

Sylvester Resigns as Defense Aide; Goulding Picked to Succeed Him

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By George C. Wilson
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President Johnson accepted with "deep regret" yesterday the resignation of Arthur Sylvester as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, effective Feb. 3.

The White House announcement said the President intends to nominate Phil G. Goulding, now Deputy Assistant

Secretary for Public Affairs, to succeed Sylvester.

Sylvester is 65 and Goulding is 45. Daniel Z. Henkin, now No. 3 man in the public affairs office, is expected to move into Goulding's deputy position.

The basic salaries of the top two positions in the public affairs office are \$27,000 and \$25,890.

Sylvester, in a letter to President Johnson dated Dec. 31, said "the time has come for me to step aside in order to address myself to some personal business left unfinished when I entered Government." Sylvester became the Pentagon's information chief Jan. 29, 1961, and thus will have completed a record six years service in that job when he retires.

These six years have been stormy ones for Sylvester, who came to the post from the Newark (N.J.) News where he had served variously as reporter, city editor and Washington bureau chief.

His most controversial utterance was his contention that "the Government has the right to lie." He went over this trampled ground again yesterday with Pentagon reporters who had gathered in

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ARTHUR SYLVESTER



PHIL G. GOULDING

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his office after his resignation was announced.

"I don't believe the Government as a political group of men has a right to lie," Sylvester said. "But when a nation's life is at stake, that takes precedence over everything." The distinction he made is that the Government has a right to lie in circumstances of extreme peril to save itself.

Sylvester said the Cuban missile crisis was such a circumstance and the Government, therefore, was justified in lying about its knowledge of Russian missiles in Cuba two days before it was to confront Russia with the evidence. He said the White House's false claim during that period that President Kennedy was breaking off a campaign trip because he had a cold was justified on the same basis.

As for what he will do after leaving the Pentagon, Sylvester said: "I'm going to look at the clouds for a month. After that I don't know what I'm going to do. I might write." He said he probably would move to New York City.

Many of the information restrictions which Sylvester implemented at the direction of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara have been controversial, such as requiring Pentagon monitors to accompany newsmen when they interview defense officials. Sylvester said that looking at his overall performance as information chief he felt a "sense of deep satisfaction."

He said he had increased the flow of information from the Pentagon "tremendously" and had provided "greater, faster responses" to queries. Sylvester has been credited for declassifying the Pentagon telephone book shortly after he took office.

The Pentagon information

chief estimates he has worked a 12-hour day, six days a week for these past six years and now "I'd like to be my own man for a while."

His advice to Goulding, his successor: "Do the best job you can and let the chips fall where they may."

Goulding became Sylvester's deputy April 19, 1965. He had been a reporter on the Cleveland Plain Dealer for the previous 15 years.