention, but probably it's worth at least a footnote. That's Stan Turner. That was another funny thing. I think Stan Turner had been first in Carter's class at Annapolis. I think Carter took delight in having Stan Turner working for Jimmy Carter. Turner wanted to come over and fight about turf all the time. He used to come over, I believe it was Friday afternoon at about five o'clock, and sit in Harold's office and talk about organization of intelligence and who does what. Harold just absolutely abhorred it. He couldn't figure out a way to escape it. All Turner wanted was what he had and whatever was next to it. So finally, I think it was my idea, to solve this problem to some extent after this had gone on for a few weeks was to have Harold authorize Deanne Seimer and Dan Murphy to deal with Turner on this stuff.

Goldberg: The dragon lady. She was a tough cookie.

Kester: Murphy was another four star admiral who was just as turf conscious as Turner was. We sort of sicced these two dogs on Turner and that problem more or

less went away. There was intelligence reorganization of some kind that went on. But that was slightly amusing .

Goldberg: We will send you the transcripts at which time you should feel free to add or subtract anything.