

CHAPTER 1

Two Presidents, Three Secretaries of Defense

Exulting in his landslide reelection in 1972, President Richard M. Nixon offered up a lofty vision for his second term. With the Vietnam War winding down, he believed that he could provide America “a new sense and spirit of positive pride.” His inaugural address on January 20, 1973, envisioned “a new era of peace” and a pattern of relationships with the Soviet Union and China, building on advances made during his first term. Nixon’s fiscal year (FY) 1974 budget message, sent to Congress just days after his second inaugural, outlined his ideas for “building a lasting structure of peace.” The president cited the national security accomplishments of his first term—disengagement from Vietnam, an agreement with the Soviet Union to limit strategic arms, the ending of “mutual isolation” with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and further implementation of support and military hardware rather than American troops—as the foundation of a peaceful future defined by shared interests and mutual respect among nations.¹

Under the stewardship of outgoing Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, the nation had added effective new weapons to its arsenal, ended an unfair draft system, established the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), and taken steps to promote racial equality and the role of women in the military. Together with the new diplomatic landscape, Nixon wrote, these developments had made possible a “significant but prudent reduction in our military forces” over the previous four years. By 1973 military manpower had been reduced by one-third compared to 1968, and proposed 1974 defense outlays were substantially the same as they had been in that last year of the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. Moreover, the president claimed that his administration found savings of \$2.7 billion in the projected Defense budget for 1974. Nixon’s aim was clear: a

lighter, leaner, and more effective national defense that delivered greater capabilities for less money to help the nation navigate a period of economic and strategic change. Into this cost-cutting environment stepped Nixon administration veteran Elliot L. Richardson as the 11th secretary of defense on January 30, 1973. On taking the helm, Richardson sought to deliver on the president's goals while fending off the more substantial defense spending cuts advocated by members of Congress who—voicing the concerns of many war-weary Americans—expected a post-Vietnam peace dividend.²

Nixon's high expectations for stability and fresh approaches to national security in his second term soon foundered. The June 1972 burglary of the Democratic National Committee's headquarters in Washington, DC, organized by the president's reelection committee and covered up with Nixon's participation, sparked the Watergate scandal and created leadership turmoil in the Pentagon and elsewhere. Richardson served just under four months as secretary; in late May 1973 the president nominated him to replace Richard Kleindienst as attorney general. Kleindienst had resigned to avoid leading a Watergate investigation, and in the wake of his departure Nixon placed Richardson in charge of "coordinating all Federal agencies in uncovering the whole truth" about the break-in. On July 2, Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) James R. Schlesinger succeeded Richardson as defense secretary. After Nixon's resignation in August 1974, Schlesinger went on to serve President Gerald R. Ford until November 2, 1975, when Ford dismissed him after their relationship soured. The president then appointed Donald H. Rumsfeld, his White House chief of staff, to head the Department of Defense (DoD). Ford and Rumsfeld had served together in the House of Representatives, and Nixon had appointed Rumsfeld as the U.S. ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1973. Rumsfeld remained secretary until the end of Ford's presidency in January 1977.³

Leadership turbulence in the White House and at the top levels of the Pentagon was but one aspect of the turbulent period from 1973 to 1977. For the Pentagon, the Nixon-Ford years were a time of strained relations with the White House and Congress. Major battles over budgets, the military assistance program (MAP), and aid to Vietnam reflected deep political divisions and affected the management of defense programs. This occurred as serious problems beset the U.S. economy. Rising inflation, high unemployment, falling economic growth, growing trade deficits, and increasing energy prices were painful symptoms of serious economic weaknesses that eroded the purchasing power of individuals, businesses, and the government alike. Economic conditions contributed to the shrinkage of the Defense budget in real terms, and crises abroad compounded these difficulties. In fall 1973 a major war broke out in the Middle East between Israel and a coalition of Arab nations, most prominently Egypt and Syria, that threatened to draw the United States and the Soviet Union into direct conflict. In April 1975 North Vietnamese forces overran South Vietnam after a long, divisive war that the United States had exited in early 1973. Still, DoD had to uphold U.S. treaty obligations and security commitments around the globe; confront the Soviet threat not only in Europe, but also in the Middle East and Africa; ensure Israel's survival; and shore up Asian alliances after South Vietnam's collapse. These events unfolded as Richardson, Schlesinger, and Rumsfeld struggled to forestall or minimize budget cuts that many in Congress wanted to impose. Each secretary sought to ensure that the armed services had sufficient funds for the AVF, and for weapons development, modernization, and procurement at a time of profound public skepticism about government institutions generally, and the military specifically.⁴

As a result, Richardson, Schlesinger, and Rumsfeld presided over a general decline in the size of the nation's defense establishment. When Richardson became secretary in 1973, some

2.25 million Americans were on active military duty; by mid-1976 active-duty end strength stood at 2.08 million. Between 1973 and 1977 the number of civilians employed directly by DoD fell by nearly 50,000, from 1.03 million to nearly 982,000. Fiscal year 1974 Defense outlays were estimated at \$81.1 billion, slightly over 30 percent of federal expenditures that year. This represented a marked decline from 20 years earlier, when the share of federal outlays devoted to defense had exceeded 58 percent. And it came less than a decade after President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs had expanded the social safety net and accelerated nondiscretionary spending for welfare, Medicare, and Medicaid. In the Nixon-Ford era, the secretaries of defense often found themselves on the defensive, pushing back against a post-Vietnam political tide that favored cuts in military spending to pay for increases in domestic expenditures. Substantial budget cuts affected operations and maintenance; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation; military construction and housing; military grant aid and sales; and civil defense.⁵

Men of very different personalities, Elliot Richardson, James Schlesinger, and Donald Rumsfeld brought different perspectives to the office. Richardson came to the Pentagon with cabinet-level experience in the Nixon administration, having served as secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) from 1970 to 1973, and before that, as under secretary of state from 1969 to 1970. His tenure as defense secretary was too brief to spark lasting personal or bureaucratic feuds, and no major crises roiled his time in the Pentagon. Schlesinger's service was markedly different. He was a defense intellectual, seasoned by experience at the RAND Corporation and in Nixon's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), where he had on occasion sparred with Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird and his deputy, David Packard, over defense spending. Supremely self-confident, Schlesinger could be arrogant and

abrasive. He clashed with Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and, more significantly, with President Ford. Schlesinger led the department through major crises, notably the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the fall of South Vietnam, as well as the second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II). His successor, Rumsfeld, enjoyed the benefits of a close, long-term relationship with the president. Being sympathetic with Ford's thinking and goals, he sought to improve DoD's bruised relations with the White House and the Kissinger-led State Department after Schlesinger's departure.⁶

Elliot Richardson

One day after the 1972 election Laird submitted his letter of resignation, effective at the end of Nixon's first term. Laird had agreed to serve no more than four years as a precondition to accepting the position, convinced that its demands eroded a defense secretary's effectiveness over time. On November 20 the president invited Richardson, head of HEW, to the presidential retreat at Camp David, Maryland. Richardson was unsure whether Nixon would ask him to leave the administration, remain at HEW, or take a new position. If offered the post of secretary of state or secretary of defense, he felt he could not refuse. He later claimed that he did not know at the time why the president selected him but did recall that Nixon had said he wanted Richardson to be a counterweight to Henry Kissinger, then the assistant to the president for national security affairs (a job title often shortened to national security adviser). Richardson accepted Nixon's offer on the spot but wanted the right to pick his own people—a privilege Laird had been accorded. On this point Nixon resisted. The president said he planned a "massive reorganization and reduction of the federal bureaucracy and White House staff." Anticipating pushback from

within the federal bureaucracy and mindful of Laird's adept and at times infuriating independence, Nixon wanted greater control over the makeup of his Pentagon team.⁷

For someone who distrusted and even despised the Ivy League-educated "Eastern establishment," the president's choice of Richardson for defense secretary was somewhat surprising. Richardson was a Boston Brahmin who held a law degree from Harvard and had clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. He had served as assistant to Senator Leverett A. Saltonstall (R-MA) and as an assistant secretary in HEW in the Eisenhower administration before returning to Massachusetts and serving as lieutenant governor and attorney general during the 1960s. Indeed, his education and Washington résumé seemed destined to provoke Nixon's ire. But Richardson had proven himself an exceptionally capable manager during Nixon's first term and had earned the president's personal respect. His nomination as secretary of defense received praise throughout the nation's capital. The Senate easily confirmed him on January 29, 1973.⁸

The priorities Nixon gave Richardson during his transition to secretary revolved around the organization and management of DoD. The president wanted the number of assistant secretaries in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) reduced by a third and sought to end duplication in intelligence programs—a problem that had made its way to the president's desk during his first term. In a January 4, 1973, oval office meeting with Richardson and Kissinger, the president stressed that the greatest waste in DoD lay in research and development (R&D). Richardson received orders to cut back on R&D and ensure that the remaining work got done—in the president's words—"by those who favor a strong defense" and "not by those who opposed it like the universities." Nixon also directed his defense secretary-designate to dismantle "the McNamara system" of management reforms instituted during the Kennedy and Johnson

administrations. Laird had replaced nearly all high-level personnel appointed by defense secretaries Robert S. McNamara and Clark Clifford before the end of his tenure, and had extensively modified McNamara's Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) for managing the Defense budget process.⁹

Some of Nixon's comments in this meeting with Richardson blended criticism of McNamara with implicit rebukes of Laird. In the McNamara years, Nixon asserted, "the Department always ran the Secretaries rather than the Secretaries running the Department, and that must be changed." Expressing his dislike of Laird's style of management, Nixon told Richardson, "We hadn't had a Secretary of Defense who was really Secretary. We had brokers but no guiding principles." Alluding to his sometimes-tense relations with the departing secretary, Nixon said he expected that in the future "the White House would not be in competition with the Secretary of Defense." Richardson was to be a strong secretary, participate heavily in the National Security Council (NSC) system, and work closely with Kissinger. Nixon added that he would continue to exercise his prerogative to see Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Admiral Thomas H. Moorer from time to time in private but pledged to keep Richardson informed. This private channel between the oval office and the CJCS had created tension and mistrust when Laird was secretary. In total, Nixon's guidance seemed calibrated to keep the new secretary on a tight leash. The president wanted no repetition of the problems he had with Laird, who had used his political ties with Congress to give himself greater freedom to act.¹⁰

On entering the Pentagon, Richardson heard complaints about how Laird had operated. Nixon's first defense secretary had been criticized within the institution for not devoting enough energy to the building's complex management challenges, especially when it came to navigating

the competing demands of the armed services. Some saw his vaunted “participatory management” style as exercising little to no actual management. Without mentioning Laird by name, Kissinger complained that during Nixon’s first term the DoD had effectively gutted the Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC) he had created within the NSC to review the Defense budget. He charged that DoD had “sabotaged any attempt to have an NSC process look at these things until they were so far down the road that no one could even catch up with them.” Days before assuming his new responsibilities, Richardson told Kissinger that he planned to “initiate a review of quite a number of fairly fundamental things,” and to arrange what he called “interfaces” with the NSC. Richardson hoped a new approach would help transcend longstanding service parochialism.¹¹

Stung by his interactions with Laird, Kissinger remained keenly sensitive about slights he perceived coming from the Pentagon during Richardson’s brief tenure. In April 1973 he fumed at the defense secretary for failing to adhere to White House instructions for recommending a new Air Force chief of staff. Richardson had sent the president, via Kissinger, the name of General George S. Brown, commander of Air Force Systems Command, whom Richardson said possessed “across-the-board qualifications” no other officer could match. But Kissinger had instructed the secretary to provide three names, not one. “I’m trying to get my blood pressure under control,” Kissinger told Richardson on April 23. “When we send over a presidential request—it has to be complied with,” he further exclaimed. Richardson assured the national security adviser that he had considered other generals, and said he wanted to avoid getting into a “a test of strength” over such matters. But the new secretary also stood his ground with the powerful Kissinger, saying he would henceforth handle such nominations differently “if the President wants to specifically request” that he do so. In a vintage performance, Kissinger

responded that the secretary should consider requests from him as coming from the president. Still, Richardson sent no more names, and despite the outburst, the president proceeded to nominate General Brown.¹²

Richardson's brief tenure coincided with the release of the FY 1974 president's budget, and as a result much of what occupied his time as secretary related to authorization and appropriation proceedings in Congress. Richardson entered office convinced that despite the diplomatic advances of Nixon's first term and political pressure to restrain defense spending, the United States still needed to maintain a robust defense capability. In his annual report, released in April, the secretary cautioned against beating "swords into plowshares," and stressed instead the importance of a sufficient nuclear deterrent and well-trained, well-equipped conventional forces to deter aggression and respond to crises. Unlike Nixon, he defended the necessity of a "vigorous research and development program" to preserve the nation's technological superiority over its adversaries. The FY 1974 budget proposal, which he inherited but tweaked, expressed these priorities. Richardson shared the president's concern that congressional cuts to defense and foreign assistance would have a disastrous effect on the ongoing SALT negotiations, forthcoming talks with the Soviets on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR), and the fledgling peace settlement in Vietnam. Accordingly, the FY 1974 budget proposed new obligational authority (NOA) of over \$85 billion, more than \$5 billion higher than the previous fiscal year. Requested outlays were \$79 billion, more than \$4 billion higher than the previous year. Nonetheless, as a percentage of total federal spending, proposed FY 1974 defense spending would still be at its lowest level since FY 1950.¹³

In congressional testimony, Richardson defended the proposed increase, pushing back against legislators, such as House Appropriations Committee chairman Representative George H.

Mahon (D-TX), who argued that defense spending should fall following the end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The secretary forcefully laid out his belief that the end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the emergence of détente did not fundamentally alter the need for forward-deployed, well-funded military forces, and countered that “the so-called peace dividend” had already been invested in domestic programs. On this final point, the former HEW secretary spoke with authority. He also opposed reducing U.S. forces stationed in Europe because cutbacks there would represent “a tragic reversal of longstanding and successful American policy.” In support of the Nixon Doctrine, Richardson defended the military assistance program, characterizing cuts as “a false economy and an undue risk.”¹⁴

Richardson’s forceful defense of department resources was rooted in sound staff work in OSD. At the start of his tenure, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis Gardiner L. Tucker, a Laird appointee who remained in the position until March 30, 1973, advised the new secretary of the heightened competition the DoD faced for federal dollars, especially from entitlement spending programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. It was clear to him that DoD resources would not increase markedly over the next few years. He wrote of consensus within the administration that “projected fiscal imbalances and deficits are of such a magnitude,” and national security requirements were “so irreducible,” that Nixon’s goals of full employment, low inflation, and real growth could not be achieved “except through painful adjustments to non-Defense programs.” In this fiscal environment the DoD would need to do a better job of relating forces and programs to defense policy, strategy, and planning guidance.¹⁵ Richardson later recalled he had come to the Pentagon with “a very low regard for the capacity and adequacy of the Department of Defense’s geostrategic, geopolitical analysis,” and found the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) “very unsatisfactory” on geostrategic issues. He wanted to strengthen

the department's capacity for relating security responsibilities to force levels, weapon systems, and deployments. He argued, "We ought to be able to move back and forth between what our responsibilities are and what requirements they impose, without discontinuity at any point in the whole process."¹⁶

Richardson, who thought Laird had wrongly prioritized the preservation of interservice harmony, aimed to curtail the style of internal horse-trading that had essentially guaranteed each service an equal slice of the Defense budget. To reach a more favorable result, minimally skewed by interservice bargaining, Richardson wanted to create a "genuinely pervasive planning mechanism" that would scrutinize issues and programs on their merits. He hoped to embed this process "in the very guts of the system so that you couldn't begin to address any significant issue of competing claims for a given function or resources without going through it."¹⁷ Given the opportunity to follow through on this vision, Richardson might have been a transformational secretary of defense. In the end, though, he had no opportunity to implement, test, and refine his ambitious plans. Fresh revelations about the Watergate break-in made front-page news almost every day of Richardson's tenure in the Pentagon, and those revelations slowly but inexorably implicated President Nixon. As they did, the beleaguered president devoted ever larger amounts of energy to damage control and then to self-preservation.¹⁸ He calculated that making Richardson attorney general, and giving him oversight of the Watergate investigation, would yield political benefits. In this Nixon was gravely mistaken. When handed a presidential order that October to fire Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox, Richardson, whose reputation for integrity was unassailable, resigned his position as attorney general rather than carry it out. After four months as secretary of defense and barely five as attorney general, Richardson left government.¹⁹

James Schlesinger

To replace Richardson, Nixon turned to his director of central intelligence (DCI), James Schlesinger, who had been in that job only since February 1973. Unlike the managerial-minded Richardson, Schlesinger was a defense intellectual with little curiosity about (or patience for) the inner workings of the bureaucracy. He brought to the job a keen analytical mind sharpened by a blend of assignments that had made him a formidable advocate on issues that mattered to him. He had honed his defense analytical skills as the director of strategic studies at the RAND Corporation from 1963 until 1969, when he joined the Nixon administration as assistant director of the Bureau of the Budget (later OMB). From August 1971 until his CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) appointment, Schlesinger served as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Years later he offered only a few sketchy details when asked why Nixon had plucked him from CIA to become secretary of defense. He knew that Army Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, had evidently urged the president to select a known quantity for the defense position.²⁰ But by then Schlesinger had also earned a reputation for toughness, and Nixon had become fully aware of his abilities and his brusque personality. He had come to the president's attention early in the first term after butting heads with Laird over the Defense budget and had then gone on to direct a review of the U.S. Intelligence Community. At the AEC Schlesinger had cut the payroll, resolved production problems, and streamlined procedures for licensing nuclear power plants. When protesters opposed an underground nuclear test at Amchitka Island in the Aleutians, Schlesinger made a point by staying at the site with his wife and two of their children to show his confidence that the test would be safe. It was the kind of bravado-over-bureaucracy that Nixon admired. During his brief tenure as director of central

intelligence Schlesinger recalled asking more than 1,000 employees to resign or retire.

“Ruthless?” the future defense secretary opined to an aide, “I’m just trying to clear the aisle so I can walk.”²¹

Nixon announced Schlesinger’s nomination as defense secretary on May 10, but he was not sworn in until July 2. Schlesinger later recalled that Senator William Proxmire (D-WI) had held up his confirmation “simply because I could not/would not give any guarantee” about halting B-52 strikes in Cambodia and Laos. At the same time, Congress debated whether to prohibit funding for military operations in Southeast Asia and set a cutoff date of August 15, 1973.²² In the unexpectedly long period between Schlesinger’s nomination and confirmation he moved out of CIA headquarters and into an office in the Pentagon, acting as secretary (but making no public pronouncements) with the permission of Senate Armed Services Committee chairman John C. Stennis (D-MS). William P. Clements Jr.—the deputy secretary of defense from January 1973 to January 1977—provided continuity within the building during the transition. Schlesinger recalled receiving no specific instructions from President Nixon, either oral or written, yet he characterized his move to the defense post as smooth—partly because he was a well-established figure. With such a significant shuffling of cabinet personnel so early in Nixon’s second term, Schlesinger also benefited from the general expectation that he would serve longer as defense secretary than Richardson. He further recalled meeting privately with the president every four to six weeks early in his tenure but added that those sessions grew less frequent as Nixon became more enmeshed in Watergate.²³

At his first staff meeting as secretary (with a group known as the Armed Forces Policy Council) on July 3, Schlesinger concentrated on the importance of making a smooth transition. He would give priority to filling vacant positions, so his team could operate at full strength, and

would model his immediate office roughly in the same way Laird had organized his. Martin R. Hoffman, who had been with Schlesinger as general counsel at the Atomic Energy Commission, would become his special assistant. Army Brig. Gen. John A. Wickham Jr. and Air Force Col. Robert C. Taylor would continue as his military assistants.²⁴

In office, Schlesinger lived up to his reputation as someone with a difficult personality. He had gotten past an awkward beginning with Nixon early in the president's first term—Nixon had allegedly quipped once, "I don't want to see that guy in my office again"—on the strength of his competency. But the same could not be said of his start with Kissinger, a classmate from the Harvard class of 1950. Both men had large egos and were quick to react to the slightest perceived threats to their prerogatives. Kissinger's influence—already significant in mid-1973—grew considerably after he added the title of secretary of state to his sprawling portfolio. He and Schlesinger were two of the Nixon administration's most strong-willed personalities, and policy differences compounded their adversarial relationship. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., a firsthand witness to their many squabbles, shrewdly characterized the two men: Schlesinger was the superior strategic theorist, but Kissinger was the more capable bureaucrat.²⁵

As secretary, Schlesinger chose to delegate responsibility for most detailed management and organizational matters and instead focus on what he believed were critical strategic issues. To him, the job of secretary was "to be the Secretary of Defense in terms of formulating the general policies," and not to get mired in managerial detail. He believed his tenure would be characterized by the global competition for scarce resources and shifting power relationships. He thought the nation's deep, long-term involvement in Vietnam had allowed Soviet power to grow relative to a weakening NATO; with the end of the war in Southeast Asia, Schlesinger believed, "the really important things were the future of Europe, our relations with the Soviet Union." It

would be essential, he stressed, to “re-anchor the strategic forces of the United States to the defense of Western Europe.” Costly commitments elsewhere, in what he viewed as peripheral areas of the world, were to be avoided because they drained the nation’s energies out of proportion to those areas’ strategic value to the United States. During his tenure, for example, Schlesinger engaged intensively on problems in Latin America and Africa only when they reached crisis levels. His driving concern with reviving U.S. power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union meant Schlesinger’s aim elsewhere in the world was simply to maintain U.S. power and prevent it from eroding.

To reorient U.S. national defense along what he saw as its proper mooring on the Cold War’s east-west axis, Schlesinger believed the Defense budget needed to grow. To him, the U.S.-Soviet military balance was the only reliable measuring stick for U.S. national security; not only was the larger, more dangerous Soviet threat to U.S. security still there, it had been getting stronger.²⁶ He believed the intelligence estimates that informed U.S. defense planning failed to capture the full extent of Soviet defense spending, that Moscow had started outspending the United States in recent years, and that as a result the military balance had been moving in Moscow’s favor. But Schlesinger also believed that those gains came at a heavier cost to the Soviet economy than U.S. analysts recognized. Yes, the near-term Soviet military threat was greater than the Nixon administration had yet recognized; but in the longer term, he argued, Moscow would have an increasingly hard time matching any increases in the U.S. defense budget. For this reason, like Richardson, Schlesinger thought it misguided to use the nation’s withdrawal from Vietnam as justification for leveling-off or reducing defense spending. The end of that long war presented the United States with an opportunity to reallocate resources to where they were more urgently needed in the world.

Ever the analyst, Schlesinger wanted a deeper understanding of the balance of military capabilities than shallow, numerical comparisons of U.S. and Soviet military hardware or total units could provide. He knew, for example, that U.S. Air Force fighters and bombers, and U.S. Army ground combat systems, were technologically more advanced and more capable than comparable Soviet systems. Therefore, he reasoned, the Soviet Union's advantage in numbers of aircraft, and in overall quantity of ground forces—its greater numbers of army divisions, for example—were questionable estimates. The United States spent considerably more per weapon system than the Soviet Union did to produce more sophisticated and more capable American weapons. This advantage imposed higher costs in personnel as well because high-tech systems required operators with advanced training. For this reason, personnel costs consumed a significantly higher share of the U.S. Defense budget (approximately 55 percent) than they did of Soviet military expenditures (roughly 20 percent). Recent growth in Soviet defense spending deeply concerned Schlesinger, but he concluded that Washington surpassed Moscow in fielding greater defense capability.

During his brief tenure as DCI, Schlesinger had questioned the CIA's widely accepted estimate that the United States and the Soviet Union devoted comparable shares of their economies—roughly 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP)—to national defense. How, he wondered, could the Soviet Union, with a GDP half that of the United States, be spending the same percentage of its overall economy on national defense, yet field significantly larger forces than Washington could? The difference was so great, Schlesinger believed, that personnel costs alone could not explain it. As defense secretary he aimed to continue to challenge CIA's estimates and to introduce more realistic analysis of the military balance into U.S. defense planning. Toward that end, in one of his most consequential moves as secretary, in October of

1973 Schlesinger recruited Andrew W. Marshall—a brilliant analytical mind and a trusted friend from his RAND days—from the NSC staff to do just that as his director of net assessment. Informed by Marshall’s analyses, Schlesinger made the case to a skeptical Congress for real growth in the Defense budget. Aided by a modest uptick in public support for higher defense spending following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the fall of South Vietnam in April 1975, the secretary secured what he later called “substantial growth” in the Defense budget in FYs 1975 and 1976.²⁷

While effective within the administration and with Congress on budget and other matters, Schlesinger could at times be his own worst enemy. To more than a few officials, his brilliance and self-assurance created the impression that he “seemed in a perpetual state of condescension.” Schlesinger’s visible feud with Kissinger, which mixed bureaucratic turf battles with personality and policy differences, drew unwanted media attention to an administration already swamped with Watergate. By early June 1974, relations between the two had so deteriorated that Schlesinger instructed his subordinates to “accept no guidance ‘under the sun’ from State on any subject,” noting, “anyone receiving guidance will report it to me and we will develop our own policy here in this building.” In April 1974 Schlesinger told his staff, “I’ve reached the conclusion that the NSSM [National Security Study Memorandum] process is HAK’s [Kissinger’s] way to keep the bureaucracy busy—so don’t be hot about moving out smartly” to comply with Kissinger’s requests. The defense secretary would sometimes even lecture the president. During an NSC meeting on June 20, 1974, with the Watergate crisis nearing its climax, Schlesinger tactlessly exhorted Nixon to use his “great forensic skills” to persuade Soviet leaders at an upcoming summit meeting to accept arms control proposals that they had rejected only months before. In Kissinger’s words: “Only a conviction that Nixon was finished could

have produced so condescending a presentation by a cabinet officer to his President.” In his diary Nixon wrote that Schlesinger’s appeal was “really an insult to everybody’s intelligence and particularly to mine.”²⁸

Schlesinger was equally condescending to Nixon’s successor, Gerald Ford. In his memoir Ford admitted that Schlesinger’s “aloof, frequently arrogant manner put me off” and recounted several incidents where the defense secretary’s personality and behavior created political challenges for his administration. Ford resented, for example, the “strange way” Schlesinger tried to have Deputy Secretary of Defense William Clements fired. The defense secretary brought concerns to the president about Clements’s engagement on DoD matters related to oil-producing Middle East nations, despite up-front assurances that Clements (a Texas oil entrepreneur before becoming deputy secretary) had given to avoid such matters. Ford found that Schlesinger’s assertions about Clements “lacked substance,” and he declined to dismiss the deputy defense secretary, whom he respected. Ford also found fault with Schlesinger’s actions around the time of Nixon’s resignation. Two weeks after Nixon’s departure a flurry of newspaper reports suggested that, in the waning days of the president’s tenure, Schlesinger had instructed the Joint Chiefs to inform him immediately of any orders coming from the White House and to avoid taking action without his say. Ford was stunned to find out that Schlesinger himself, in comments at a press luncheon, had been the source of the reports. He later wrote that for Schlesinger to suggest that military commanders under civilian control might become involved in “illegal action” at a moment of national crisis was “to stab our armed forces in the back.” To the president, such action by a secretary of defense was “inexcusable.” Looking back years later, Schlesinger characterized the situation differently. He recalled being concerned about the unique circumstances surrounding the impeachment process and said that he “had given

instructions that any order from the White House that came in other than through me was to be sent to me directly and not to be acted upon.” Schlesinger said he did not discuss the matter with President Ford, but noted, unapologetically, that he had given the order to “insure [*sic*] the integrity of the chain of command” during unprecedented times.²⁹

By autumn 1975 President Ford’s relationship with Schlesinger, never harmonious, reached the breaking point. During the fall of Saigon to communist forces that April and the *Mayaguez* hijacking a few weeks later, the president thought Schlesinger had deliberately ignored presidential orders. He also regarded certain comments the secretary made in meetings on the crises as bordering on insubordination. The president continued to lose patience with Schlesinger through that summer. The end came in October, as Congress and the administration tried to settle on a Defense budget that met the nation’s security needs but fit within fiscal limits. That month Representative Mahon, as the House Appropriations Committee chairman, trimmed over \$7 billion from the president’s FY 1976 DoD budget request—a cut Schlesinger characterized as “deep, savage, and arbitrary” in public remarks delivered from the Pentagon press room. The president, who had come of age professionally in the House, and who considered Mahon a personal friend, found the secretary’s comments personally offensive and thought such a public broadside would make it harder to get adequate funding restored before the bill’s final passage. Ford believed in the efficacy of direct talks with chairmen of congressional committees, and after Schlesinger’s affront he concluded it was no longer possible to have a productive relationship with his inherited defense secretary. On November 2, 1975, the president made sweeping changes in his national security team. He fired Schlesinger and asked DCI William E. Colby to resign. He promoted Air Force Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft to national security adviser, replacing Kissinger, who continued as secretary of state. George H. W. Bush, head of

the U.S. liaison office in Beijing, China, replaced Colby at CIA. Ford nominated Donald H. Rumsfeld, his trusted White House chief of staff, to be the new secretary of defense.³⁰

Donald Rumsfeld

Forty-three years old when he took the oath of office on November 20, 1975, Rumsfeld was the youngest person ever to become secretary of defense. With experience in the military and in elected office, his background differed markedly from the man he replaced. Rumsfeld had served as a U.S. Navy pilot from 1954 to 1957 and had been elected four times as a congressman from Illinois (1963–1969), working alongside House Minority Leader Gerald Ford. He resigned from the House in 1969 and served in a succession of high-level executive positions in the Nixon administration: director of the Office of Economic Opportunity (1969–1970), director of the Cost of Living Council (1971–1972), and ambassador to NATO (1973–1974). Immediately after Nixon announced his resignation, Ford summoned Rumsfeld from his NATO post in Europe to help manage his transition to the Oval Office. According to Rumsfeld, Ford later selected him for the defense post because he knew that Schlesinger and Rumsfeld shared the same outlook on national security. But Rumsfeld came to the job with a positive, longstanding relationship with the president and without the personal baggage Schlesinger had carried in ample supply. The president expected the new secretary to help improve the strained relations between the State and Defense Departments.³¹

Rumsfeld's relationship with the president was based on mutual respect. The incoming secretary had sharp differences with Kissinger, as had Schlesinger, but at the president's request he kept them out of the media. Rumsfeld was also quick to protect the DoD's institutional interests. For example, early on he noticed that the volume of sensitive State Department cables

sent to the Pentagon had fallen off by the end of Schlesinger's tenure, a development he saw as evidence of the rivalry and disagreements between the two secretaries. With this restricted flow of information, Rumsfeld observed, the "Pentagon wasn't hearing what was going on and wasn't involved." Stressing the importance of close cooperation between the departments and Ford's desire to improve Defense-State ties, he persuaded Kissinger to be more cooperative. Slowly, the flow of high-level information from the State Department to the Department of Defense resumed.³²

Like Schlesinger, Rumsfeld advocated for increased defense spending. He shared his predecessor's concern that the decline in U.S. defense expenditures had undermined the country's military capability relative to that of the Soviet Union. Moreover, Rumsfeld concurred with Schlesinger's assessment that the CIA had seriously underestimated the scale of Soviet defense efforts and expenditures, and he considered the growing Soviet threat as reason enough for the United States to ramp up its own defense spending. Under pointed questioning by Senator Barry M. Goldwater (R-AZ) during his November 1975 confirmation hearing, Rumsfeld stressed that "the bedrock on which U.S. budgets should be built has to be our capabilities relative to adversaries." The United States "should, in fact, provide real increases in the defense budget" or risk falling behind the Soviet Union in military capability. Shortly after taking office, he consulted Director of Net Assessment Andrew W. Marshall and found that while Moscow had not yet achieved equivalence in terms of military capability, the trend lines were such that "they [the Soviets] were moving up and we were in decline." Moreover, as a former NATO ambassador, he understood both the state of the transatlantic alliance and the critical importance of keeping U.S. forces stationed in Europe. An early advocate of the AVF from his time in Congress, Rumsfeld was also determined that the initiative succeed so the nation would not need

to reinstitute conscription. Aware that the Pentagon could no longer rely solely on active-duty forces, he thoroughly supported Laird's Total Force concept. In his view, in times of crisis or war, reserve and National Guard forces would be indispensable.³³

Limited by the timing of his appointment from initiating major personnel changes at senior levels of the department—he took office less than a year before the 1976 presidential election—Rumsfeld moved to shape OSD around the margins to suit his management priorities. He quickly seized the opportunity to fill the second deputy secretary of defense position that Melvin Laird had created in 1972.³⁴ Like Laird, Schlesinger had left it vacant, but Rumsfeld persuaded Robert F. Ellsworth, the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, to take the position and concentrate on intelligence issues. Rumsfeld viewed Ellsworth's appointment as a way to remove potential problems in dealing with the Intelligence Community. Moreover, Ellsworth had been Rumsfeld's predecessor at NATO, and he knew the new director of central intelligence, George H. W. Bush. Like Rumsfeld and the president, Ellsworth had also served in the House of Representatives, which equipped him to deal effectively with Congress on intelligence matters. Sworn in on December 23, 1975, he was second in precedence behind Clements and received full power to act for the secretary in all matters relating to intelligence. He exercised direct authority over the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the National Security Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, and the operations of the assistant secretary for intelligence. He also would present and defend before congressional committees the intelligence portions of the Defense budget. Ellsworth was the first and only person to serve in the second deputy position before it was terminated during the Carter administration in 1977.³⁵

Elevating a trusted, longtime friend to deputy secretary gave Rumsfeld something of a bureaucratic shield from Clements, with whom the secretary had developed an uneasy

relationship. Ellsworth's appointment effectively reduced the number of interactions the two had in conducting DoD business. Rumsfeld did not consider Clements a policy adviser, and although the deputy was deeply involved in acquisitions, Rumsfeld tried to limit his participation in other matters. Rumsfeld later characterized Clements as "a frustrated Secretary of Defense and State combined," and believed Clements's continual criticism of Schlesinger had been harmful to the former secretary. When an interviewer observed that Clements later served two terms as governor of Texas, Rumsfeld retorted, "I'm surprised he didn't pull it [the state] out of the union," suggesting how difficult it was for him to get along with the deputy.³⁶ For his part, Clements complained that "Rumsfeld ... thought he could come to DoD and ... run it like he ran the White House. By law, he couldn't do that." Looking back, Clements concluded that he and Rumsfeld "never agreed on anything."³⁷

The political dynamics of the Watergate period and the impending 1976 presidential campaign shaped Rumsfeld's tenure as secretary. As the election approached, the Republican Party split into moderate and conservative factions in a schism that had implications for national security policy. Moderate Republicans, like Ford, looked to the example of the Eisenhower administration, advocating a strong military and a willingness to seek arms accords with the Soviet Union. A growing conservative wing of the Republican Party, however, generally opposed détente and increasingly embraced the principles advanced by Senator Barry Goldwater, the unsuccessful 1964 Republican presidential nominee, who tended to speak in staunchly anticommunist terms, lean on U.S. military power to settle a wide swath of international disputes, and oppose federal involvement in domestic social policy issues. Nixon had won elections with politics that managed to be both bellicose and flexible, bridging the Republican factions even as they grew farther apart. Ford, an unelected president and a product of the

Republican establishment, lacked the political strength to straddle the divide. Conservatives criticized his close ties to Kissinger, pursuit of détente with the Soviets, and his choice of a liberal republican, Nelson A. Rockefeller, to be his vice president.³⁸

The competing visions for the party crystallized in 1975 with the emergence of former California governor Ronald Reagan as a challenger to Ford in the Republican primaries. His insurgent campaign for the 1976 Republican nomination took aim at détente, the administration's negotiations over the Panama Canal, and other instances of what Reagan called the "collapse of the American will and the retreat of American power" under Ford's leadership. He argued that the United States had fallen behind the Soviet Union in military strength, and at one point he skewered détente for delivering little more for the United States than "the right to sell Pepsi-Cola in Siberia." Ford wanted arms control talks to proceed, but as Reagan's blows landed with greater effect the president found himself increasingly on the defensive as he fought for a presidential term in his own right. He stopped using the word détente, calling it "no longer applicable to the situation," and decided to defer further talks with the Soviets until after the election. For his part, Rumsfeld tried to steer clear of the increasingly raucous campaign but found that doing so was "easier said than done," given that the campaign increasingly centered on national security concerns. Rumsfeld later wrote of the difficulty he experienced as secretary of defense in navigating these unsettled political waters. He found Reagan's criticism about U.S. military decline vis-à-vis the Soviet Union valid, if overstated. As secretary he found himself pointing out the reality of this decline in order to persuade skeptics in Congress to approve increases in the Defense budget, but in doing so he risked giving ammunition to Ford's critics. Kissinger later characterized Rumsfeld as "determined to help Ford survive the political wars without suffering too many lasting wounds himself." Much to Kissinger's chagrin, the defense

secretary resisted new diplomatic and military initiatives to maintain the administration's credibility with moderates and conservatives.³⁹

Deputy Secretary of Defense William Clements

By the mid-1970s the position of deputy secretary of defense had evolved into its modern form of managing departmental affairs on a day-to-day basis and handling critical high-level administrative issues— thereby allowing the secretary to focus on strategy, political relations, and policy.⁴⁰ But William Clements's temperament did not fit the mold; he persistently sought to do more. Like Melvin Laird's first deputy, David Packard (cofounder of the Hewlett-Packard Company), Clements came to the Pentagon with experience as an entrepreneur and business executive. He had started the Southeast Drilling Company (SEDCO) and built it into one of the largest oil-drilling companies in the world. As a condition of confirmation, the Senate Armed Services Committee directed Clements to disentangle himself from his business interests by giving up management control of SEDCO, selling his shares of the Keebler Company (the baking outfit sold cookies, crackers, and biscuits to DoD), and avoiding all oil-related issues in his work as deputy secretary.⁴¹

Although Clements came from the private sector, he was quite well-connected politically. In 1968 he headed the Nixon presidential campaign in Texas, and from 1969 to 1970 he served on the Blue Ribbon Defense Panel that Laird had assembled to review the department's organization. On November 22, 1972, two days after Nixon had met with Richardson about becoming defense secretary, the president summoned Clements to Camp David and offered him the deputy secretary's job. According to the president's diary, Clements and Nixon met for slightly less than one hour, from 2:07 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Years after leaving office, however,

Clements claimed that Nixon met with him for three hours and gave him a wide-ranging charter—authority to recruit service secretaries, assistant secretaries, and other senior officials—a claim that exceeds the deputy secretary’s traditional authority and conflicted with Richardson’s understanding that Nixon would allow him to select his appointees. Clements avowed that Nixon wanted him to handle acquisitions, intelligence, and promotions within the services. The deputy secretary aimed to reverse the “trend toward Soviet superiority” in weapons, which he believed was Moscow’s goal. He worried that the high costs and long development times of new weapon systems would continue to handicap the United States.⁴² With this expansive portfolio in mind, Clements was sworn in on January 30, 1973. He served until January 20, 1977, a tenure that included the entire presidential terms of Nixon and Ford. In a time of personnel turbulence at the top, Clements’s tenure represented continuity and stability, even though he clashed regularly with Schlesinger and Rumsfeld.

While Schlesinger and Rumsfeld regularly jostled with Kissinger, Clements quickly forged a cooperative relationship with the national security adviser. In Clements’s first few months on the job Kissinger called him regularly, developing something of an alternate channel to the DoD. During Richardson’s brief tenure the frequent Clements-Kissinger interactions centered on personnel matters, with Kissinger expressing his and the president’s preferences for senior OSD appointments. Clements, deferential and eager to please both Kissinger and the president, dutifully followed instructions. In one early instance Kissinger called saying he was “sick and tired of my personally having to call every subordinate bloody officer in order to get Presidential orders carried out,” and adding, “The only guy I feel I can call in Defense and get enthusiastic support is you.”⁴³ Kissinger’s efforts to cultivate Clements during Richardson’s tenure were consistent with his established practice (honed during Nixon’s first term) of

communicating directly with second- and third-tier Pentagon officials in an effort to go around the defense secretary. It would pay dividends when Schlesinger and Rumsfeld took the helm.

Clements claimed he had “a solid working relationship” with Richardson (the two were sworn in on the same day), but their time together was too short to evaluate how well they might have resolved any differences. The deputy secretary acknowledged his difficulties with Schlesinger, which he attributed to differences in personality as well as an underlying difference of views on defense policy. On the issue of nuclear strategy, the deputy secretary thought Schlesinger focused too heavily on what he called “the nuances of nuclear exchange,” which he believed was “an absolute waste of time.” Maintaining a capability to inflict assured destruction upon the Soviets—the strategy articulated by Robert McNamara in the early 1960s—impressed Clements as still adequate in the mid-1970s. This fundamental disconnect lingered and carried profound implications for their working relationship. In Clements’s view, Schlesinger “would like to debate endlessly with his court ... [it] was an academic discussion.”⁴⁴ For his part, Schlesinger scorned his deputy as “forceful but lacking in judgment.” According to Air Force secretary John L. McLucas, the friction between the two was so pervasive it allowed aides to take advantage: “There was a joke ... that if you didn’t like the answer you got from Clements you could go to Schlesinger, and he would overturn it every time. If you thought you’d get a no from Schlesinger, you could wait until he was out of town and then ask Clements.”⁴⁵

Key OSD Officials

Richardson’s short tenure as secretary of defense allowed him little time to replace the full slate of Laird appointees. This meant that the first wave of nominations and appointments of Nixon’s second term did not begin to take shape until the summer of 1973, when Schlesinger started

bringing new leaders into the department. A second, considerably smaller period of turnover occurred in the months following Rumsfeld's appointment as secretary in November 1975. Broadly, the churn of having three secretaries of defense in four years, combined with the post-Vietnam dislocations in the defense establishment and the political turmoil of Watergate, hampered the ability to attract candidates to fill senior positions in OSD and to retain incumbents at the assistant secretary and deputy assistant secretary levels.

After nearly eight years spanning the Johnson and Nixon administrations as the director of defense research and engineering (DDR&E), John S. Foster Jr. left OSD in June 1973. The director was the chief adviser to the secretary for scientific and engineering matters. His successor, Malcolm R. Currie, had worked as an engineer and manager at the Hughes Aircraft Company during the 1950s and 1960s, rising to the position of associate director of Hughes Research Laboratories. From 1969 to 1973, he was vice president for research and development at Beckman Instruments, Incorporated, a manufacturer of biomedical instruments. Currie was the first in a series of DDR&Es from the aerospace and electronics industries. During his early days at the Pentagon, he sought to build close working relationships with the service secretaries.⁴⁶ Currie represented a rare bit of continuity in OSD, maintaining his tenure from June 1973 through the end of the Ford administration and putting his imprint upon practically every weapon system under development during that period.⁴⁷

Richardson and Schlesinger struggled to fill the position of assistant secretary for international security affairs (ISA), one of the most important policy posts in DoD. ISA had responsibility for the military dimensions of U.S. international relationships, and despite the importance of continuity during this complex period, six different people served as head of ISA between January 1973 and January 1977. Three served in an acting capacity. The first Senate-

confirmed appointee, Ambassador Robert C. Hill, took office in May 1973 and served just under eight months before leaving the Pentagon in January 1974.⁴⁸ Early in 1974 Schlesinger offered the ISA job to Paul H. Nitze, a high-profile Democrat who had filled that post from 1961 to 1963 before going on to serve as secretary of the Navy and deputy secretary of defense. Laird had also wanted Nitze to return to ISA during Nixon's first term, but conservative Republicans in the senate, led by Goldwater, strongly objected to the nomination. Nitze had served on the U.S. SALT delegation and retained a reputation for hawkishness toward the Soviet Union, but he had been an object of Goldwater's ire since the early 1960s. When Schlesinger pushed to have Nitze named assistant secretary for ISA in January 1974, President Nixon, perhaps reluctant to alienate a conservative icon whose vote he might need in a possible impeachment trial, quietly shelved the nomination rather than sending it to the Senate. With no return to ISA in the offing, Nitze rejoined the U.S. SALT delegation for a short time. He resigned from the delegation four months later, concerned that Nixon might make unwise concessions to the Soviet Union to get an arms control deal that might improve his dreary political fortunes.⁴⁹

Having a seasoned professional of Nitze's stature at the helm might have bolstered ISA's standing under Schlesinger. Without him, the storied office entered a period of drift. Schlesinger later recalled giving the ISA office a circumscribed role, saying that with his own personal focus on NATO and Western Europe, ISA "tended to pick up the areas of the world I was less interested in." Ironically, after the Nitze nomination fell through Schlesinger chose two men with high-level NATO experience for the ISA post. In May 1974 he turned to Robert Ellsworth, a former Republican congressman from Kansas (1961–1967) and ambassador to NATO (1969–1971). Ellsworth served as head of ISA from June 5, 1974, until December 22, 1975, when Rumsfeld elevated him to the second deputy secretary of defense position. Ellsworth's successor,

Eugene V. McAuliffe, a foreign service officer, had served as deputy chief of mission in the U.S. delegation to NATO and as U.S. ambassador to Hungary. He led ISA from May 1976 through the end of the Ford administration.⁵⁰

The Office of Systems Analysis had evoked strong emotions since its creation early in Robert McNamara's tenure as secretary. Uniformed officers especially resented what they saw as unwise intrusions into military issues by arrogant civilian systems analysts. Despite congressional criticism, Laird retained the office during Nixon's first term and relied on its analyses. He did, however, make staffing cuts that reduced the number of personnel in Systems Analysis from 209 to 152 personnel between 1969 and early 1973. This was a deeper staffing cut in percentage terms than any other OSD office during that period. In spring 1973, when another small reduction threatened Systems Analysis, its incumbent assistant secretary, Gardiner Tucker, protested that his staff already was "tense from working 60 hours per week and sensitized from past attacks and mistreatment." He requested more, not fewer, personnel and was partially successful in that Richardson canceled the pending reduction but allowed no additions. At the same time, the secretary announced the redesignation of the Office of Systems Analysis as the Office of Defense Program Analysis and Evaluation (PA&E), a change, he said, that was calculated to "better reflect" the work of its staff as well as his hope that it would "become an even more valuable instrument in assisting the Department to make sound policy and program decisions."⁵¹ On May 11, 1973, Leonard Sullivan Jr. replaced Tucker after previously serving as Laird's deputy director of DDR&E for Southeast Asia. Nine months later, his position was upgraded to the assistant secretary level. A specialist in tactical weaponry while serving as DDR&E, Sullivan thought of PA&E's role as "the challenger of all aspects of Service proposals and programs across-the-board." He later recalled that moving to this role after working in

weapons development was like trading the “white hat” of a creator for the “black hat” of a skeptic. His new position made him more inclined to kill service programs than to support them. “I knew I was going to be considered a traitor by an enormous number of people,” he noted, and indeed some former colleagues shunned him for years after the move.⁵²

The elevated PA&E, a magnet for congressional criticism since its early days as Systems Analysis under McNamara, endured until Schlesinger left the Pentagon, when Senator John L. McClellan (D-AR), chair of the upper chamber’s appropriations committee, strongly urged Rumsfeld to gut it. McClellan wanted to shrink PA&E and put it under the assistant secretary of defense (comptroller). Under Sullivan’s leadership PA&E had assisted the newly created House and Senate Budget Committees, which were engaged in power struggles over defense matters with the Appropriations and Armed Services Committees in both chambers. Senator McClellan was implacable. By Sullivan’s recollection, Rumsfeld “said he couldn’t use up any Congressional good will fighting for me and to please be gone by the next Monday.” Sullivan left on March 13, 1976. His deputy, Edward C. “Pete” Aldridge, filled the position—downgraded anew—of director for planning and evaluation from mid-May 1976 through the end of the administration.⁵³

The assistant secretary of defense (comptroller) oversaw the preparation and management of the Defense budget, serving as the department’s chief financial officer and regularly testifying before Congress on budget matters alongside the secretary. Following more than two decades in the private sector, Terence E. McClary held the position of comptroller from June 1973 to August 1976, when he left government service to join General Electric. After a career with the Dupont Corporation, Arthur I. Mendolia joined OSD as assistant secretary for installations,

where he oversaw procurement, production supply, maintenance, transportation, energy, installations, and housing activities.⁵⁴

As recruiting senior civilians became more difficult later in the Nixon-Ford term, Schlesinger and Rumsfeld began appointing military officers to positions at the deputy assistant secretary and principal deputy assistant secretary levels. It quickly became a sensitive issue, as critics decried what they believed was the creeping militarization of senior civilian positions. In January 1974, a *New York Times* story described how generals and admirals were “infiltrating” the ranks of OSD, “an office created as the citadel of civilian control over the military.” Eleven flag officers were then serving as deputy assistant secretaries throughout OSD—just over 20 percent of such positions. Ten years earlier there had been three, and twenty-five years before that, none.⁵⁵ At the request of Representative John Moss (D-CA), the General Accounting Office (GAO) looked into the number and legality of these appointments. Title 10 USC prohibited any serving officer from holding a “civil office” such as a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed position like assistant secretary of defense. The GAO noted that even though the posts of deputy assistant secretary and principal deputy assistant secretary were administratively created under the secretary’s authority and were not enshrined in statute, a military officer serving in one of these roles could violate the law if at any point he exercised the full functions of an assistant secretary.⁵⁶ Accordingly, Deputy Secretary Clements directed that position descriptions for military officers who were serving as deputy assistants specify that the incumbents would neither act for nor perform the functions of an assistant secretary. In the future, to ensure full compliance with the spirit and not merely with the letter of the law, all principal deputy positions would be filled by civilians.⁵⁷

The Service Secretaries and the Joint Chiefs

Two Navy veterans with extensive political connections in the Republican party served as secretary of the Navy between 1973 and 1977. John Warner, a World War II veteran who also served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War, was under secretary of the Navy prior to becoming secretary in May 1972 under Laird.⁵⁸ He stayed on until April 1974, when he left to become administrator of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission before entering elective politics in 1978. J. William Middendorf, III, a former diplomat and Republican party treasurer, succeeded Warner in April 1974. His congressional connections helped him become Navy secretary without Schlesinger's endorsement.⁵⁹

In the Department of the Army, Robert F. Froehlke, a longtime friend and confidante of Melvin Laird who became Army secretary in 1971, stayed on five months into Nixon's second term and left in May 1973.⁶⁰ Former Georgia Congressman Howard "Bo" Callaway, a 1949 West Point graduate and Korean War veteran, succeeded him. Callaway had served one term in the House of Representatives before becoming Nixon's southern regional chairman during the 1968 campaign. As a former legislator, Callaway enjoyed good relations with the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, which aided his work on the Army's transition to the All-Volunteer Force (AVF).⁶¹ Tapped in July 1975 to run President Ford's election campaign, he was followed that August by Schlesinger associate Martin R. Hoffmann. He had been general counsel at the Atomic Energy Commission (1971–1973) under Schlesinger, had served as special assistant to the secretary of defense (1973–1974), and was DoD general counsel (1974–1975) before being nominated as secretary of the Army. Hoffmann had come to Congressman Gerald Ford's attention when he worked as minority counsel to the House Judiciary Committee from 1965 to 1966. In addition to his good relationship with Schlesinger, Hoffman enjoyed a long

association with Donald Rumsfeld, his Princeton University classmate. The strength of these relationships helped Hoffman overcome opposition to his nomination from Deputy Secretary Clements. He served from August 1975 through the end of the Ford administration.^{62 63}

In contrast to the Navy and Army, the secretaries of the Air Force under Richardson, Schlesinger, and Rumsfeld all had strong technical backgrounds. Robert Seamans, a former MIT professor and associate administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration , had served during Nixon's first term and stayed on until his under secretary, John McLucas, was confirmed as his successor in June 1973.⁶⁴ McLucas had served as deputy director of defense research and engineering (1962–1964), assistant secretary general of NATO for scientific affairs (1964–1966), and as head of MITRE Corporation before becoming under secretary of the Air Force and, simultaneously, director of the National Reconnaissance Office in 1969. These experiences convinced him of the importance of building and testing prototypes before committing to buying major weapon systems, an approach he pursued as Air Force secretary that became known as “fly before you buy.”⁶⁵ McLucas sought to involve himself deeply in procurement matters, going so far as to take personal flights in aircraft the Air Force was considering for purchase.⁶⁶ McLucas left in November 1975 when President Ford appealed to him personally to become head of the Federal Aviation Administration. His successor, Thomas C. Reed, a physicist and former Air Force officer, had served as an assistant to the secretary and deputy secretary of defense (1973–1974) and director of telecommunications and command and control systems in OSD (1974–1975) before becoming Air Force secretary in early 1976. As secretary he worked to increase the number of Air Force officers promoted to flag rank from backgrounds as fighter pilots and project managers, with the goal of curtailing the dominance of bomber-pilot generals within the institution.⁶⁷ Rumsfeld did not know Reed before coming to the

Pentagon but found him to be “an extremely effective Air Force Secretary.” Reed served until April 1977.⁶⁸

While churn and turnover defined DoD’s civilian leadership during the Nixon-Ford term, uniformed military leadership represented stability and continuity. The service chiefs were appointed to specific terms, regardless of who was president. President Nixon did not hold the Joint Chiefs, as a body, in high regard, telling Richardson in their November 1972 Camp David conversation, somewhat hyperbolically, that he had “stopped talking to the Chiefs altogether because they drove him up the wall.” Still, the practice Nixon had established with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs during his first term carried over into his second: he and Kissinger maintained their direct line of communication to CJCS Admiral Thomas Moorer, bypassing the defense secretary. For a time, the chairman remained uneasy that his frequent contacts with the president and his private conversations with Kissinger could cause friction in Nixon’s second term as they had with Laird in the first.⁶⁹ The risks subsided a bit after the U.S. combat role in Vietnam ended in January 1973, removing a source of significant strain between secretary and chairman. The arrival of the affable Richardson defused further tensions. Of the three defense secretaries who spanned Moorer’s term as chairman, Richardson was “the easiest to deal with and [the easiest to] understand what he was really after.”⁷⁰

Schlesinger expressed a commonly held criticism that the chiefs tended to serve too often as representatives of their services. In his view, the JCS organization protected the services’ individual interests and budgets, an orientation that created a “barrier” to the JCS producing “excellent advice, efficient war plans and well-designed force structures.”⁷¹ He frankly told the chiefs in February 1975 that he wanted flag officers with broader capacities: the ability to conceptualize and rise above the thinking of service bureaucracies, and a willingness to show

tolerance for mavericks.⁷² Schlesinger saw such qualities in General George Brown, who succeeded Moorer as JCS chairman on July 1, 1974. Past assignments made him exceptionally well prepared for the position: he had served as military assistant to the secretary of defense, assistant to the CJCS, commander of the Seventh Air Force in Southeast Asia, and then as head of Air Force Systems Command before becoming Air Force chief of staff (the appointment that had sparked momentary tensions between Secretary Richardson and Henry Kissinger). For Brown's successor as Air Force chief of staff, Schlesinger settled on General David C. Jones, the commander in chief of U.S. Air Forces, Europe. This leadership change worked to the secretary's advantage. As chief of staff Brown had been skeptical of committing considerable resources to the F-16, which he regarded as a questionable sacrifice of quality for quantity, and to stealth technology, which the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had promoted. Jones embraced both, as did Schlesinger.⁷³

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, whose liberalizing reforms of Navy rules and regulations had drawn much publicity, ended his tour as chief of naval operations on June 30, 1974. A polarizing figure, he attracted at least as many critics as admirers. According to Haig, President Nixon felt that Zumwalt had pushed naval discipline "back to the stone age" and would not consider him for either chairman or supreme allied commander, Europe (SACEUR). When seeking Zumwalt's successor in December 1973, Schlesinger cautioned Haig about a reaction from retired naval officers who might want to "turn the clock back to 1955" and eliminate the many of Zumwalt's changes to make naval service more attractive to the new generation joining the Navy. On February 20, 1974, Zumwalt formally recommended that the vice chief of naval operations, Admiral James L. Holloway III, succeed him. Schlesinger endorsed Holloway, as did President Nixon. After his Senate confirmation he took office on July 1. Holloway steered clear of undoing

his predecessors' personnel reforms but did not share Schlesinger's and Zumwalt's enthusiasm for designing lower-cost alternatives to large, sophisticated warships.⁷⁴

As the service that had borne the brunt of the tumultuous Vietnam conflict, Army leadership involved special problems. General Creighton W. Abrams, Jr. became chief of staff on October 1, 1972, even though he had lost Nixon's confidence as commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV). Abrams owed his appointment as Army chief to Secretary Laird's unwavering support and to the secretary's freedom in choosing subordinates. As a condition of service, the president had insisted, and Abrams agreed, to serve only two years rather than the statutory four.⁷⁵ Schlesinger worked closely with Abrams on not cutting Army force structure, and valued him as "one of the gems of the United States military establishment," fit to become chairman, if the Army did not need him so badly for its post-Vietnam renewal.⁷⁶ But the Army chief, a longtime cigar smoker, was diagnosed with cancer little more than a year into his term, and his health steadily worsened. He died on September 4, 1974, following complications from lung cancer surgery. Alexander Haig, the White House chief of staff, briefly vied for the opportunity to return to active service and become the next Army chief of staff, but President Ford preferred that he succeed General Andrew J. Goodpaster as supreme allied commander Europe. The president instead chose General Frederick C. Weyand, who had been vice chief of staff under Abrams. Schlesinger had endorsed Weyand, telling the president that the general enjoyed "virtually unanimous support within the Army." He served two years as chief of staff, retiring on October 1, 1976. General Bernard W. Rogers, the commander of Forces Command, became the next chief of staff, remaining in the position until 1979.⁷⁷

General Robert E. Cushman Jr., commandant of the Marine Corps since January 1972, had had won Nixon's admiration while serving as his assistant for national security affairs during

the Eisenhower administration (1957–1961). Well before the end of his four-year term, Cushman began advocating for his successor to be the assistant commandant, General Earle E. Anderson. In March 1975 he formally recommended Anderson “as my sole candidate for Commandant.” Then trouble erupted. Marine Corps flag officers received supposedly anonymous questionnaires requesting that they list in order their preferences for commandant. Recipients discovered, however, that each questionnaire was numbered and therefore could be used to question a senior officer’s loyalty if Anderson got the job. Schlesinger considered the revelation “disgraceful.” General Cushman retired earlier than planned, and Anderson also left active service. A groundswell of support among active and retired Marine generals for Lt. Gen. Louis H. Wilson Jr., commander of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, sparked a positive reaction in Congress. Wilson easily won confirmation and became commandant on July 1, 1975.⁷⁸

The four years under presidents Nixon and Ford were tumultuous for the nation and for its defense establishment but would also fundamentally alter U.S. conduct of the Cold War military struggle with the Soviet Union. Turmoil from the Watergate scandal cut short the promising tenure of Elliot Richardson as secretary of defense and made recruitment of senior OSD officials a difficult proposition. Richardson’s successor, James Schlesinger, would bring a measure of stability to the Pentagon and introduce lasting changes to how the United States assessed the Soviet threat and devised strategy to counter it. Under Schlesinger, DoD conducted dynamic net assessments of the U.S.-Soviet competition that would reveal previously undiagnosed vulnerabilities in the Soviet Union’s defense posture. These findings lent credibility to the secretary’s critique of détente, and along with double-digit inflation and an array of foreign crises they would bolster his case for modestly increasing rather than cutting the U.S. Defense budget. That congressional appropriators bucked widespread societal expectations for a post-

Vietnam peace dividend and increased funding for defense is a testament to Schlesinger's analytical prowess as secretary. But Gerald Ford's accession to the presidency would expose Schlesinger's flaws and bring new turbulence to the Pentagon. Schlesinger and Ford agreed on the fundamental tenets of defense policy, but the secretary's personality and operating style grated on the new president and ultimately doomed their working relationship. Rumsfeld's move from White House chief of staff to defense secretary in late 1975 would bring substantive continuity and a better working relationship with the commander-in-chief.

Endnotes

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2. “Annual Budget Message to the Congress, FY 1974,” 32–48; “Radio Address: “The New Budget: Creating a New Era of Progress,” 28 Jan 1973, 30–32; both in *Public Papers of the President: Richard Nixon 1973* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1975); Roger R. Trask and Alfred Goldberg, *The Department of Defense, 1947–1997: Organization and Leaders* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office [OSD/HO]1997), 90.
3. Roger R. Trask and Alfred Goldberg, *The Department of Defense 1947–1997, Organization and Leaders* (Washington DC: OSD/HO, 1997), 90–95.
4. Ibid.
5. Defense Manpower Data Center, “Deployment of Military Personnel by Country as of 30 September 1973,” *DoD Data/Reports*, www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp, accessed 21 Feb 2019; Department of Defense, *Annual Defense Department Report FY 1974* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1973), 119, 125; *The Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 1974* (Washington DC: GPO, 1973), 67, 69; Richard A. Hunt, *Melvin Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military, 1969–1973* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2015) 2; “Department of Defense Key Officials 1947–2004” (Washington, DC: OSD/HO, 2004), 90–91.
6. James Schlesinger, “The Office of the Secretary of Defense,” in *Reorganizing America’s Defense Leadership in War and Peace*, ed. Robert J. Art, et al. (Washington: DC: Pergamon-Brassey’s, 1985), 255–257; Donald Rumsfeld, *When the Center Held: Gerald Ford and the Rescue of the American Presidency* (New York: Free Press, 2018) discusses Rumsfeld’s relationship with Ford.
7. Presidential Daily Diary, 20 Nov 1972, Nixon Presidential Library, Yorba Linda, CA; John L. McLucas, *Reflections of a Technocrat: Managing Defense, Air, and Space Programs during the Cold War* (Maxwell Air Force Base: Air University Press, 2006) 81; Nixon, *RN, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 764 (quote); Elliott Richardson, interview by Maurice Matloff and Stuart Rochester, 31 Aug 1989, OSD/HO, 1, 10, 11 (quote).
8. Richardson interview, 31 Aug 1989, cited in note 7; R. D. Heintz, “Pentagon Frets about Richardson’s style,” *Detroit News*, 22 Jan 1973, folder 73-74, box 559, OSD/HO. At the time of Richardson’s nomination some signs of discontent appeared in the press from anonymous generals, who viewed his appointment with wariness and even suspicion. One expressed fear that Richardson would bring “a closed mind and a superior attitude, not unlike McNamara’s patronizing disdain” regarding the uniform services. The sentiment was far from universal, however. Richardson was a veteran of World War II and had landed in Normandy on D-Day as a member of the U.S. Army’s Fourth Infantry Division.
9. Memo, Kissinger for the President’s Files, 4 Jan 1973, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 35: 1, note 2.

10. Memo, Kissinger for the President's Files, 1–2 (quotes), 3, note 5, cited in note 3. See Hunt, *Melvin Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military, 1969–1973* for a comprehensive analysis of the relations between Laird and Nixon.
11. Telcon, Kissinger and Richardson, 4:58 P.M., 26 Jan 1973, folder 3, box 8, HAK Telcons, NSC Files, Nixon Library; Levine, “The Pentagon as Laird Leaves,” cited in note 9. For more on the DPRC, see Hunt, *Laird and the Foundation of the Postwar Military*, chap. 3.
12. Telcon, Kissinger and Richardson, 7:15 P.M., 23 Apr 1973, box 19; memo, Scowcroft for Richardson, 12 Apr 1973; memo, Richardson for Nixon, 20 Apr 1973, and memo Richardson for Kissinger, 23 Apr 1973; folder 020 Air Force (Jan-Jul 1973), box 5, Acc 330-78-0001, Record Group 330: Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (hereafter OSD Records), Washington National Records Center, Suitland, MD (hereafter WNRC).
13. Department of Defense, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1974* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1973), 1–5 (quote, 3). Draft memo, Nixon for Rogers, et al., 10 Mar 1973, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 35:31–32.
14. House Committee on Appropriations (HCA), Subcommittee on Department of Defense, *Hearings: Department of Defense Appropriations for 1974*, 93rd Cong., 1st sess, 3 Apr 1973, pt. 1:1–13, 41 (quotes, 4, 12, 13).
15. Memo, Tucker for Richardson, 30 Jan 1973, *FRUS 1973–1976*, 35:4–17, 4 note 1.
16. Richardson interviews, 31 Aug 1989, 5–6 (quote, 5), 2, 13, and 14 Dec 1989, 5–6.
17. *Ibid.*
18. The literature about Watergate is voluminous. Stanley Kutler, *The Wars of Watergate* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1990) provides a detailed recounting of how the scandal unfolded.
19. James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 775–776.
20. James R. Schlesinger, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Maurice Matloff, 12 Jul 1990, OSD/HO, 22.
21. Charles A. Stevenson, *SecDef* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2006), 46.
22. See Chapter 9 for details.
23. Schlesinger interview, 12 Jul 1990, 1, 9–10, 23, 44–45, and Schlesinger, interview by Goldberg and Matloff, 7 Feb 1991, OSD/HO, 27. See also Schlesinger, interview by Timothy Naftali, 10 Dec 2007, <https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/histories/schlesinger-2007-12-10.pdf>, accessed 22 Nov 2023), 22.
24. Memo for Schlesinger, 2 Jul 1973, 3 Jul SecDef Staff Mtg, folder 334 AFPC, box 41, Acc 330-78-0001, OSD Records.
25. Douglas Kinnard, *The Secretary of Defense* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1980) 161, 163; Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 432.
26. Schlesinger interview, 12 Jul 1990, 11–13, 19, 46–47; Kinnard, *The Secretary of Defense*, 163, 164.

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27. Schlesinger interviews, 1 Aug 1991, 26, and 7 Feb 1991, 36. See “Federal budget outlays for national defense: 1967–1996,” Table Ed 155–167 in Susan B. Carter, et al., ed., *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition, Volume Five* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5–369.
28. William Hyland of the NSC Staff quoted in Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 623; BG Taylor Notebooks, entry for 4 Apr 1974; Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 1158; Richard Nixon, *RN, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 1024.
29. Gerald Ford, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 322–324 (quote, 323); Schlesinger, interview by Goldberg and Matloff, 7 Nov 1991, OSD/HO, 50–51; Walter Poole, *The Decline of Détente: Elliott Richardson, James Schlesinger, Donald Rumsfeld, 1973–1977* (Washington DC: OSD/HO, 2015), 16–17.
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31. Rumsfeld, *When the Center Held*, 21–22, 224.
32. Donald H. Rumsfeld, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask, 12 Jul 1994, OSD/HO, 19, 32; Bradley Graham, *By His Own Rules: The Ambitions, Successes, and Ultimate Failures of Donald Rumsfeld* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 127; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 223–224.
33. Rumsfeld interviews, 12 Jul 1994, 19, 20, 23, and 2 Aug 1994, 2, 11, 19; *Hearing SASC, 1st Sess, 94th Congress, 12–13 Nov 1975, Nomination of Donald Rumsfeld to Be Secretary of Defense*, 1–30; Roger Trask and Alfred Goldberg, *The Department of Defense 1947–1997, Organization and Leaders* (Washington, DC: OSD/HO, 1997), 94–95.
34. Hunt, *Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military*, 26.
35. Rumsfeld interview, 12 Jul 1994, 24–26; interview, 2 Aug 1994, 8; ltr, Schlesinger to Senator Stennis, 5 Dec 1975, folder “020 DSD 1975,” box 5, Acc 330-78-0058, OSD Records; DoD Directive 5105.2, 27 Jan 1976, The Rumsfeld Archive On Line; memo, Rumsfeld for Ellsworth, 27 Jan 1976, folder “020 DIA 1976,” box 7, Acc 330-79-0049, OSD Records; memo, Ellsworth to Rumsfeld, 16 Dec 1976, The Rumsfeld Archive On Line; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 218.
36. Rumsfeld interview, 12 Jul 1994, 22; Clements interview, 26, 34–35.
37. Rumsfeld interview, 12 Jul 1994, 27; Clements interview, 26, 28, 27, 7.
38. Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 548–550; Melvin Small, *The Presidency of Richard Nixon* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999), 25–30; Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974–2008* (New York: Harper, 2008), 64–69.
39. Jon Nordheimer, “Reagan, in Direct Attack, Assails Ford on Defense,” *New York Times*, 5 Mar 1976, 1. Quotes from article. Editorial Note, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 38, Part 1: 69; Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 224; Rumsfeld, *When the Center Held*, 132–133 (see

also chap. 15); Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 228–229; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 175–177, 860.

40. See for example, the duties assigned to David Packard, Laird's deputy. Hunt, *Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military*, 9–10, 20–21.

41. "The Pentagon's new No. 2 man," *Business Week*, 27 Jan 1973, 40, folder 73-74, box 559, OSD/HO.

42. Presidential Daily Diary, 22 Nov 1972, Nixon Library; William P. Clements, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask, 16 May 1996, OSD/HO, 4, 5, 7, 12; McLucas, *Reflections of a Technocrat*, 81; Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 218 note; "The Pentagon's new No. 2 man," cited in note 50; "Pentagon Nominees' Confirmation Delayed Because of Senate Displeasure with Nixon," *Wall Street Journal*, 12 Jan 1973, 1–2; John W. Finney, "Acting Pentagon Chief Says His Budget May Have to Grow to Meet Soviet Challenge," *New York Times*, 14 Jun 1973: all in folder 73-74, box 559, OSD/HO.

43. Clements interview, 8; telcon, Kissinger and Clements, 1:56 PM, 16 Apr 1973, folder 8, box 19, HAK Telcons, NSC, Nixon Library.

44. Clements interview, 9, 14, 27–28, 29.

45. Schlesinger interview, 7 Feb 1991, 16; Clements interview, 18. McLucas, *Reflections of a Technocrat*, 85.

46. Malcolm Currie, interview by Peter Westwick, 9 May 2013, 32, Aerospace Oral History Project, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA. This post had been created by the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, elevating the position from assistant secretary to director.

47. Clements interview, 35.

48. *Washington Star-News*, 11 Dec 1973.

49. Paul H. Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 338–341.

50. Schlesinger interview, 7 Feb 1991, OSD/HO, 29–30 (quote).

51. Memo, ASD(SA) for Moore (SecDef Special Assistant), 3 Apr 1973; memo, ASD(SA) to SecDef, 16 Apr 1973 with SecDef decision dated 20 May; memo, R. J. Murray for Moore, "Manpower Authorization for Systems Analysis," 11 May 73, all in folder "020 DPA&E 1973," box 6, Acc 330-78-0001, OSD Records.

52. Leonard Sullivan Jr., interview by Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask, 4 May 1999, OSD/HO 22–23, 19–20.

53. Sullivan interview, 4 May 1999, 24; Edward C. Aldridge, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Louis Smith, 2 Feb 1999, OSD/HO, 8, 17; memo, Sullivan for Wickham, 7 Nov 1975, w/att, "Senate Opposition to Assistant Secretary of Defense (Program Analysis and Evaluation)," folder "020 DPA&E 1975," box 5, Acc 330-78-0058, OSD Records. Before leaving, Sullivan suggested to Rumsfeld and Clements that PA&E be placed "under the aegis of a financial manager" but remain a separate functional entity with direct access to the secretary and deputy secretary of defense. Rear Adm. Staser Holcomb, Rumsfeld's military assistant, commented that this arrangement would work only if the assistant secretary (comptroller) was "a big picture man" like Wilfred McNeil, comptroller from 1949 until 1959, "rather than an accountant or

financial manager” as had become the case after 1965. Memo, ASD(PA&E) for SecDef and DepSecDef, “The Future of Program Analysis and Evaluation” with written comment by RADM Holcomb, 17 Feb 1976, folder “OSD PA&E 1976,” box 7, Acc 330-79-0049, OSD Records.

54. Ltr, Clements to Senator Symington, 4 Jun 1973, folder 020 I&L 1973, box 7, Acc 330-78-0001, OSD Records; “Nixon names Perry, Home Loan Bank Aide, A Member of Board,” *Wall Street Journal*, 23 May 1973.

55. John W. Finney, “Military in Pentagon Posts Once Limited to Civilians,” *New York Times*, 13 Jan 1974, 1. Quotes from article.

56. Ltr, General Counsel Paul Dembling to Schlesinger, 7 Nov 74; Report by Comptroller General, “Number and Legality of Military Officers Serving in PDASD and DSAD Positions,” 13 Mar 75; folder 210 1975, box 22, Acc 330-78-0058, OSD Records.

57. Memo, DepSecDef for DDR&E et al., 6 Dec 1974; ltr, Cooke to Paul Dembling, 9 Dec 1974; folder 210 1975, box 22, Acc 330-78-0058. Inevitably, there were gray areas. Amos Jordan, PDASD (ISA) during 1974–1976, had retired from the Army in 1972 as a brigadier general. When Robert Ellsworth vacated the assistant secretary’s post to become deputy secretary, Jordan was ruled out as his successor.

58. U.S. Senate Historical Office, “Warner, John William”, <https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=w000154>, accessed 10 Dec 2014.

59. J. William Middendorf, *Potomac Fever: A Memoir of Politics and Public Service*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 103–108.

60. Robert Froehlke, interview by Barbara Hatch, Robert Frederick Froehlke Collection (AFC/2001/001/62101), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

61. Howard Callaway, interview by Mel Steely and Ted Fitz-Simons, 1 Dec 1988, Georgia’s Political Heritage Program, Annie Belle Weaver Special Collections, Irvine Sullivan Ingram Library, University of West Georgia, <http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/uwg/phc/do:callaway19881201>, accessed 17 Dec 2014.

62. Clements interview, 6, 33–35.

63. Rumsfeld interview, 12 Jul 1994, 48.

64. Robert C. Seamans, Jr., *Aiming at Targets* (Washington, DC: NASA History Office, 1996), chaps. 2 and 3.

65. Thomas C. Reed, *At the Abyss: An Insider’s History of the Cold War* (New York: Presidio Press, 2004), 196 (quote).

66. John McLucas, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask, 10 Nov 1998, OSD/HO, 50–53, 62.

67. Reed, *At the Abyss*, 208.

68. Rumsfeld interview, 12 Jul 1994, 48.

69. Hunt, *Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military*, 549–551.

70. Thomas Moorer, interview by Maurice Matloff, 24 Jan 1985, OSD/HO, 7-8.
71. Richardson interview, 5; Schlesinger interview, 7 Feb 1991, 19; Senate Committee on Armed Services (SCAS), *Reorganization of the Department of Defense: Hearings*, 99th Cong., 1st sess., 20 Nov 1985, S. Hrg. 99-1083, 199–200 (quote); Douglas Kinnard, *The Secretary of Defense*, 167.
72. Telcons, Admiral Moorer with Maj. Gen. John Wickham, 25 Feb 1974, and with Admiral Zumwalt, 6 Jun 74, Diary of Adm. T. H. Moorer, NARA II. Thomas Moorer, interview by Maurice Matloff, 24 Jan 1985, OSD/HO, 8 (quote); Entry for 24 Feb 1975, Notebooks of MG John A. Wickham, USA (Mil Asst to SecDef), box TS-5, Schlesinger Collection, Library of Congress.
73. Entry for 8 Feb 1974, MG Wickham Notebooks, box TS-5, Schlesinger Collection; Schlesinger interview, 12 Jul 1990, 28–29, 31–32.
74. Entries for 20 Dec 1973, 8 Feb 1974 and 25 Feb 1974, MG Wickham Notebooks, box TS-5, Schlesinger Collection; Clements interview, 16 May 1996, 34; telcon, Clements with Kissinger, 15 Jul 1974, 1:07 PM, folder 4, box 26, HAK Tel Con Transcripts, NSC Files, Nixon Library. Memo, CNO and SecNav for SecDef, “Presidential Nomination—Flag Officer of the Navy,” 20 Feb 1974; memo, SecDef for Pres, same subj., 21 Feb 1974, folder “020 Navy,” box 6, Acc 330-78-0011, OSD Records, WNRC.
75. Hunt, *Melvin Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military, 1969–1973*, 232-233.
76. Schlesinger, interview by W. S. Poole, 22 Aug 2012, OSD/HO, 7–8. Abrams reciprocated, telling Schlesinger late in September 1973, “Never in history has a secretary rolled up his sleeves and gotten to brass tacks.” Entry for 24 Sep 1973, MG Wickham Notebooks, box TS-4, Schlesinger Collection.
77. Entries for 8 Feb 1974, 2 Jun 74, 26 Aug 1974, and for 3, 7, 13, 14, 18, 20 and 23 Sep 1974, MG Wickham Notebooks, box TS-5, Schlesinger Collection. Associated Press, “Army Chief Abrams Dies at 59, Directed U.S. Forces in Vietnam,” *New York Times*, 4 Sep 1974, A1.
78. Memos, CMC for SecNav and SecDef to Pres, 27 Mar and 22 Apr 1975, folder “020 Marines 1975,” box 16, Acc 330-78-0058, OSD Records; Schlesinger interview, 22 Aug 2012, 19.