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Matloff: This is an oral history interview held with Dr. Harold Brown in Washington, D.C., on April 20, 1990, at 10:00 a.m. This interview is being recorded on tape and a copy of the transcript will be sent to Dr. Brown for his review. Representing the OSD Historical Office are Drs. Alfred Goldberg and Maurice Matloff.

Dr. Brown, as we indicated in our correspondence, we will focus in this interview particularly on your role as the Secretary of Defense from January 1977 to January 1981. We would also like to direct your attention to certain aspects in your background and experience in the Department of Defense in 1961 and 1969 which are also relevant to the History of OSD and national security policy.

Goldberg: We are writing in this period now, and we would like to cover it at least to some extent.

Matloff: To turn to your experience as Director of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E), May 1961-Sept 1965, what were the circumstances of your appointment? Who recommended you, and how did it all come about?

Brown: Some of it I know myself; for some of it I'll have to speak from what others have told me. The Kennedy administration came to office in January of 1961, and Bob McNamara was named the Secretary of Defense. There was some carryover of people from the Eisenhower administration. Herb York, who had been the first Director of Defense Research and Engineering, stayed on for a few months. He had had a heart attack the previous year and wanted to go back to California, but agreed to stay on for some months. McNamara asked him to make a list of possible successors, and I was apparently on the list. From what I am told, I was the first one offered the position. I had not met McNamara before he offered it to me. I had met Ros Gilpatric, the Deputy Secretary of Defense who, like me, had been a trustee of the Aerospace Corporation, at a trustees meeting. So the first I knew about this was in February or March of 1961. I happened to be in Washington, and Gilpatric had asked to see me. He took me back through the Secretary's dining room and introduced me to McNamara and they sprung

this on me. I said, "I'd sure like to do this, but it comes at an inopportune time."

McNamara responded, "These things do come at inopportune times, but you have to take them then, because they may never come again." So I said I would think about it, but would probably do it. I went back to California and talked with my wife about it, phoned back, and said I would do it.

Matloff: I take it you were briefed by Dr. York? We have interviewed him for this program, too, by the way.

Brown: York and I were very old friends. We had known each other for 11 years and had been very close associates. I had worked for him and stayed in very close touch with him. I knew something about what the job was like.

Matloff: What problems did you face when you took over, and what was the state of Defense Research and Engineering as you saw it at the time?

Brown: A considerable amount of order had been brought into it by Herb York during the two-plus years that he had been in the position. The Secretary of Defense, first McElroy and then Gates, as well as President Eisenhower, clearly had depended a great deal on him to do something to rationalize the missile program and the defense part of the space program. He had been chief scientist in ARPA before that, and during that period he had actually done a great deal to help create the National Aeronautics and Space Agency out of the old National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics. He had seen to it that the Von Braun team had been transferred to NASA from the Army. He had put the bulk of the defense space launch and satellite program, including the intelligence, reconnaissance, and communications parts, in the Air Force. So a lot of that had been done. He had organized the DDR&E office, which had previously been largely composed of civil servants, by bringing in many people from industry and establishing a program structure to go along with the functional structure. He had obviously been very influential in that administration.

A new administration had come to office in part on the basis of the missile gap, getting things rolling again, and expanding military expenditures, a circumstance that was to be repeated on almost a grotesque scale in 1981. In 1961 the watch-word was, "Yes, we need to do more, but we need to do it rationally; we need to have careful program analysis." Bob McNamara had brought in Charlie Hitch as Comptroller, and Cy Vance, as General Counsel, was looking at the organization of the Defense Department. It was a time of considerable activity and reexamination of roles and missions, not only as regards OSD vs. the services, but also within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The services, which had begun to be overseen actively in Gates's term as Secretary of Defense, were now to be subjected to the famous 100 McNamara questions, which really got into details of program and tried to get from strategy to program to budget. It was already foreseeable in Gates's day that if you projected the costs of all the programs that had been started, there wasn't going to be enough money to do them. That was so not only not under the Eisenhower budgets, but also under the early Kennedy budgets. So it was very important to pick and choose. York and Gates had established the procedure for doing this, or at least the necessity of doing it. McNamara established the procedure and brought in a group of people who were eager to try and do it. That included Hitch; Enthoven, Hitch's deputy for systems analysis; and York, who had been there. Some of the decisions had already been made, but many still were left. Within the Office of the Secretary the question was who would exercise what authorities. There may have been a perception at the beginning that Hitch and his people were McNamara's people, whereas I had simply been recommended by York. There was a certain amount of contest about who would have authority over what, not only as regards the Comptroller's office, but also the Assistant Secretary for Installations and Logistics, over the questions of who would have what to say about the the Nike antiballistic missile program, the TFX program, the B-70 program, and all the rest. It took about six months to shake out. At the end of it, I

think there was a reasonable division of authority. I believe that during that period it became clear that R&E would continue to have the principal inputs on the RDT&E program, and on those systems that were driven by technology, which included not all of them, but involved the most contentious ones.

Goldberg: During the Eisenhower administration, the Comptroller had played a key role on almost everything.

Brown: It happened at budget time. McNeil, who had been there forever, and Joe Hoover, who was the budget officer, would let the programs go along as they wished, and at the end, all of the previous decisions would be thrown out and everything would be determined by the budget. Lincoln was the Comptroller after McNeil, and I guess he had the slogan, "the budget begins at zero." In other words, when you make up the budget, you start from zero. That is something that was not tried again after 1960 until the Carter days. President Carter brought in zero based budgeting.

Goldberg: But Lincoln didn't have the influence or power that McNeil had.

Brown: No. McNeil ran everything out of his hat; Lincoln was just another Comptroller. The difference in the McNamara days was that the Comptroller's office, through Systems Analysis, had a strong input at the beginning. Later on, when Systems Analysis (SA) was split out, SA had that influence at the beginning on the program decisions. McNamara and Hitch established the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting system. The idea was that the budget didn't come out of thin air at budget time; it would be a refinement on the program decisions that had been made. In fact, the budget line is set--when you start making up the budget--by a separate budget number that is influenced largely by overall fiscal considerations of the entire government and is something that the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director of OMB (formerly the Director of the Bureau of the Budget) decide, before Congress gets its whack at things. (Congressional action now involves much more elaborate detail than the procedure that it was in the 1960s.) That gives you a new

number which may not be compatible with the program, and so there is another examination taken at the end. At least in the '60s, a good deal of the program was established during the programming phase, not just in the budgeting phase. Bob McNamara always claimed that the budget was a number derived at the end after you've done all the programs and made all the programming decisions, and had nothing to do with national policy, deficits, etc. Nobody believed that then. It's even clearer now that it's not the case. It's also clear that it wasn't completely the case then.

Matloff: What were your relations with the Secretary and his deputies--Gilpatric and then Vance?

Brown: Close. I'd have lunch with them once a week, probably, and worked closely with both of them. So far as I could tell, each always knew what the other was doing. The Deputy Secretary knew what he could decide and what he had to bring to the Secretary. There were some broad areas that were delegated to the Deputy Secretary. That worked very well with both Gilpatric and Vance. McNamara himself was interested in the program decisions, and so on most of them he was the one with whom I interacted. When it came budget time, he would do some of it, and the Deputy would do some of it.

Matloff: What was his attitude toward defense research policy?

Brown: I don't think he looked at it as a policy question. He would leave the RDT&E budget to me, largely. He didn't have very strong views as to exactly what the numbers should be, but he thought of it as being about 10 percent, which is what it was. Later on, when the Vietnam War came along, and he began to worry more about money, he would occasionally try to use it as a balancing item. It wasn't big enough to serve that purpose, but he would squeeze it. At the beginning he looked in detail mostly at the big items, the full-scale engineering development items and the R&D parts of systems that were already in deployment. Early on, we set up a system dividing program 6, which was RDT&E, into 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, etc. Actually, that was an invention of Vice Admiral

Charles Martell, who was Deputy for Administration in R&E. It's a division--6.1 is basic research, 6.2 is applied research, 6.3 is advanced development, and so forth--which has persisted to this day. It's 30 years old and still going. McNamara paid attention most of all to 6.4 and 6.6. 6.4 was full-scale engineering development; 6.5 was tests and ranges, etc.; and 6.6 was the RDT&E part of operational systems development. He looked at them as programs. He looked to me for technical advice on non-RDT&E programs and to handle the R&D programs. We interacted most strongly and occasionally contentiously on the big systems. On most of them he was doing what I thought was correct, like the cancellations of Dyna-Soar and Skybolt, which was my advice; and on Nike--the antiballistic missile questions always go to the President--if anything, I was more negative on that one than he was. My inclinations overall were probably to do more than he wanted to do. For example, it made sense to me both as DDR&E and as Air Force Secretary to do more on air defense than he believed sensible. As Air Force Secretary, which came later, I pushed an air defense version of the A-12, which was a strategic reconnaissance version of the SR-71. That one never flew. Those are some examples.

Goldberg: You were against the B-70 also?

Brown: Yes, except that that decision had fundamentally been made by the time I got there, except for bits and pieces.

Matloff: How about your relations with the Assistant Secretaries? You mentioned Hitch. Did you deal with some more than others?

Brown: I dealt a lot with Charlie, because we both tended to think analytically and our authorities overlapped somewhat. The Systems Analysis people sometimes came up with their own technical designs. It's not unusual; everybody gets into every else's business. We did a good deal of program planning and strategy, and they did a good deal of technical analysis. They had some frustrated engineers, and we had some frustrated analysts. An example is the work that was done in R&E on analysis of

strategic exchanges; out of that study, led by General Glen Kent, the words “assured destruction” and “damage limitation” emerged into defense analysis and then public view. That was very much a case of systems analysis, and we did it rather than they. There were other cases where they did some technical design. So there was a fair amount of overlap, and occasional contention. It never became personalized, which is why we always got along well. There was some overlap with I&L, but less, because they gradually retreated from the systems business and concentrated on the logistics business, which is very important and needs to be looked at together with the other. They had the expertise and the charter. Tom Morris had that shop then, and later on, and was a very reasonable person. I had little to do with the manpower people. I had a certain amount to do with ISA. Paul Nitze and I would interact when there was a weapons development program that was common with an ally. We had a Mutual Weapons Development Program, when we were supporting R&D in France, Britain, etc. That tailed off through the early '60s. On that kind of thing, ISA and we would interact. DDR&E didn't get very much into the policy or foreign policy issues, but to the extent that ISA was involved in strategic analysis we did interact somewhat.

Matloff: Any dealings with the service secretaries or the JCS?

Brown: A lot with the service secretaries. Most of the programs were in their organizations and the Director, DR&E, by statute, had the authority to approve, disapprove, or alter RDT&E programs. That was an infringement on what the service secretaries saw as their authority. They liked to think of the OSD staff as just staff. In the case of R&E, there was also line responsibility over that part of their budgets, and they didn't particularly like that. R&E had that kind of authority, but it didn't have personnel authority in those areas. The program directors weren't hired and fired by R&E, but by the services, except for DARPA, which was under the line control of R&E. I occasionally interacted with service secretaries, but more often with their assistant secretaries for R&D. Before those were appointed, McNamara would tell the service

secretaries to consult with me. I would sign off on that, but generally it was their responsibility to pick someone. On program matters I would occasionally butt heads with the service secretaries. The only one I remember losing was with John Connally.

Goldberg: I knew it would be the Navy.

Brown: It was either the SQS 626 or the ASROC. I wanted to delay them, and McNamara sided with Connally. The decision turned out to be a mistake.

Goldberg: Did you encounter as much resentment from the services as McNamara and Enthoven did?

Brown: No, but I did encounter enough. In the fading memories of some of the retired chiefs I am identified as one of the whiz kids, but at the time I don't think that there were nearly the same problems. There were some. LeMay and I obviously butted heads on some of the things he wanted to do. The Army then, as now, was much more amenable to civilian control and to the authority of civilian appointees. The Navy was mixed, actually. The Navy generally wanted its own way, but it varied from place to place. It was Admiral Rickover, even more than the CNOs, who created trouble. The one exception, I guess, was the TFX case, where George Anderson was egged on by Ike Kidd, who at the time I couldn't stand but who has since become a close friend. Kidd was his Exec, a captain. As far as I could tell, Kidd kept egging on Anderson to resist very strongly, and in the end successfully, commonality of an aircraft with the Air Force. That was the biggest Navy flap that I remember.

Matloff: How about in connection with Congress? Did you have complete leeway in testifying on the Hill?

Brown: I can't recall ever having my testimony altered by anyone in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Matloff: What was Congress's reaction to Defense R&D? Did you get a sympathetic reaction?



Brown: Yes. I would say it varied somewhat from committee to committee, and also among individual members. The appropriations committees, I think, were extremely friendly. George Mahon was then chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on the House side; Carl Hayden was the chairman on the Senate side. The appropriations committees were very supportive. The armed services committees were somewhat more skeptical. They were more influenced by the services. Mr. Vinson was always very friendly, as was Senator Russell. They really ran their committees; they were judicious; eminent, but not unapproachable. There were some members on those committees who were considerably more hostile. Among the armed services members on both the House and Senate side there was considerable skepticism and occasional hostility. From people on the Senate side, like Barry Goldwater, who subsequently became a friend, or Strom Thurmond, there was considerable questioning. On the other hand, I don't think I ever found an attitude that accused me of being less than forthright or of being incompetent. Some of them said or implied that I had a lot to learn; that I didn't have military experience; that I was arrogant and unbending. But by and large, I don't think this ever prevented a fair hearing and generally a favorable response.

Goldberg: Did Daniel Flood give you trouble?

Brown: Dan Flood was eccentric rather than hostile. I always regarded the House Defense Appropriations subcommittee as the best forum. I thought that George Mahon and Jerry Ford, who was the ranking Republican member, were very fair and friendly. The same goes for the others--Mel Laird and Glen Lipscomb, Republican members, and the other Democratic members. Harry Sheppard was not always with it.

Goldberg: Did you know Bill Minshall? Was he influential or effective, do you think?

Brown: He came across not as hostile, but much more contentious than the others. But, again, I never sensed any hostility in that committee; nothing but an honest attempt to do the right thing. It struck me as being the ideal congressional committee.

Goldberg: That was true over a long period of time.

Brown: It was still true in 1977-78, so long as George Mahon was the chairman. When Joe Addabbo took over, it changed, because Joe was a much more narrowly politically oriented person. He'd been that way as a member, and was that way as chairman-- again, not hostile, but less interested in the national security aspects than in the political aspects.

Matloff: We've touched on some of the controversies over weaponry during this period. How do you account for the rise and demise of the missile gap?

Brown: By that time the missile gap was gone, because there had been the beginnings of information from satellites that showed that the estimates of what there might be didn't correspond with what there was.

Matloff: So you didn't get into any of the play of discussion and debate over that?

Brown: We still made the decision to build 1,000 Minutemen, because it was clear that the Soviets were going to deploy. Put another way, what was established was that, although the curve of the buildup might well be what had been projected, it was at least a couple years behind where the "missile gap" promoters had said.

Matloff: How seriously did you view the progress of Soviet research and engineering as a threat?

Brown: It wasn't so much Soviet research and engineering, except in the missile area, as it was Soviet forces. It was clear the Soviets were devoting a lot of effort to their technology, but I didn't think that we had been, or would easily be, overtaken in technology. Even then, it was clear that their weapons generations were shorter than ours, but our technology was at a higher level. Even in the case of missiles, our accuracy was better than theirs. They had gotten started earlier on big rockets, and that gave them an edge that led to the concerns about the missile gap.

Matloff: Things like earth satellites, propulsion?

Brown: When it came to military applications of earth satellites, it was clear that we were well ahead, although that was not publicly understood or advertised.

Matloff: You touched on Skybolt. Do you want to add anything about your position on Skybolt?

Brown: It just wasn't a very good idea. It was principally generated by an Air Force wish to have pilots involved in missiles, and one way to do that is launch them from aircraft. But it didn't really compete with land-based or sea-based ballistic missiles in terms of accuracy, reliability, or anything else. The big problem that arose from that cancellation was not any damage to our military capability, but the political difficulty with the British that really shook the Macmillan government. It had an even bigger effect on the French, when we struck the deal with the British to replace the Skybolt with the Polaris. Implicitly it excluded the French and accelerated and maybe provided the occasion for, although I wouldn't say caused, de Gaulle to leave the NATO military organization.

Matloff: Do you want to add anything to your positions on the B-70 and TFX?

Brown: The B-70 cancellation made sense. Most of it had happened beforehand. The Air Force briefly tried to revive it in a reconnaissance strike form, and Dave Jones, who subsequently became one of my closest associates in the '70s and remains a close friend, was then a colonel, and was selling it on the Hill. I called him into my office and we had a very unpleasant session, in which I told him to stop. McNamara was so angry at that that he surfaced the A-12 and called it the RS-71, which has served very well and has now been phased out. On the TFX, it was probably doomed from the beginning by the Navy's opposition to having any aircraft that they didn't design themselves. They are very concerned about having their own air force. To a degree, that is justified by the difference in operations from carriers and from land, but they exaggerate it. In this case, it is clear that they were exaggerating the problems of launch, wind over the deck, and everything else, to justify having a slightly different

aircraft. And It is only slightly different, as you can tell by looking at the F-14 and the F-111. They are just not that different.

Goldberg: Did you think that it would have been feasible had the Navy cooperated fully? Would it have worked?

Brown: Yes, I believe that. I think that it would have limited the Navy's ability to use those aircraft, if they had had a slightly bigger one, which is what the F-111 was; but only for a short time, because the Navy kept building bigger carriers, which could easily accommodate it. The carriers on which the Navy would have experienced some difficulty are the very ones that the Navy wanted to get rid of, and has gotten rid of, so I think it would have been feasible.

Goldberg: So, to some extent, McNamara has gotten a bum rap on the TFX.

Brown: I believe so.

Matloff: You mentioned that the staffs were getting into each other's jurisdiction, even regarding strategy. Were you an advocate or supporter of the flexible response strategy, which was so popular in the Kennedy administration?

Brown: It really wasn't a matter that came very much into the purview of R&E. To the extent that I was involved, I supported it, but it's not a matter in which R&E played a significant role.

Matloff: Did you get drawn into debates over counter-force vs. counter-city doctrine?

Brown: Yes, very much, because we did the analysis of assured destruction vs. damage limitation. Counter-force has as its goal damage limitation. It seemed to me then, and still seems to me now, that you need more than an urban industrial targeting capability, because, if a war actually happened, that would not be an acceptable strategy to use, at least not at the beginning. You would not want to confine yourself to that or nothing. In other words, unlikely as intra-war deterrence and escalation may be, in the event it would be a good option to have, because otherwise you have the option of not doing anything or else destroying cities.

Goldberg: So you weren't looking at them as alternatives?

Brown: No. I think you have to have an urban industrial destruction capability as your ultimate deterrent.

Goldberg: We had minimum deterrence people.

Brown: The minimum deterrence people say that's all you need to be able to do. What I say is that those same people would argue, if a war came, that you shouldn't do what they said was the only thing that you should be able to do. You should have other capability. How much, is a matter of useful discussion. We were fairly deeply into that.

Matloff: Later on in your Secretary of Defense role it will come up again with the PD-59.

Brown: Yes. My views haven't really changed. PD-59 is not very well understood, but essentially what it says is, have the option at every level to make the next level unattractive to the other side. I believe you ought to have those capabilities. I believe there are limits to how finely you ought to try to divide it, and I am rather skeptical that in the event it would work. But it's better to have the option even if it doesn't work than not to have any option at all.

Goldberg: McNamara sounded the waters on counter-force in the speeches he gave in 1962 at Ann Arbor and something after.

Brown: He backed away very quickly.

Goldberg: What is your explanation? There are a number of reasons I have encountered.

Brown: The one that occurs to me is that he soon realized that it was a recipe for unlimited force requirements.

Goldberg: As the Air Force saw it.

Brown: Yes, and it is. If you say that's all you are going to go for, there is an infinite amount of it to go after. I think also he began to wonder whether, in fact, you could modulate a war that way. I still think it was the first reason that had the effect.

Goldberg: Of course, counter-force has always been part of the strategy and plans anyhow, from the very beginning.

Brown: But what he said at Ann Arbor was that we would make that the exclusive focus. Indeed, the SIOP plans in the '50s were essentially counter-force. They had catastrophic urban-industrial damage, but as a by-product. It has always been U.S. doctrine, ever since the early 1950s, that we would not respond initially, or principally, against urban industrial targets; we would respond against strategic capability. In other words we would damage limit. We would also go after war-making potential. When you say that last, it is rather difficult to separate that from urban-industrial targets, but to some degree you can do it. How you would actually behave in a war nobody knows. It would depend a lot on the detailed circumstances. There has been a continuous progression since the late '50s to a finer-grained set of options.

Matloff: On the other end of the spectrum, there was much talk during this period also about counter-insurgency of various kinds. Were you and R&E drawn in on that?

Brown: Yes, through DARPA, especially. We set up a program to develop equipment for low intensity conflict, as it's now called; it was called counter-insurgency then. By 1963 we were well into developing materiel for the Vietnamese forces. Indeed, I was over there for the first time at the end of 1963. But DARPA--Jack Ruina and some of his colleagues--worked on that. We had a substantial program. We encouraged the military to do more there. Somewhat later, when I was Air Force Secretary, I pushed very hard on the AC-130, which was the C-130 adapted to fire heavy machine-gun fire onto the ground, and it was actually very successful. But the whole of the apparatus, both the organizational apparatus and the development capability of U.S. military, was on the wrong scale for that. It took too long to get things done; there was insufficient quick reaction capability; the organizational machine was too ponderous. Nevertheless we turned out a fair number of things, which in the end proved not to be terribly effective, because the real issues were political. Not what equipment you use,

although that is an issue, but what organization you use, what goals you follow, how you work with the locals--those are the key issues.

Matloff: I would like to come back to the budget, if I may, for a moment. How much input did you have as Director of R&E? How much control over the formulation and allocation of the Defense budget for R&E?

Brown: I would say predominant, far more than any other person, because, as I say, the Secretary of Defense left most of that to me. I would get together with him at a meeting at budget time and go over the individual items. He would question a few, and, in later years, would also say that the total was too much, to come back and adjust. He didn't get into very much detail.

Matloff: Were you in general satisfied with the allocation of funds for R&E in this period?

Brown: The only thing that I would have to be satisfied with, since the rest was largely my own doing, was the total number. And, by and large, I was. I thought that a roughly ten percent number was reasonable. We had a few rules of thumb. That was one; another was that we tried to keep research at about ten percent of the total research and development program.

Matloff: There were a number of international incidents and crises during this period, such as the Berlin crisis of 1961-62, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and involvement in Vietnam. Did any of these incidents have an impact on defense R&E programs?

Brown: Berlin didn't have very much impact. Some people in R&E were involved in the Cuban missile crisis because when you get into that kind of a situation you immediately get very worried about your reconnaissance capability, your electronic warfare capability, etc. We were in on that. I would not say that either of those had any long-term effect on the overall program, except for their effect on defense in general and on the political atmosphere in general. Vietnam did involve us in a new set of research and development activities, including, for example, the so-called McNamara line, the

attempt to set up a barrier. We were fairly deeply in that, although it was carried out by a separate organization called the Defense Communications Special Project, or something like that. The R&D was supervised by the R&E organization.

Matloff: What was your attitude toward the involvement of the Kennedy administration in Vietnam in this period?

Brown: I must say that at that time I felt that was an important thing for us to do. I probably hung on in support of it longer than McNamara himself did. I think most of us had what I would now regard as an incorrect perception of Chinese involvement and of what the loss of Vietnam would involve. At the same time, looking back on it, I have another set of second thoughts. Saving South Vietnam was not as important as we thought, but it may have been important elsewhere, as in Indonesia and the Philippines, that the United States was prepared to stand up and fight in Vietnam. I also have the feeling that we adopted exactly the wrong level of escalation; that we should have either done much less, in which case we would have been out earlier and with less pain, or much more, in which case it might have been possible to reach at least a temporary agreement, after which we could have withdrawn and maybe left a more stable situation. I doubt it, but it's at least possible. What's clear to me in retrospect is that, by gradually escalating, we thought we were sending them the message that we could do more and more, but the message they were getting was that they could take anything that we dished out. I think we did the wrong thing; but whether, if we had escalated heavily, we would have come out better, I can't really say, because fundamentally the problem was that we didn't have the stake that the North Vietnamese had, and we didn't have the political infrastructure in the South that was needed to fight off an insurgency. The local government was corrupt. It didn't have the loyalty of its people, and didn't really care very much about them. You can't win under those circumstances. You can certainly bomb the hell out of the other side, and that may put things off for a while, but if the side you are supporting doesn't have, in



turn, the support of its people, you are not going to win in the end. I can't say I saw very much of that at that point; at that point it seemed to me that it was important that we not let them (and I was thinking more of the Chinese than of the Soviets) get away with something.

Goldberg: Did you support higher levels of escalation and effort?

Brown: It never came up while I was in R&E, but later I did, when I was Air Force Secretary.

Goldberg: You'd have gone still higher than was actually done?

Brown: Yes, but the main thing, in retrospect, was not to go higher than we finally did, but to do it earlier than we did.

Matloff: Were you drawn in on discussions of arms control, and, if so, what did you advise? This would have been the period of the limited test ban treaty.

Brown: I was always in on that. In 1963 the atmospheric test ban was signed. I was for that. A comprehensive ban, I always had a question about, both on the basis of detectability, or verification, and stockpile reliability. Later on, when I was Secretary of Defense, my position was that we ought to have a threshold and shrink it, but that a comprehensive test ban could not be supported as something militarily advantageous to the United States. You could argue that you had to do it politically, although I was never convinced of that. A decision could be taken on those grounds and probably you could live with it militarily, but it was not militarily advantageous to the United States. The other point, and something that political leaders, especially Democratic Presidents, failed to understand is that they never could get the military to agree to that. The military believed that our conventional inferiority had to be offset with nuclear capability, and they were much more worried about stockpile reliability than most of the impartial technical people.

Matloff: As you look back and sum up, what were your major achievements as Director of R&E and what, conversely, disappointed you the most, or was left unfinished, that you would have liked to have done?

Brown: I think that my principal accomplishment was to improve the quality of the technical leadership in the services and DARPA. We turned out, I think, a good many good military systems, but that was also happening earlier. I believe that we effectively improved the Minuteman system. The Minuteman III is enormously better than Minuteman I. In other words, our strategic systems became a lot better than they had been, and those were the strategic systems that served us all the way through into the early 1980s. That was a very substantial accomplishment. I believe that we began to produce a generation of high technology conventional systems. The technology for the generation of tactical fighters and tanks, the M-1, didn't come in until the late 60's; those systems entered the force in the 1970s. It's not a bad rule of thumb to say that everything that showed up in the force ten years later was what we had done. I feel good about that.

What I would say was least successful, and has gotten worse ever since, is the requirements process and the contracting procedure. The inability to trade-off cost against performance in setting requirements was something that I was unsuccessful at fixing. The contracting procedure--the elaborate paperwork systems that go with that, the way contracts are awarded on the basis of brochures rather than past performance--I regard as a failure that I inherited. It probably was no better or worse when I left, but has since gotten very much worse.

Matloff: Did the experience of DDR&E influence your approach to your later roles as Secretary of the Air Force and Secretary of Defense?

Brown: The way it influenced most was that I knew the place from the inside; and I knew the development process, procurement process, and requirements process, and

how it affects military capabilities better than most people who come in from the outside.

Goldberg: You had had a lot to do with the Air Force before you came into R&E, too.

Brown: I'd had a fair amount to do with the Defense Department beforehand. I had been on the Polaris Steering Committee, the Ballistic Missile Coordinating Committee, and had worked with the Army on tactical nuclear weapons. It was a narrow slice of what they did, but it was across all the services, and I knew a good many of the people. When I became Secretary of the Air Force and Secretary of Defense, in each case I found myself dealing with people whom I had known before. When I became Secretary of Defense, I had known two or three of the Chiefs, and each of the Vice Chiefs, then four stars, as one-stars or as O-6s. I knew almost all of the CINCs from when they were one- or two-star officers. It wasn't quite that way when I went to the Air Force, but it was to a degree. That was one thing; the other was the knowledge of how the requirements process and the development process worked or failed to work and how it fed into the rest.

Matloff: You were getting drawn in on the budget and strategy one way or another, too, and the exposure was there.

Brown: Yes.

Matloff: What were the circumstances of your appointment as Air Force Secretary?

Brown: McNamara knew I was tired of being Director, R&E, after four years, and was looking around for something else for me to do. He found a couple of possibilities, but they were not jobs within his competence to grant, and didn't work out. One of them was DCI, which I might not have liked, but it didn't happen. The President turned to Adm. Raborn. The other was Administrator of FAA, which didn't particularly interest me. Then he turned to one that he could have a big influence on, namely, Secretary of the Air Force. Zuckert was tired, too, and McNamara was following a pattern that he had set by replacing his original service secretaries with people who had been in the

Office of the Secretary of Defense--first, with Vance from General Counsel to Secretary of the Army; next, with Nitze from ISA to Secretary of the Navy; and then with me from R&E to the Air Force. I think what he had in mind was admirable. It was to try to give people both kinds of experience, with the thought that that would prepare them to be Deputy Secretary or Secretary of Defense. Indeed, it happened with all three of those people, although in my case not until quite a bit later. Something I didn't realize at the time was that it clearly was a way of trying to educate people and qualify them for higher office.

Goldberg: Did you talk with Zuckert?

Brown: He and I knew each other well and were fairly close. We had crossed swords on occasion, over such things as the B-70, the Skybolt, and so forth.

Goldberg: Was he disappointed with his experiences, when he left?

Brown: He was burned out.

Matloff: The term he used in looking back was that he had been a "group vice president," that that was the role the service secretaries played.

Brown: And he wanted to be a CEO, probably. Zuckert had been Assistant Secretary of the Air Force back in the Truman administration. In fact, he was Assistant Secretary when Gilpatric was Under Secretary of the Air Force. In those days, the service secretaries had far more influence than they had even in the late Eisenhower administration, and much more than in the McNamara days. He felt constrained, squeezed between the Secretary of Defense and the Air Staff. He had a very tough time with LeMay. Actually, partly in order to help me out, he brought McConnell in as Vice Chief, figuring that I would get along much better with McConnell. McConnell became Chief some months before I became Secretary.

Goldberg: McConnell became Chief in February 1965, because LeMay never got to finish four years. It was very odd.

Brown: Yes, you are right. In any event, McConnell's coming in made it feasible to have a reasonable transition. McConnell and I always got along extremely well. Specifically, McConnell always made sure that I knew what was going on operationally, even though, according to the way the chain of command functioned, the service secretary had no responsibility for military operations. That was a matter for the Chiefs. The subject came up a few years ago in the arguments between John Lehman and Jim Watkins. Watkins had it right. The Chiefs are not responsible to the service secretaries for military operations. The individual chiefs, and this they always tended to forget, are not responsible for operations, either. Even in the '60s they weren't; that was the basis for the argument between McNamara and George Anderson at the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

Goldberg: He had the argument with Arleigh Burke, too.

Brown: Yes, but Arleigh was gone by mid-1961. The only point I'm making is that although the Secretary of the Air Force had no operational responsibility, McConnell generally kept me informed.

Goldberg: That's not what happened to Zuckert; he was cut out.

Brown: That was LeMay.

Goldberg: Not for the first year. He told us he was all right for the first year or two because he had Glen Martin as his exec. Martin had been in the Plans Directorate; he kept him informed. When Martin left, they downgraded his exec and he was out.

Matloff: We interviewed both Anderson and McNamara about the incident in the Cuban missile crisis.

Brown: I wasn't there, but I know that there was an argument, and what it was about.

Matloff: How did you conceive the role of Air Force Secretary, and what problems did you encounter?

Brown: I felt that I could be an advocate for the Air Force and get things for them that they couldn't get for themselves, but only if I had a substantial effect on what the

program was. In other words, I could not be their front man; if I was, I wouldn't be any more successful than they. But if I could introduce into the decision process in the Air Force the kind of program thinking, planning, and analysis that I had been part of in the office of the Secretary of Defense, then I could be more effective on behalf of that kind of program than they could be on behalf of a program that didn't have that. I would say that, generally, it worked. It didn't always work; sometimes I didn't succeed in getting my program adopted in the Air Force; and sometimes even when I did, I couldn't get it through the office of the Secretary of Defense. But it worked for me generally, and I think that's what Zuckert had not been able to do.

Goldberg: Your image was considerably different from Zuckert's--from inside the Air Force and outside the Air Force.

Brown: I may overestimate my influence within the Air Force, but I think they probably did regard me as somebody who was able to make their case successfully. One case I remember. They were looking for a low end tactical fighter. We wound up with the A-7, which they would never have come to themselves. But McConnell and I worked it over and over and picked the A-7, not the F-5, which the fighter jocks would have preferred. But we were able to get the A-7, and probably would not have gotten the F-5.

Matloff: What were your working relationships with Sec/Def McNamara and his successive deputies, Vance and Paul Nitze? How often did you meet with them?

Brown: The access didn't change; the relationship changed. It became somewhat more adversarial. I wasn't their staff any more. The service secretary has to be both staff and line, but I was less of a staff than I had been, less than McNamara would have liked me to be, probably. But the relationship was open; very straightforward; that didn't change. I had more arguments with the systems analysis people than before. I didn't have many arguments with R&E, because Foster and I had known each other. He succeeded me at Livermore, and also at R&E. In the end Foster got picked, not by

McNamara, but by Vance and me, because after trying a lot of people and getting turned down, McNamara got fed up and asked us to pick somebody.

Matloff: Did you have complete leeway in selecting your own staff in the Air Force?

Brown: I would say, not really. Nobody was forced on me, but suggestions were made. When I was appointed, McNamara or Vance suggested that Norm Paul would be a good complement, because he had been Manpower Assistant Secretary. I didn't know him well, but I agreed, and took him. When he left, Townsend Hoopes, who had been the Principal Deputy ASD(ISA), was suggested to me. Again, I thought he would be a good complement. I accepted the idea that it should be somebody complementary to me, somebody with different kinds of skills and experience. I also accepted the thought that they could probably find those people better than I could myself. But I had a veto power; I would not have had to take them.

Goldberg: Hoopes is writing a biography of Forrestal now.

Brown: I guess it's the first one since Millis's Forrestal Diaries.

Goldberg: There's been a psychological study in between.

Brown: No wonder I didn't read it.

Matloff: Did your working relationships with the Secretary of Defense change when Clifford succeeded McNamara?

Brown: Yes, because Clark was much more remote and he just worked on Vietnam. Paul Nitze ran the inside of the Department when Clark came aboard. Before that, most of the program decisions were made by McNamara, even though he was doing it with one hand while he tried to run the Vietnam War. Afterwards, Paul made them, but that was for a period of only ten months or so, until the election. After that everything changed anyway. McNamara left at the end of February, 1968. My relations with Vance and with Nitze were very good. They were especially close with Vance, maybe even closer than with Gilpatric, and with Nitze they were also close and friendly.

But Nitze is a different kind of person; he is more analytical, and with more rough edges than Vance.

Matloff: Did the Secretaries or Deputy Secretaries ever consult you on matters outside the traditional interests of the service--the Air Force?

Brown: Yes. They would occasionally consult me on matters of technology, even though that wasn't my province. When the northeast electrical blackout happened, at the end of 1965, McNamara called me up and asked me what I thought happened. McNamara did consult the service secretaries on such issues as what was the right strategy in Vietnam. I don't think he was necessarily very much influenced by it, but he did ask us about that. And, inevitably, the Air Force Secretary was always asked about the issue of nuclear strategy.

Matloff: How about your dealings with Assistant Secretaries of Defense, any more than others?

Brown: With the Systems Analysis people, there was a considerable amount of head-butting on all the big systems--for example on the C-5, which was actually their invention--and on the strategic forces.

Matloff: Any dealings with the JCS?

Brown: Not a lot, actually. The OpsDep would sit in on the weekly meetings I had with the senior Air Staff people--that was the principal point of contact. I would be at occasional meetings with Bus Wheeler, who was then CJCS, but there was not a lot of interaction.

Goldberg: Enthoven, in Systems Analysis, was exercising a good deal of influence, wasn't he, with McNamara?

Brown: Yes. I think he had a substantial influence on a lot of the programs--mostly good, sometimes wrong.

Matloff: How about presentations to Congress, did you have much of those? Did you have complete leeway in those, or not?



Brown: There was a lot of congressional testimony on the budget, programs, just as there was when I was DDR&E. There, as when I was DDR&E and Secretary of Defense, I tried not to take more than one or two other people with me when I testified.

Although that probably caused me to make a few mistakes, it had a very good effect on members of Congress who were used to seeing senior civilian officials testify with an array of generals and admirals behind them to answer all their questions.

Goldberg: Didn't McNamara?

Brown: He was an exception. He was the model for testifying alone. It turns out that I was using him as a model as well as Herb York, who never took up more than one person to carry his papers. So when I came into R&E I did the same thing. When I became Secretary of the Air Force, it was harder, because the Air Staff wanted to have some people, and even though I generally let them come, I let them sit in the back and almost never turned to them.

Matloff: Would you clear with OSD or McNamara before you went up to testify on the Hill?

Brown: They got to see my statements beforehand. As to whether there were any changes in testimony forced on me--I suspect that there were, but I can't remember any significant ones.

Matloff: Any dealings with the White House? If so, through what channels?

Brown: Occasionally. The ones you remember are when the President calls you on the telephone. That happened four or half a dozen times while I was DDR&E with Kennedy and Johnson; and four or five times with Johnson after I became Secretary of the Air Force. It would always be on some current issue. Some journalist, or congressman, or somebody in the private sector, would call up the President about some issue and the President would know that I knew about it and call me. But within the White House, my dealings, both as DDR&E and Sec/AF, involved some of the NSC staff--McGeorge Bundy, or Carl Kaysen--on issues of nuclear strategy or something of that sort. Rarely,

but occasionally, they involved somebody on the political side like Kenny O'Donnell or O'Brien. Then in the Johnson administration my dealings would be, for a while, with Bundy, but rarely with Rostow, who was so focused on Vietnam. For a while there that egregious person, Marvin Watson, would keep bugging various people in Defense. I think I had a couple of occasions where I interacted with him, but nothing terribly significant.

Matloff: What use did you make of the think tanks and outside consultants; for example, RAND? What dealings were you having RAND and its theorists in this period?

Brown: Both as DDR&E and Secretary of the Air Force I dealt with the people there whom I knew. I knew the people in the physics division quite well, and some of the others less well. Occasionally, they would come in--a lot while I was DDR&E--to talk about things like the electro-magnetic pulse or various vulnerabilities. When I was Air Force Secretary, I really looked at the force structure analyses that came from RAND. I looked at the RAND reports, and occasionally met with some different people, and some of the same ones.

Matloff: Were you reading on strategic theory in this period, or dealing with any of the theorists? Did any of them particularly impress you?

Brown: Yes. I knew Andy Marshall; and Albert Wohlstetter, but not very well. It wasn't just RAND. In the DDR&E days it was the IDA people more than the RAND people, because they directly served the Office of the Secretary of Defense. In fact, that contract was administered out of the R&E office, both for the support they gave the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the support they gave the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I guess I had forgotten, while we were talking about it earlier, but there was substantial interaction at DDR&E with the Joint Chiefs of Staff over the IDA reports.

Goldberg: And WSEG?

Brown: That's the part of IDA that served the JCS. I would get briefed on those reports.

Goldberg: What did you think of the WSEG reports?

Brown: They were of variable quality; some good ones.

Matloff: What role, if any, did you as Secretary of Air play in strategic planning, and how influential was the Air Force in strategic planning in the McNamara era?

Brown: As you might expect, I carried with me what I had been through in DDR&E. Kent had done analyses on an interservice team with Navy and Army officers, and had moved over to the Air Force and became Director of Studies. We continued to work on those and I think those had some influence on the force structure and on the strategic planning through the late '60s.

Matloff: How do you see the basic contributions of the McNamara era to strategic planning and doctrine?

Brown: I would say that the fundamental contribution was the idea that you should do this by analysis and not by the seat of your pants; that civilians should get deeply into the Single Integrated Operational Plan, SIOP, so as to be sure that it served the fundamental political strategic objectives and not just some narrow set of military objectives.

Goldberg: This was something McNamara did right at the beginning when he came in; almost immediately.

Brown: He enunciated it right away, but it really wasn't finished when he left. It's not quite finished now, I would say. But he set that process into motion. I think it was very important to do, and it was a very major objective. Relating the force structure to the objectives is another significant matter. Putting together the air-based, sea-based, and land-based components of the triad, relating them to the issue of defense--ballistic missile and air defense, and civil defense; that whole way of looking at strategic balance evolved during the McNamara years. I think we had a very important part of it. Relating that to the programs and the budgets is extremely important, not just on the strategic side, but everywhere. The whole planning, programming, budgeting system

was a major achievement which has, through a considerable series of vicissitudes, nevertheless persisted and remains very valuable and important. There have been attempts to adapt it to other parts of the government, but not nearly so successfully. A third accomplishment, I think, was considerably greater integration of State and Defense thinking. This, again, has gone back and forth. During the McNamara-Rusk era there was very close cooperation and coordination. Their respective styles were different, and that had some consequences, too. Rusk comes across to many people as a kind of stone Buddha. He doesn't say very much, although he is articulate.

McNamara is very expository and likes to lay things out and present things. Rusk tended to operate separately with the President. In fact, I think he felt it was the Secretary of State's job to listen at meetings and then go talk to the President privately. McNamara was out there testifying before Congress and making speeches, and so to some extent he appeared to be the principal expositor of American foreign policy as well as American military policy. I know that annoyed a lot of people in the State Department, probably a lot more than it annoyed Rusk. That set a precedent. Interestingly enough, as I read history, George Marshall, who had been Secretary of State, took the position when he was Secretary of Defense that that wasn't the Secretary of Defense's job, and he deferred to Acheson, at least in public. How much Truman went to Marshall during that brief period of a year plus instead of to Acheson, I don't know. I suspect probably not very much, because I don't think Marshall would have put up with it.

Goldberg: Their relationship was an extremely good one. They had Lovett there, too.

Brown: He came over from one to the other. He had been in State, and then went over to Defense. But in public Acheson was the spokesman. McNamara was different. I don't know whether to call it an achievement, because to some extent it has had an unsettling effect. It persisted to some degree with Clifford, because he was so close to Johnson. In the subsequent years, in the Nixon years, it didn't really work that way.

Laird was never much of a foreign policy spokesman; he didn't try to be. Neither was Rogers, of course. When Kissinger came in, he completely dominated the scene. I deferred to Vance, by and large, although I was out front on a good many occasions. I tried to speak from the Defense perspective. Inevitably I got into foreign policy issues. Weinberger, at first with Haig and then with Shultz, adopted a higher profile than McNamara, a more adversarial one vis-a-vis the Secretary of State. I leave it to history as to how well informed and effective that was. Although Weinberger would never adduce McNamara in his defense for anything, he could say, "I'm not behaving any differently from the way McNamara behaved." So that may have left a lasting legacy, or it may not.

Goldberg: But like you said, McNamara wasn't adversarial.

Brown: That's the difference.

Goldberg: Yes, it is. He did behave differently.

Brown: I guess Cap could say, "I'm not the first Secretary of Defense to have a foreign policy." He is, however, the first to have a foreign policy different from the foreign policy of the Secretary of State.

Matloff: Some of the State Department people were annoyed by the Posture Statements of McNamara.

Brown: They were troubled that the Posture Statement of the Secretary of Defense contained the only organized exposition of foreign policy.

Matloff: I asked Rusk if that annoyed him. He said, "No."

Brown: Yes. People in the State Department were much more annoyed than I think Rusk was. But because the Secretary of Defense has to have a Posture Statement, it made sense to try to ground it in a foreign policy. Since there was no document, McNamara made up the document, and every subsequent Secretary of Defense, I think, has followed that position. I didn't follow the posture statements during the Nixon-Ford years, but I think they were in there, and I know they were in mine. I always

started out with the foreign policy. What was different was that that was not the only foreign policy document issued in the Carter years, although it was probably still the most organized.

Goldberg: What was different, also, was that McNamara gave five to ten times as much information in his Statements as had been done before.

Brown: Right.

Matloff: Weinberger was interested in knowing about his own Statements compared with McNamara's.

Brown: Weinberger's first Statements were just terrible. The first few were a lot of things just stapled together. Bill Kaufmann left, and they were just stapled together. I think for a while Cap was satisfied with that, because he wasn't really interested in the Posture Statement. He was interested in changing what he saw as an incorrect direction, and putting in much more money and buying a lot more stuff. Finally, he got Graham Allison down to write a more organized one. I know that Graham turned to my Posture Statements and used those as a model.

Goldberg: McNamara's were done by Henry Glass, in the main; and very carefully crafted.

Brown: I remember Henry would take infinite pains with those.

Matloff: What did you see as the strengths and/or weaknesses of systems analysis as applied to the Air Force?

Brown: The strength was that the systems analysts insisted on introducing alternatives and examining them. The weakness was that they sometimes fell in love with their own alternatives and designed their own systems, at which they were not nearly so good.

Matloff: Did the approach of McNamara and the so-called "whiz kids" to the Air Force budget put you in an uncomfortable position vis-a-vis Gen. McConnell and the Air Force generals?

Brown: I was serving the role that I described before. Since I had come out of that system, I knew it and was able to operate in it, and was able to introduce enough of it into the Air Force so that the discussion, the negotiation, and the conflict could be carried on on reasonably equal terms. One of the big achievements of the McNamara PPBS system, it seems to me, was that it forced the services to introduce some of the same thinking into their own procedures, so as to be able to compete on equal terms. That produces a better result. It produces a better program proposal from the services if they've gone through the same procedure. That was a big plus. Like everything else, the McNamara approach has its minuses, too. The over-emphasis on what's quantifiable and the under-emphasis on what's not had, I think, severe repercussions in Vietnam, and created significant problems in other parts of the Department as well.

Matloff: Were you satisfied with the portion of the budget that was allocated to the Air Force in this period?

Brown: Nobody with that kind of responsibility is ever satisfied with the outcome, but there was no scandalous disproportion.

Matloff: How about the issues of weaponry in this period? You had inherited controversies. The Clifford administration, for example, inherited controversies over the Sentinel ABM system, the TFX, nuclear-propelled attack submarines and surface fleet, the manned bombers to replace the B-52.

Brown: Most of those didn't deal with the Air Force. Since I had been in the antiballistic missile business since the mid-'50s; naturally I was in on that. I subscribed to, but not with enthusiasm, the thin defense that was adopted. I was convinced that a thick defense didn't make sense, but that the NIKE X program was a great deal better than the NIKE Zeus and it might make sense to deploy some small part of it. I didn't have anything to say about the nuclear submarine program when I was Air Force Secretary. The TFX was already flying. The investigation went on for a longer period than it took to develop and deploy the airplane. I was in on that all the time. What I

did on the manned bomber was to push through preliminary research on the so-called "AMSA," the advanced manned strategic aircraft, which later became the B-1. I was sure that we should have a bomber, but not sure what it should be. I felt that decision shouldn't be made until the '70s. The B-52 would suffice until then, but we should go ahead and design and then later decide what the successor ought to be.

Goldberg: You got a chance later on.

Brown: I got a chance to say that the B-1 was wrong and that the Stealth was right. We may well end up with the opposite situation, but that will be a mistake.

Matloff: What role were you playing in connection with Vietnam in the period as Secretary of Air? Were you being consulted, for example, on the bombing campaign?

Brown: Yes, I was. It was primarily a matter for the uniformed military and the Joint Chiefs, but I ran a study in the Air Force and Nitze ran one in the Navy on interdiction and we came to different conclusions. I suspect that they were more correct than we, but the conclusion that I expressed wasn't wrong. We concluded that we weren't going to be able to stop the supply, but that if we eased up, that supply would get a lot bigger and the people in the south would have much more of a problem. I think, in fact, in the end that's what happened. Looking back on it, although we didn't put it this way, what we were saying, in effect, was that "You're not going to win, even if you step it up; but, if you stop it, you're going to lose."

Matloff: Did you detect any changes in McNamara's attitude toward the war during this period?

Brown: Sure, during 1967 he was already very disillusioned and he was burned out by the end of that year.

Matloff: He doesn't like the use of that word.

Brown: I know he doesn't. He's still burned out about it, actually.

Goldberg: He's talking about it, now.

Brown: Maybe to you, but he sure doesn't talk about it in public.



Goldberg: He has talked to us about it.

Brown: That's good for him. I'm glad, because I have a very high regard for him, and letting it stew inside him has warped his personality.

Goldberg: He's kept control over that particular tape. His permission has to be given for anybody to see it.

Brown: That's fair enough.

Matloff: Did you have any reaction to President Johnson's reluctance to call up the reserves?

Brown: The Air Force didn't need them as much as the Army did. But it was clear that militarily it was a problem not to call up the reserves, since we were stretching the active forces. So his reluctance to do that, although understandable in political terms, was probably disastrous in the long run, because his failure to do so meant that there was never a public referendum on the subject. The Air Force was able to live with it, but it was troublesome.

Goldberg: This failure to call up the reserves attracted the attention of a lot of people. I got a call last week from General Singlaub. He's working on his memoirs and is focusing on this because at the time he had some strong views on the subject.

Brown: Understandably, because the Army had a worse problem. Calling up the reserves wouldn't have won the war, but it would have decided whether the American public was prepared to support it.

Matloff: How about in connection with NATO? Were you drawn in on any of the policies, strategy, or buildup?

Brown: Much more when I was in R&E than when I was in the Air Force. During my Air Force days U.S. forces in Europe were being drawn down so as to support Vietnam.

Matloff: Were you drawn in on de Gaulle's departure from the integrated military structure and all the hullabaloo that that raised?

Brown: Yes. I actually made a couple of visits to France during that period, because SACEUR was still in Paris in 1966. That was the last time. I remember visiting Lemnitzer there; and the next time in Belgium. Our interaction with the French was principally on equipment.

Matloff: How about the Arab-Israeli war of 1967? Were you drawn in on that?

Brown: Yes. I remember being awakened by the Air Force Operations Center on the morning that war began and being told the Israelis had just knocked off the Arab air forces that morning. Thereafter, my principal involvement really was with the Israeli attempts to get U.S. aircraft. I believe that Rabin was then the ambassador, and he came in to see me after and talk about F-4s, which we finally gave them. That wasn't a decision made in the Air Force, but the mechanics of it were done through the Air Force. If I remember correctly, I may have met Weizman for the first time at that time. He was then, I believe, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff.

Matloff: How about the Pueblo Incident of January 1968?

Brown: I remember it, but we weren't involved very much. There wasn't a great deal to do; by the time we could have done something it was too late.

Matloff: Were you drawn in by OSD on any other area problems or crises during your role as Secretary of Air?

Brown: I don't recall.

Matloff: How about on arms control and disarmament?

Brown: Very much, toward the end. I remember that McNamara consulted me before the Glassboro conference about what he was going to say. He was going to try to educate Kosygin, especially on the issue of antiballistic missiles. All during this period, 1966-67, we talked about arms control, and in 1967 we began to plan for a strategic arms negotiation. I worked in late 1966-early '67 with John McNaughton and with Mort Halperin, who was then in ISA, and afterwards with Paul Warnke and with Halperin. The plan was to meet with the Soviets in 1968, and there had been

considerable negotiation. The terms had been set in a way that has plagued us ever since, because it excludes air defense but includes antiballistic missile systems; the control of bombers but not anti-bomber capability. We had even had a proposed delegation made up. Adrian Fisher, the Deputy Administrator of ACDA, was going to head the U.S. delegation. The thought was that I, then Secretary of the Air Force, would take on the additional responsibility of being the number two person on that delegation. In fact, the invasion of Czechoslovakia killed that. Johnson subsequently tried to revive it, but by then he had said he would not run again, and the Soviets were waiting for his successor. I wound up in those negotiations, anyway, but that didn't happen until a year later.

Matloff: In looking back, how do you view the strengths and accomplishments or the weaknesses and failures of the Secretaries of Defense whom you served?

Brown: I wouldn't change what I said. My perspective changed, but my conclusions didn't change, when I went from the OSD staff to being Secretary of the Air Force. Vietnam was the big failing. The emphasis on the quantifiable played a role in that, but it was much more than that. It wasn't just the Secretary of Defense.

Matloff: How about your own accomplishments or disappointments as Secretary of Air?

Brown: I believe I was able to emphasize the rational planning, the connection of goals with means, of strategy with force structure, of equipment with budget. The Air Force had a tradition of that, after all. The same RAND people who brought it into the Office of the Secretary of Defense had been supported by the Air Force and had been advising the Air Force. I think I was able both to emphasize that and to produce a better connection between it and what the Office of the Secretary of Defense did. I was able to introduce a better relationship between the Air Staff and the Air Force Secretariat than had existed before. I don't think that was so much a failing of Gene Zuckert's as it was a difficulty of Curt LeMay's own particular personality. Whatever

the reasons, it was a lot better at the end of the '60s than it was in the early '60s. On disappointments or failings--the outcome of the Vietnam War was, of course, a disappointment to everybody. I regret that I didn't better harmonize the interaction of the Air Force and the CIA in their joint reconnaissance programs. That, strictly speaking, was not a matter for the Air Force Secretary, but I knew all the people and I should have been able to do better. I would add, however, that the failure of intelligence and judgments in Vietnam was a separate problem, and was also a disappointment.

Goldberg: Was that primarily a military problem, or a CIA problem?

Brown: The CIA was probably more accurate. I think that the military tended to be more a prisoner of their hopes.

Matloff: One last question--What influence did your experience as Secretary of Air have on your subsequent service as Secretary of Defense?

Brown: It gave me the management experience that I needed, and that I wouldn't have gotten from being Director, DR&E. It gave me a sympathy for and a rapport with a good many of the military, not only in the Air Force, that you don't get unless you've been a service secretary. It gave me more experience with the Congress, too.