Matloff: This is an oral history interview with Dr. James R. Schlesinger held in Washington, D.C., on July 12, 1990, at 10:00 a.m. The interview is being recorded on tape and a copy of the transcript will be sent to Dr. Schlesinger for his review. Representing the OSD Historical Office are Drs. Alfred Goldberg and Maurice Matloff.

Dr. Schlesinger, we shall focus in this interview particularly on your service as Secretary of Defense from July 1973 to November 1975.

Schlesinger: Let me make one thing clear from the outset. There was a long hiatus in my confirmation, but I was serving as Secretary of Defense roughly from late April on. I had moved out of Langley down to the Pentagon with the understanding of John Stennis. There was a three-month hiatus because of Senator Proxmire's concern about my answers to bombing in Southeast Asia by B-52s. We had to wait that out, but it did not affect my activities in the Pentagon significantly.

Goldberg: We interviewed Elliot Richardson just a few months ago, so we have that period immediately before.

Matloff: That background in itself is very valuable for us to know, because it doesn't show up in the records and it is the kind of thing that doesn't appear normally

in the setting up of the tenure of each of the Secretaries of Defense.

Schlesinger: When was Elliot sworn in as Attorney General, late April?

Goldberg: Yes.

Schlesinger: From approximately that time I went down to the Pentagon each morning and the operations at Langley were turned over, basically, to Dick Walters.

Matloff: Before we get to that period, by way of background, do you recall when and what led you first to become interested in national security policy?

Schlesinger: There is the general and the specific. As a child of the war years, and particularly of the Cold War period, I could not help but be engaged in what was the world conflict. In 1948 we had the Berlin airlift and the Czechoslovak coup, which caused a great deal of uproar at Harvard. There were defenders of the Communists, particularly F.O. Mathiessen, who had spent some time in Czechoslovakia and who later committed suicide on the premise that he could not live in a world in which he could not be a Christian and a Socialist at the same time. Even he was shaken by Masaryk's defenestration. It was a very exciting period; then slowly the environment turned sour. About two weeks

after I left Harvard we had the invasion of Korea. So all of these events were very clearly marked on my memory. One does not ask people of that generation how they got interested in national security; it was simply in the atmosphere. More specifically, in 1957 I was asked to go to the Naval War College. I went there to teach economics and strategy--the impact of economics on strategy. That got me deeply and specifically involved in the national security issues. You probably took a look at my book. The book was finally published in 1960. Shortly thereafter I got an offer from Rand. I went to Rand because of my interest in national security and foreign policy issues, which was steadily growing. At Rand I was the Director of Strategic Studies, a new post that had been created to deal with the altering relationships as the Soviet Union improved its counterforce capabilities and its deterrent posture, and what that might imply for the United States. I worked closely with the Air Force on a classified basis. That ultimately led to my becoming Assistant Director of the old Bureau of the Budget. I should mention that when I was graduated from Harvard, I probably was less interested in these matters then I subsequently became. I received a Sheldon fellowship and had a delightful

year wandering around the world. I wandered into Europe and saw the displaced persons camps; and I wandered into the Middle East and saw the displaced persons in the areas around Israel. So I came back with some idea of the immensity of the problems that the outside world was facing, and that only the United States, which was somewhat indifferent, could deal with.

Matloff: I suspect that you were one of the few holders of the Sheldon that used it in matters relating to national security.

Schlesinger: It was more or less adventitious. I visited 22 countries and just got on the road and wandered around. It was a period when one could not help but be aware of these things. It started in 1950, and on my first visit to Germany it was a bombed-out wreck.

Matloff: It sounds like the post-World War II period in Korea was the stronger influence rather than World War II.

Schlesinger: I think that's right, but I was a somewhat precocious child, so I followed the war news through the war.

Matloff: To identify the book for the record, it was The Political Economy of National Security, published in

1960. Had you been teaching at the University of Virginia when you did the work at the War College?

Schlesinger: Yes.

Matloff: Who during your service at Rand particularly impressed you in the field of strategic theory? I know that you were developing your own thinking during that period.

Schlesinger: The eminences, when I went there, had been Albert Wohlstetter and Herman Kahn. I had reviewed Herman Kahn's book when it was first published.

Goldberg: Would you include Bernard Brodie in that list?

Schlesinger: No, I think he was more of an eminence outside of Rand than he was within Rand, as a practical matter. He was frequently cited, because he had written a book that was quite citable. But I think it had less originality than either of the other two. I reviewed Herman Kahn's book and found it enormously stimulating--a revelation that went well beyond my more primitive notions of nuclear strategy that had slipped out of my work at the War College. Herman had left to form the Hudson Institute and would drift back every once in a while. He was quite a presence. Albert was just on the point of getting into a fight with Frank Collbohm that

led to his departure from Rand. I had spent some time with Albert, and there is no question that in the early years he was quite an influence. He was distressed by some of my work in the nuclear proliferation area, because it suggested that putting together a small nuclear capability was not something that was going to disappear simply because of the technical problems of other countries. This was the prevailing hope in that era and was a guiding point to the policies of the Kennedy administration--a question that you might want to pursue, as a matter of fact. My best pal in that period was Andy Marshall. He had seen a great deal. We used to exchange our views and confidences about the world regularly.

Goldberg: Bill Kaufmann had left, also.

Matloff: You may be interested to know we have interviewed both Wohlstetter and Kaufmann for this program.

It was during this period that you wrote "The Uses and Abuses of Systems Analysis," in 1963. What were your objections or qualifications? I remember that was when you gave it "two and one-half cheers."

Schlesinger: You are going back a long way. I'm going to have to resurrect my views about systems analysis.

The principal problem was that the enthusiasts would attempt to quantify the non-quantifiable, which was OK as long as you recognized what you were doing and put in an adjustment factor for the degree to which certain problems were non-quantifiable. Even more important than that was the tendency to believe everything that was important in the world had been caught within your formal analysis and to deny that there was something outside the formal analysis that might be enormously important. I think that, in some respects, Bob McNamara in his policy-making suffered from that, and did not take into account that there were aspects of human existence that were enormously influential in outcomes but which could not be captured in a quantitative analysis.

Matloff: Were there any repercussions from the official defense community to these qualifications that you were making?

Schlesinger: There was considerable unhappiness on the part of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Hahn [?], and particularly Alain Enthoven, were quite put out about it. But I don't think there was any uncontrollable anger in the military services.

Goldberg: All the military services were guilty of the same thing, for that matter, in some of their work at a lesser level.

Schlesinger: They thought that this was dealing with the problems as they saw it that emanated from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and that they did not associate themselves with some of the same kinds of deficiencies in reasoning.

Goldberg; On the other hand, I have encountered studies that they did, in fact, participate in and they did exactly the same thing. They ignored or simply acknowledged the possible presence of other factors which could not be quantified, and therefore they didn't include them in their calculations.

Schlesinger: I think that is right; in fact, their errors, in some ways, were even more gross. If you just take the analysis of potential military combat on the basis of firepower models, it turns out to be inane, because if you look at the history of warfare, quite regularly the side with the lesser firepower wins.

Goldberg: That was precisely what I had in mind. That was the study--because they ignored everything--weather, terrain--you can't quantify them. All they had was firepower.

Matloff: What contacts and relations were you having with OSD and the Secretaries of Defense while you were working at Rand?

Schlesinger: I was working in part for the OSD on the spread of nuclear weapons. You will find a host of things that I have written on that spread. So far as I can see, most of them are relevant today. Structurally, the problem is about the same as it was then. As you may recall, the issue was touched off once again by the decision of Charles de Gaulle to lead with the creation of the Force de Frappe. That led to several reactions in Washington, including the creation of the multilateral force. I was working on a small part of it, which was "could the French do it?" This was a reflection of the attitudes of the administration, generally, and of OSD in particular. There was a desperate desire, if I may say so, to have it analytically demonstrated that it was well beyond French capabilities. I was quite in agreement with the policy objectives that were stated, that it was better from the standpoint of the alliance as a whole for the United States to provide the big deterrent and that the European powers not fritter away their resources on small deterrents at the expense of conventional forces.

I fully agreed with that, but I could not in conscience jigger the evidence to the point of suggesting that because I wanted a particular outcome that the French were on a road of folly. The administration took the view at the time that if the U.S. spoke firmly enough to our allies and if they only understood what we wanted, they would proceed to desist. That was, I think, wrong in general, but particularly wrong in dealing with Charles de Gaulle, who had the special pleasure of plucking a feather from the eagle's tail every now and again. And the fact that we were opposing the French in the way that we were led to additional piquancy for him in demonstrating that France was technically capable and that the Americans would not dominate policy formation. We were adding to his incentives rather than subtracting from them. All of which I said; and once again, this was something of a disappointment. I was working at the time partly for the Air Force on nuclear spread, and partly for Harry Rowen, who was then Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for ISA.

Matloff: In '67 through '69 you were the Director of Strategic Studies at Rand. So you were rather in a unique position to observe what was going on within the

Department, and yet not being part of the official establishment.

Schlesinger: Yes, and I found it fascinating being part of the gossip mill, as it were, of the defense community.

Matloff: What reaction did you have at the time to the performance by McNamara as Secretary of Defense?

Schlesinger: I think I also reviewed Charlie Hitch's and Roland McKean's book on The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age in about 1962, and I found the whole PPBS system enormously impressive conceptually. I worked in the PPBS system for a while. There was a side to Bob McNamara that involved his installing these improved budgetary techniques, improved analytical techniques, within the department. That, I thought, was a splendid change. Bob McNamara deserves a great deal of credit. He got at the time a great deal of abuse, and now he gets a great deal of unspoken praise, because the phrase "cost-effectiveness" is now part of the common language of the land. Nobody says that the phrase was introduced into government policy in those early transformations by McNamara. I was excited by McNamara's Athens speech, and more particularly the Ann Arbor speech, the declassified version of the Athens

speech. Needless to say, as Bob McNamara backed increasingly away from those concepts, in 1963-65, and from damage limitation, I became more and more distressed about his strategic policies. The reason is clear and was a reflection of what I did when I became Secretary: to attempt to re-anchor the strategic forces of the United States to the defense of Western Europe. Bob had taken the view with the phraseology of "mutual assured destruction" logically that we could not initiate the use of our nuclear forces in the event of a massive invasion of Western Europe. Indeed, at that time each year in the strategic DPM it would be written that the strategic forces of the United States exist to deter attack on the United States and the zone of the interior--words to that effect. The draft would then go over to the Department of State and somebody would take a pencil and put a little caret and say, "the United States and its allies". That dispute between the two departments reflected the logical difficulties, it seemed to me, of our strategic policies at that time. I brooded about that at Rand, and I was determined to do something about it before I became Secretary, but I was not in a suitable position to do anything about it. To have a declaratory doctrine and a force posture that

preclude use of our strategic forces meant that Europe depended exclusively upon forces that were over there, other than in the event of a massive or any kind of Soviet nuclear attack on North America. I thought that in a sense Bob McNamara was an outstanding Secretary of Defense and probably the best we had had up to that point. Many of his predecessors had been people of extremely limited ability. During the Eisenhower period the president of the United States thought of himself as his own Secretary of Defense and his Secretaries of Defense tended to be subordinated, as one might imagine. Bob came on, was trusted by the president, did an outstanding job with budgetary reform, and pointed to many questions that had been ignored in the period. With regard to the SIOP, for example, it was Gates who did the useful preliminary work on the SIOP and began to pull the individual services together. But a lot of that went on under McNamara. He was outstanding as a Secretary of Defense. And then I have to add my caveat that as a Secretary of War he had his limitations. It is an important distinction, it seems to me. Partly, that analytical mind did not appreciate the problems that were so manifest in Vietnam until it was too late. I, myself, sitting out there at Rand throughout that

period, did not want to send in our ground forces in 1965. I thought that it was a mistake.

Goldberg: He might agree with you now.

Schlesinger: That was one of the ironies, in view of the fact that I was one of the few at Rand that was reluctant to send in the ground forces--not because I disliked the use of military power, but because I thought that it was going to be ineffective (although not as ineffective as it turned out ultimately to be), and that we were going to dissipate our efforts in dealing with the much more fundamental problems of a secure NATO, the balance with the Soviet Union, and the like.

Matloff: What was your attitude toward our involvement in Vietnam, while you were at Rand?

Schlesinger: At the outset I took the view that the French were in there for a long time and it was not going to be easy. When we went in, in 1965, there were all of these statements coming from some of my colleagues, including Albert Wohlstetter, who was delighted with it at that time, that we were going to be back by Thanksgiving and it would take 50,000 men. I remember betting Charles Wolfe, with whom I agreed subsequently on many policy matters, that we would need

200,000 men. It turned out to be a much larger commitment than that ultimately. I, in 1965, did not dream that if we put in as large a commitment as we did we would ultimately come out as badly as we did. That was my initial attitude. After we were committed, I followed the war in a desultory way, partly because Bing West wrote a series of things about how the war was going and the problems of the war. It seemed to me that we were concentrating on a war that was right but was not the whole war. We were fighting the war of the big battalions and having our brains beaten out in the guerrilla war in the villages, in which the VC, and ultimately the NVA, controlled the villages. Unless we could provide security to these people, it didn't matter how much we bashed up the NVA or the VC. So I was distressed with the conduct of the war. I thought that our military strategy had its deficiencies because of the focus on the war that we knew how to fight. This is almost like, as I think about it, the criticism I made of systems analysis a little earlier. We were concentrating on a war that we knew how to fight, that we were prepared for. We knew how to fire artillery, how to use tactical air--and we used all these things probably excessively, but we were not dealing with what

we had to deal with successfully. We made these half-hearted attempts--and I think that the Agency had a better understanding of this than did the Pentagon--the seize and control operations, and talk about oil spots. One of the reasons I was interested in the Marines was that that cap operation [?] seemed to be closer to what was necessary to stabilize the villages of Vietnam. But I did not think that it was going to come out as badly as it did. We will probably come back to this later when I describe the end of the war, the last days. I mentioned earlier that, although I had been acting for three months as Secretary of Defense with no objections from Capitol Hill because the procedure of confirmation was being held up by a single senator, I had been held up simply because I could not/would not give any guarantee that the attacks of the B-52s would cease in Southeast Asia. Shortly after I became Secretary of Defense, the Congress in the summer of 1974 in the Appropriations Act said, "No more U.S. military actions on, over, in, the successive states of Indochina." Thereafter we only had a few months in which bombing continued in Cambodia. We were out of that issue at that time.

Goldberg: You had the view, I presume, that the role of China in the background was the major factor in determining what our strategy was in Vietnam?

Schlesinger: I had the opportunity to watch that at the time. Indeed, it was disproportionately important; ludicrously important. You have all of this stuff about the industrial countries being the cities and the villages taking over the world--kind of a higher degree of admiration for Maoist doctrine than I thought appropriate; and for Lin Biao, who put forward much of this at the time. It was one of those times in which a government gets wrapped up--a danger for all governments and all administrations--in its own logic and begins to spin out defenses for the policy actions that it is taking and ultimately begins to believe what is spun out. You will recall that President Johnson went around to Manila and the fringe of Asia talking about the danger of a billion Chinese armed with nuclear weapons. Secretary Rusk, of course, had been Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East during the Korean War, and one of my colleagues at Harvard had told me of an episode in which one of the people in the intelligence community had conceived that the Chinese were moving south of the Yalu in substantial numbers. He was looking at the

evidence and he went around Washington trying to persuade more senior officials that this was indeed a possibility. He (my colleague at Harvard) recounted how the fellow got to the office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, spelled this out, and Rusk listened very politely, because Rusk was always a perfect gentleman. When it was over, Rusk looked at him and said, "Young man, they wouldn't dare." I think that Dean Rusk's attitudes in the Vietnam period were much influenced by the experiences that he had had in the early 1950s when he was bold enough to say the Chinese wouldn't dare. Thereafter, he wouldn't put anything beyond the Chinese.

Goldberg: Did you think at the time that if we had invaded North Vietnam on a large scale, the Chinese would have come in?

Schlesinger: I thought that it was a possibility, but that the odds were against it. On the other hand, it was plain that the administration did not want to run that risk. I mentioned previously that I had spent much of my early time focused on the project on the spread of nuclear weapons, that I was working in part with ISA. Harry Rowen said to me one day, "If the Chinese had a real nuclear capability that was capable of reaching the

United States, we wouldn't be doing what we are in Southeast Asia." That was a reflection, I think, of the dominant view within a certain element of the administration.

Goldberg: Harry had left ISA in 1965 and gone over to budget, I think.

Schlesinger: I became a Bureau of Budget consultant after Harry went over there, and did a fair amount of work. In fact, that may have helped me get my job as Assistant Director.

Matloff: Your background was unique in its early exposure to defense problems before becoming Secretary of Defense, and your views were being formed along the way at least partly by the Rand experience.

Goldberg: Some time in the late 1960s you had a discussion on television with David Schoenbrun. That was on Vietnam, wasn't it?

Schlesinger, Yes, and it was sort of interesting because Schoenbrun was thoroughly emotionally involved in it and I took a position to some extent parallel to his. I said that we were focusing far too much attention on Vietnam; that the really important things were the future of Europe, our relations with the Soviet Union; and that this was diverting our energies

disproportionately. At that time I didn't realize how it would disrupt the American society, and emotions.

Goldberg: So your position was not a defense of our actions as such, in Vietnam; in a way, you were really deploring our presence there?

Schlesinger: That's too strong. I was expressing regret that we were devoting as much energy to a subsidiary problem, but I certainly didn't deplore it. More or less, I think I was a pro-forma defender of government policy.

Matloff: We'll come back to that. Obviously some of your thinking on strategic problems was molded and formed during your period at Rand.

Schlesinger: Yes. My colleague Kissinger used to say that one comes naked into these jobs except with whatever intellectual capital one has, and that you don't have time to develop a structure of ideas when you are in the job. You tend to carry in this intellectual capital. Whether it's valuable or not depends on the circumstances. Those who don't have it coming into the job are pulled apart, because one element of their advisory group tells them to do this, another, something else, and there tends not to be any consistency in policy.

Goldberg: Has it always been such that our top officials don't have the time to think and to develop structures of policy and concepts? In an earlier age there may have been time, because things moved much more slowly. Today there is such an enormous scale and things move at such a rapid pace, people don't have time to think. I've been told this by people in positions of authority, who have said that they should have known or understood certain things but couldn't, because they were too busy with day to day things.

Schlesinger: That is part of it, but there is a critical question with regard to government. First, over this last 25-30 year period the quality of people going into government has declined. In the old days, when the president said, "I need you," there were very few people who would say, "I've got my private interests, Mr. President." It is, in part, the stimulus of the cold war. It's also the fact that lately there is a kind of contempt, or something of disdain, for these government positions; therefore, the used car dealer from Sacramento is a perfectly good assistant secretary of defense. So you've had a decline in the background and quality of people that go into these jobs. Secondly, I think that not only have we had a

decline in the quality of American education, it has fallen particularly in disciplines like History. I don't know how you are supposed to do jobs in State in particular, or in Defense to a lesser extent; but even a job that appears to be more technical, as in the Treasury, unless you have a long knowledge of history, the deliberation on free versus flexible exchange rates, and what happened in the 1930s to the flow of capital. So a knowledge of history seems to me to be, if not essential, near essential for these jobs, and yet the teaching of history has declined. So you have a lower quality of people, particularly in sub-cabinet positions, and you don't have the intellectual background.

Matloff: To move to the next step, the appointment as Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget in 1969 in the Nixon administration--what led to that?

Schlesinger: A number of things led to that. I don't know precisely who was the source of the recommendation to Bob Mayo, but I know that Keith Glennan, a member of the trustees of the Rand Corporation, strongly recommended me to the administration people. He may have been consulted directly on the BOB appointment. I know Charles Walker, who became Under Secretary of the

Treasury, recommended me to Bob Mayo. I had been invited to go down at the time of Nixon's Mission Bay conference after his nomination. I was invited down by some of the people to discuss defense issues.

Matloff: What were your duties with relation to Defense in that position, and also as Assistant Director of OMB in 1970-71? You had a period in there of acting deputy director of BOB.

Schlesinger: It was a role in which originally I would handle the national security issues--defense, intelligence, foreign policy, economic assistance, etc. Also, it turned out that they split up the BOB and since I had a background in some of the resource issues, I also inherited the division of resources, one of which units was the Atomic Energy Commission. I had been working on atomic energy at the Rand Corporation, and I naturally took over the AEC that was embedded in the division of resource usage led by Jack Young, who came to work for me later on. There was some tension. The Nixon administration in some ways tended to be partisan. Although I had been an ardent Republican in the years before I went to Rand, once I went to work for a government think tank I thought it was inappropriate for me to be involved overtly in partisan politics, so I

stayed away from political campaigns and the like. In an earlier year I participated vigorously in the Citizens for Eisenhower, and that was the end of it. As I say, the Nixon administration could be partisan, and Sam Hughes, who was the Deputy Director of the BOB, an old-line civil servant but too liberal and democratic for the administration, gradually came to feel more and more uncomfortable in the administration and announced about six months after I came to BOB that he was going to depart. Therefore, I became the acting Deputy Director of BOB and continued in that role for a year, in which capacity I had an overview of everything that went on within the Bureau.

Goldberg: Why did you remain acting?

Schlesinger: Bob Mayo was not successfully winning points with the powers that be within the White House system. When the BOB became the OMB, Bob was released from his responsibilities. But it was plain that he did not have the support in the White House to get approval and the administration early on had decided that they were going to make changes in the BOB/OMB, and for that reason I was left in an acting capacity. I gave a speech once to the Cabinet wives and I observed that one has all of the feeling of security in the job of acting

deputy director that one has in the job of being an acting wife.

Matloff: What position did you take in that capacity, as assistant director both of BOB and OMB, in connection with defense spending and the defense budget?

Schlesinger: It was a mixed position. In general, the BOB/OMB is supposed to be skeptical about the requests of various departments. I was skeptical about many of the programs that were going on and this resulted in a termination of some of those programs.

Matloff: Can you give some examples?

Schlesinger: Let me answer your general question first. Early on, there was a decision by the President, conveyed to me through Bob Mayo, that there was going to be a substantial cut in Defense. And I said, "We can't do that unless we have substantial cuts in military manpower. It would not be responsible to do that." It turned out that the President had in the back of his mind the withdrawal of all of our forces from Vietnam and the shrinkage of our forces down to something on the order of 2.3-2.4 million men. We were about 3.7 million men at the start of the administration, and we were spending about 9 percent of the gross national product. I thought, given our withdrawal from Southeast Asia,

that we could do a dandy good job with defense, spending 7 percent of the GNP, or maybe 6 1/2 percent. As I watched the defense budget continue to decline, I became very restive about it. But at the time that I came into the job we were spending about 9 percent of the GNP and I thought that we could go down to 7 quite handily. Once the President indicated that he had in mind substantial withdrawal from Vietnam, then you could shrink the military force. He could proceed with the all-volunteer force that he had in mind and we could get substantial reductions. Outside of Vietnam, I was rather selective about where I would want to see reductions. Indeed, at several points I urged the White House to spend much more on certain activities than the Department was asking for. At one point the DoD proposed that we shrink to 9 divisions; at another point, 6 divisions. I went to Henry Kissinger and told him, "This is the end of the NATO commitment. We cannot allow this, responsibly. The Department must hold Army manpower at a level which is sufficient to sustain our position in Europe." On that side, there were certain things that I felt we had to spend a lot more on. There was a great dispute over the manned orbiting laboratory (MOL). We went to the President and had him kill the

MOL. That caused a great deal of unhappiness on the part of Melvin Laird and the Secretary of the Air Force. The Air Force was quite unhappy about it,officially, but later on, as they got into the budget squeeze, they told me that they were very grateful that the MOL was gone because it was so expensive a vehicle. One of the areas in which we were spending too much was intelligence. MOL was one of the dramatic examples of competition between the Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency for the mission of surveillance. During that period I did a study for Nixon on intelligence and this was driven by Chairman Mahon's saying to the President that we were spending too much on intelligence, more than $5 billion a year. He indicated that we had to cut it back to 3 billion. If you look at intelligence spending today, those seem to be pretty trivial tasks. Mahon put the President on notice that there was going to be substantial reductions in intelligence. I was working from a position of strength, in some respects, in that these were actions that had powerful political forces, plus a decision of the President, behind them.

Matloff: How about your position on the Navy's anti-sub carriers? I believe you did some trimming there, too.

Schlesinger: I think we wiped out the anti-submarine carriers.

Matloff: What were your relations with then Secretary of Defense Laird and OSD?

Schlesinger: You will have to ask Mel about that. He is a jolly fellow, and our relations generally on the surface were quite good. I was always over there in the Pentagon and hobnobbed with his officers and his friends, like Bob Froehlke, who became Assistant Secretary for Administration. I think he was Laird's roommate, but certainly a college friend. We got along pretty well, in general. From time to time there was a squeeze put on the Department. Particularly there was a squeeze that made David Packard and others in the Department angry, and I suspect Mel Laird as well. That was the time of the drawing up of the FY '71 budget. That was not, incidentally, the responsibility of the Bureau of the Budget. In the very last days, after the budget had been set, Arthur Burns, who was an advisor to the President, went to him and said, "The budget deficit is too large." It was about $5 billion, or so. Once again, it sounds trivial by current standards. "You have to get it down to $3 billion." So one had to reopen the books and by presidential decision, one-half

of that came out of the DoD. Of course, the BOB had to deliver that message, and Dave Packard, who had worked very hard in smoothing out the budget, was quite wrathful in that he had to open up all those deliberations again. But he directed most of his wrath towards Bob Mayo, poor fellow. My relations with Dave were pretty good, in general. I should mention, in passing, that we did, at that time, something that we have not done since the partial collapse of the Soviet threat. We had an exercise called NSSM I. That is approaching Defense budgetary problems the right way. You decide what is is that you want to do and what capabilities you have. If you don't have enough money, you shred some of those capabilities. As you remember, we went from the two and one-half war concept to the one and one-half war concept at that time. I worked very closely with Packard throughout that period.

Matloff: How about with Kissinger and his staff, on the NSSM III study? That apparently led directly to the reduction of the two and one-half war level.

Schlesinger: What I am talking about is NSSM III. I think that resulted in National Security Decision Document No. 1.

Matloff: This is in mid-1969.

Schlesinger: I worked very closely with Packard on those elements that dealt with the DoD, under the general direction of the National Security Council.

Matloff: How about the position you took on the Gates Commission's initiative to eliminate the draft?

Schlesinger: I was opposed.

Matloff: Why were you opposed?

Schlesinger: Two things, as I recall it. I thought that being liable to the draft was a good thing in a democracy, despite the resentments, understandable, perhaps, emanating from the Vietnam War. I thought going to zero draft calls, for a while, was a good thing, but abolishing the system of conscription, I thought at the time, was a mistake in our system. Secondly, I was doubtful that we could get enough manpower at the right cost to fulfill our national security obligations. I mentioned that I had fought against further manpower reductions in the Army. There was a view in the Department of Defense then that you could do almost everything with air and sea forces. From my background, the most significant commitment of the United States was to Western Europe. I was fearful about the implications of the end of the draft on our ability to sustain our forces in Western Europe over the

long haul. I went to those meetings that were run at the time, and it turned out that Al Haig, I, and perhaps one or two others expressed reservations. I think that my reservations, probably in view of my position, were expressed more in terms of the budgetary impact. That was what I was permitted to talk about. I think that there were others who sympathized. Ken Belieu, if I recall, was at that meeting and I think he was sympathetic. Mel Laird was, of course, strongly in favor of the all-volunteer force. Then the President passed the word back to then Col. Haig and to me (he may have told Al this directly), "Get out of the way, we're going through with the all-volunteer force." That was a decision that was done without my strong support. Incidentally, Nixon told me in later years that it was a mistake. Presidents have the opportunity to say things like, "If you understood the circumstances and difficulties and political pressures. . .," but he didn't say that, just that it was a mistake.

Goldberg: What's your position now on the draft?

Schlesinger: It's obvious where military manpower is going that we do not need to have the draft to supply military manpower. I would like to see a system of conscription on the books, so that every young male has

the feeling that he may be called to serve--called, not lured in by a package of benefits. I say "young male," but it has grown much more complex because of the women in the armed forces. I am strongly opposed to the draft for women, and I don't know how I'd get around the present legal difficulties.

Matloff: In retrospect, how valuable was the experience in BOB and OMB in your later capacity as Secretary of Defense?

Schlesinger: I think that was immensely valuable. The greatest value, of course, was that one had another view from outside the building. The Pentagon has a habit of becoming monolithic when it deals with the outside world. Not within the building, where there are all sorts of factions--inter-service rivalry, intra-service rivalry, etc.--but it tends, particularly in flush times, to be monolithic in facing the outside world. Of course, secretaries organize the building in order to avoid ostensible divisions in dealing with the outside world.

Matloff: You were beginning to acquire somewhat of a reputation as a budget cutter as a result of some of the programs you had trimmed on the military side in this capacity. Did that in any way complicate your problems

or your relationships within the Department of Defense when you later came over?

Schlesinger: No. First of all, you would have to ask some of the senior military people to what extent they were apprehensive. For example, Tom Moorer had run into me in various of my BOB connections. No, partly because by the time I got to the DoD, defense spending was below what I thought it should be in terms of preserving an appropriate force structure. The Congress kept slashing the administration's requests, and I was by and large defending the Department's position. Secondly, in that post-Vietnam era the attitude on Capitol Hill was such that the military services could not play what had been a traditional game for them, which was to go up to Capitol Hill, give a wink, and say, "In public we have to support the Secretary's position, but we don't like this, and we do like that." They couldn't play that game in the post-Vietnam era because the stock of the military services had been severely lowered. Therefore, if the services were going to win anything from the Congress, they had to come through the Secretary's office. It was a period, I should emphasize, in which the Office of the Secretary was immensely strong, partly because of the weaknesses of the services in the post-

Vietnam era and partly and increasingly as a result of the difficulties into which President Nixon had gotten himself.

Goldberg: Has Cheney consulted you in the last year about the draw-down he has to make?

Schlesinger: No, I talked to Dick two or three times. We talked a little bit about the draw-down.

Goldberg: Of course, he's facing something that is similar and yet much more drastic.

Schlesinger: I was in the position as something of a long-time NATO buff, of being able to rush in in that post-Vietnam period when the Congress's view was slash, slash, slash, and to seize on the NATO commitment as my justification for preserving the U.S. Army. I say seize on it; I believed strongly in it; I thought it was the right measure. But I also exploited the argument as a way of preserving my force structure in that post-Vietnam period when all the talk about peace dividend was around. A lot of people had forgotten that we still had the Soviet Union to contend with and that we had the NATO commitment; they were prepared to just go on slashing. That was made worse by the respectable rate of inflation in that period, so that there were all of

these people who professed that they were dealing only with nominal dollars.

Matloff: Just one or two questions about your next two positions, first as the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission from 1971 to 1973--what contacts did you have with the OSD and Sec/Def in that capacity and how valuable did that experience prove for your later role as Secretary of Defense?

Schlesinger: All of my experiences were valuable as stepping stones to Defense. As you know, the Atomic Energy Commission had two responsibilities--one was the development of civilian nuclear power, plus some other civilian uses of the atom; and the other was national security. My predecessor, Glenn Seaborg, was quite disinterested in the national security aspect of things. Indeed, he chose, as he told me both before and after I succeeded him, to stay away from that and to take the position that he was there only to respond to decisions by the administration. He was in many ways an academic scientist. The role of the Atomic Energy Commission in its military aspects was not one that got him many plaudits from his fellow academic scientists, so he tended to stay quite away from it. I devoted almost half of my attention to the national security

responsibilities. I worked closely with the labs on the development of new weapons; for example, the enhanced radiation warhead. I tried to shift the laboratories increasingly in the direction of the laser for reasons that may be of interest to you. And I became the chief defender of the AEC's activities in the nuclear area. You may remember the Cannikin test that took place in late 1972, in which I brought my two young daughters and my wife up to Amchitka Island while half of the world kept saying that the test of the Cannikin device, that was the Spartan warhead, was going to cause an earthquake in the Pacific and a tidal wave that would destroy Hawaii, and so on. The end of the world was coming in that atmosphere that was quite pacifist in this country.

Goldberg: Nixon loved you for that.

Schlesinger: Yes, indeed. That was great fun. I had received an invitation from the governor of Alaska challenging me to go up there. So I chose the challenge. I am an amateur ornithologist, and I regarded it as a splendid opportunity to get up there and see some of the Alaskan birds, whereas everyone else seemed to think that I was not only making a great sacrifice of time, living in allegedly rough

circumstances, but that I was also risking my life and the lives of my children. Once these two little girls walking along on the plane appeared on TV, the furor about the end of the Pacific and the tidal wave that would destroy Hawaii began to die down. There were many people who were just opposed to the President's decision to develop the ABM system, the Spartan warhead, and so forth, and they were using all of this environmental exaggeration as a way of achieving control over a military program. I think that all blew away, and it was just great fun. Dealing with a world that had gone largely hysterical and being able to calm it down was great fun.

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Matloff: We've gone from your college days up through your CIA experience rather hastily. Let's move to the Secretary of Defense position. What were the circumstances of your appointment, and who recommended you?

Schlesinger: These processes in the White House are quite hazy. I had left the Atomic Energy Commission with a feeling of ambivalence, because I was really

quite interested in that agency and getting it straightened out. We had made major changes at the AEC during my tenure there. We were getting to a critical period in the history of the agency and all of a sudden I was yanked out. I had said to the President, when he called me up to Camp David in 1972, "Dick Helms is an old bureaucrat. He's a civil servant. The normal age for retirement at the CIA is 60. Just let let me stay at the AEC for a while, and when Dick gets to be 60, he can retire with great honor." But the President and Haldeman, his principal aide on that issue, did not want that. There was sort of a clean sweep at the end of the first Nixon term. I went to the agency not entirely without a feeling of ambivalence and regret at leaving the AEC, which, incidentally, was reinforced when I got caught up in the problems of the agency--particularly the allegations with regard to Watergate. The administration decided to pull Elliot Richardson out of Defense very hastily, after Kleindienst, his predecessor as Attorney General, had run into some trouble, I think, about Watergate. Elliot had to be moved very quickly, so they had to look around very quickly.

Matloff: He told us he was reluctant to leave. The last thing in the world he wanted was the Justice Department job.

Schlesinger: He told me that Defense was just a sponge job. He may not remember it, but he was kind of intrigued by Justice. All lawyers are. I've heard various stories; for example, that David Packard was consulted, and offered the job; I have been told that David recommended me, amongst other things, that may or may not be the case. I know that Al Haig, with whom I worked in the Kissinger years, pushed the President to name me as the replacement. I think it was done very quickly. They had to look around. It's not a good idea to move people around in agencies very quickly. I was a little regretful leaving the AEC after 18 months; it was not a good thing for the CIA for me to depart after 4 months; but I can't give you the 15 minutes of background, partly because there was very little negotiation. I was told that I was going to Defense, and given my background, that was quite desirable from that standpoint.

Matloff: How long and well had you known President Nixon before the appointment?

Schlesinger: I had not met President Nixon before I joined the administration in 1969. I can even see him sitting there in the oval office with his cufflinks and French cuffs that day that Bob Mayo brought me in to introduce me. I mentioned earlier that I had been asked to come down to Mission Bay; but during that period Nixon was a very remote figure, sitting at home by himself. He did not mix with any of the advisors, or even his own staff, very much. During that first budget year, drawing up the '71 budget, I was in his office regularly, with Bob Mayo, for the most part, but not always. For example, on part of the decision on the MOL, I think that Bob didn't come with me. The President put in a great deal of time on the '71 budget. We in the Budget Bureau thought that he was very interested in the budget. It turned out that he was merely being polite; he was quite frustrated with the amount of time that he put in, which partially explains the administration's treatment of Bob Mayo subsequently. I had worked extensively with him.

Matloff: Did he give you any instructions or directives when you took over the job as Secretary of Defense, either written or oral?

Schlesinger: No. He knew my views on defense, and I had worked closely with Kissinger and Haig in my time in the Executive Office. Nixon's view of the world was to hire people in general rather than for specific points of view or abilities. I might say, in passing, that the President had an intriguing and, I think, faulty view about the difference between something that he called government and the something that he called politics. He had a high regard for government; I think that's been reflected in his subsequent writings. He wanted to get eminent people in Cabinet and sub-Cabinet positions, and he wanted them to run the Departments well. I think that he had a very high-quality Cabinet. He also had a view of politics that was most dramatically reflected in the Watergate affair--that it was a dog-eat-dog world in which you got them before they got you, and so forth. The interesting thing was that there was no connection between the two. He regarded me as "government." On several occasions when I was at the BOB and at the OMB under George Schultz there would be a note attached to my name which said that, "Schlesinger is to be in here for the substantive discussions, but is not to be here for the political discussions"-- something that I came to value increasingly.

Matloff: Did he overlook the Harvard background? It's been reported that he had some suspicion of Harvard intellectuals.

Schlesinger: I think that this was part of that government versus politics. He had a very high regard for people of intellect, but he preferred that they be confined to the government side of things, and that they were not entirely trustworthy on the political side of things, if you didn't have this dual view. That is my observation. He has never talked about this, at least to my knowledge. I worked closely with him. He acquired a considerable regard for my abilities and he was less than highly fond of my person. I guess that is the way to put it. There was one report that came out of the White House during the Mayo years that I had told the President that he was in error, or some such thing, and that he said, "Keep that man out of my office." But he was always very pleasant to me and hired me for three or four jobs, so he must have had some respect for my abilities.

Goldberg: He was afflicted with bifocalism, apparently.

Schlesinger: Bifocalism with regard to the politics and government.

Goldberg: Two different views, yes.

Schlesinger: I stress that, because people tend, in the wake of the Watergate affair, to forget that here was a man who was deeply concerned about government and deeply knowledgeable about government. During that year that I first came into the government and we worked on the '71 budget I was simply amazed at the extent of his knowledge of the range of government activities outside of foreign affairs. He was not very fond of domestic agencies, but he knew a great deal about them.

Matloff: I take it that there must have been some discussion between you and Elliot Richardson when you took over. Did he offer any suggestions or advice? He had only been in the job, himself, a short time, of course.

Schlesinger: No. In a way, partly because of the hiatus I described earlier. Elliot was gone; he was already absorbed. We had a meeting in his office and he told me about some of the people that he liked around the building. But the fact of the matter was that my knowledge of defense issues at that particular juncture exceeded Elliot's, even though he had been the Secretary for two or three months. Elliot in some ways, while very articulate, is a shy man about putting forth propositions that he doesn't feel entirely comfortable

with, and I don't think he felt entirely comfortable as yet with the job. I had seen Elliot when I was DCI. He would sit over there. Part of the reason, I suspect, that Nixon transferred him was that he tended to talk in NSC meetings as a lawyer. Almost as the editor of the Law Review, he would look at the problem, "on the one hand" and examine it from all sides. Nixon was a very polite man in dealing with others most of the time. He would sit there patiently. But there was an underlying impatience that was not expressed. Elliot would reflect at great length on a problem, and it was plain that the President wanted him to move on.

Matloff: That's interesting, because Nixon, himself, of course, was trained as a lawyer, and put Kenneth Rush into his position largely because he remembered his old professor at Duke Law School. But this was a different capacity. Was the transition difficult, coming from these other agencies to Defense?

Schlesinger: I think it was the smoothest thing that can be imagined. In the first place, I was not a wholly unknown commodity; in the second place, that building has a tendency to rally around the Secretary and give him a chance, even if they were uneasy, and I don't think they were particularly uneasy with me. Having

your Secretary jerked out after three months and having a hiatus does not calm down a building, and what that building needed was stability. The first thing I said was that the Department of Defense needed a period of stability.

Matloff: How did you prepare for the confirmation proceedings? Were you briefed within the Department?

Schlesinger: It's an interesting question, because by that time I had been confirmed about three times, and had strong support on Armed Services and was familiar with most of the issues. A general policy that I followed in the confirmation hearings was to avoid, if I could, controversial issues, saying, "I haven't had an opportunity to examine that as yet, sir, and I'll be delighted to examine it and later on come back to you." I was not going to get into controversy, and my general knowledge of defense was sufficient to carry me through. So I don't think I did a lot of preparation. Indeed, I was nominally the head of one agency and I was running another agency.

Matloff: I know you used that tack when the question came up about appointing the second Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Schlesinger: That was probably disingenuous of me. I had no intent, at that point, of appointing a second Deputy, I suspect.

Matloff: What was your initial conception of your role as Secretary of Defense and what atmosphere did you find in the Department when you took over? Watergate was beginning to have some effect by this time.

Schlesinger: Curiously, despite my experiences at the agency, in which Watergate was a very heavy weight and dominated most of my period at the agency--dealing with the allegations and the relatively minor activities of Ellsberg and all of that--when I moved over, I said to myself, or psychologically felt, that I was through with all those Watergate problems. I wasn't precisely right about that, let me say in passing. For the most part, I regarded my obligation as to run the Department and not to be the chairman of the board, but be the Secretary of Defense in terms of formulating the general policies--at least keeping a hand in weapons systems decisions and being primarily in charge of deployment policies. Every Secretary deals with the job in a different way, depending upon the strengths and limitations that he brings to the job. Because of my background, I was much more interested in things like strategy and deployment

and weapon systems selection, particularly on the strategic side, than I was in the ceremonial aspects of the job, which tended to bore me by and large. The Watergate problem was an extension of the Vietnam problem as far as the Department was concerned in that it was strengthening the forces on Capitol Hill for dragging down defense spending. So one of my tasks was to buoy up the Department. Since that was the atmosphere as I came in and I came in immediately as the champion, as it were, of the Department as far as the Defense budget was concerned, everybody would rally around. It's a lot easier to rally around your defender than it is your dismantler.

Matloff: Did you come in with definite ideas on how to run it or change it?

Schlesinger: Yes.

Matloff: You had an agenda of some kind, even though you were thrown into the post?

Schlesinger: One comes to this job with an intellectual capital of the past or intellectual biases or intellectual burdens, as the case may be. But what you have been before you tends to carry into the job. I came into the job with very clear convictions about our role as the leader of the Western World--our role, in

particular, in NATO--and what this might imply for our strategic forces. I also had certain attitudes with regard to Defense budget. Those attitudes had been developed in part at Rand and reinforced in my days at the BOB. In fact, when I was at the Bureau of the Budget I gave a speech to the Military Operations Research Society, which basically captured what I felt had been the weaknesses of the McNamara era. Those weaknesses were that the Secretary himself prescribed how money would be used and he prescribed it in a particular way. Bob McNamara said, "There shall be a force of fifteen carriers; there shall be 16 Army divisions; there will be three Marine divisions; so many air wings," and so on. He prescribed the force structure. He created great incentives for each of the military services to build as much capability into those units as they could, and that tended to drive up per unit cost. I had noticed this when I was at Rand, but I spoke out on this as a hypothetical matter when I was at the BOB, and when I was at Defense I had all of this intellectual background or baggage. So I immediately went around striking arrangements to convince the chiefs of the services that, indeed, I was not there to cut budgets. We were down to about 5 1/2 percent of the GNP

at that point and I always thought we shouldn't go below 6 1/2 percent. What I was going to do was to be prepared to protect their resources in general and if they could give me greater military capability, then I was prepared to back them to the hilt. I had the complete embrace of that proposition by General Abrams, who was warned off in part by his staff. They told him, "You can't trust any of these blokes; you tell him where you can cut and he'll take the money away and not let you use it elsewhere." I said, "I'm going to defend 785,000 men for the Army. And what I want you to do is to give me greater military strength. We have 13 divisions. I want to have greater military strength by your getting rid of obsolete missions, saving people who are just in service trades, and you give me more division flags. I will defend an expanding force structure as you take the manpower out of your hide." So my general proposition is that the Secretary can't manage the services, specifically. He's got to give the people in the services an incentive to manage better for the goals that he has. So I had those views as I came to the Department, in addition to my views of the importance of NATO, the conventional capability in NATO,

and the change in strategic doctrine. I had the opportunity to put them into play.

Goldberg: How far did you get with the Navy, with this ploy?

Schlesinger: I mentioned General Abrams; I did not get as far with the Air Force, initially, as I did with Gen. Abrams . When David Jones came in as Chief of the Air Staff, he played the game. Basically the game was, "The F-15 is a costly aircraft, and the result of this is going to be that you are going to be limited to 20 or 22 air wings. You get me cheaper equipments and we are going to be able to sustain more air wings." Ultimately, when Dave Jones came in, he said he embraced the F-16, which was about half the cost of the F-15, and we were able to raise the target for the Air Force from about 22 to 26 air wings. Gen. Brown, who had been head of Systems Command and the developer of the F-15, wasn't very enthusiastic about that, when he became Chief. Basically I said, "We've got a certain amount of resources; there's the price-quantity tradeoff; if you can do things more cheaply, we can have greater military capability. I don't have a fixed force structure in mind." So I was quite successful with the Army; less successful, initially, with the Air Force. But

ultimately, Dave Jones and the Air Force came around. I was not very successful with the Navy at all.

Goldberg: Nobody's successful with the Navy.

Schlesinger: That's right. But I shouldn't say that, because Zumwalt had this notion of the high-low mix. With regard to that, we had a reasonable meeting of the minds. It required me to attempt to get Adm. Rickover to back away from nuclear power for smaller ships. I would have been prepared to do something about the carriers as well, if the Navy had wanted to do so. But the carrier issue wasn't up. We had the low mix. Rickover came to my office one day; he had been my subordinate before, at least that's what it said on the organizational chart. He was always very deferential. The fact of the matter was that he tended to have his own agenda. He came to my office and I said, "We are going to have to have your help on Capitol Hill to get through the low end of the mix," because he was always up there saying that unless the ship was driven by a nuclear power plant, it was worthless. I said, "I am going to support the high end of the mix, and will give you total support on that. As a consequence of that, I want you to support the low end of the mix and not to say anything detrimental about it." Rick looked at me

and said, "Are you trying to bribe me, sir?" I said, "Rick, I don't want to answer that question directly, but let me point out that there is a very thin line between bribery and blackmail, and what I would like to inquire is whether you are attempting to blackmail me." His answer was, "No, sir." The fact of the matter was that Rick was not very cooperative and the Navy had a strong predilection, in general, probably reinforced by Zumwalt's lack of total support in the Navy, towards the highest quality in their ships. If the United States was going to be a world power and we were going to shrink to 380 ships, we were going to be in some trouble. So my style with the Navy was to try to induce the Navy to go along with the low end of the mix by talking about a 600-ship Navy. We never got to the 600 ships. That meant a Navy that had moderate unit costs per vessel; it wasn't a blank check. The Navy's strategy over the years has been to demand the best; to allow the force structure to shrink, if need be, during periods of low budgets; but then when the national mood turns in the direction of defense, they can restore what they have previously lost. As I watched the budgets after 1980, it wasn't clear to me that the Navy's strategy wasn't the sound one. It was not the one that

I preferred. That was with Zumwalt. Holloway, whom I appointed to succeed Zumwalt, was more in the Navy tradition. I said to him, "We can sustain 15 carriers if you're prepared to have a cheaper carrier, including possibly non-nuclear, (although nuclear looked like it was a reasonably cost-effective thing to do with the larger vessels, whereas Rick wanted to make every destroyer nuclear-powered). We are only going to be able to sustain, with our budgets, 11 or 12 carriers, if we continue to build them as nuclear carriers. We have carriers that cost $2 billion dollars." That sounded like a big sum in those days. Holloway went away and he came back and said, "We are going to take the more capable vessel." I say, I like to incentivize the services, but I am prepared to live with the service judgment in that regard. Once you've got the incentives, once you've indicated what it is you want them to accomplish militarily, if the service has a clear decision, and you try to shove another piece of equipment down their throats, you are going to have bureaucratic resistance that will ultimately thwart you. You have to have these people working with you.

Goldberg: The Navy is especially adept at this bureaucratic resistance--more so than the other services.

Schlesinger: The Army's tendency is to go along. It salutes and is prepared to go up and down as the national need requires. The Navy is a force unto itself, a society unto itself, to a large extent. It has never accepted the National Security Act of 1947. Sometimes they point out good reasons for not accepting it in spirit; of course they accept it in law. If I may develop my theme of how a Secretary must incentivize the services--if the Secretary does not try to persuade the service in general and the chiefs of the service in particular that he is taking a reasonable position and not just badgering them or beating them around, he is going to run into complete resistance. Bob McNamara with the Air Force in the early '60s was an example of that. The relationships became so bad. It was costly to Bob when we got into the Vietnam war. And it was costly to him in terms of his relations on Capitol Hill. I think that you've got to persuade the services to come along. Now, ARPA was a Secretary of Defense's instrument. I took the view with the Director of ARPA that I was not setting up a competing center of

development vis-a-vis the services, but that ARPA's function was to develop new concepts and then we would persuade the services that those concepts were ones they (the services) wanted. I cite this because there is always going to be resistance in the services; and I cite it in particular because of the development of the stealth technology. One day, for his monthly meeting, George Heilmeier, the head of ARPA at that time, came in and had a list of options that he wanted to discuss with me. I had already spelled out to him that we were not going to use his agency to develop competing equipments because if the services didn't want them they would regurgitate them, and that we had to persuade the services to make use of new technologies. His first or second option on the list was, "How would you like to make an aircraft invisible to radar?" That was the start of the stealth program right there. I overstate, it is not invisible, but it is very low visibility when we change the shape and composition of the aircraft exterior to lower the radar signal. I said that was the best of the lot on his list but I reminded him that he had to persuade the Air Force. He went off and worked with the Air Force. I kept in touch with him on his progress. Of course, the first thing the Air Force said

about the stealth concept was, "not invented here. That came out of upstairs." He kept working with them and some months later I saw him and he described how after these continued battles with the Air Force bureaucracy over the concept and cost, and fighting with the Systems Command, there was a great meeting called by the then Chief of the Air Staff, David Jones. I had said early on that once we got it started, we wanted the service to provide the funding for development of the technology. Heilmeier went through his briefing, and after all the difficulties he had previously had persuading the Air Force, at the end of the briefing Dave Jones said, "Find the money." That was the end of the dispute about the acceptability of this technology to the Air Force. Once you had the Chief of the service and the service aboard, things just steamed ahead. I regard it as one of the dramatic changes in the order of battle. It remains to be seen how effectively it advances U.S. interests, but the fact, for example, that the Soviet Union's immense investment in air defense is to some extent circumvented by the development of the stealth technology is very important in the strategic equation. It continues to be, even with the decline of the Soviet threat. There we have the critical thing, which is to get the services

working for you. This is partly the basis of my observation of the difficulties that Bob McNamara had had trying to move the F-111 down the throat of the Navy. When the Navy refused to take the F-16, we had a very careful systems analytic treatment of the YF-16 and the YF-17 and we were under considerable pressure from the Congress to choose an aircraft that would satisfy both services' needs. An ironical fact, because McNamara had run into congressional opposition when he attempted to provide such an aircraft in the F-111. There were considerable pressures, given the budget pressures, to cut back by having one aircraft. We did a very careful systems analysis and it was something that I presided over myself, which was rare enough for a weapon system. I had been interested in the lightweight fighter concept since my days at the BOB when David Packard started the prototype fly-off. I thought that that was the right procedure. R&D is another long story to go into. After we did the analysis, it was evident that even if the Navy went for something other than the YF-16 for the new carrier, which it did ultimately--the F-18--it would be cheaper to the U.S. government to allow the Air Force to go ahead because most of the fighter buying was going to be the Air Force. You did

not want to increase the unit cost of Air Force fighters simply in order to obtain the objective of a bi-service fighter. We decided that the F-16 was the right concept. It went through its tests beautifully, and has been one of our most successful weapon systems programs.

Goldberg: Let's wind it up now and make a new appointment.

Schlesinger: Yes. The only thing that is classified is that one section.