P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

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SECRETARY BROWN'S ADMISSION

When Defense Secretary Harold Brown submits to questioning by reporters or Congressmen, he speaks so slowly and deliberately that it almost seems he is hoping that his interrogators will run out of time before he has a chance to reveal any important information. In a recent appearance on Meet the Press, he almost succeeded in surviving the 30 minutes without saying anything significant, but not quite.

With one minute remaining, a reporter fired this question: "Mr. Secretary, Henry Kissinger has warned that, unless the United States takes dramatic steps to change the military balance, the United States will face a massive crisis in the 1980s. Do you agree?" Brown replied: "It took us 15 years to get in the situation where the momentum is against us. It's going to take us some years to change that situation."

The impression he conveyed is that the previous administrations (which clearly included Kissinger) are to blame for the fact that the "momentum is against us," and that Sir Galahad Brown is nobly trying to remedy the mistakes of his predecessors. The truth of the matter is that Brown convicted himself out of his own mouth when he admitted that the decisive mistakes were made 15 years ago.

Here was the Defense Department lineup 15 years ago, in 1964, when those crucial decisions were made which started the momentum going against us. The Secretary of Defense was Robert Strange McNamara, who came into the government fresh from one of the classic business mistakes, the Edsel automobile. Since leaving the Defense Department, he has presided over the World Bank. He was in the Kennedy Compound at Hyannisport when Ted's top advisers gathered to decide what story he should tell about Chappaquiddick, and he was with Ted again this month when the announcement was made about the Kennedy presidential campaign organization.

In 1964, the number-two man in the Defense Department, the Deputy Secretary of Defense,was Cyrus Vance. He has become better known in the Carter Administration as Secretary of State.

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In 1964, the Director of Defense Department Research and Engineering was none other than Harold Brown himself. Within months, he moved up to the high post of Secretary of the Air Force.

The 1964 roster of the Defense Department included many other names which have since become more familiar. Joseph A. Califano, Jr. was Special Assistant to the Secretary. The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs was Arthur Sylvester who achieved fame for his statement that "it's an inherent government right, if necessary, to lie to save itself."

This 1964 Defense Department crew bears the responsibility for making the decisions which started the military momentum going against us. They reduced our strategic bomber force from 2,110 land-based and 600 carrier-based to only 680. They retired all our B-47 bombers although the SAC Commander-in-Chief said they could "deliver weapons in the year 2000."

The same McNamara-Vance-Brown team of 15 years ago decommissioned 149 of our 208 multi-megaton missiles, the "big guns" of our nuclear arsenal. They "took out," more effectively than any enemy could have done, all our multi-megaton Atlas and Titan I missiles, and even dismantled their launching sites.

The same McNamara-Vance-Brown team of 15 years ago destroyed all our medium-range nuclear missiles, including the 105 we had on launching pads in England, Italy and Turkey zeroed in on Soviet targets. Then they closed down all our strategic missile bases close to Russia, as well as our bomber bases in Turkey, Italy, England and North Africa.

The McNamara-Vance-Brown team in 1964 and 1965 scrapped the biggest weapon in our arsenal, the 24-megaton bomb. They scrapped the powerful Skybolt missile, the great supersonic B-70 bomber, and our mobile missile program. They cancelled all plans for an anti-missile defense and for a civil defense shelter program.

Yes, Secretary Brown is correct. The peril our nation faces today is the result of decisions made 15 years ago. He and Vance made those decisions which started the "momentum against us."

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