GEORGE H. W. BUSH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD B. CHENEY

March 16-17, 2000
Dallas, Texas

Interviewers

University of Virginia
Philip Zelikow, chair
Tarek E. Masoud

Columbia University
Richard Betts

George Bush Presidential Library Foundation
James H. McCall

Note taker: Tarek Masoud
Transcription: Tape to Type
Transcript copyedited by: Tarek E. Masoud, Laura Moranchek, Jane Rafal Wilson
Final edit by: Jane Rafal Wilson

GEORGE H. W. BUSH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD B. CHENEY

March 16-17, 2000

March 16, 2000

Zelikow: I'm Philip Zelikow. I'm not sure we have ever met before. I used to work for Brent [Scowcroft] at the NSC [National Security Council] staff during the Bush Administration before I corrupted myself by becoming a professor at Harvard. I now run the Miller Center of Public Affairs. I'm also a history professor—

Cheney: Down at U.Va. [University of Virginia]?

Zelikow: At U.Va. And one of the things we're doing is the Bush Oral History Project, in partnership with the Bush Library. We're trying to do basic research on Presidencies. For the older ones we're the ones who are doing all the tapes for the [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt, [Harry S.] Truman, [Dwight] Eisenhower, [John F.] Kennedy, [Lyndon B.] Johnson and [Richard] Nixon Administrations. But for the more recent Administrations we're trying to compile the oral history record that the libraries on their own do not compile. Dick?

Betts: I'm Dick Betts. I'm a professor of political science at Columbia University. I spend part time at the Council on Foreign Relations. I was at the Brookings Institution in Washington for about 14 years before moving to Columbia about ten years ago. My research is mainly on defense policy, war, military strategy in general.

McCall: I'm James McCall. I'm associated with the Bush Library and Foundation. We're supporting the Miller Center the best we can.

Cheney: Now, you did some work on the President and Brent's book?

McCall: Yes. I was one of the collaborators on that, and I do some other work on national security issues. We're also doing a film version of some of the materials from the Oral History Project. I wrote a note to you about what we we're doing there. So we'll talk about that another time.

Cheney: Okay.

Masoud: I'm Tarek Masoud. I'm a fellow at the Miller Center. I help run the Oral History Project.

Cheney: What's the name of the guy who used to run the Miller Center?

Zelikow: Ken Thompson.

Cheney: How's he doing? Now he's retired, I guess?

Zelikow: No, he's still actively teaching and he's still active at the Miller Center. But he's getting a little older and they recruited me to come over from Harvard almost two years ago.

Cheney: That's a great facility down there. I've dealt with them in the past.

Zelikow: Now, let me go through the ground rules. First, though, I'm going to make a little pitch about what we're trying to do. You're a bit of an amateur historian yourself, looking back at your own book that you wrote with your wife. So in a way you can think to yourself, suppose some years from now, instead of a book called *Kings of the Hill*, someone is writing a book called *Kings of the Pentagon*. And they wanted to research this fellow Cheney, the way you were looking up stuff, say, on James Blaine. And you think, what records would they unearth about Cheney, what would they get? There's the journalists' books that you know about. There's the paper record, which is what it is. But actually, there's not, I think, a convenient place where they could have the opportunity to read at length your own views on what happened in all these events, compiled in a systematic way.

They'll get fragments, because they'll get quotes from reporters who are doing a story on one piece. There may be a couple of personality profiles they'll unearth, samples of which you have in the briefing book that we sent to you. But they'll basically get about the kind of stuff that you saw in that briefing book, plus the books. If you think that that's perfectly adequate and really tells the whole story, then there's hardly any reason for you to participate in this. Our sense is that it never is. So in a way what we're trying to do—rather than sit you down for an hour and get your best cocktail party stories, which is about all you have time to do in a short time—is to really take some time, go through things in some detail, and really give you a chance to get your reflections on the record for a very long time to come.

Now to that end, we'd like you to encourage you to be as candid as you can, because you're basically producing a record that's going to stand for a long, long time. Long after we're all gone, we hope. So candor is important. For that candor, we have provided you with some protections, and that's what I want to talk about in the ground rules. You have a lot of control over this event. We do not play "gotcha" or try to trap you into things that you'll later regret. We're going to do these sessions; we're going to produce a transcript of these sessions. We will then give that transcript to you. You can review it; you can mark it up. If you said something that, on reflection, you think that may be factually inaccurate, because you didn't have chance to check it, you can check it. You can revise it in whatever way you think best. If there's material that is true, but which you'd rather not be made public right away, you can designate. Say, "Please restrict public disclosure of this material in such and such way, or for such and such time," and we'll respect all those restrictions.

We have some precedent now in doing this. The Miller Center did the Oral History Project for the Carter Presidency, with President Carter's cooperation and all those top officials. I think they will tell you that now, some years later, their experience is that we kept all the promises we made. So you have a lot of control over this material and what you want to say, because we feel you're a grownup. We're not going to trick you into saying something you don't want to say. Once you get into that mode, then it's like a background press briefing. We don't want the session to be like that.

Cheney: Okay.

Zelikow: Do you have any questions about the ground rules?

Cheney: No. So there will be, in effect, a tape of everything we do, but then also verbatim transcripts are going to come back on everything we say?

Zelikow: Yes. Then you'll have an opportunity to review that transcript, edit it.

Cheney: So in a sense, I don't really need to worry today about what's off the record or on the record. We can just go ahead and talk freely, knowing that in the end I'll get chance if there's something sensitive to say I want you to hold that for five years or until he's dead. All right.

Zelikow: All right. Then we'll execute various papers with you. The ultimate destination of the edited transcript that you have cleared for deposit will be at the Miller Center and a copy made available to the Bush Library for its collection. Again, though—

Cheney: A copy of the transcript or a copy of the tape?

Zelikow: Copy of the transcript.

Cheney: Transcript, okay.

Zelikow: Again with whatever restrictions you wish to place on the availability of that material.

Cheney: Okay.

Zelikow: All right? Any other questions on your end?

Cheney: No, not that I can think of.

Zelikow: Now our invitation to you made freely the offer if you want to include any staff or any former staff in this session. You didn't bring anybody along. If you change your mind or want to call someone and get them to fly down to join you tomorrow, whatever you want to do. But again, the idea is that you should make yourself comfortable. If you feel like you need any help in papers or people to answer these questions, we're happy to work with you on that.

Cheney: No, I have not spent a lot of time since I left the Pentagon thinking about my time in government. A lot of people finish their governmental service and then they go back and write books about it, spend the rest of their careers sort of working with or massaging that piece of history. I must say I haven't done that. I had other jobs. That was my public career and then it was over and then I moved on to other things. I have not even read all the books. Don't tell Brent. I've got them all; I buy them, people send them to me. I put them on a stack and say, "Someday I'll get a chance to sit down and read through them," but I have not. I just haven't spent a lot of time doing that.

So what you'll get from me at this stage is my personal recollections of that period of time. I assume that's what you want. There are other records available, but the Library's got most of those. There are the things floating around, like a Gulf War chronology that was done by one of my staff people at one point, again I think gave a set of that to Brent and the President. So there's stuff out there. But in terms of what I've got here with me personally, what you're going to get is what I remember. And that fades year by year.

Zelikow: And we'll try to help you.

Cheney: You can help stimulate that as well, too. Now I took some time, after the book arrived, thumbed through it, looked at some of the old clips and so forth. Sat down and tried to spend a little time thinking, trying to organize my thoughts in terms of what I wanted to talk about. It was my understanding that it wasn't just a question of you guys asking questions. Also to some extent you want to record whatever I want to say. So some of it's organized in a reasonable fashion, some of it's just words, names, things I jotted down as I thought about it that will trigger memories and conversations.

Zelikow: Let me ask a few simple questions and then we'll get into this. At any point, though, if you want to basically go on to the thoughts that you prepared to say, you can just say, "I'd like at this point to talk a little bit about that."

Cheney: Do you have an agenda that you want to follow? I saw the table of contents in the briefing book.

Zelikow: We do, but that's really flexible because some people come in cold and sit back and say, "Ask me your questions," and so we shoulder that responsibility. But at any point where you want to say, "Stop questioning for a moment because I want to talk about something. Let's run a seminar here for a moment," that would be splendid.

Cheney: Okay.

Zelikow: Quick, simple questions though. Are you now writing a memoir?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Do you plan to?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Did you keep a diary?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Have you made plans for your papers, for the deposit of your papers?

C**heney:** For some of them. I've still got some left. Part of it goes back to my congressional career. Some have been deposited. Everything that related to my official responsibilities in DoD is already at the library, I believe. A lot of that was—

Zelikow: At the Bush Library?

Cheney: Yes. There were formal records there.

Betts: Right, chron files sorts of things. But what about the more personal files?

Cheney: Part of it. I was very leery about putting anything down on paper. I mean you've got to realize that my early days in Washington were in the Nixon Administration. I watched the absolute destruction of a number of colleagues. I worked for Don Rumsfeld for five years, and Don and I survived and prospered in that environment because we didn't leave a lot of paper laying around. If you go back and look at the Ford Library, there's very little in the Ford Library that's got my name on it, where I wrote memo or anything like that. It's unfortunate from the standpoint of history, but I did not want to leave a lot of tracks around.

I made a decision in the Ford Administration that I would not write a book. The President needed to have at least one individual who wasn't writing a book. Given the job I had, that was me. A lot of those things were and would always remain private unless he chose to disclose them. That's sort of the mindset as I went through my time in the Pentagon too. So I didn't keep a diary. I have not written a memoir. My wife and I did collaborate on that one book some years ago, but writing books is very hard work and requires discipline and time that I haven't had up 'til now, because I've been so busy doing other things. You know, I can't say someday I might not sit down and try to reflect back on those years. As I say, as time passes—Brent and I talk every once in a while now, and we can't remember whether an event was a Bush event or a Ford event. So that's the onset of age.

But there is no detailed record like that. I do still have some papers from my congressional days and some things from my Pentagon service. So I still have to make some decisions about where some of that's going to go. The options are for more of it to go to the Bush Library, although everything that was sort of official was bundled up as I dealt with it and saved and went into the archives anyway. The University of Wyoming, my alma mater, has got some things and is always asking for more. They'd like to have my congressional papers. They've got some of the congressional papers already and then some stuff at the Ford Library that relates to the Ford Administration.

Zelikow: When you make a decision—but I think you've already catalogued the most logical suspects—on your congressional papers, the Library of Congress also is a very good repository for papers of Congressmen, and is an essential location for people who are researching Congress. We are collecting some papers from Presidential Administrations, but you might already find it more appropriate for your Ford work to go to the Ford Library, and for some Bush-related work perhaps to the Bush Library.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: When you reflect, or if someone asks you a question, "Do you have any favorite books?" Do you think, *Well, that person got that piece of it right. I didn't write a book, but you might want to go read X*. Like for the Ford Administration, maybe you ask folks to read Jim Cannon's book, I don't know. But I'd be curious if you have favorite books, that for someone reading this years from now, it says, "Be sure you've checked the following books, which I think capture at least fragments of my experience pretty well." Do you have any such books that are on your list of recommendations?

Cheney: Let's say in fairness, I haven't read all of those books. I've looked at a couple as they came out. It's more of a matter of looking at the index and checking under your name to see how they treated you. I've never read Colin Powell's book cover to cover, just glanced at pieces of it. He talked to me about pieces of it as he was writing it.

Zelikow: He refers to you once or twice.

Cheney: Yes, he does. One of the books that I did read probably more of than most was *Crusade,* by Rick Atkinson from the *Post,* the military correspondent, covers the Gulf conflict, that I thought was well done. Generally captured a lot of what went on then. [Bob] Woodward's *The Commanders*, again I didn't read it cover to cover, but my general impression is he did a pretty good job of capturing the run-up to the war. Of course, he ends with the beginning of Desert Storm. Those are two; I gave one to my mother for Mother's Day. That gives you some idea of what I thought of the book.

Zelikow: Atkinson and Woodward.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Have you looked at [Michael] Gordon and [Bernard] Trainor?

Cheney: Hmm, *The Generals' War*? Pieces of it, maybe. My recollection, again I haven't read everything cover to cover, they were fairly critical of General Powell as I recall in parts and of the way the war ended.

Zelikow: They were more critical of [Norman] Schwarzkopf.

Cheney: Schwarzkopf. I'm reluctant to give any more endorsements than I have because in fairness, I have not sat down and read all them. I did read the President's last book; it was letters to friends. I thought that was well done, but it was an easy read.

Zelikow: Let's go back to your own personal story then. You were born in Nebraska, moved to Wyoming.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: Your father working for the government?

Cheney: Yes, Dad grew up in a small town in Nebraska. His father was a cashier in the local bank that went belly-up in the Depression. Dad went to college for a few years but had never graduated and then went to work for the Soil Conservation Service. It was established back in the '30s. Spent 37 years in federal service, including, about two years in the Navy during World War II. He was a career civil servant.

Zelikow: And you grew up in Wyoming mostly?

Cheney: Yes. We moved there I think the summer I was 13.

Zelikow: The press profiles basically say you were a big man on campus in high school. Good grades, football team, and you got into Yale. Went to Yale.

Cheney: I was recruited by the local recruiter in Casper to go to Yale, yes.

Zelikow: A Yale alum in Casper?

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: A big Yale club there in Casper?

Cheney: No. Well as a matter of fact, he's a good friend of President Bush's. They were classmates. He was later Republican state chairman, state senator, was the ambassador to Guatemala during the Bush Administration. Still a close friend today.

Zelikow: So he recruited you to go to Yale. You dropped out of Yale—

Cheney: Well, I got kicked out of Yale, actually. Twice. And the second time they said, "Don't come back." [*laughter*] Do you want me to elaborate on that?

Masoud: Please.

Cheney: Well, as I say, I'd been recruited. In those days—this was 1959—the idea of diversity, Wyoming was pretty unique. They didn't have a lot of Yale alums from Wyoming, but I'd never really given that much thought to what I was going to do when I got out of high school. It was

the only college application I filled out, and I did it in part to respond to the urgings of my buddy Tom Stroock. But I really wasn't ready to go to school and was involved with what was described as "a very high-spirited group of young men" by the master of Berkley College, in the letters he used to write to my father. I did a total of about two years there, but at the end of that period of time we parted ways.

I was subsequently invited back after I got to be Secretary of Defense and allowed to speak to the alums at one point, but that was 20 years later. When I left I went out and—

Zelikow: Why were you kicked out?

Cheney: Well, it was a combination of things. My grades and various and sundry scrapes with the authorities that were not in keeping with the high standards that Yale expected of its young men. We'll just leave it at that. [*laughter*]

Zelikow: So you had a rap sheet?

Cheney: Yes, I'm sure I did. I never saw it, but I'm sure I did.

Zelikow: Well, when you filled out all those security forms later.

Cheney: There was nothing in there that would disqualify me from a security clearance.

Zelikow: Good. One thing I noticed is that there seemed to be some relationship there when you went back to Wyoming, you also eventually married Lynne Vincent, from Wyoming. I didn't know whether that also had drawn you back to Wyoming.

Cheney: Well, Lynne and I went to high school together and had dated in high school. I first took her out when she was 16 years old. So the relationship had survived all of those various travails. After I left school, I went out and built power transmission line for a couple of years. Actually for a period of six years, I carried a ticket in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and worked all over Wyoming, Colorado and Utah. During those years, she was going to school out at Colorado College and then getting her master's degree at Boulder. I was still, I guess, far back in the ranks. She made it clear eventually that she had no interest in marrying a lineman for the county. So in 1963, in the fall of '63, I went back to school at the University of Wyoming.

That's when I should have graduated, in '63, if I'd stayed at Yale for four years. I entered, I was probably a sophomore. I was able to transfer in some credits. Wyoming was great for me because the tuition was 96 bucks a semester. I could get a part-time job, my apartment that I shared with another guy cost me $22.50 a month. It was cheap enough thanks to the generosity of the taxpayers of Wyoming that I could get an education. So I started back at school in '63, applied myself, turned out I was a pretty good student when I worked at it. We got married a year later, August of '64. Lynne by then, as I said, completed her master's degree. She got a job as an instructor in the English department at the University of Wyoming. I was still an undergraduate.

Then went on and finished my BA and in about two years, got a master's degree after that. Then left Wyoming to go to Wisconsin.

Zelikow: Were you then thinking about an academic career?

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: As a political scientist?

Cheney: Yes. What happened, once I got back to school and sort of reengaged, I did fairly well. Carried a 4.0 grade average, was an intern in the Wyoming state legislature one year and won a national prize with a paper. I got a lot of encouragement to do other things. I had to make a choice between graduate school and law. Didn't have any money and there was no money available to go to law school in those days—I don't even know if there is today in terms of fellowships and so on—but I could get money to go to graduate school. That had an impact in my choice. When I went to Wisconsin after I'd finished my master's degree, I'd been selected for this National Center for Education and Politics program that provided six months in the office of a Governor or a big city mayor for a would-be political scientist.

Zelikow: And that was Governor Knowles?

Cheney: That was Warren Knowles, funded by the Ford Foundation. That's why I went to Wisconsin originally. At the same time, Lynne and I both wanted to go into graduate school. We applied to several schools and were looking for a place where we could both get an attractive package, both get financial assistance. Wisconsin came through for both of us. So after I'd completed about nine months with the Governor—I actually stayed on there for a year—I entered the University of Wisconsin at Madison as a Ph.D. candidate. She did the same in the English department.

She completed her degree and dissertation; I never did. I did all the coursework and passed all my exams. Then went to Washington, originally for the purpose of serving as a congressional fellow and writing my dissertation, and then going on as an academic. I wanted to be a professor of political science.

Zelikow: Before you move to Washington and the whirlpool sucks you away from what otherwise might have been a very promising academic career.

Cheney: Well, I don't know about that, but for a while it was on track.

Zelikow: Tell me just a moment, what did you really care about when you were studying political science? Were there any professors or books that were important to you?

Cheney: I guess there are two responses to that. As I think back on those things that sort of shaped my thinking and that had an impact and an influence later on in my life, it was really more history than it was political science, although the career path I was following as a graduate

student was really political science. I had taken a course at Yale when I was a freshman taught by a man named Brad Westerfield. He taught a great course that was the—

Zelikow: He's still around.

Cheney: Is he? It was a big lecture course, but it basically dealt with the political-military-diplomatic history of the post-war period from the end of World War II up 'til then, about 1958. I loved that course, that was a fascinating course, and really got me started and interested in a lot of the things I pursued over time. The summer I decided to go back to school at the University of Wyoming, I sat down and started working my way through Winston Churchill's six-volume biography of World War II. Then I had a professor at Wyoming who let me finish that up as an independent reading program while I was there.

So I got hooked, as I think back on it now, it was more history than it was political science. But the course I followed in terms of my graduate work was very quantitative, oriented towards the Congress. I was a research assistant for a man named Augie Claussen, who later went on to Ohio State. He was heavily involved in roll call analysis and trying to tie together and explain congressional voting by looking at congressional district characteristics, economic and political variables of various kinds. So we were doing multiple regression analysis on 12 years of voting in the House and Senate. That's the work I did for him while I was there. We actually wrote an article—

Zelikow: So you were statistically literate, you could do a regression analysis and understand them.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Not a bad skill to take to the Pentagon.

Cheney: Well, except we actually published an article in the *APSR* [*American Political Science Review*] while I was a graduate student that he and I co-authored on a piece of the research that we were working on. It was going to be a book for him and part of it was going to be my dissertation eventually. I went back some years later as a member of Congress and pulled that article out, to see how it tracked with my personal experience. There was a big gap there. It's not clear to me—I understood, obviously, one was a legitimate analytical approach in trying to explain voting in the House and the Senate, but that was very different from the perspective of a member of Congress.

So in terms of what shaped my later interest, as long as I was involved in pursuing an academic career, I'd say it was very heavily oriented in the direction of the Congress and to some extent the Presidency. The research work I was doing at the time was very quantitative in nature.

Zelikow: Have you had a lot of—you've mentioned one example—other chances to reflect on the gulf between academic understanding of public affairs and the world of public affairs that you experienced? Because you had a foot in both those worlds, and I wonder if you ever, and

perhaps Lynne too, whether the two of you ever reflect on that. If you do have some reflections, I'd be interested in what they are.

Cheney: I guess I do. She taught more than I did. She completed her Ph.D. in 19th-century British literature, but eventually she gravitated out of the academic world as well and really became a journalist and author. Ran a federal agency for several years, the National Endowment for the Humanities. So we both, once we got to Washington, gravitated out of the academic world.

One of the things that influenced me, that had an impact, was my year that I spent, or better part of a year, as a congressional fellow. This was early '69, and I was working for Bill Steiger from Wisconsin. Bill and about half a dozen House Republicans got together and put together a project that was based around the issue that was very hot at the time, and that was whether or not the federal government should cut off funding to campuses where there'd been unrest. This was the period of time when there was absolute turmoil, the National Guard was out all the time on the University of Wisconsin campus. There were riots and demonstrations and protest from one end of the country to the other, primarily over Vietnam.

The six included George Bush. That's the first time I ever met President Bush. He was then a junior member of Congress from Texas, good friend of Steiger's. Others in the group included Don Riegle, who was then a Republican Congressman from Michigan, later a Democratic Senator from Michigan. I'd say six of them all together. We eventually had a group of 25 or 30 House Republicans in the effort. We went out and surveyed campuses across the country and did it without any fanfare or any notice, just went on the campuses quietly. I took Bill Steiger and then Bill Brock, later Senator from Tennessee, to the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago. At Wisconsin I had to meet with faculty members, turned out there was a senate faculty group on campus that met weekly. These were sort of the deans of the academic community, to talk about what was going on on campus.

Again, it was a private group. I'd been around for three years and didn't even know the group existed until I went back with my congressional friends and the chairman of the political science department got us into the meeting. The deal was we could sit there and listen but we couldn't say anything, so we sat in the back of the room and listened for a couple of hours one afternoon. These were the people who really gave the University its academic heft. They complained about everything: about students, about the administration, about the chaos that was rampant on campus. But in all the time I'd been on campus, not one of them had ever been engaged—I didn't care which side, on either side—in the debate that was really tearing the University apart. That was a disappointment.

I also took Steiger and Brock to an SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] rally for Fred Hampton, who was then the leader of the Black Panthers, killed in a shoot-out in Chicago a few weeks later with the police. You know, it was a time of a lot of turmoil and uncertainty, but that experience of going and looking at what was going on on campus was not from the perspective of a student, a graduate student on campus, but rather sort of from the outside and from the perspective of the Congress and the political world.

When it came time a few months later to decide whether or not to accept an offer from Don Rumsfeld to stay in the Administration or to go back to the academic world and finish my dissertation as I had originally planned to do, it really turned out not to be a close call. Initially, I told myself it was just for a year. I'm not going to stay, I'll just take a year off, I've got time to go back and do the dissertation. I can use the money; I'm a poverty-stricken graduate student. I'm going to get a real honest to goodness salary as a GS-15. But of course, once I'd made that call, that was it. I never did go back to the academic world.

It was a traumatic time in American politics. It was right after Bobby Kennedy had been assassinated and Martin Luther King. The war in Vietnam was raging, Tet Offensive, all of that was going on. The presidential election and Johnson and subsequently Nixon in '68-'69. I really had to make a choice and that was a life-altering experience, if you will, for me. Let's say at that point, that's when I made the call that rather than go back to the academic world, I'd go ahead and go down the political route. I didn't know I was signing up for 25 years when I made that call.

Betts: Would it be fair to say that the initial connection with Rumsfeld was the turning point in your career, then?

Cheney: Certainly, it was very important. I'd back it up a step though and I'd give a lot of credit to Bill Steiger and a woman named Maureen Drummy. Maureen was from Wisconsin. She had been involved in running the program that got me to Wisconsin to work for the Governor, for Warren Knowles. She had selected me for that program and said, "We want to send you to Wisconsin." She's since passed away. But Maureen then was very close to Bill Steiger. And when Bill got elected to Congress in '66, he was only about two years older than I was and was the youngest member of Congress at the time, very talented guy. When he got elected to Congress, he took Maureen with him as his administrative assistant. So when it was time for me then to become a congressional fellow, Maureen was running the Steiger office and hired me in effect to work for Bill Steiger as his congressional fellow.

The Rumsfeld thing is interesting because the first Rumsfeld session I had was a disaster. Don had been elected to the House in '62, so this is late '68. One would come together as fellows, and they'd invite members to come in and tell you about the Congress. Don was one of the guys who was on the list every time to do that. I was very impressed with his presentation to the congressional fellows. So I made an appointment to go interview with him to see about going to work for him. You were supposed to go negotiate your own deals in terms of where you were going to work. I went in and sat down with Rumsfeld in his office. After about 30 minutes, I left. The sparks just flew when we met. I mean, I didn't like him; he didn't like me. He thought I was too academically oriented, I couldn't do anything for him, I didn't understand anything about the needs of a Congressman. I thought he was an arrogant SOB., and so I walked out and went to work for Bill Steiger. That was in probably November-December of '68.

May of '69, I went to work for Don Rumsfeld. He hired me. He became my boss for the next five years.

Betts: So he didn't believe in first impressions.

Cheney: Well, it was interesting. What happened was Rumsfeld was close to Nixon and he got picked to go down and run the Office of Economic Opportunity, the old war on poverty, and serve as a counselor to Nixon in the White House. But he didn't know anything about the war on poverty. Bill Steiger did; he was on the committee. So Bill was advising Rumsfeld, part of his transition team. Then I sat down one night, unsolicited, and wrote about a 12-page memo to Rumsfeld telling him what he ought to do, how he ought to conduct himself in his congressional hearings, what he ought to do with the agency once he took control. This was a little forward-leaning on my part, but I gave it to Bill Steiger.

Bill liked it. I said, "Well, why don't you give it to Rumsfeld?" So he passed it on to Rumsfeld, this was along in March-April of '69. I didn't hear any more about it until the day Rumsfeld got sworn in. Then I got a phone call with a request. The phone call actually came from a guy named Frank Carlucci, who figures into the story a little later on. But Frank was helping Rumsfeld at that point. They'd been classmates at Princeton and Frank was a foreign service officer temporarily assigned to help Rumsfeld out, asking me to come down to OEO the next day to meet with a group of academics and other policy types that were getting together to help Rumsfeld with his transition at OEO.

So I walked into the room of about 40 people and sat down. Rumsfeld came in, addressed the group, sort of gave us our marching orders and then left. Then his secretary came back in and said, "Is there a Mr. Cheney here?" I kind of lift my hand and she says, "Come with me." So she took me back into Rumsfeld's personal office. I walked in and he was sitting there at his desk. He never even looked up. He just pointed and said, "You, you're congressional relations. Now get the hell out of here." That was it. [*Laughter*] So I walked out and said, "Where's congressional relations?" They said, "It's just down the hallway," and gave me directions. I walked down, went into congressional relations and took over the congressional relations shop.

I spent the last four months of my congressional fellowship when I was nominally on the Hill actually running the congressional shop and OEO in the summer of '69. Then out of that came the offer from Rumsfeld to be his special assistant and I worked for him for four years. Then he figured very prominently in getting me hooked up later on with Jerry Ford.

Zelikow: You followed Rumsfeld to the White House, when Rumsfeld went to the White House staff.

Cheney: Right. We worked together throughout the first Nixon term. Don was OEO director and a counselor to the President. Then there was a period of time when he had just the White House job, he'd given up the OEO job.

Zelikow: And he physically moved over to the OEOB [Old Executive Office Building]?

Cheney: Yes. We actually split our time. I had an office in the West Wing. It was on the second floor. He had the office that later became the counsel's office. I don't know who's got it today, but it was on the top floor in the West Wing. I had a little cubbyhole I shared with another one of his guys. We'd start out there in the morning early, and he'd do the morning staff meetings, and

we'd go over, the two of us, to OEO and run OEO during the day and finish the night back over at the White House again. He was dual-handed then, so I had offices both places.

Then in '70, late '70, I went to the White House full-time. In August of '71 when Nixon imposed wage-price controls, he set Rumsfeld up as the director of the Cost of Living Council. He took on that assignment as well as his White House hat and I went to work for him over there as director of operations for the Cost of Living Council. So the last part of the first Nixon term we spent basically running the wage-price controls program.

Then at the end of that first term, Don had sort of worn out his welcome with the White House crowd. He'd been very aggressive, and I thought properly so, in defending his people. At the end of the election in '72, the morning after the election—Nixon's just won this massive landslide—he called the Cabinet together and he and [H. R.] Haldeman told all of the Cabinet members that they were to go back and get the resignations of all the political appointees throughout the administration. Rumsfeld said, "No, I won't do it. Those people worked their hearts out for you. If you've got somebody you want me to fire, you tell me and I'll go fire them. But I'm not going to go to people you're going to keep," because most of them, they were going to take their resignations in and then give them back. He said he simply refused to do that.

So eventually he ended up the ambassador to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]. That was his fallback position. They sent him to Brussels. He invited me to go with him. I thought about it and decided not to. I had an offer at that point from a small firm there, this outfit called Bradley, Woods and Company in Washington. I signed on with them for 18 months. And then—

Zelikow: Doing what?

Cheney: Well, this is a group there, with customers from major financial institutions.

Zelikow: Lobby shop?

Cheney: No, didn't lobby at all. We would advise groups like the IDS Mutual Funds up in Minneapolis, or Fidelity, or the big mutual funds, pension funds, and so forth on what was going on in Washington that might affect their investment strategies. We had a relationship, it was a soft dollar business relationship with Oppenheimer on Wall Street. And as I say, I did that for about 18 months. This was the period of time when the Nixon Administration came apart. It's from really January of '73 until August of '74. Don was in Brussels. He was thinking about running for the Senate from Illinois, working with me on that. We actually set up an office in Illinois and sent a secretary, we were getting organized.

Zelikow: For the race in '74 or for '76?

Cheney: It would have been the race in '74. But the Watergate thing just got progressively worse and it was increasingly clear that '74 wasn't going to be a very good year to be a Republican candidate for anything. He was also very close to Jerry Ford, so when Ford took over as President—it was actually the night before Ford was sworn in—Nixon had gone on the air and announced he was going to resign at noon the next day. I watched that with friends. Lynne and

the kids were out in Wyoming then. When I got home that night on the telephone was Don's secretary from Brussels telling me that he was en route back—he'd been asked to come back by Ford—would I meet his plane the next day out at Dulles?

So the next morning I got up, went to work, watched Nixon's departure ceremony in his East Room speech, when he resigned the Presidency on television. Drove out to Dulles, picked Rumsfeld up. There was a messenger out there waiting with a letter for him asking him to come straight to the White House. So we went to the White House and he took over as head of the transition team for Ford. Asked me if I could bust loose for a few days to help out. So that afternoon, the afternoon Ford was sworn in as President, we went to work running the transition for Ford, from the Nixon to the Ford Administration. That lasted about two weeks. Then Don went back to Brussels and I went back to my company.

By then—this is late August—by mid-September, things had gotten progressively worse. Ford had done the pardon, the Nixon pardon. Politically things were difficult. He hadn't really made a lot of changes at that point in the White House, but I got another phone call from Rumsfeld asking me to meet him that weekend up in Washington, which I did. There he told me that he thought Ford was going to ask him to be White House Chief of Staff. They had a meeting scheduled for the next day. He wanted to know that if he accepted that post, would I be willing to sign on as his deputy. I said that I would. He went and met with Ford the next day and Ford hired Don, and in effect me as his number two. So we moved in right away and took over the old Haldeman operation. Al Haig left at that point, went to NATO as the Commander in Chief of U.S. forces in Europe. And we took over the White House.

Zelikow: Could you reflect for just a moment on the issue of Vietnam, before we leave that part of your life behind for a while? The questions that arose later about military service in Vietnam and how you had addressed those issues, and your reflections back on that now.

Cheney: Well, as I think back about it, you know it's hard to sort out what my views of the war at the time were versus everything that's happened since. As a general proposition I was supportive in those days, I think, of the Johnson Administration policy. I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about it. I had not served in the military. At the time that I was footloose and fancy free, when I was bouncing around in the construction line building business, they were taking older draftees. I was 18, 19, 20 years old. I was 1-A, but this was in '61, '62, '63, before Vietnam really got started. So I never got called during that period of time. As I said, Vietnam hadn't really gotten cranked up yet.

Then in '63, I went back to school and was classified 2-S, student deferment. In sixty-four I got married, the same month as the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, Tonkin Gulf incident and resolution were passed. By '66, this thing started to pick up again in Vietnam, our first child arrived. So that was about the time I'd completed my master's and I went from being 2-S student deferment to 3-A, I think it was. I was a parent; I had dependents. Then by 1968, I'm 27 years old and no longer eligible. So I was never called.

As I think back on the war now, I mean it's still a traumatic event, obviously, for a lot of people. I had dinner just last night with some friends, including a general who worked for me while I

was in the Pentagon and happened to be in town. He ran our intelligence operations in the gulf during the Gulf War. He retired as a two-star, a man named General Jack Leighty. He was, as late as last night, as the two of us were being asked about Desert Storm by the group assembled at dinner, and he was being asked about political leadership and so forth. He spent a lot of time then talking about Vietnam and the impact it had as late as 1989 in terms of how the military looked at civilians. We can talk about all of that later on as we get into Desert Storm, but it still to this day, you know, obviously has lasting significance for us. Pick up the press and Bill Cohen, the Secretary of Defense, is in Hanoi looking for MIAs [Missing in Action]. So it has lasting significance.

From my personal standpoint it wasn't a traumatic event at the time, partly because as I say, I never had to go. I wasn't called. There were about 12 million of us who were eligible in that age cohort; about 3 million had to go. If I'd been called I would have gone, but I missed it because of age and timing and what my status was.

Zelikow: So back at the White House, you're Deputy Chief of Staff, 1974.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: A young man in a big job.

Cheney: Thirty-three years old.

Zelikow: This is obviously a period in which you meet a number of people who will become important later.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Right off the bat, people on the national security side. Scowcroft for sure you would have begun working with almost on a day-to-day basis from this period. Bush, though, you would not necessarily run across him very much. Maybe a little more later on, but not that much.

Cheney: Well, when we took over in September of '74 in the White House, Brent was there pretty much as [Henry] Kissinger's deputy on the NSC, I believe, at that point. Henry had two jobs; he was both the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor. George Bush was our man in Beijing in '74 and then came back in '75 the same night that I was named Chief of Staff. Rumsfeld went to the Pentagon as Secretary of Defense. Kissinger lost his second hat and Brent became the National Security Advisor. And George Bush came back and took on the CIA job.

Zelikow: November '75.

Cheney: November '75. So I worked very closely with Brent during that period of time. You couldn't help it, when you traveled together in all the presidential trips, foreign trips. My job was more in the logistics and managerial side of things, Brent on the policy side of things, but we became very close friends during that period of time and remain so today. Not that close a relationship with then-CIA Director Bush. Dealt with him some. I've got a picture someplace of

all of us gathered around the Cabinet table, the President—Bush—was briefing us as CIA Director. We were getting ready to evacuate Lebanon in the summer of 1976.

I'd see him at NSC meetings, those kinds of things, but didn't have very many intimate contacts with him. He would have been plugged in more through Brent in terms of his White House operations. But also during that period of time, another significant relationship that developed was with Jim Baker, because one of my jobs as Chief of Staff—and I'd really been involved in it going back to the summer of '75 when I was still Rumsfeld's deputy—was to get ready for the '76 campaign. Jim came over from the Commerce Department, as I recall, in early '76 and became the headhunter in terms of our delegate operations.

Zelikow: That's late April, early May '76.

Cheney: Right. Then at the convention in '76 in Kansas City, I offered him the job, at the direction of the President, to be chairman of the fall campaign. So we spent a lot of time together throughout the Ford years, especially the Baker-Scowcroft-Cheney relationship really developed in those years. That was very important later on.

Zelikow: As Chief of Staff, did you feel that you developed either strong experience or convictions on national security issues? Different Chiefs of Staff have different approaches for how much they involve themselves in these matters.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: You do not figure prominently in the histories of national security matters during this period, but that may be just because Kissinger didn't write up your role as prominently as he might have. So help me understand how you viewed that experience from the national security side.

Cheney: Well, it's important to understand how I saw my role during those days too. I had a deep interest in national security issues and foreign policy issues. It's something I'd always followed and been interested in.

Zelikow: But more as an avocation? Because your main portfolios were macroeconomic. I mean, you're doing all this domestic stuff.

Cheney: Right. But in that role as Deputy Chief of Staff, you would see a lot of stuff. I mean when I'd get the intelligence reports every morning, the limousine would be waiting for me at home. The first thing I'd see everyday would be the PDB [President's daily] brief, getting ready for Vladivostok or going to Vladivostok where the key item on the agenda with the Russians is arms control. So I was around it a lot. Not required to make judgments or decisions about it from a policy standpoint—that would have been Brent's responsibility, to make sure that all that happened—but if you're responsible for the political operation, you couldn't help but have some views and be involved.

Again, not so much in making the decision, but having to deal with the consequences of what was going on in the foreign policy arena. It could affect schedule. The Rambouillet summit in Paris with [Valery] Giscard [d'Estaing], the first of what later became G7, G8. An awful lot of what we did was foreign policy-related. I was running the President's schedule every day, handling his appointments and personnel decisions and ambassadorial assignments. You're around it a lot.

I was just trying to think of my involvement in terms of policy debates. It was more a matter of managing problems when they arose. I got a Cyprus problem when Ford first came in, the Greeks and the Turks had gone to war over Cyprus. The Congress passes an arms embargo prohibiting any U.S. dealings with the Turks. Turks are good friends and allies, NATO allies. You've got a real mess on your hands. But it's not just foreign policy, it's also Congress. Ford cared about it a lot because he was a member of Congress. So he'd get involved in the efforts to try to unwind the consequences of that foreign policy development.

Zelikow: Let me hone in on one particular thing, because it becomes very important later, which is attitudes towards détente. This is a major litmus test for any Republican in the year of our lord 1976.

Cheney: Let me make some notes here so I don't forget things.

Zelikow: Because if you think back, this is a year in which Kissinger is a political liability to the President, to not put too fine a point on it. The President, by some accounts anyway, feels a strong loyalty to Kissinger and is not obviously entertaining the idea of Kissinger's resignation, although there is the November '75 reshuffle. What I'd like to do is to see if this is a formative period for you in shaping your attitudes toward détente, whether you took a side internally in the White House on the issue of Kissinger's future. I mean, whether all these arguments or factions affected the way you thought about this basket of issues later on.

Cheney: One of the areas where that experience clearly had a significant impact on my later thinking had to do with the whole area of executive-legislative relations. I gave speeches, probably wrote articles about it. I was of the opinion that the combination of Vietnam and Watergate had significant negative impact on the Presidency and on terms of the balance between Congress and the White House. We ended up with things like the War Powers Act, which I think is a flawed concept, and the Budget Reform Act. A number of things that Congress adopted in response to the Vietnam-Watergate crises that subsequent Presidents have had to live with. And I emerged from that experience a very strong believer in the authority of the President to manage these issues as contrasted with the Congress. I thought Congress had infringed upon executive prerogatives.

If you want to see sort of an exposition of my views, you ought to look at the minority views on the Iran-Contra report. It's probably the best, most comprehensive statement of how I viewed the world. We had some high-quality guys helping me. It was not an original piece with me, but I was the ranking Republican on the Iran-Contra committee when I was in the Congress. This was '87. What emerged in that minority report is very much a reflection of the experiences I had, partly harking back to the Ford days, when we there doing battle with the Congress on so many

different things, including Vietnam. And I've talked about the arms embargoes and sanctions and so many other areas where Congress was really, I thought, encroaching on executive authority.

So that clearly shaped my views later on. To some extent had an impact on things, like why did I leave the Congress and go to DoD? Beyond that, in terms of the question of détente—

Zelikow: And Kissinger.

Cheney: Aw, come on, I've got an orderly presentation here. With respect to détente, I was generally supportive of the arms control initiatives. But again, I saw my role at the time—if I had really strong views on something, I'd go in and express them privately to the President. I'd meet with him alone every morning and every evening and talk about whatever I wanted to talk about. Usually I'd go in and manage issues. He'd dump things on me; I'd get decisions from him on various things. But I always conducted myself outside those private meetings in the Oval Office as trying to be a clear channel for everybody to the President.

I had a strong view that I did not want to be in a position where anyone in the Administration could accuse me of misusing my position to warp the input to the President and shape the outcome of the policy debate. I spent a lot of time thinking about the job as Chief of Staff, both before and when I was Rumsfeld's deputy, and later on when I participated in conferences again, talked about it and so forth. My own view of how the Chief of Staff ought to function is that it's not a public job. You do not go out and be an advocate for policy. You don't go out and say, "We need to cut the defense budget." As soon as you do that, the Secretary of Defense is no longer going to be willing to operate through you as somebody he's got confidence in, in terms of getting access to the man.

So I tried to avoid getting into a situation where I was doing battle on policy issues with any of my colleagues in the Administration. My job would be to make sure the President had all the information he needed before he had a decision, to get the right people in the meetings, to supervise the paper flow, and make sure everything was properly staffed out. I was careful not to have people know what my views might be on some of those issues, because I felt it would inhibit my capacity to function in a way that had integrity in terms of the operations of the White House.

With respect to détente, as I say, generally supportive of the arms control accords. Over time my views changed to some extent. I mean it's a matter of shades, though, a degree here. If you were to look at Scowcroft and myself, I think it would be fair to say we both believed in deterrence. We both supported arms control efforts and initiatives. I'd be farther over on the deterrence side than Brent would be; he'll be farther over on the arms control side. You'll see later on where we would differ on various issues on those kinds of things. Not a fundamental difference, but it's a matter of emphasis more than anything else. I think you'd have to describe me as probably more conservative than most of my colleagues in the Ford Administration on most issues. I think that's reflected in my later record. Probably true in the Bush Administration too.

Zelikow: But you did not attempt to take on Kissinger—

Cheney: Not on détente, no.

Zelikow: —Or attempt to persuade the President to dump him?

Cheney: No. We need to talk about November '75, though, for a minute. Kissinger's role is important. If you remember the night that Nixon announced he was going to resign the next day at noon. After he finished his speech, they cut to Jerry Ford on the lawn of his house in Alexandria, Virginia. He was out front there, the television cameras on him. The first words are going to come out of his mouth. He's now been designated, he's going to be the President of the United States in 12 hours. The first thing he said was, "I have asked Henry Kissinger to continue as Secretary of State and he has agreed." Almost a direct quote. Very first words out of his mouth. He felt clearly very strongly during that period of time that he really needed help and assistance and continuity in the foreign policy arena.

I think Nixon probably had an impact in persuading him that this was important. I think he probably felt more inadequate in that area than he did in a lot of the domestic areas. The next day when he met with the transition team—this is the five or six hours after he's been sworn in—he told the transition team, "You will go look at White House organization and the relationship between the White House staff and Cabinets, OMB [Office of Management and Budget], domestic council, et cetera," listed all those things. "You will not look at the NSC operation. Stay out of the foreign policy, national security piece of it." As I say, at that point, Henry had both jobs. Ford was clearly—I mean it was very direct—you know, "That's off limits. You guys can look at everything else." So he didn't make any changes in that area until about 14-15 months later. And then for a lot of reasons he decided to make some significant changes.

I was involved with Rumsfeld, the two of us, as the staff to work with Ford on those changes that he ultimately announced. There were a slew of them. Part of it was aimed at, well, we had to find a new Vice President. [Nelson] Rockefeller was coming off the ticket, that was one of the things that was announced at that point. We were trying to position various people as potential running mates for the President. I'm trying to reinvigorate, if you will, the Cabinet.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Betts: You mention about trying to juggle and position people. Was getting rid of [James] Schlesinger and [William] Colby, in your mind, more of getting new people that you wanted, or getting rid of people you were having problems with, or both?

Cheney: It was different for each one. With Bill Colby there had been a series of Agency—it was more of an institutional problem. Bill had been there a long time and we had all of these allegations about various and sundry historic problems in the Agency. You know, assassination attempts and all the rest of it. The Rockefeller Commission had been involved in looking at a lot of this stuff. I think a general view was that it was time for Bill to hang it up. But it was more institutional than it was personal. Schlesinger—

Betts: Excuse me, you weren't concerned that Colby was being too cooperative with the congressional investigations?

Cheney: No, that would not be the Ford view.

Zelikow: It might be the Kissinger view.

Cheney: It might be the Kissinger view. I think most of us just felt that we really needed some new blood out at the Agency. We weren't going to get it and restore the credibility of the Agency until we got somebody new out there. Bill was looked on as part of the old guard. Very talented guy, I thought well of him. As I say, it was more of an institutional and a managerial problem.

With Schlesinger, that was more personal from the standpoint of the President. Schlesinger was a brilliant, good Secretary of Defense. I still have a high regard for what he did there in terms of, for example, the F-16. I think Jim gets a lot of credit for having muscled the Department and the Air Force into buying off on the F-16 as the price they had to pay to get the 15. But he made a serious mistake. Ford became concerned that Congress was constantly cutting the defense budget.

There'd been some other problems. At the time that Saigon fell, at the end of the Vietnam War, there had been a potential embarrassment of some significance. We had Marines on the ground in the embassy in Saigon. We had given word that when the last person was out, to notify the President. Then we'd go out and announce that we'd completed the operation and everybody, all the Americans were out safe. That word came over from Schlesinger that in fact everybody was out, the ambassador and so forth. So we went out and announced that the operation was

completed. Got back in the Oval Office and got a phone call saying, "Sorry, we've still got 50 or 60 Marines on the ground in the embassy in Saigon." Those kinds of things that had hurt.

On the budget debate, when Ford told Schlesinger that he needed to be doing a better job in terms of working the Congress to get more money for defense, Jim's response was to hold a press conference and denounce George Mahon. George was a Democrat from Texas, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and one of Jerry Ford's closest personal friends. They had served together on the Appropriations Committee for 25 years. Now they were two out of a handful of people who used to have a jurisdiction and oversight over the CIA, for example, during that period of time. Ford really had enormous regard for George Mahon, and it was mutual. And Schlesinger went out and attacked Mahon. Wrong answer.

So when it was time to make these changes, Ford—I can remember the morning it happened. We were getting ready to go to Florida, to Jacksonville for a meeting with President [Anwar] Sadat, who was in the States. Before we left on that Sunday morning, we wanted to get Colby and Schlesinger in to give them the word that they were going to resign. We brought Colby in and that went fairly smoothly. Then Schlesinger was in the outer office and I was in the Oval Office with the President, making suggestions. You know, maybe you want to offer him an ambassadorship someplace, just to sort of give him an easy out.

Betts: It was the Ex-Im Bank he was offered, wasn't it?

Cheney: Well, the response from the President at that point was, "Dick, get that son of a bitch in here so I can fire him." One of the few times I saw Ford—it took a while to get him worked up to the point where he'd fire somebody, but he pulled the trigger on Jim. As I say, that had more to do with Schlesinger's mismanagement, in Ford's eyes, of those relationships.

Now, I would also say the relationship between Schlesinger and Kissinger was bad. A lot of people were crossways with Henry. Henry was to some extent carrying a big stick because he'd had to sacrifice his second hat. So in tightening up some of these other operations and dealing with some of these other problems, I'm sure Ford listened to Henry. I was not in all the meetings between Kissinger and Ford. They used to have a lot of private meetings, so some of this is speculation as well.

To follow on, to say Kissinger was controversial and a political liability, yes. I'm sure he felt sort of that he was the bull's-eye on the target. Certainly from my standpoint and I know from President Ford's standpoint, we had enormous regard for him. There was no effort. It would have been unacceptable for the President to try to get rid of Kissinger. He wouldn't have done that. There were people around, like Bob Hartmann, who was a speechwriter, a long-time aide to Ford. Hartmann had the knives out for Kissinger always. It was just continuous. He was always chopping away at Henry. But you know, it didn't have that big an impact on Kissinger.

Now Henry had great sensitivity in some areas. I mean, I can remember going with Ford on a state visit to Warsaw. This was right after the Helsinki summit in '75. I'm running the trip; Rumsfeld wasn't there. Landed in Warsaw and I left the presidential party and went out and had a private meeting in the suburbs in a private home with John Sherman Cooper, who was then our

ambassador in East Germany, down in Berlin. Spent the afternoon with Senator Cooper and then went back and rejoined the presidential party and the Senator went back to his embassy in Berlin.

A couple of days later, Henry found out that I had had a private meeting with one of his ambassadors unbeknownst to him, and went absolutely bonkers. We were on the airplane flying to someplace else on the trip. The screaming and the yelling, it took 15 minutes to get him to calm down enough so you could even have a conversation with him. The reason I met with John Sherman Cooper was because the President had asked me to. And the reason he asked me to was because Cooper was the resident expert on Kentucky politics. We were getting ready to have to run a primary campaign in Kentucky and we needed all the advice and counsel we could get. So I had a very pleasant chat and got educated about Kentucky politics by John Sherman Cooper.

I didn't understand until I read Sy Hersh's book on Kissinger in the White House a couple years later why Kissinger was so upset. He thought I was doing what he'd done to Bill Rogers. And what he'd done to Bill Rogers was set up this worldwide network of private reporting relationships with ambassadors all over the world. They had to back channel to the Nixon White House, to Kissinger, instead of coming through State the normal way. Henry was convinced I was doing to him what he'd done to Rogers.

Zelikow: Later too, Kissinger and Rumsfeld do not appear to have gotten along.

Cheney: I think there were some differences there, yes.

Zelikow: And he would have seen you as Rumsfeld's guy.

Cheney: Sure. Well, there was another relationship here too that was sour from my standpoint, which I'm sure affected Kissinger's view during that period, and that was Rockefeller. Henry was first, last, and always a Rockefeller man. Rockefeller had been his mentor, had been the guy who'd really gotten him involved in politics. Had worked for Rockefeller before he ever worked for Nixon. Nancy was an employee of Nelson's for years. Rockefeller was very unhappy as Vice President.

One of my jobs as Chief of Staff was I became the foil between Rockefeller and the President. We had a policy that said we've got tough budget problems, there aren't going to be any new spending programs. Rockefeller every week would come up with a new spending program. He'd go in and have his one-on-one with the President. They'd have lunch every Wednesday or whatever it was. At the end of the day I'd go in for my de-brief, and the President would hand me the proposal and say, "Here, what the hell do we do with this?" I'd say, "Well, we'll staff it out." So I'd take it out and we'd send it around the horn. It would go to OMB, go to the domestic council, go over to Treasury or wherever, whoever was involved. The answer would always come back the same way, "This proposal's entirely inconsistent with our stated policy of no new starts." And Rockefeller would blow up.

All of this led ultimately to a scene, a major scene, at the convention in Kansas City, in two respects. When Rockefeller was giving his speech as the outgoing Vice President, the microphone shut off in the middle of his speech. He was convinced that I had arranged to have

the microphone turned off while he was giving his speech to the delegates in Kansas City, his swan song as Vice President. I didn't; I didn't have anything to do with it. It was a technical problem. But all this led to a confrontation underneath the speaker's platform, a lot of yelling and screaming by Nelson Rockefeller at me personally.

My job was to do what the President needed to have done. They maintained a great relationship, and I was the black hat. We had one other thing that involved Kissinger at the convention in '76, and that was the [Jesse] Helms amendment to the platform. This was an effort by the Reagan forces and Helms to some extent on his own hook, to criticize the Ford Administration. Remember, Reagan used the Panama Canal issue very effectively during the course of the primaries, then really started to hammer away at Ford on the Panama Canal treaties. This was a platform plank that was designed to embarrass the President and Kissinger.

The key vote in Kansas City came not on the platform but came on the Rule 16C, that had to do with whether or not Ford would be required to pick his Vice President before he was nominated as President. That was the test vote. We were organized; we won the fight on 16C. But then later on that evening, the platform came up. In that was this proposal that Helms had drafted that really criticized Henry by everything but in name. It was anti-détente, anti-everything. It just blasted away at Henry. Kissinger wanted to fight it. He wanted us to go on the floor and get all of the delegates together and defeat the Helms foreign policy plank. We didn't want to do that because by this time it's late at night, after we'd won our key fight on the rules. Our delegates were in bars all over Kansas City, they weren't on the floor. The only people on the floor were the Helms folks. So there was a big meeting upstairs in Ford's suite. Nelson Rockefeller was there, taking Henry's side.

Zelikow: Baker would have been there too.

Cheney: Baker probably would have been there. Stu Spencer was there. Tom Korologos was there. And in the middle of the meeting, Kissinger finally threatens to resign. Pounds on the table, "Unless you fight this and take it on, there's no way I can survive as Secretary of State. There's no way I can function in my capacity. You absolutely have to fight it. And if you don't fight it, I'm going to resign." And at that point, Tom Korologos spoke up and he said, "Henry, for Christ's sake, if you're going to quit, do it now, we need the votes." [*Laughter*]

That was the end of the conversation. We did what we wanted to do. We made a political call on that case, and then we took a dive on that issue. We just went down and accepted the platform on a voice vote. Nobody ever cared or paid any attention to it; platforms aren't very important anyway, once the fight's over with. If you didn't fight on it, it was done deal. Then we moved on after that. So there were issues like that involving Henry, but I will say I still come back to the notion that he was an enormous talent.

Betts: Going back to November '75 and the shuffling then and the run-up to the primary campaign, do you recall at what point you and President Ford realized that the Reagan challenge was going to be really serious? When it started affecting or making you think about these other sort of personnel matters or positions?

Cheney: It was pretty obvious from the very beginning. We had, in fact, offered Reagan a Cabinet post when Ford first came in. He didn't have any interest. He was out by then. Seventy-four was when he left, I believe. He'd been Governor from '66 to '70 and '70 to '74.

We had two individuals who were instrumental for us in terms of trying to deal with this. One was Tom Reed. Tom had been the Republican National Committee man from California during the Nixon years and was Reagan's man in Washington. He'd been sort of a liaison between the Nixon and the Reagan operations. Reagan had been thinking seriously about running for President anyway in '76. That was on his agenda; he had already made one brief run at it in '68. So the fact that he was a potential candidate was very much there from the very beginning from when we got to the White House with Ford. The other individual who was important in that was Stu Spencer. And Stu came on board, I want to say early '76, maybe late '75 —probably late '75—as sort of a political strategist for us. Of course, he had run Reagan's campaigns for Governor in California. So we were sort of plugged in, we were aware that the Reagan people were giving serious thought to running. It was an issue, as I say, as early as the spring of '75, late '74.

Betts: Did you have a sense then that the foreign policy criticism was going to be as strong as it was, as sort of the hub of the Reagan campaign?

Cheney: No, I can't say that we did. If you remember the sequence in the primaries, New Hampshire came first. Didn't talk about foreign policy in New Hampshire. In the end we won New Hampshire and it was viewed as a Ford victory, even though we only carried it by 1,300 votes. But that was because the Reagan forces had a serious foul-up there. Their chairman, Governor Meldrim Thompson, who was running for Reagan, announced a week or so before the New Hampshire primary that Reagan was going to win New Hampshire outright, and then he didn't. And when he didn't, even though we were the incumbent and we only won by 1,300 votes, still it was perceived as a Ford victory.

Florida was where Reagan first made his Panama Canal pitch. We did well in the Florida primary. It just didn't really take hold then, but it started to grow. It went from Florida then I think on to say, Wisconsin. We won all of those primaries, and then we came to North Carolina. North Carolina's where they nailed us. North Carolina—Helms, conservative Republican Party—really was prime ground for the Reagan foreign policy attack, which was, "The Panama Canal's ours. I bought it, I paid for it," et cetera. He used that very effectively, won in North Carolina. He was thinking about getting out before the North Carolina primary, but when he won in North Carolina—they had bought a half-hour of national television time—Reagan went on the air and gave a great speech, raised a lot of money. Then we were in a dogfight from then all the way down to the convention. They took Texas. We'd win one; they'd win one. But the foreign policy issue as I recall was first raised in the Florida primary in the spring of '76.

Zelikow: Let me go back to an issue involving Bush from the Ford era. I believe there were two occasions that I know of when Bush was very seriously considered for the Vice Presidency. First, which is not well known, is an effort that was quietly organized to promote Bush for Vice President, right in the fall of '74.

Cheney: Bill Steiger was one of the leaders.

Zelikow: He was.

Cheney: How do you know all this stuff?

Zelikow: I've been doing some biographical work on Jim Baker.

Cheney: Have you? Okay.

Zelikow: So it's Bush-Rockefeller. I'll tell you what I know. I know about Bush–Rockefeller; I know who was promoting Bush. I know about the circle of people on the Hill who had combined to address President Ford on this. I know that a rumor was floated that tied Bush to the Townhouse Operation, one of the little Watergate stories, alleging that Bush had gotten some cash. There's no need to go down that road, people went down it later and it got taken care of. But that rumor was floated for the first time and then it just—well, Ford's going to go with Rockefeller.

Cheney: There was a third candidate, which was Rumsfeld.

Zelikow: I did not know that.

Cheney: What happened at the time—we're back now, this is August of '74.

Zelikow: Going into September.

Cheney: Yes, but this is during this transitional period when Ford picked his Vice President. He's the first man who's become President by appointment and one of the first things he needs to do is pick a replacement. During that transition period, he looked at three individuals: Nelson Rockefeller and George Bush and Don Rumsfeld.

I know that because two years later, when it was time to pick a Vice President in connection with the Kansas City convention, Ford called me in one day and pulled out a piece of paper, yellow legal pad sized paper, with a whole bunch of handwritten stuff on it. Down one side it listed candidates and down the other side it listed qualities. Had, as I recall, bunches of pluses and minuses filling in the matrix. It was the piece of paper he had used in making his decision to go with Rockefeller in '74. I asked him who had prepared it for him and he said Bryce Harlow. Bryce, of course, had been a legend. We don't need to spend a lot of time here, but he was very close to Ford. Procter & Gamble lobbyist for a long time, Nixon White House aide, worked for Eisenhower back in the Eisenhower Administration.
Bryce had put together this sheet for Ford that he used in evaluating Rumsfeld, Bush, and Rockefeller. He was giving it to me to look at because he wanted me to supervise the operation of the selection of a running mate for him at the Kansas City convention. If you go back again to August, we knew—that is, I was aware even then—that Rumsfeld was a potential candidate. There was a lot of press speculation that Bush was. Bill Steiger had called me as a former

employee who was then working on the transition team to lobby me on behalf of Bush, even though I was working for Rumsfeld at the time. He was close to Rumsfeld too.

I was with Rumsfeld, Rumsfeld was actually out at our house for some reason. Might have even stayed there for a couple of days because my family was gone, his family was in Brussels. As we sat, the night before Ford made the announcement—he may have even talked to Don and to George Bush about this whole proposition. That is, President Ford may have had conversations with them. I don't remember the details, but I do remember Rumsfeld and I sitting in my kitchen, hearing over the television that Nelson Rockefeller was then leaving Albany with two or three jets loaded with staffers and family to fly to Washington. That was a pretty good sign that it wasn't going to be Rumsfeld. I remember Don turning to me at that point and saying, "You know, damn it, Cheney, that's the problem. There's Rockefeller with all those airplanes and all that money and all those staff people and all I've got is you." [*Laughter*]

But the next day Ford did the ceremony in the Oval Office. He had Rockefeller in the side office. You didn't know for sure until they opened the door and Rockefeller stepped out that he was the choice.

Zelikow: Why Rockefeller and not Bush?

Cheney: Ford told me that—

Zelikow: And did this rumor about—

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Because there was some suspicion among the Bush supporters that Rockefeller's people had stimulated that rumor as a way of shooting Bush down.

Cheney: In anything like that, there are people trying to plant stories with reporters and call members of Congress and leak stuff. Having talked to Ford about it later—and as I say, I did not advise him in '74. I was not at the meeting when he decided who he was going to go with. But I know the very high regard he had for George Bush. I know that one of the reasons we wanted to bring Bush back from China and give him some visibility in the Cabinet was because Ford wanted to consider him for Vice President in '76. Wasn't able to for other reasons later on, but it had nothing to do with Townhouse Operation.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: What he told me later on was that—I think it was at the same time he showed me that piece of paper—that he had made his decision to go with Rockefeller. That he sort of looked on Bush and Rumsfeld as the future of the party. They were that younger generation. Nelson Rockefeller gave him something, though, that neither one of them could give him. Nelson Rockefeller was an international figure. He was a major national figure already in his own right, not only as Governor of New York, but everybody knew who he was. He had run for President.

That he, Jerry Ford, was the former Congressman from Flint, Michigan. He'd never run for national office, was not known in the international community, and was dealing during this period of time—you know, again, this may have been in Henry Kissinger having been in earlier and made these arguments—he wanted to reassure the world that the guy that was coming on board who was going to take over, was going to keep U.S. commitments around the world. Whether it was NATO or Vietnam, that you could count on and rely on this new President and this new Administration. In one way he sent a signal intended as reassurance to the world, to take this known quantity, prominent Republican, Nelson Rockefeller, and make him his Vice President when he had to make that choice.

It's important to understand that we always had, during the Ford years, this paradox. On the one hand, we've taken over from a failed Administration, a terrible scandal, Watergate. We have to clean house, new crowd's in charge, do all of those things to demonstrate that this was a fresh start. On the other hand, we didn't want to scare the hell out of our friends and allies around the world. We had to emphasize continuity in foreign policy and defense. That's why Ford did things like, first words out of his mouth, he said Kissinger has agreed to stay. Told the transition team, "Stay out of the NSC apparatus, that's off limits for you guys." And I think, partly, selected Nelson Rockefeller.

Zelikow: Staying with Bush—why [Robert] Dole, not Bush? And now it's in mid-'76 in Kansas City.

Cheney: Okay, can you guard it for a minute?

Zelikow: Surely from an electoral point of view, you lost Texas to Carter in '76.

Cheney: Right. John Connolly promised—

Zelikow: There are a lot more electoral votes in Texas than there are in Kansas. Plus, you've just described the President's attitude towards Bush. So help me, because Bush comes up again and he's a bridesmaid again.

Cheney: Well, he didn't come up again in Kansas City. Remember what happened here. Once the decision was made to send him not to Commerce but to CIA, then his political prospects became a hot issue for the Hill. By this time the CIA Director is being confirmed. There had been a bill passed that requires confirmation, and that hadn't been true always in the past. But to get Bush confirmed, Ford had to sign a letter to the Hill, promising that he would not consider George Bush for Vice President in '76. That was the price of admission of getting Bush through the confirmation process. There was a meeting in the Oval Office that I participated in and watched—you know, Ford hated it; he didn't want to do it—but it was the only way you were going to get Senate sign off on George Bush as CIA Director. George Bush didn't like it either, but they really were left with no option. It's early '76, late '75, and it's clear that the nomination's not going forward unless Ford promises that.

Now, were there political motives in the minds of those who insisted upon that promise? Maybe. But there was also legitimate concern that you are making a pretty political appointment to be

Director of the CIA. The CIA has been in a lot of trouble, great credibility problems. This is the first political appointee to run the CIA; up to then it had been career guys. So I think there were some concerns on the Hill that you don't want this just to be a way station for George Bush to spend a few months, and then you're going to jerk him out in July and make him your Vice President. I'm sure they were scoring political points too, but once the decision was made that George Bush was going to the CIA, the Vice Presidency was out.

Zelikow: I'd like to move forward now to your congressional years.

Cheney: Before we do that, they brought lunch in for us. They've got some sandwiches. We've got some for the audio technicians as well.

Zelikow: Well, it might be time anyway for you to catch your breath for a moment.

Cheney: So why don't we take a break at this point?

[Break for lunch]

Zelikow: We're going to leapfrog ahead to the Bush Administration. But before we do that, if you could just talk a little bit about how from Congress you engaged in the 1980 and 1988 campaigns and the implications of that.

Cheney: Let me take you back to '78 first. Because in '78 I've gone home to Wyoming and I run for Congress. I've got to win in Wyoming. I've got a tough three-way primary for the nomination. The Wyoming Republican Party had been deeply split in the Reagan-Ford fight of 1976. My problem was to avoid having my legacy from that '76 campaign adversely affect the nomination battle in Wyoming. I had to put some distance between myself and President Ford so I didn't run as Jerry Ford's guy in Wyoming. He came up and spoke at our convention; I arranged for him to come address the Republican convention, but he didn't say a word about me. He was on board for all of this, but I needed Reagan's support and the Reagan organization's support in '78 in Wyoming too. I'd worked hard to build that base inside the party.

By the time the '80 election came around, I'm running for re-election, first time out. I had no desire to sort of re-engage, if you will, in the '76 battles. A lot of my staunch supporters in Wyoming, the woman who was chairman of the campaign was a Reagan supporter in '76. So I was careful not to get caught up in the Ford-Reagan stuff, because there was still a legacy of that even in '80. My only involvement in the national campaign in '80 was in Detroit at the convention. I was asked to come down by Howard Baker and company and participate in some conversations with Baker and John Rhodes and Bob Teeter.

Zelikow: Which Baker are you talking about?

Cheney: Howard Baker. This is over whether or not Ford ought to become Reagan's running mate, which I thought was a dumb idea at the time but it was seriously, seriously considered. I remember sitting in a meeting with Bill Casey, who was there representing Ronald Reagan, going over a list. He had a list of all the stuff Ford had asked for that they were willing to

consider letting him have, in order to get him to go on the ticket. Shortly after that it all fell apart, fortunately. George Bush became the running mate and that was the right answer.

Ford was asking for the sky. He hated being Vice President, the nine months he had of it back in '74. But he wanted supervision of the National Security Council, he wanted some control over the budget, he had a whole list of things he wanted. The Reagan people, as I say initially, were going to do it. Then they backed off and Ford backed off and it got resolved. That was my only involvement in the '80 campaign. I didn't get involved other than that.

If you move on up to '87, '88—

Zelikow: You did not get dragged into Bush versus Reagan in '79-'80?

Cheney: Nope, stayed out of it for my own domestic political reasons.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: In '87 and '88, in the run-up to the '88 elections, I also stayed out of it. Don Rumsfeld gave serious thought to running. Actually set up a committee, had several meetings, asked me to sign on and support him, I said no. George Bush asked me to support him. Had me down for breakfast at the White House. Barber Conable got us together at one point at his house there in Washington, just the three of us and our wives one night. I turned down the President as well.

The main reason was that I was moving up the leadership ladder in the Congress. My objective then was to become the Republican leader in the House. I'd already been policy chairman at the end of my first term, got to be chairman of the conference when [Jack] Kemp stepped down to run for President. Right after the '88 general election there would be the caucus where we would pick the next Republican whip, the number two job in the House. Trent Lott, who had it, was leaving to run in the Senate. I knew I was running for that job, actively lobbying for it.

We had Kemp, who was a member of the caucus and had a lot of support inside the caucus, running for President. We had George Bush, who was Vice President, a lot of support inside the caucus, running for President. And Rumsfeld, whom I had obviously personal obligations to. I just said no to everybody, so that my race for the leadership didn't get caught up in an ongoing battle within the party over the Presidency. And it worked. Because when we met in December, I got elected without opposition as the Republican whip.

So I had no involvement in either the '80 or the '88 campaign, really, on behalf of George Bush.

Zelikow: You worked, once the nominee was picked—

Cheney: Sure, I supported the nominee after the nomination was done.

Zelikow: When were you first approached about the idea of joining the Cabinet of the Bush Administration?

Cheney: The afternoon before it happened. Again, my track wasn't to go back to the executive branch. I had devoted ten years to the House, loved the House—we'll come back and talk about that later—but I really had my sights set on replacing Bob Michel, whenever Bob retired. Besides, the Bush forces had made it pretty clear they weren't interested in taking members of Congress to join the Cabinet, because we didn't have that many Republican members of Congress. So at least at the outset, there was a policy he wouldn't do that. It was later relaxed, obviously, when they came in for Manny Lujan, Lynn Martin, Ed Madigan and others.

There was a meeting where President Bush came to the Hill and met with the House Republican leadership, I'd say along in February, maybe. He made a point as he was going out of the meeting of stepping aside to ask me how I was doing. He knew I'd had coronary bypass surgery the summer before, August before. Looking back on it, I've often wondered if he didn't have the notion in mind, at that point, that I was a potential replacement for [John] Tower. Tower was in trouble by then. But the actual conversation came probably March 9th. It's the day Tower's vote is slated for, that afternoon. It's clear he is going to lose, that he's going down. Brent Scowcroft called me that morning and said that they were beginning to think about what they were going to do for a follow on, and they wanted to consult with me. They wanted my advice on what they might do by way of the follow-up to the Tower thing.

It wasn't that unusual a request. I got those every once in a while anyway. I'm the Republican whip in the House and good friends with Brent and a lot of the other people. Baker used to consult me when he was Reagan's Chief of Staff. I mean, it wasn't an unusual kind of request. He asked me to come down to the White House that afternoon at 4 o'clock, as I recall, and meet with him and John Sununu to talk about it. I told him I couldn't come then. I had to go do the *Evans and Novak* television show, which we were taping, but that I would come after the show was over with. They said fine.

So I went and I taped the show, which was supposed to run that Saturday, and during the course of the show, one of them—Bob Novak or Rolly Evans—were speculating on who was going to be the next nominee to be Secretary of Defense. I think it was Novak who said, "Look, I've got it on absolute, gold-plated authority, guaranteed. It's going to be Bobby Inman." All of this was taped on their show and then, of course, I was announced at noon the next day. [*Laughter*] They scrubbed the show. They did a re-run. It is the only time the Evans and Novak people ever did a re-run.

But anyway, I went to the White House, it was along about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, sat down. It was clear, after I'd been there just a couple of minutes, they said, "What are we going to do now?" I suggested, "What about Rumsfeld? Why not a guy like Don Rumsfeld, who has been Secretary of Defense?" That didn't fly too well because there were still some hard feelings going back to the New Hampshire primary in '88. Rumsfeld and Haig had endorsed Bob Dole the Saturday before the New Hampshire primary, which George Bush then won. I'd never heard the President say anything negative about that, but Sununu made it pretty clear that that was not an acceptable solution to the problem.

Then Brent said, after a little bit of monkeying around, "What about you? Would you consider it?" That was really the first time that I'd—

Zelikow: Were you floored? Or had you fantasized about the possibility?

Cheney: Well, about the time he's raising it, I'm starting to get the drift that there is something going on here besides the usual congressional consultation. We talked about it at that point then. Scowcroft and Sununu and myself. I was flattered to be thought of in those terms. We kicked it around a bit and as I recall, the way we left it, I would call Sununu the next morning. If I was interested in taking it to the next step, then he would arrange for me to see the President. They didn't want to put the President in the position of asking me and have me turn him down. They were clearly there with the President's knowledge that they were talking to me about it. It was artfully handled, the way that sort of thing is. So we left it that way.

I left and picked up my wife and went and had dinner with Tom Stroock, a guy who crops up for no reason, but crops up through the story. Tom was back in Washington then, he and his wife. We'd had a longstanding agreement to have dinner that night. So went and had dinner with them. We couldn't say anything or talk to anybody about it, so after we finished that Lynne and I went home and I was able to talk to her about it in the car. When I got home and walked into the house, the phone was ringing. It was Jim Baker. Jim was obviously part of the cabal at this point too. He lobbied me long and loud as to why I ought to sign on as Sec Def.

We slept on it that night, concluded the next morning that I did in fact want to take it the next step, talk to the President. Called Sununu, he arranged for me to have a private meeting with the President upstairs in the residence at noon. I had a speech with a bunch of newspaper editors downtown that morning. I went and did the speech and went over and went in the back way to the White House, so nobody could see me come in. We were trying to keep it quiet at that point. Went upstairs to the President's office on the second floor and spent probably an hour or more with him, just the two of us. Sununu came in then for the latter part of it.

He did not offer it at that point. We talked about the job. Talked about some of the priorities, some of the problems. Central America, arms control, procurement reform, some of the kinds of things he was interested in having done at Defense. Then we finished the meeting, I left and went back to the Hill. I'd only been back there a short period of time and the phone rang, it was the President. At that point he offered me the job, said, "I want you to be my Secretary of Defense. Will you take it?" I said, "Yes, I will." He said, "All right, get your fanny back down here and we'll announce it right now." So I got in the car and drove back to the White House and got hooked up with the President. He took me down into the briefing room—it was about 4 o'clock on a Friday afternoon—and announced that I was the new designate as the Secretary of Defense.

My basic reason for agreeing to do it, the bottom line was that I had to choose. I obviously had a promising career in the House, which I had to give up to go do this. On the other hand—a lot of stuff we can talk about in the congressional section—but my presence as the whip made it easier for Bob Michel to stay. I was a buffer between the old guard, Bob Michel and company, and Newt Gingrich and the guys coming along behind. Being in that position, my choice was, do I want to spend four more years as Bob Michael's understudy, as the whip in the House, or four years as Secretary of Defense? And that wasn't a close call. Defense looked like a lot more fun. There was the attractiveness of working for George Bush, whom I had a lot of respect for, with

Brent Scowcroft and Jim Baker, two close friends, and I believed then and do now, enormously talented individuals. It just looked like the kind of opportunity you couldn't pass up.

Not that it had any long-term political benefits to it. If I were going to look at it strictly in those terms, probably I would have stayed in the House. But in the end it wasn't a close call. I didn't agonize over it. Sat down and looked at it and said, "Yes, let's go do that." So that's how I got the job.

Zelikow: Whom do you credit for having come up with the idea of Cheney for Defense?

Cheney: I don't know. I assume Brent and Jim had a hell of a lot to do with it. But John Tower had been a really loyal troop for George Bush. He had been on the Tower commission with Brent, remember the Tower Commission was the Administration unit set up to look at Iran-Contra. He had always been a big George Bush supporter. I think the President felt obligated to him and stuck with him all the way through to the bitter end, until he went down to defeat. But nobody could have forecast that Tower was going to be defeated. He wasn't just rejected by the Senate, he was rejected by his own committee, the committee he chaired for years and had been a member of, the Senate Armed Services Committee. Back in December or January, you would not have expected that. It was clear as you went through the early weeks of the Administration, Tower was in trouble.

Zelikow: There were some people even then who forecasted trouble for Tower on the Hill and difficulties.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: You were not involved in those conversations? Now, Defense as a portfolio. I mean, I could write the fact sheet; Pete Williams could write the fact sheet. Of course, naturally this experience in the House, on the Intelligence Committee, et cetera. But one could make an equally plausible case for just about any of the other Cabinet departments. Did you—?

Cheney: I wouldn't have accepted.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: I mean, I wasn't lusting after a job in the executive branch. In my view, based on my own experience in government—by then, I guess close to 20 years—some jobs matter a lot more than others. State matters a lot, Defense matters a lot, Treasury under some circumstances. I'd already been Chief of Staff. Commerce? No, didn't have any interest. HUD [Housing and Urban Development], Interior? None of those had any great interest for me. I had an abiding, continuing interest in the whole national security area. I'd been heavily involved in it in the past, not only on the Intelligence Committee for four years. Had strong views about executive-legislative authority and who ought to be dominant. Had done the Iran-Contra thing and been involved in the Goldwater-Nichols battle back in '86. It was just a subject of great interest to me. It looked like a hell of a lot of fun.

Zelikow: Take a moment, and here you should feel free to range as broadly as you want. You go into this job, tell us about your daily operating world and the people who figure prominently in it, as you kind of get through days and weeks. Who are you relying on? What does that world look like to you?

Cheney: I've got a different conceptual notion that we might want to move to at this point, because this is the place where I spent some time thinking about how I would organize some thoughts on it. Basically it's very important, I think, to get on the record my view of the President, because he was the boss, the one who selected me and whom I worked for. Also the NSC, that is the Baker-Bush-Cheney arrangement, and then talk about what my priorities were.

Zelikow: Right.

Cheney: Because you clearly have to make choices. One of the great things about being part of the Bush Administration was just the unique quality of the man who was running the show. If you were to go out and design a President to be Commander in Chief in a crisis like Desert Storm, you couldn't do any better than what we had with George Bush. In terms of his experiences, combat pilot in World War II, UN [United Nations], China, CIA, Vice President. He was a delight to work for in that regard. So a lot of what followed after that, whatever successes we enjoyed and so forth, you have to start with the man. He's the guy who got elected; he's the guy who hired all of us. He was the one who gets the credit and the blame if it doesn't go right. I can't say enough about his own capacity, the way he worked, the guidance he gave us, the support he gave us when we had to do some very difficult things, some politically difficult things. Never hesitated and signed right up to.

Again, viewed from the perspective of Defense Secretary, he loved the military. He has told me on more than one occasion that his happiest days as President were the days he spent with the troops. You couldn't have had a better Commander in Chief, so to speak, given my role as Secretary of Defense. There have been other Presidents for whom it would have been extraordinarily difficult to function in that capacity. For professional reasons, because they didn't understand the job. Because you didn't have their confidence, you weren't free to make decisions and operate, they wouldn't support you when you got into hot water. He was just a hell of a boss, I'd start with that.

Secondly, the NSC apparatus. We've talked about my friendship with Brent and Jim, but it really was unique. I'd been in Washington by then for 20 years. In the Nixon Administration I'd watched Kissinger do battle with Rogers. Rogers eventually quit and Henry got both jobs. In the Ford Administration I'd watched Kissinger do battle with Schlesinger and with Pat Moynihan. I used to have to referee those battles, and Schlesinger eventually went down. In the Carter Administration I'd watched [Zbigniew] Brzezinski and [Cyrus] Vance, and Vance eventually resigned over Desert One.

In the Reagan Administration I'd watched seven national security advisors in eight years and the Iran-Contra train wreck, and then been part of investigating the whole Iran-Contra thing. So that the track record of these relationships between State and Defense and the NSC weren't very good. Even in the Reagan good years, you still had daily battles between [Caspar] Weinberger

and [George] Shultz. Colin Powell will talk about having both over for breakfast every day some weeks, just to keep the thing glued together as you moved forward.

When you get to the Bush Administration, we didn't have any of that. Primarily, obviously the President would not have tolerated it. But also because we started from the fact that we'd all worked together 15 years before. There was an element of trust there that made it a delight to go to work every day, to work with your colleagues. You never had to worry that the Secretary of State or the NSC advisor was going to take something you said, use it out of context, leak it to the press, use it to hammer or take advantage somehow in the bureaucratic wars. There was the concept that it was a team. We all had different responsibilities, different views. Sometimes we had major differences and policy differences to argue about, but that piece of it was a very important consideration too, as I look back and reflect on why it worked.

In terms of what I tried to do as Secretary, I was influenced to some extent by the time I'd spent in the Ford White House. I guess I was older and wiser. When I was 34 and took over the White House, I thought I had to do it all myself. I thought there was some kind of a relationship between the number of hours you spend on the job and how good a job you were doing. By the time I got to the Pentagon 15 years later, I was a little wiser. I knew I wasn't going to be there forever, that I had to establish priorities. I had to pick certain things I was interested in and get rid of the others, delegate them to somebody else, that I couldn't do everything. So I really approached it with the notion that I had to figure out what my priorities were going to be and then find somebody else to handle the other stuff.

The way I organized it, not necessarily in this order, but first was the President. Obviously, whatever he needed to have done, whatever he wanted, he was the boss. He was the one whose name was going to be on the ballot the next time around, so that was top priority. Second was this set of relationships with Baker and Scowcroft, the NSC. Our weekly Wednesday morning breakfast when we were all in town, keeping the national security apparatus tied together because of the relationships among the three of us. Making certain that the pressures that exist inside the bureaucracy didn't drive wedges between us and that we did function as a team.

Third, I wanted to be involved in broad questions of strategy. The Cold War ends, we go from the assumption of all-out global nuclear war that begins with two weeks warning, to the regional focus. The notion that we had to be prepared to defeat anybody who tried to dominate a region of the world that was close to us. Fourth, the big budget questions, things like major resource allocation. Fifth item on the list—and again, not necessarily in this order—any operational use of the force. We'd deployed troops, we went to war, the chain of command from the President to the Secretary down to the force. That was something I obviously wanted to be able to spend a lot of time on, high priority for me.

This led to the sixth item, and here I'd call it sort of general relations with the military. The link between the Secretary as the senior civilian in the building reporting directly to the President on the one hand and directly down to the CINC [Commander in Chief] or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs on the other. I saw that relationship as very important, obviously something that was going to take a lot of my time.

Seventh, Congress. There's a whole section we can spend talking about the Congress. I won't do it all now, but there were some serious problems in terms of the relationship between the Pentagon and the Hill as a result of what had gone before. By virtue of my ten years in the House, my relationship with all the guys up there, I could say and do things that nobody else could get away with because I had been a member of the club. I took that as a prime responsibility for me during my tour.

The next item would be what I would describe as press and public. The communications with the outside world, building and maintaining credibility for the Department with the external world, and obviously working with the press. Intelligence was a special continuing interest of mine, partly because of my time on the Intelligence Committee. There is a big chunk of DoD, obviously, which involves the intelligence community. DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency], NSA [National Security Agency], et cetera. Diplomacy, broadly defined. This turned out to be a bigger part of the job than I thought when I went into it. You end up having to spend a fair amount of time dealing with other defense ministers, attending NATO quarterly meetings, doing all of those things that really are sort of "small d" diplomatic, but that do take up a fair amount of your time.

And then finally, I had, at least for the early weeks I was there, what I would describe as personnel. There were then 44 presidential-level appointments, Senate-confirmable posts in DoD. Assistant Secretary and above.

Zelikow: Forty-four?

Cheney: Forty-four. By the time you added up all the service secretaries, assistant secretaries, policy shop and so forth. I replaced 39 out of the 44 in the first few months I was there. So it was a major personnel operation. I had to be heavily involved in that myself, on the theory that that's one of the most important things you do in any organization. And if I got that right and hired good people, then there was a pretty good chance we'd be successful. But if I didn't, if I couldn't bring in good people, if I didn't get a lot of those posts filled, then it didn't matter how hard I worked, we were going to have a train wreck. It wouldn't fly. So those were the things I focused on and thought about. Each one of those, obviously, is something you could spend a lot of time discussing. That should give you a sense of what the priorities were.

The other side of the coin was, what did I want to give up? I mean, that sounds like a lot. What was I willing to delegate to others and not deal with? The daily care and feeding of service secretaries. Somebody has to worry about the Secretary of the Air Force, Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy. Tailhook. Detailed budget preparations. I had 37 days to put our first budget together and I wanted to be intimately involved on that, but that I saw as sort of a learning period. After that, somebody else had to worry about a lot of the detail.

I would get involved on a selective basis and make the big decisions at the top, but there is just an enormous amount of work that goes into that and somebody else had to do. Riots, wasn't interested in doing riots. Oil spills, hurricanes, all of those domestic uses of the force that you get involved with. Procurement reform. This was an item that the President was interested in, but it's also sort of a bottomless pit. It needs to be done, somebody has to work it and manage it

continuously, but I had a great deputy in Don Atwood, who knew an awful lot more about the industrial sector than I did. So Don ended up doing that as well. Those were the categories of things that I didn't want to spend time on.

Let me say a word or two, you ask about people. We could spend the rest of the afternoon talking about people. But there are two right at the top of the list who were clearly more important than virtually anything else. First was Colin Powell. I made the decision the afternoon the President announced my appointment that if I could, I wanted to try to get Colin for my Chairman of the JCS. The background of that was, again, I mentioned Frank Carlucci earlier. Frank of course had been my immediate predecessor as Secretary, but Frank and I had worked together 20 years before at OEO as part of the Rumsfeld operation and been friends ever since. I'd heard Frank over the years talk about Colin Powell. Colin had been the White House fellow in OMB when Carlucci was there in the Nixon Administration working under Weinberger. Later on he'd been the military assistant to Cap Weinberger when Cap was Secretary.

I'd met him when he was the corps commander in Germany. I'd been on an Intelligence Committee trip to the Middle East and on the way back stopped in Germany and spent part of an afternoon with the then-commander, I think, of Fifth Corps, and it was Colin Powell. Then when Iran-Contra blew up in '87, Carlucci was brought back as the National Security Advisor. The first thing he did was to reach out and grab Colin and bring him in and make him his deputy. So I'd had the opportunity the last two years of the Reagan Administration to work fairly closely with him on a lot of policy issues. As I say, at the time I was a senior Republican in the Congress on the House side, and during Iran-Contra, Colin and Frank were down cleaning up the NSC apparatus during the same period. I'd watched him work, we'd dealt on Contras and Central America together, other kinds of policy issues. I'd been impressed with the quality of his effort. The day he left the White House to go back to the Pentagon by the end of the Administration, I'd actually called him right there towards the end and expressed the hope that we'd have the opportunity down the road some point. I had no idea I was going to Defense or anything else, just wished him well.

So when the President named me Secretary, that evening, the first thing I did was to call Frank and go see Carlucci. We spent two or three hours together at his house in McLean, just talking about the Department and so forth. But right at the top of my list was what did he think about the idea of General Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Zelikow: You had the idea before you talked to Carlucci?

Cheney: Yes, but he was a big advocate of it too. It wasn't a slam dunk in terms of making it happen, partly because Bill Crowe had already been offered the job. There'd been a conversation, I think between Brent and Bill Crowe, who was the incumbent, had been there for four years, to see if he would continue for two more years, another two-year term as chairman. Crowe was not enthusiastic about that. But at that point when I came on board, that offer was outstanding.

There were also some reservations about taking Colin at that point. He had just gone back to the Pentagon. He had just gotten his fourth star and been assigned to forces command. He didn't

even arrive down at forces command until about the time I signed on as Secretary. The appointment had already been made, but he was just moving in. He was the youngest CINC and the most junior of the CINCs at that point, of the guys you'd look at as the pool of candidates, ordinarily, to be chairman.

There was the Al Haig precedent. There was some concern about a "political" general. You know, are you getting into a situation where a guy's track is more political than it is military. Obviously, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs requires certain political skills, but it is essentially the senior military man in the government. I think there was a little hesitancy. Brent had always had strong feelings that the NSC advisor should not be an active duty military guy. When he took the job back in the Ford Administration, he'd resigned his commission. He was an Air Force three-star and he had to give that up to become NSC advisor. Colin hadn't done that; he'd kept his active duty status. I think that was the price he extracted for agreeing to come back and give up corps command and come back and do the NSC job as the deputy.

So there was a little bit of—not opposition, I wouldn't put it in those terms—just questions, concern. Al Haig had come to the White House to work for Kissinger as a lieutenant colonel in the Nixon years. Returned to the Army as a four-star Vice Chief of Staff. That didn't always sit all that well with the troops. So there was a little bit of concern here too that we not get into a situation where Colin has left the Army, gone to the White House, and comes back as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

So I discussed it with the President and Brent. We left it that I would go reassure myself that Colin had in fact re-acclimated to the military and that there wouldn't be a problem in this arena. So I went down at one point and visited him, had lunch with him in Atlanta, Fort McPherson, where he had forces command. What I was looking for was a feel for his comfort level. I didn't ask him about the job. I didn't tell him I was thinking about him for the job. Just that I was in the area, wanted to stop in, spend some time. It was clear that this was a guy who loved the U.S. Army, who had no qualms at all about moving back in the U.S. Army. It was my judgment based on that conversation that in fact this would fly and that we wouldn't get into difficulties in terms of having a lot of resistance to it. So I went back and recommended to the President. The President signed off on it, Brent signed off on it, and we nominated him to be chairman.

We could spend hours talking about it. He came on board on October 1st of '89. I thought it was a stroke of genius to recommend him for the job, one of my best decisions. When I think back now on my time there, it's not possible to conceive of my tour without Colin Powell as an integral part of it. He was good, not only was he good from a military perspective, but he had all of the understanding that went with having been the military assistant to the Secretary and the NSC advisor and so forth. That worked very well. We didn't always agree. There were times when we had differences, and there will be opportunities to talk about individual issues there, but that was a key decision and a good one, I think.

The second one was Don Atwood. Don became my civilian Deputy Secretary. The President gave me a free hand on personnel, with a couple of exceptions where he asked me to look at somebody. Later on he asked me to look at Jim Lilley. Jim had been the ambassador in Korea, ambassador in China, I think an old CIA hand. The President asked me to look at him for a

particular job. I did and hired him and never regretted that. The other guy he asked me to look at was Atwood. When he had first talked to me about the job, he explained that Don had come down to be Tower's deputy. He had been a career man at General Motors and he was the vice chairman of General Motors getting ready to retire when he left Detroit and came down. I think Bob Teeter probably had a lot to do with hooking Atwood into the Ford Administration. But he was left hanging out there to be the Deputy Secretary when the Tower thing went down to defeat. So I took a look at Don—

Zelikow: You said Teeter and Atwood in the Ford Administration?

Cheney: No, Teeter and Atwood in Detroit. Teeter lives in Ann Arbor.

Zelikow: Okay, I misunderstood.

Cheney: Teeter lives in Ann Arbor, consults with the auto companies, and I think knew of Atwood. I'm guessing, speculatively, that Teeter was the original source of the Atwood idea to bring him in. Don came down, I'd say he was 65 at that point. He was retiring from General Motors and signed on board. We hit it off. His background was totally different from mine. Mine was politics and government; his was industry and the private sector. But a superb individual.

He paid a heavy price. When he came to take on the job he had to get rid of all his General Motors stock, cost him millions of dollars. They even made him take out an insurance policy against the failure of GM in the amount of his pension, the theory being that if General Motors got into trouble he'd throw them a big contract from the Pentagon in order to save his pension. Crazy stuff, but that's what the lawyers insisted he do in order to get confirmed. He really gave up his retirement. Unfortunately, Don died shortly after the end of the Bush Administration. I always felt bad because he had been happy, I know, back playing golf in Michigan and spending time with his grandkids, but he gave all that up to come serve the country and did a great job. He never got the press or the time and attention that General Powell and I did, because of the nature of his post. But he was every bit as important to the functioning of the building, to the operation of the Department, as Powell and I were.

Most of the heavy lifting on key decisions would get done around the table in my office in the evenings. We'd always try to wrap up the day with a session with myself, General Powell and Don Atwood. We'd start with our three military assistants with us, usually Dave Addington, who was my special assistant civilian. More than frequently, we'd kick all them out. But that's where an awful lot of the significant decisions got made, among the three of us around that table in the afternoons. He did all of those things I didn't want to do, all of those things I didn't have time for. My ability to go spend virtually all day on Desert Storm during those operations was because I knew Atwood would take care of everything else. The Deputy Secretary of Defense is, I think, a far more significant post than a lot of the Cabinet jobs. Carries more responsibility, more weight. As I say, Atwood did a superb job, would be right at the top of my list of key people.

There are a lot more, if you want me just to run through the names. Maybe I'll take a minute and sketch out for you what a day was like and whom I interacted with as we went through the day.

Zelikow: Dick, I'm particularly conscious that there are some things that you wanted to be sure to ask about, that you feel like you've got the time to do that.

Cheney: You might want to do it now.

Zelikow: So, if you want to let him go.

Betts: Maybe in the next couple of hours, if we can get to some of your views about management style and how you saw yourself, say, compared to some other Secretaries. Also, I'm a little interested in some more on civil-military relations and some particular cases there, such as the firing of General [Michael] Dugan. Maybe some of this will come up along the way. I apologize, I have to leave to catch a plane at 2:45 because I have a meeting in Washington.

Cheney: There's no reason why we can't jump ahead and get some of those. Let's talk a little bit about the civil-military relationship, if you want. To back it up a little bit more I guess, you've got to throw Goldwater-Nichols into that mix.

My impression when I became Secretary was that the Department under Cap had worn thin on the Hill. I don't mean to be critical of Cap Weinberger. I called him and Frank Carlucci right after the Gulf War and thanked them for what they'd done to create the force that we used in 1989. I even called former President Reagan that same day and thanked him.

Traditionally I was a big supporter of the military as Secretary and as a Congressman, voted for most of the budgets and programs, got involved a bit in the military reform movement through Newt Gingrich. Newt was a classmate of mine. We'd gotten elected together; we were good friends. One of the things that Newt did in the '80s before he got into the leadership was he was working the military reform axis. I didn't like everything about the military reform caucus, like Barbara Boxer, for example. Barbara is not one of my favorite people. There were people who really didn't like the military, never supported it, who would use the reform caucus for their own purposes. But there were a lot of us on the Hill who were strongly supportive of the military and the Administration and the Defense Department, who nonetheless thought there were problems.

And Goldwater-Nichols came along. I won't bore you with all the details there. I thought it was a good piece of legislation. I believe I co-sponsored it in the House, voted for it. My friend Frank Carlucci didn't like that. Frank and I, I remember, had a conversation at one point. The Administration, especially the guys in the Pentagon—Weinberger and Carlucci—were adamantly opposed to the Goldwater-Nichols. I think it was felt by them that this was unnecessary interference by the Congress with the executive. [I remember] saying I had a predilection for the executive ordinarily and in these kinds of conflicts I'd come down on the side of the executive branch, but this was on the heels of Lebanon and Grenada.

I'd been involved when the Grenada operation went down. I was asked to join Bob Michel, Tom Foley, and a handful of other members on a bipartisan basis. We went to Grenada right after the operation; the troops were still mopping up when we got there. The more I looked at the Grenada operation, the more it was clear even here, where we'd had a relative success, got everybody out and so forth, that there were problems. The Army guy on the beach can't talk to the ships at sea,

so he's using his AT&T credit card to call Fort Bragg, so they can put him in touch with the Navy in the Pentagon, so they can talk to the guy off the coast. Serious screw-ups. The Navy Seals had some serious problems. Just a lot of things that didn't go right when you looked underneath the operation.

So there was a body of thought, some of it driven by people who didn't like the military, but a body of thought as well by some people who really felt there was serious need to make some changes that generated that. I would put myself in that latter camp when I arrived and when I went down to the Pentagon. There was a guy named Colonel John Boyd. I don't know if you've come across Boyd's work. Again, Newt had introduced me to Boyd. Boyd had been a fighter pilot in Korea, OODA [Observe, Orient, Decide, Act] loops. I still remember, I spent hours listening to him as he went through his briefs on OODA loops. But there were some people you had to admire and who were thoughtful who could look at the Weinberger Pentagon and conclude that we'd burned up some relationships there. Cap had reached the point where he never said yes when anybody ever asked him to give him up anything. It was always, "No, no, hell no." You couldn't even negotiate with him.

I was concerned about those kinds of problems when I went down. So one of the areas I'd carved out, I mentioned earlier, to be focused on was Congress. I felt I had to take on that responsibility and try to restore and rebuild some of those relationships. Goldwater-Nichols, I believe today, based on my own experience with it—we were really the first Administration to use it fairly extensively—that it was exactly what the doctor ordered. It was the right thing to have done for a lot of reasons, partly because it clarified the chain of command, the role of the CINCs. It made it possible for the chairman to function as the principal military advisor to the Secretary. The President was no longer in a position where you could only get the lowest common denominator of advice out of the Chiefs. We used it, I think, very effectively.

Zelikow: Can I just interrupt with a specific factual question? When you would deal with the other Chiefs, did you do that through Powell or did you do that independently, directly with them?

Cheney: Both.

Zelikow: All right.

Cheney: It depended, lots of times. I dealt with Colin most of the time, because we deal with each other every day, direct line from my phone to his phone. He would be in my office sometimes several times a day; it was a very close working relationship. But I felt perfectly free and often did deal independently with the Chiefs. As a general practice, Tony McPeak would have me up for briefings where he would bring in some of his guys on a particular program or something they were interested in. I'd spend a couple of hours with the Air Force and the Air Force Chief. I'd go down and have lunch with the CNO [Chief of Naval Operations]. Carl Mundy felt free to come in.

I mean, if the Chiefs wanted to see me one on one, I would see them. Frequently it would be the other way around, too. I'd want to interact with them for some reason.

Betts: Was there any pattern in your eyes to which of the services tended to give you the most heartburn over things, or the least?

Cheney: Let me make a note here before I forget. Well, the conventional wisdom, shall we say—and I think this was reinforced by my experience—was when you've got some bad news to deliver, you need the services to do something, give up bases, for example, budget, whatever, the Army would salute smartly and try like hell to do it. The Navy would say, "Hell no, no way." And the Air Force would do everything they could to convince you they were doing it, and then they'd do something else.

That's probably overly crude, probably not fair to everybody involved, and it turned a lot on personalities and also what I was asking them to do. The general arrangement I had with General Powell was that in terms of giving directives—the operational use of the force, dealing with the CINC, for example—I would always go through him. Didn't have to, that was our option. Under Goldwater-Nichols I could go direct to the CINC if I wanted, but I would refrain from reaching around him to go to the CINC when I was passing something down. I wanted it all to go down through him. I wanted him to have some pretty tight control of that.

I did not want a single channel coming up. I wanted multiple sources of information coming up. I did not want him to be the screen for information coming to the Secretary from the military. There were a couple of times when that got a little tense, which Colin will tell you too. I used my military assistants an awful lot as a source of information or to go pulse the system and generate stuff I needed. I had three great ones. I inherited Bill Owens when I got there. Bill, of course, later became vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, one of the most creative guys I ever got around. I inherited him from Carlucci. Superb guy, Rhodes scholar, nuclear submariner.

Then when Bill got ready to move on—we sent him out to Sixth Fleet—I went to Tom Kelly. Tom was the J3 on the Joint staff, Army three-star. This was summer of '91, shortly before the Iraq thing started—

Zelikow: Summer of '90?

Cheney: Yes, '90. I called Tom in one day and said, "Who's the best one-star in the U.S. Army? I want to make him my military assistant." I had had a Navy guy, probably ought to rotate. The services all nominate. They've all got their guy they want on that job, because they want nothing better than to have their brightest young one-star sitting up there at the right hand of the Secretary. But I didn't want *their* guy, I wanted my guy in that job and I wanted somebody off the Joint staff. I wanted somebody who had those ties and connections. The direction we'd gone in, the emphasis on Joint, the Goldwater-Nichols, all the rest of it, what I needed was to make sure I had good access to the Joint staff as well. I wanted somebody who came out of that background.

One of the things that General Powell and I had done was to make sure, when we got people assigned to the Joint staff, that they had a billet back home and that they were going to move up. This wasn't the end of a guy's career. You didn't bury him by sending him to Joint staff. We

wanted the best and brightest to come to the Joint staff, and that they'd then have a place to go when their tour was up, and we made that stick.

But anyway, I called Tom Kelly and said, "Who's the best one-star in the Army?" He said, "Joe Lopez." I said, "Wait a minute, Lopez is Navy." He said, "You want Lopez." That was a hell of a recommendation. So I called Joe Lopez in. I knew him; he was working for Kelly down on the Joint staff, but I called Joe in and interviewed him and hired him. Great choice. Did a fantastic job. He's now working for us here at Halliburton since he returned from the Navy a year ago. Then when Lopez left, I went and got John Jumper, an Air Force in this case. Again, I'd seen John operate during the Gulf War on the Joint staff, and then we pulled him out of there. He just took over the air combat command for the Air Force down at Langley, got his fourth star. Doing a hell of a job too.

The three of them, very different backgrounds, very talented individuals and enormously valuable to me. All of them eventually went on to get their four stars and had major assignments and did yeoman duty. But I used them extensively when the balloon first went up in the Gulf and Iraq invaded Kuwait to begin to generate options and pull up options for what we might do. I could send Owens and Lopez down around, say, "Go tell me, find out for me, what's the Navy got on this?" Stuff I wanted from the Joint staff too, but I wasn't getting enough and I wasn't getting it fast enough. Then you could use the military assistants for that. They also had a requirement. They had to go to the POAC once a week—the Pentagon Officers Athletic Club—because that's where you found out what the hell was really going on in the building. Lopez would go down there at least once a week and hang out in the gym, work out with the guys, take showers, whatever. That was a vital piece of information, whatever was being passed around the POAC.

In terms of the relationships with the military, there were a couple who have gotten a lot of press commentary. You guys had some clips in there on the Larry Welch affair. When I arrived, first press conference I had when I'd been there about a week, my first meeting with the press, that morning there was a story in the *Washington Post* that had a picture of Larry and a prominent story about him on the Hill negotiating on strategic missiles, ballistic missiles. How we were going to go there earlier. I was asked a question about that at my press conference, and I basically said that he'd been freelancing. He'd been up there without my approval.

Now in fairness to Welch, at the time it was a very good signal to send around the building. It was a target of opportunity if you wanted to sort of reassert civilian control. Part of the difficulty was during the Tower nomination fight, nobody had been in charge. Carlucci had left January 20th. Will Taft was still there as the deputy, but he's part of the old guard on his way out. Then there was a real vacuum at the top of the building. Larry was doing what he needed to do. He was worried about the future of the program; he's out dealing with the Congress. I always felt afterwards that he got a bit of a bum rap out of that. He was clearly not happy.

Betts: But you did see it as a way to send a signal?

Cheney: Absolutely. You start to define what the boundaries are. And I did not want, as a general matter, the Air Force Chief of Staff up there cutting deals on something as vital as the

future of our strategic weapons system, and Peacekeeper missiles versus single-warhead Midgetman, and all the rest of the stuff. Those are presidential-level decisions and certainly secretarial-level decisions, and they don't get made independently by the services.

Now there was a unique set of circumstances that led Larry to be up there doing what he was doing. I think eventually I repaired the relationship and we got along fine. I have a lot of respect for him—it was a different deal with Dugan—but I thought it was important. As a matter of management, again, the reputation on Cap was that he did not assert authority over the military. That he sat on top of the building, but that he had never really—he had a big impact and he did good work. He went out and got the resources they needed to rebuild the military at the time they needed them. There was a lot of respect for him, but he had never hammered anybody. He had never really asserted his will inside the building, or at least that was the rap on him on the Hill. It might not have been a true statement.

I think lots of times, rather than send everybody a memo, sometimes a signal like the one I sent that day has a much bigger effect. The other one that had an enormous effect, obviously, was when I fired Dugan. Again, you say it's business, it's not personal. I'd met Mike Dugan when I was on the Intelligence Committee. He used to come up occasionally and brief us up there when he was a two-star, very bright guy. When Larry Welch got ready to retire, we had two candidates to be the Air Force chief: One was Mike Dugan and the other was Tony McPeak. Tony was an F-15 driver, a fighter pilot's fighter pilot, but from a different sort of wing of the Air Force, if you will, than Dugan was. Dugan I think was much more cerebral, probably more intelligent. Both Welch and Don Rice, who was the Air Force secretary, wanted Dugan.

I interviewed both of them and in the end decided to go with Dugan, based on the recommendation I'd gotten from Rice and from Larry Welch. He had only been on board a couple of months when the Gulf crisis developed and then he went off on a trip to the Gulf. This must have been early September of '90. Contrary to advice, he took some reporters with him. Pete Williams, I think, had been involved and said, "Look, you don't need to haul reporters with you on the plane. There are a lot of them over there already." But Dugan went ahead, and he had, I think, a *Washington Post* reporter and maybe John Broder from the *L.A. Times*, two or three journalists. Spent 14 hours with them in the airplane on the way back.

Now I don't care who you are, if you spend 14 hours with a reporter, you're going to get in trouble of some kind. What emerged out of that was a front-page story in the *Washington Post* that I thought went over the top. It ran on a Sunday morning. I got up and read it, made me mad. So I put it aside, went down and took a walk on the C&O Canal and cooled off. Came back, read the article over again, made me mad all over again.

The problem with it, it portrayed this notion that somehow the Air Force was going to win the war all by themselves. He got into talking about targeting and how we are going to go after Saddam's [Hussein] mistress, things that just were inappropriate. The thing that bothered me, I think, most of all was this notion that somehow the chief could go running off to the Gulf and then come back. We're trying to emphasize jointness. We've got a CINC; we've got a command structure there in place. He's not even in the chain of command; he's the Air Force chief. He's got no operating role in terms of the deployment and use of the force. Here we are with this story

all over the deal, and we've got some little service rivalry in there, and "the ground troops may be needed, but they'll be able to walk right in after we take care of them with the Air Force."

So I called the President up at Camp David, got him off the tennis court and told him I had a real problem with the Dugan story and that I might have to relieve him. That I was going to call him in the next morning, Monday morning, and just wanted to give this warning to the President in advance, make sure he didn't have any trouble with it. I mean, it is a presidential appointment. He said, "Whatever you need to do, Dick, is fine by me. Just let me know which way it goes." So I had Dugan lined up to report the next morning. I had Don Atwood sit in with me. General Powell came in shortly before Dugan did and I told Colin what I was going to do. Then he left. General Dugan came in. I asked him if the story—

Zelikow: May I just interject, did Colin make a recommendation?

Cheney: No. I think he was a little hesitant. I always thought Colin thought I hit Dugan too hard, that he would have argued for more moderation on my part. Never objected, I'm just reading between the lines. I think he was surprised that I moved as quickly as I did to get rid of Dugan. But I had Mike in, asked him if in fact the story was accurate. He said, yes, basically it was. I said, "I need your resignation. You're relieved." End of story. He left. We had Tony McPeak in the wings, brought Tony in. He took over as chief.

There was a funny follow-on story to it. A couple of weeks later we had a meeting of all the Air Force four-stars and retired four-stars. They have a small club that meets periodically, comes down and the incumbent chief briefs all the former chiefs and top commanders of the Air Force. Tony invited me to come up and speak to the assembled group. General Dugan's in the audience; he's one of them. He is now a retired four-star. And he's sitting there alongside all the former chiefs and all the other former four-stars of the United States Air Force. Tony got up in front of the group and said, "Gentlemen, we've got the Secretary of Defense here today to talk to us. He wasn't the President's first choice to be Secretary of Defense either." Absolutely broke the place up. Got everything off to a good start, back on the right track. But the Dugan thing was important.

Zelikow: When you relieved Dugan, did you make your case to him as to why you thought this had been bad, or did you just give him the news and let him work out why you were making this decision?

Cheney: I think he knew when he walked in that he'd gone beyond the pale. I did not spend a lot of time arguing with him.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: What I wanted to confirm was that he in fact had said what was in the press. You know, you don't always believe everything you read in the newspapers. He did, and so I relieved him. I said that I thought that was inappropriate. I'd made a speech that day—well I held a press briefing, I think, later on that morning and answered a lot of press questions on why I did why I did. That's all on the record.

Betts: Was this all just on the merits of what he had done, or was there any other element in this case too, sort of sending a signal at a crucial time of reminding people who's in charge and all that?

Cheney: No, I thought the action stood on its own merits. But I also, I think it had very positive benefits and consequences. That's a very rare occurrence, that somebody fires a member of the Joint Chiefs.

Betts: First in 40 years.

Cheney: It does not happen. It served once again to reinforce, and as I say, I did a press briefing afterwards, which I'm sure there's a transcript of, that lays out in some detail what my concerns were. That was all public and it sent a hell of a message. You know, I'm not sure, there was a lot of chatter in the POAC after the word came down that Dugan had gone to the Gulf, came back, got his picture on the front page of the newspaper, and he was toast, he was gone.

I think it set the right tone for the way I wanted to conduct those operations. It was part of maintaining what I call the integrity of the chain of command, which was a very important consideration for us and, as you know, a complete separate subject in itself. But the chain of command ran from the President to the Secretary, down to the CINC. And, if I wished, through the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, which I so designated. And everybody else in the building, I mean everybody—the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Chief of Naval Operations—not in the chain of command. It was partly reinforcing the whole concept of Goldwater-Nicholson, we weren't going to have a situation where everybody and his brother feels free to go operate in the Gulf. It was part and parcel of the system we had in place, where no units could deploy over there unless the CINC had requested them and signed up to it. We reinforced that idea. Colin reinforced it as well.

We kept all of the people in Washington who want to give you military advice when you deploy the force in their proper roles. We didn't have the State Department coming over, picking targets of what we were going to hit. We didn't get undue interference from the West Wing of the White House or the NSC staff, trying to do what essentially was the military function and responsibility. And the Dugan thing, in making certain that everybody understood that this was going to be a joint operation. We were going to function that way accordingly and we weren't going to have a lot of high ranking officers out freelancing to the press. It was a very important message to get across. I didn't have to go—I mean, Dugan was a gift, from that perspective. There would have been other ways to do it if that hadn't happened, but it happened.

It was an unpleasant business too. Nobody likes to fire someone. Mike Dugan, hell, he had a distinguished career: He had risen to the peak; he's now the Air Force Chief of Staff. To say it wasn't personal, it was business, but I thought it was the right response.

Betts: In a number of ways you've indicated that you were more of an activist leader in this role than somebody like Weinberger, who dominated a lot of recent memory in the Department. Did you have any sense that there was any discomfort or resentment of that change among the

professional military? One doesn't get the sense on the outside that you were criticized for micromanagement the way somebody like [Robert] McNamara was, but you do seem to have taken a much stronger role in imposing your will downwards than some of your predecessors.

Cheney: They never said anything to me.

Betts: I guess they got the message.

Cheney: I wouldn't expect them to. I think most of the military agreed with what I did or at least were willing to take that on board. It was probably not anything they had anticipated, but I think a lot of them thought about it, reflected on it, and said, "Okay, those are the rules and we'll play by the rules." As I say, nobody ever came to me and was critical of that action, but you wouldn't expect them to do that or respond in that way.

As I say, Colin never said any word after that initial time. I always had the feeling when he left that morning that he was surprised that I was going to put the hammer down on Dugan, but never argued with him.

McCall: There was something not quite to that scale, but before Christmas in '90, when there was speculation about the timetable for the launch of the air campaign and there was also speculation on when ground forces were going to be ready. Perhaps this is the time of trying to get in the last elements on the ground. Of course, out of the field comes—in the press—differing notions of when the troops are going to be ready. And, I think, do both you and Powell go over to handle it? Can you link that experience with—

Cheney: What happened here, I mean, we haven't even talked about Norm Schwarzkopf yet. Norm's a whole book in himself. This is on one of our trips over there and I can't remember—in December we went over. Then we were trying to nail down the start date for the air war. The diplomatic thing had been squared away with the UN and so forth. We came back and met with the President up at Camp David, as I recall. This is shortly before Christmas. At that point, that's when we set the H-hour, if you will, for the onset of the air war.

Then we were back over after the air war had started. This is probably late January, early February. It was one of those trips where basically what happened was Cal Waller—Cal was the deputy commander, the deputy CINC in effect—and Cal was relatively new to the theater. He made a statement that the force wasn't going to be ready by next day. He was talking about the ground force, and that was true. They were still feeding in the theater, the decision that had been made back in October in terms of doubling the size of the force and all the additional deployments, there was still going to be some time before they were ready to go and that's what he had reference to.

The press, as the press often does, got it kind of screwed up. I think some people took this as saying we weren't going to be ready to launch the air war until later. That wasn't true. We accepted and tolerated the little bit of chaos that was built into the system partly because Cal was new, partly because it wasn't all that bad having confusion in Saddam's mind as to what the hell was going to happen when, and partly because Waller was put there for a unique reason. This

was another case where we sort of violated tradition. Tradition would have been you have an Army CINC, you're going to have somebody from another service as the number two. We didn't. We went out to Fort Lewis and got Waller, an Army general, and put him under an Army general, even though there was a little bit of flack about that.

We did it because Waller had worked for Schwarzkopf before. This is about the third time Cal had worked under Norm. Though I love Norm Schwarzkopf, he's a great American, did a hell of a job for us, he's not the easiest guy in the world to work for. He can be an absolute terror in terms of his people who work underneath him. He has a tendency to be volatile, emotional, and explode at people. He gets over it quickly, but you really need a bit of a buffer there. One of the things we did was to put Cal Waller into that slot because he knew how to manage Norm's occasional outburst. That's why he was there. He wasn't all that happy about having to do that.

Betts: It wasn't a planned deception, though.

Cheney: No.

Betts: I'd always hoped it was.

Cheney: No, we weren't that well organized. We did do some deception, but that wasn't part of it. Part of my job, coming back again to the civil-military thing, I think one of the Secretary's responsibilities is when you get ready to do one of these operations, first thing you better make sure of is that you've got the right guy to command it. History, our history, is replete with the difficulties Presidents and former Secretaries have had on that very point. In the case of Panama we concluded we weren't happy with the leadership in Panama, the CINC in South-COM. So I replaced him.

Zelikow: You're talking now about—

Cheney: [Frederick] Woerner.

Zelikow: The assignment of [Max] Thurman in place of Woerner in May of '89.

Cheney: Sent Max Thurman down. This is something that was worked out with Brent; Brent felt strongly about it too. There was just a feeling in the Panama situation—that's a separate subject—but Woerner could find an excuse not to do anything in Panama. We had continuing problems in relationships down there. So after a conversation with Brent, I called Woerner in and relieved him. Then sent Max Thurman, who was getting ready to retire, who I think was a giant in the Army and had really done some phenomenally good things. I asked Max to go down and take on the assignment. He did and within a matter of months it was all wrapped up. [Manuel] Noriega was in prison in Miami and the problem was solved.

There were a lot of other things that went into it. But when it came time to do the Iraqi Gulf crisis, one of the first decisions I had to make was whether or not we wanted Schwarzkopf in that role or whether I wanted somebody else. I thought long and hard about it. That's one where I spent a lot of time talking to General Powell. I didn't know Norm that well. He'd been the

CENTCOM [Central Command] CINC for a period of time before I arrived. I met with him a few times, usually in a larger group, but I didn't really have strong personal feelings about it. He was with us the first weekend of the Gulf crisis. He was part of the party when I flew out to meet with King Fahd in Saudi Arabia that weekend. He was on the plane with me. But as I say, Norm had a reputation, a reputation as a guy who was very, very hard on his subordinates. My basic question to Colin was, "Is this the right guy or should I pull the plug on him and get somebody else?"

Betts: Was there anybody else in contention in your mind or was it just doubts about Schwarzkopf?

Cheney: No, I had the general view, and I still do to this day, that we had dozens of officers who could fill those slots, really, really talented people. Without taking anything away from a Colin Powell or a Norm Schwarzkopf or any of the other guys who gained legitimate recognition for what they did, we had a lot of other guys you could have plugged into those slots who would have done very, very well in those assignments. That was one of the things that I was always struck by during my time there. The senior military leadership these days is very good.

So as I say, that was a very conscious decision. It was primarily on Colin's recommendation that he could work with him and we could keep it all stitched together. And Norm had some great strengths, he did a hell of a job with the public, he had enormous tolerance for dealing with allies. He's got 37 different people over there, the Senegalese and the Moroccans. Everybody and his brother sending troops but they don't have any logistic support, very limited military capability. Every time the State Department would go get another contingent from Burundi, you know, we'd have to take care of it. And Norm did all that; he managed all that stuff very well. He was great with the press and so forth.

When you put all that together, managing that coalition, he did a hell of a job. But like all of us, you've got strengths and weaknesses. One of his weaknesses was that he was a real SOB to his staff, and he needed somebody like a Cal Waller there to sort of absorb that abuse. Which wasn't fair to Cal, but Cal had been there before to make it all work.

Betts: In that period, did you have a sense of trouble from your perspective about Air Force relationships with Schwarzkopf and Powell and the Air Force, as you put it, planning to win the war all on their own? Certainly at the planning level there was a lot of tension. Was that more or less handled by Powell and the military chain of command, or did you have to deal with it?

Cheney: No, I got into it some.

Zelikow: There is a subset of that too, which is that there are actually factions inside the Air Force. It's not just Air Force versus CENTCOM; it's factions inside the Air Force. One of those factions being allied with the air commander at CENTCOM.

Cheney: Yep. I mean we had Checkmate, for example. You're familiar with the Checkmate Operation, down in the bowels of the Pentagon, did an awful lot of the targeting. This stuff would then feed out through the theater where it needed to be and then get worked into the

operation. I was always amazed—I mean, there is a great anecdote about Buster Glosson. General Glosson when I arrived was a one-star Air Force general who was working the congressional relations shop in the Secretary's office and had been there a long time. Welch disliked him intensely. My guys came in—and I had a new assistant secretary, had been my top staff guy on the Hill and so forth—so it was time to move General Glosson out. Somehow he had managed over the years to offend the powers that be in the Air Force and so they shipped him out. They looked for a place where they could bury him.

When I show up, by this time it's mid-August. It's my second trip to the Gulf after the crisis. I stop in Bahrain and I go to the Navy command ship, the fleet command ship there, where it's docked in Bahrain. I'm walking across the deck and getting ready to go downstairs for a briefing and I hear somebody yell, "Hey, Mr. Secretary." I turn around and look and it's Buster Glosson, General Glosson, they shipped him out to Bahrain. I don't think there was another Air Force officer within a thousand miles of there, certainly not one of their airplanes. They thought they'd buried him. [*Laughter*] This is early 1990. He ends up running the air war; he was in charge. I think he eventually got his third star. He was subsequently retired. It was a classic case of taking a guy they thought they were getting rid of and moving out here, but he was there. He was good. Did a hell of a job, worked for Chuck Horner.

So there were problems inside the command structure, without question. Frictions and so forth there. A certain amount of that you have to tolerate, and a certain amount of that, from my perspective, I didn't need to worry about. If it got too nasty or too messy, I'd hear about it. General Powell might bring something to me. In terms of managing that relationship between Colin and Norm, that was really for the two of them to sort out. If it didn't work then I'd have to intervene. So when you went farther on down the ranks, you know, stuff happens. You have got your model for how you want things to work and who ought to be doing what to whom. But I would, periodically, go down to the Checkmate Operation in the basement of the Pentagon. That was not by any means an official channel, but it was another source of information for me about what was going on and how we were doing picking our targets and bomb damage assessment and those kinds of issues. So I made it a point to go down there periodically and get a feel for that.

The air war is the one place where I intervened and overrode the CINC in the conduct of the operation. The problem we had were the SCUDs. We had made a decision, obviously, that we wanted to keep the Israelis out of the conflict. The SCUDs were a direct threat to Israel. In order to keep the Israelis out, it was necessary for me to be able to say every day—because I talked on the phone every day to Moshe Arens, the Israeli defense chief; I had a secure line set up between our offices. In order to justify not allowing them in and to keep them out, we had to be able to say to them and demonstrate to them that we were doing everything we could to deal with the SCUD threat. That involved reallocating some of our air assets off the targets in Baghdad and putting them out in the western desert, trying to hunt down SCUDs.

Now from Norm's standpoint, that was a waste of assets. Israel wasn't in his theater. Israel was excluded from central command; it was part of the European command. The SCUDs weren't doing a lot of damage. Knocking down a few houses, but it was no big thing until later, obviously, when we lost 28 people in that one attack in Saudi. But from his perspective, he's got

a mission; he's got a plan. He's got assets; he's applying his assets to his targets. The last thing he wants is to take a bunch of F-15s off of the Baghdad targets and instead put them out in the western desert. I intervened.

The President knew what I was going to do and required him to reallocate those resources. Then got a report every day on exactly how many missions we'd flown the night before, who was flying them and so forth, so that I could go back to Arens and say, "Look, here's what we've done. These are the steps we've taken," to keep the Israelis out. Viewed at the CINC's level, he had one set of priorities. But from a strategic level and the standpoint of keeping the coalition together and avoiding the train wreck that would have occurred if the Israelis had intervened, it was very important that we make that reallocation. So that was a case, where, as I say, with the approval of the President—he knew what I was doing—I intervened and forced reallocation of assets.

Zelikow: You intervened through Powell?

Cheney: Yep. We'd be on the phone—

Zelikow: Or would you go directly to Schwarzkopf?

Cheney: I would go through Colin, or both of us would get on the phone together and talk to Norm.

McCall: Did that extend beyond the F-15s to the other assets that were being deployed out there?

Cheney: Yes. I mean, I got personally involved in the use of some of our Special Ops teams. Norm wasn't very big on, he really had a strong bias against our Special Ops guys. Didn't like them. Not an unconventional kind of attitude from the standpoint of some in the military. But we'd worked with them previously. Wayne Downing was the guy, I'd dealt with him directly on a number of occasions. We'd done the planning for Panama, for example, and I'd watched him in operation there. I had a lot of confidence in him and I thought they were appropriate for us to use. The Brits had started before we did, really. Norm finally bought off on that as well. But I pushed it and nudged it along to get Downing—

Zelikow: The Brits with their SAS [Special Air Services], with their special operating, yes.

McCall: Was there a similar situation with Panama? The reason I ask this is part of what happened with Panama was that there was a lot of force allocation out there that was, shall we say, unnecessary. Did you find you had to override—?

Cheney: Stealth bombers.

McCall: We had forces coming from everywhere.

Cheney: Well, what happened in Panama. Panama was a great training experience for us as an Administration. We had the opportunity to have an objective, have to use force, coordinate with the Congress, deal with the public, all of those things that come with using the force. It was really the first time we'd done it as an Administration and we learned from that. I looked at the Panama operation, I remember going over the plans and raising questions. "You're going to fly 117s to Panama?" I said, "How tough is the Panamanian air defense system? Do they even have one?" In the end, the argument of course was that they wanted to drop these weapons to stun the Panamanian forces. It was a lot of hooey. They finally cut the size of the deployment, but I think they flew two aircraft down there, did fly a mission and claimed great accuracy, which turned out not to be true: they missed when they got there.

So there were, I think, probably some excesses in connection with Panama. You know, you can make the argument in the case of Desert Storm that we used a hell of a lot of force and did we really need all of those. But that's a whole separate story. It's an important part of the civil-military thing if you want to get into it. It's down the chronology a ways, in terms of the Desert Storm scenario itself. I can do it right now if you want, if it fits with your priorities.

McCall: Can I ask one follow up on the Panama. One of the other issues, it's not just the 117s in Panama, there is a lot of inter-service rivalry about what assets are going to be allocated down there. You have pieces of everything being brought in.

Cheney: Well hell, there was a small contingent—

McCall: Did you have to adjudicate that?

Cheney: There was a small contingent of Marines that were already on the ground. Marines are the only ones with rubber-tired armored vehicles. The Army doesn't have—didn't have then—any rubber-tired armored vehicles. You didn't really need Abrams tanks, though we ended up using M-113s. You had a unique situation in Panama because you had a lot of stuff already on the ground there. You had a permanent presence in Panama under our rights under the treaty, which had been there for a long time, so you were routinely rotating folks down there.

Now partly what we did, once we got Max Thurman in place, as we went in, we'd been through this exercise about the first of October—was the day that Colin Powell came on board, we had this abortive coup. We had gotten word that there was going to be a coup attempt. We scurried around on it. By the time, we weren't even able to make a decision as an Administration as to how we were going to respond to that. There had been some response down at the local level, at the theater level. But by then the guy had made the attempt to place Noriega under arrest, Noriega reversed the tables and shot him and it was all over with. Partly that led to a couple of things. It led, one thing, to the tightening up of our interagency processes. The increased reliance on the deputy's group, the fact that we had been slow and hadn't reacted fast enough on that particular case.

But it also led to, as Max took over down there, he asked for a lot of stuff and we put a lot of stuff in there. Partly, I think, because of a "why not send enough" mindset. That comes back later, and we'll talk about in connection with Desert Storm, but there is always competition

among the services to get in there. But again, nothing went in there unless Max had signed off on it. We ran a pretty tight ship among Max and General Powell and myself as we did the operation. And you know, the PDF [Panamanian Defense Forces] turned out not to be all that formidable a force. But we didn't screw around. We did their *Commendancia* with C-130 gun ships. That was a very direct, very aggressive, "Yes, we could probably do it with less force and less violence, but why screw around?"

Betts: You brought up the coup attempt and it sounded as if, from your point of view, you really didn't have a chance to decide completely. From other reports, it seemed like there was a deliberate decision not to get involved. I was sort of curious about what you remember from those discussions and what the determining factor was. For example, one thing I've heard but never seen anywhere in print—I heard from someone on the NSC staff—was that there was some concern about the assassination ban. That U.S. support for the coup could wind up being interpreted as complicit in Noriega's assassination if that happened. Do you recall that as an issue?

Cheney: No, I don't recall. What happened from my perspective, I had Marshal [Dimitri]Yazov in town, the Soviet defense minister. I was hosting him and I had decided—you know, every time I went over there they took me out to another battlefield or another cemetery where they'd buried thousands of troops. I took him to Gettysburg. We got a guy, an historian up there at Carlisle War College who is a superb historian of the Gettysburg battle. Put all the Soviets on the bus and drove around all day on the bus and did a tour of the Gettysburg battlefield, which was superb. But in the middle of all of that—I had Bill Owens sitting behind me on the bus and Yazov is on my right—Bill said I had a call from General Powell. It was Colin's first day on the job. I said, "Pass the cell phone up to me." I used the cell phone to talk to General Powell. The thing that just stunned Yazov was that cell phone. He'd never seen anything like that in his life. But this was the phone call about the Panama situation.

We were disorganized, out of place. I'm up running around in Gettysburg. General Powell has just been sworn in; he's the brand new chairman. I don't know where the hell Baker was. We didn't react well to it and it bothered us a lot. What it led to, as I say, was a real strengthening of the processes. The deputies committee in particular and the way they worked and coordinated the number twos, Wolfowitz, [Robert] Gates, people like that who were able to function so that we could operate better. We learned from the Panamanian experience, both the failure when the coup attempt came in October as well as when we finally did the operation in December. We learned a lot as a team, how to work, how to function, what the issues were you're going to have to deal with.

One of the real problems you have with any new Administration, even one as experienced as ours was—I mean, we weren't a bunch of amateurs, we'd been around there before—it's hard. You know, there is no training ground for senior civilian political leaders in an Administration. We were lucky. We had a President who had been schooled in it for years. I'd been White House Chief of Staff. Scowcroft was doing the NSC job for the second time. We used to joke he was going to have keep doing it until he got it right. Baker had been Chief of Staff and Secretary of Treasury and now State. General Powell's background. This was a pretty experienced crew.

But even then, we weren't as good as we needed to be. There isn't any process today by which the new team, when they come on board, get any of that experience. What you do is you bring in the President-elect and you brief him on the SIOP [Single Integrated Operational Plan], scare the hell out of him, and then everybody goes home. End of story. He puts a team in place, and if you're lucky, you get an operation like we had in Panama, which let us test some things and build relationships and develop understandings and procedures that stood us in good stead then a year later when we had to do Iraq. But we were lucky.

I've come back again, trying to focus on your civil-military questions. Brent and I used to talk in the run-up to Desert Storm about our reluctant generals. You helped him with the book, does he write about that, he and the President—

McCall: [George Brinton] McClellan.

Cheney: McClellan. Brent's too nice.

Betts: Bob Gates's line, I think, "McClellan lives."

Cheney: But it was understandable, partly because of the Vietnam legacy. When the Gulf crisis first started, there were two camps. There were those of us who believed this really was a major strategic threat to the U.S., we couldn't afford to have Saddam dominate the Gulf. The other school of thought was more a matter of, "Kuwait, who cares about Kuwait? It's a little bitty country over there in the Gulf. Most of their citizens live in the south of France anyway. Why should we get exercised about Kuwait?" Of course, the former view was the one that eventually prevailed and I think was the right one. But there was a certain hesitation in the system in terms of offering up options initially, because I think they weren't quite sure what we'd do with them. I'm talking here a matter of hours or a few days.

By the time we get to Camp David that first weekend, we've got the stuff starting to flow pretty good. But as we went through the fall and we did the initial deployment and then we got ready to go, trying to think about how we were going to use the force, we sort of begin to transition from defense to offense. And thinking about liberating Kuwait, there was a concern—that was my experience and Brent's experience as well—that we weren't getting the kind of forward-leaning posture we wanted in terms of military planning. I think from the standpoint of the military, partly based on their Vietnam experience—again, I heard my friend Jack Leighty mentioned just last night—they didn't know quite what to make of this new crowd. The last time we'd been through one of these drills, back in Vietnam, civilians had screwed it up, at least that was the conventional wisdom.

So there were questions about were we really committed to doing it, would we do it right, would we use enough force, would we try to second guess what ought to be military decisions in terms of selecting targets and so forth. Did the President have the balls to call out the Reserves? We had to address those questions as we went through the early stages of the Gulf crisis. Our reaction to the first proposals that we got when we told Norm to give us a plan for aggressively, offensively using the forces to liberate Kuwait. We got the air war plan pretty good, the one we eventually used, at least the broad outlines of it. Totally unhappy with the ground war plan. So

was Norm; he didn't like it either. His last chart on the briefing was that he didn't care for it, but it was basically fairly conservative and went right straight up the middle into Kuwait. I think the argument then from them was that they didn't have enough force to defend Saudi and reach around and do something else.

So we had a meeting at the White House where we reviewed those plans down in the Situation Room. The President was there. We all concluded—Brent, myself, the President, and I think Jim—that we didn't have it yet; we didn't have the plan. The conclusion was that we'd send Colin back out to the Gulf to meet with Norm and get an answer to the question, "Norm, what do you have to have? What are you going to need to be comfortable undertaking offensive military actions to liberate Kuwait?" Colin went out; he came back. Another meeting in the White House. He said, "We want 7th Corps out of Germany. We want the 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kansas. We want another Marine division. We want six aircraft carriers," et cetera. I mean, hell of a shopping list. Sat there and said, "Okay, you got it. Now what the hell are you going to do with it?" That was sort of the ultimate test. I think from that point on, things began to flow pretty well.

There were still differences of opinion. I think General Powell was always more conservative than I was in terms of reluctance to use the force, more willing to consider sanctions for a longer period of time. I arranged to take him back over one day. He wanted to make sure that the President had heard all of the pro-sanctions arguments. So I scheduled a session with the President one day and took General Powell with me. We went in and sat down in the Oval Office and Colin made all the arguments. Not so much of, "This is what I believe," but rather, "This is one scenario. You might want to make sure you've considered it and thought about this." And of course, you had Congress, a lot of the members of Congress advocating sanctions as a course of action during that period of time.

Zelikow: About what time would that be, that work that you're talking about? Powell trying to make sure that the President understands the arguments? Would this be October or would this even be later than that?

Cheney: I think this is probably later than that.

Betts: This ties up with another question I had and that was when could you identify the point that there was a decision for war. For example, the whole set of issues involved in Reserve call-ups and then the decision around October not to rotate the forces. It seemed from the outside that that decision was probably tantamount to a decision for war. Was that the way it seemed at your end?

Cheney: I'd back it up even earlier than that. There was never any doubt in my mind, from the very earliest days, and I think Brent would say the same thing, that if Saddam refused to leave, we were going to war. That the President made that decision. And I took what he said that very first weekend of the crisis, when he came back down—by then I was on my way to Saudi—but he came back down and got off the helicopter on a Sunday night from Camp David and announced, "This aggression will not stand."

From that point there was never any doubt in my mind that if we had to, we were ready to go. He was going to use the force. As I say, I always had the feeling Brent had the same basic understanding. There were others—I would put Baker and Powell in this camp—that weren't there at that stage. We were still going to do a lot of diplomacy. It wasn't that we had rejected diplomatic efforts or anything else. It was just that I was convinced that the President had made the decision. Then, if you come later on and look at deployments, the best way to enhance the prospects that he would withdraw was to put a hell of a lot of force over there. The best way to guarantee you could prevail if he didn't withdraw was put a hell of a lot of force over there. It wasn't an either/or kind of proposition in my mind.

And there is no question, I knew exactly what I was doing when we went and got the Reserves, called up the Reserves. We put a stop/loss order out, nobody got out of the service. We stopped the rotation and I announced there will not be any rotation. You were going to deploy as units; you were going to come home as units when it was over with. And that sent a hell of a signal.

There were several different audiences. Obviously the military and the troops seemed fine with it. They all understood we were deadly serious and we really meant business. To the public, you could feel public support begin to build once they understood that we really were deadly serious, this was a serious problem. All of a sudden we are calling up Reservists from all over the country. Then Sam Nunn. I mean, Sam's no fool. I can remember going up, having to testify before the Armed Services Committee. He very quickly put two and two together and said, "Look, there isn't any way you guys are going to leave a force of this size over there in the desert for a year or two while you're waiting for sanctions to work. I mean, this is a go to war decision if he doesn't get out." Yes, it is.

Betts: Earlier, towards the end of the summer, with the initial decisions on Reserve call-ups, do you recall if there was much concern about the timing of the call-ups due to the limitations on how long you could keep people without emergency declarations and things of that sort? Did that cause you to delay some call-ups?

Cheney: No. The Reserve call-ups, when I wanted them and got the President to sign the order, we thought about those kinds of issues. The place where it had an impact was the roundout brigades. We really didn't get into difficulties with most of the Reserve call-ups, but the roundout brigades were a problem. The fact of the matter was that we had this theory, at least all the way through the '80s, that you could take a heavy division and have two active brigades and then have a Reserve brigade that would be the roundout brigade that you'd deploy if you had to deploy them, and that you could call them up and go.

It first surfaced with the 24th Division and Norm Schwarzkopf directly. Norm did not want the roundout brigade of the 24th. Norm had commanded the 24th before and knew all about it. It was a division in the Georgia National Guard maybe, the brigade. He persuaded me—and he and Colin both did—that they weren't ready to go, and they weren't. They had a commander that we had to replace eventually, he had been there for essentially political reasons, They had 50-year-old tank commanders. They had not trained in anything approaching brigade size any time in recent history. They just weren't ready to go. So what we ended up doing then was sending them to the desert, out to Fort Irwin to train.

I took a lot of flak from the National Guard community, and especially the guys on the Hill who were big on this concept, but I made the decision that I wouldn't send them, that I would listen to what Schwarzkopf and Powell had to say about it. We left them out. Now, I think that once they got to the desert, they got some training, they got some new leadership, I think they would have been perfectly capable of going and operating. Of course, by then the operation was over with. One of the lessons we learned in all of this was that the concept of roundout brigade, at least as it applies to the Army, is flawed.

The Marines had some Reserve tank units they called up, who performed very well. I think smaller size, different set of circumstances perhaps, different doctrine. But they didn't encounter the problem that the Army did with the large roundout formations.

Betts: Do you recall much of the discussion about the danger of biological attack and what to do about it? There are some vague references in public to the threats conveyed about the letter that Baker gave to Tariq Aziz, I guess, and some other things.

Cheney: Aziz wouldn't accept it.

Betts: But the impression one gets from reading the secondary accounts is that there were these vague threats. Then, I believe it was Bush in his memoirs said that he decided he wouldn't do it. In any case, was there much thought beyond that? Or was there just so much going on that people wrung their hands for a little bit and then moved on to other things?

Cheney: No, we spent quite a bit of time worrying about bugs and gas. John Jumper, who later became my military assistant, was the guy who was in charge of the horse up at Michigan State or wherever the hell it was that we used to produce anthrax. There was only one horse in America that could be used for that purpose and John was in big trouble if his horse died.

We knew he had both biological and chemical agents. We knew he had used chemical agents before on the Kurds, used them in the war with Iran. We didn't know whether or not he had warheads for the SCUDs that contained chemical or biological agents. Turned out he did. We were really worried that he might launch one of those against Israel. And if he hit Israel with bugs or gas, then all bets were off. We weren't going to be able to keep them out, obviously. But he didn't, he never used it.

We spent time. We had a formulation that we used, that I used repeatedly in public with the press. People would ask about this, to the effect that if he uses biological or chemical agents against our troops, all bets are off and we reserve the right to use any means at our disposal to respond. That was specifically meant to keep him off balance and make sure he understood we might. Obviously we weren't going to use chemical or biological agents. The threat clearly was that we'd use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons. I asked for—and had to ask a number of times—for there to be some planning done in the Joint staff about how we would react if in fact that happened. I said, "I want to know how many tactical nuclear weapons will it take to destroy a division of the Iraqi Republican Guard. Here's your divisions laid out there. You come back

and tell me how many nukes." And the answer finally came back one day. We never got to the point obviously where we were—

Betts: And Powell said he had the study destroyed afterwards.

Cheney: Colin really didn't want to give me those numbers. But I thought it was important we at least think about it. I would say, if I were to fault the military—and I don't aim this as criticism at any one individual, it's a hard subject for them to deal with because it's sort of outside the box. You have a few units that think about weapons of mass destruction. But you know, for the guy commanding a division or who is dealing with his armor or infantry or whatever it might be, the whole idea of chemical and biological weapons has never been front and center as a specialty in the Army. It forces them to think about things they're very uncomfortable thinking about. Now as I say, fortunately we didn't get into a situation where we had to respond to that. But I was perfectly prepared, if I thought it had made sense, to recommend that we consider the use of tactical nuclear weapons if he'd done it.

Betts: This wasn't the subject of any long conversations between you and the President?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: The subject of any conversations between you and the President?

Cheney: I don't recall any conversations. I'm sure he would have been briefed on the Iraqis' biological and chemical capabilities and so on. It was my view, still is today, that if a foreign power uses weapons of mass destruction, biological or chemical agents against U.S. forces, that the American people would be perfectly prepared to tolerate the use of a tactical nuclear weapon. You would at least consider it. That's the unthinkable. Again, I come back to the notion that that is far enough outside the box that it makes people nervous. But I wanted to have at least a little bit of information about what we were talking about if we went after some military targets that the Iraqis had. We never had to address that, so.

Zelikow: In a way I'm astonished at your modesty, because they have the stuff deployed in the forces, ready to use them. The notion that you would not have—if this had happened, and then folks said, "We're ready for that contingency, aren't we?" And the answer is, "No," because it was too far out of the box—

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: —This would not be a good answer.

Cheney: No, but the answer that you get. How many hours of footage ran of guys practicing the drill, putting on the suits and taking off the suits? We wore those suits out. You know, they probably had holes in them by the time the war actually started. A lot of that was intended specifically to convey the message to Saddam Hussein—and I think it was an accurate message—that if he did use these kinds of systems, that we were prepared to operate in that type of environment. He knew he wasn't. They didn't begin to have the kind of counter-measures that

we had routinely deployed with our forces. So there was a real reluctance and there is to this day. I'm sure you could go to the Pentagon today and sit down and have a conversation like this about how you deal with these kinds of weapons—

Zelikow: I'm surprised that this issue was not discussed with the President.

Cheney: I didn't say that.

Zelikow: That the issue of—

Cheney: Of a response.

Zelikow: Of what kind of WMD [weapons of mass destruction] response, if any, the United States might make, was not discussed with the President. Further, when you talk about using tactical nuclear weapons against frontline divisions.

Cheney: Against military targets.

Zelikow: That's certainly one acceptable target category, but not necessarily the only or perhaps even the best one. Given that those are the forces that are in the closest proximity to your own units, et cetera.

Cheney: The Republican Guard wasn't, though. They initially went in and took Kuwait, and then they pulled back. They were deployed up along the Iraqi border. They weren't the frontline divisions.

McCall: I should interject two things. First, there was a conversation with the President about, in broad terms, response to bugs and gas and other delights of warfare. The President recounts it in his book. We did have conversations about this in preparation. That was the only time really that it was brought up. I think you were there for that; it was just a general discussion. The President discounted it.

Zelikow: Discounted the threat?

McCall: No, he didn't discount the threat. My recollection—again, you're getting this secondhand now from me and there isn't really a written record of this other than the President's and Brent's comments—was exactly what you said at the outset here, that there was an awareness that we could not take it off the table, but the nukes were probably taken out of the actual—

Cheney: If something like that would have happened, nobody is authorized, the CINC isn't authorized to go let off a nuke. I mean, what's going to happen is you are going to have a big meeting in the White House. At that point you figure out what your options are and anything additional you would have done. I mean, I didn't feel that we were somehow derelict in our responsibilities because we didn't have cruise missiles with nuclear weapons ready to go to take out Baghdad.

Betts: One thing that doesn't appear to have been discussed and that was the possibility of using chemical weapons in retaliation. Now we couldn't do that; they're illegal. But then?

Zelikow: We'd already signed up?

Cheney: Yes, we'd signed up.

McCall: Can I ask a related question now?

Cheney: The chemical weapon thing was signed at the end of the Reagan Administration by Shultz in Paris.

McCall: On the nuke front, in Europe, we were always operating on the assumption that there was going to be initial Soviet attack. Afterwards when we got into the Soviet plans, what we could find of them, it was clear that they were going to use tac nukes. Therefore, we trained as if we were going to do that and we expected it as frontline soldiers. There was no reverse notion of that, of first use for the United States, but I'm just saying, did you see a disjoint operationally between the expectations that were taken seriously in the field, but at the Pentagon were sort of taboo, out of the box?

Cheney: We were in the process of moving away from the old Cold War scenario. You know, the Wall had come down in late '89 and to the extent that we'd been focused on a doctrine that said we might have to resort to nuclear weapons to stop—and reserved the right to do so—to stop a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. There were other things working: we had problems with some of those weapons; we had to redeploy them. I think there was always doubt, at least in some of our minds, about an 8-inch nuclear round that you are going to launch out of some artillery piece over here and hit a target 10 or 12 miles away, if that was what you were doing. Didn't seem to be necessarily the right thing to do if you didn't have to.

Colin had strong feelings, Powell did, about tactical nuclear weapons. He didn't like them. Maybe it was his European experience. He couldn't wait to get them out and we were finally able to redeploy them. He was not a big fan of tactical nukes. I think part of that was based on his earlier experiences in the service. But that was, I would say, the dominant thinking in the U.S. Army especially, and the military, by the time we get to the desert. People have redeployed and the Cold War is ending, and they were cutting back. We brought 7th Corps out of Germany, but when we get through with them they're going home, most of them. You know, we'd moved off that notion that we are likely to have to use nuclear weapons any time soon. A lot had happened in the last 50 years.

It's one thing to go back and read the history of the Eisenhower years and we're trying to build nuclear weapons, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki aren't that far in the past. We'd used them. By the time you get to the 1990s it is not a very realistic option from the standpoint of the U.S. military.

McCall: One last question, I never asked anybody else about this. Do you remember hearing anything about Soviet warnings that they would not tolerate those kinds of responses?

Cheney: No, didn't come up. Not on my watch, not that I recall. I do recall conversations, probably that the President was involved, where we talked about how we were going to go after the bunkers where we thought some of the stuff was stored and methods for trying to destroy it. He would have been aware that this was a problem, as I say, without question, but I don't recall a conversation with him. The nuclear, tactical nuclear weapons option was something I wanted. I wanted to know myself, if something happened, is this an option? What do you do to them? So as I say, I found out it takes 17 weapons to destroy an Iraqi Republican Guard division. Or at least that is what I was told.

Betts: I'm just going to jump ahead a bit to the end of the war and the controversy about closing the gate, as it were.

Cheney: I had my mind kind of walking sequentially through the war, and you guys are jumping in here to get stuff that's—we haven't even gotten close to that.

Betts: Well let's go back, I don't want to throw you off.

Cheney: We haven't even gotten close to getting—

Zelikow: I'd like you to get the chance to address the points that you want to be sure are covered before you go. We're going to go back, and I'll play sweeper here to try to be sure.

Cheney: There's a lot of stuff we're jumping over here.

Zelikow: So, if you want to go ahead with that.

Betts: The question I had, the impression I had from reading the later accounts was that there were breakdowns in communication between General [Frederick] Franks and Schwarzkopf and then between the field and Washington about what exactly had been accomplished in the last hours of the war, and the impression in Washington apparently that the Republican Guard had been cut off. I just wondered how much of those secondary accounts conveyed the right impression, that there was sort of a fog of war problem in communications at the end. Did you have the impression in Washington that there'd been a more decisive encirclement and cut off of the Republican Guard than there turned out to be? Or did that not really have an effect on the decision about when to end the war?

Cheney: The surprise I remember at the end, where we got some report in that turned out not to be accurate, had to do with whether or not we'd captured the site where the cease fire was going to be signed. It was SAFWAN one or whatever we called it. Initially, I think Norm felt he'd been told it had been taken and then found out it wasn't. General Franks had to go ahead and sort of clean that up. There was always bad blood afterwards between Schwarzkopf and Franks, I think there may still be to this day.

Part of that, coming back to your question in terms of timing and ending the war, the time we made the decision to halt military operations I guess is the way I think about it, we had been through the air war and then the ground war started, went very well for us. We'd reached the point where 80,000 Iraqis had surrendered. You've seen the American troops turn from being warriors to being angels of mercy. Feeding, providing medical care and water. We had the highway of death going north out of Kuwait City where we'd really hammered them. The concern was about whether or not we got the Iraqis or got the Republican Guard cut off—because the Republican Guard was more than one unit. Some of the divisions had been hard hit, decimated. Some hadn't.

But of greater concern than that was the notion that somehow, okay, we'd done that. We'd accomplished our objective. The objective was to liberate Kuwait. Plus, we've reached the point where we're asking our young kids to keep hammering away when it's hard to justify what the purpose of doing that is, other than just continuing the slaughter. I think that was a major concern for General Powell. He was a big advocate of being concerned about the notion that we were somehow piling on here, because clearly the Iraqis had done everything they could to get out of Kuwait, they're in full-fledged retreat. We had the meeting in the White House in the Oval Office where the basic question is: have we achieved our objective? The unanimous view of those of us who were there, civilian and military, was yes. Our objective was to liberate Kuwait. We'd done it.

We got Norm on the phone from Riyadh. I talked to him, General Powell talked to him, the President talked to him. Discussed all of this with him as well as the decision to stop military operations. He was given another 12 hours or something like that, some chunk of time by which it was to be wrapped up. He had no problem with that. Now, later, afterwards, at one point, he gave a press interview that implied that he had wanted to continue, but that was not in fact the situation at the time the decision was made by the President.

Betts: So you didn't feel later if you'd known more about the specifics of the tactical situation and what had or hadn't been done, that it would have affected the decision?

Cheney: I can't say that it would. I mean, I look back on it now, there are two categories of arguments, I think. One is this notion, gee, if we'd just gone another 12 or 24 hours we'd have killed more Iraqis or blocked the retreat of the X division. Yes, there's no question we could have done that. Might have weakened the regime further, might have been tougher for the Iraqis to deal with the problems in the south when those developed after the war. You know, Norm's decision to allow them to fly helicopters. You could look at that and say that was as big a problem as anything else. But he was the guy on the scene. He was carrying out the President's instructions. Not in that level of detail, but in terms of getting things resolved. It's an interesting debate. Frankly, I don't think it changes the course of history. We had in fact achieved our objective. Whether or not you hang some more Iraqi scalps on the wall, okay, it's an interesting military discussion.

The other issue that has been kicked around a long time is, why didn't you go to Baghdad and get rid of Saddam? That's a whole separate question, a whole separate issue, which we can debate as well too. There was never any serious advocacy of the notion that we ought to take

Baghdad. I think there was a general assumption that Saddam will never survive, that politically the blow that had been administered to his military and him here, that he can't possibly survive. That was the advice we got from all the experts. Turned out they were wrong, obviously. But there was never a serious debate about whether or not we ought to go to Baghdad. A lot of discussion after the action, commentators. At the time, we all agreed we'd done what we set out to do. It was time to stop the operation.

Zelikow: I was actually at the Oval Office meeting, the first half of that meeting, as a note taker for some of it on the 27th. In reflecting on that, I think I ended up writing the only written notes that were made at the time—

Cheney: Did you?

Zelikow: Which I then gave to Brent quickly thereafter and said, "Just in case you need these." What struck me later, as I reflected more about this—and at the time I didn't know a lot of things—because Powell gave the briefing. The tone of the briefing right from the start was that the President said, basically, "What do you need?" He said, "We've got an ongoing engagement with this Republican Guard Division. Basically, we need several more hours for that to wrap up. Then we're pretty well done."

There was a discussion of Tarnish, Battleship Missouri, that sort of thing, but Schwarzkopf the day before had already given the press conference saying the gate is closed. Powell had come in giving a briefing, basically says we're tidying up, but after that we're just basically shooting people who are running away. He didn't use those words. Then later, of course, much afterwards, I read the accounts in which Franks and [Barry] McCaffrey said, "We were stunned, because the gate wasn't closed." So then I just asked myself the question, which may be an interesting question to you and may unearth some other things, Powell, in that briefing, clearly did not know what Franks and McCaffrey thought was obvious, all right? So I just ask, as a staffing procedure, if you are preparing for a military briefing with the President, what went wrong here?

Now I don't think that Powell was hiding anything. Powell didn't know what the conditions were in the field. So how do you do better than this? I actually tried to think of, if I were a staffer, what kind of staffing procedures would I set up, so that at least you knew better what you didn't know. I was curious if you ever had any reflections about this or if that stimulates any reflections from you about your frustrations or problems in getting a sense at your fingertips of what's really happening in the field.

Cheney: As I look back on that, there was a significant engagement fought the day after the cease fire. The 24th Division took on a significant Iraqi element and destroyed it. To the extent you've got commanders in the field, division commanders in this case or core commanders in Freddie Franks' case, who have a different view than has been communicated up the chain, someplace there it looks to me it's between Norm and his subordinates—

Zelikow: See, I was not there when the call was placed to Schwarzkopf. I was then surprised later to learn that Schwarzkopf had said what he said, because then that told me, forget Powell. Schwarzkopf doesn't know what Franks and McCaffrey know.

Cheney: Right. So if there was a breakdown, my sense of it would be that's where it's at. Part of this goes back again to Norm wasn't the easiest guy in the world to work for or to relate to or communicate with. Or maybe he's just speculating. I've never discussed it with him. You know, he's got the President of the United States and the Oval Office on the other end of the phone and he's got problems down there, but he's not going to tell him what the hell the problems are. The President wants to hang it up; we'll hang it up. End of story. I can see some of that too.

Again, these are interesting questions. I've always had the feeling though that it is not all that significant in terms of the ultimate outcome, unless you had been willing to change your war aim, go to Baghdad and run Saddam to ground. Then you've got a whole different proposition and I think you can make an argument about that. I still think we made the right decision there. I don't think we should have gone to Baghdad. I don't see this as sort of central, if you will, in terms of what our objectives were.

Betts: In the days after the war, when the Shiites and the Kurds rose and the U.S. didn't intervene on their behalf, how much controversy was there about that decision? One person who still seems very agitated about it, I know, is Paul Wolfowitz. I don't know if he was exceptional or whether there was real debate about whether or not to do something.

Cheney: No, I think that's an accurate description of the way Paul felt and looks back on it at the time. I think if I were to say anything, I think we did encourage them. The President's public comments about overthrowing Saddam did encourage them to think that now was the time to rise up. I wasn't party to discussion about how that might be stated or what ought to be stated. I think Brent was a lot closer to it than I was, what, if any, conversations there were prior to the time the President made those comments. I think you have to look at them against the backdrop of what all the experts said would happen once Saddam was defeated and was kicked out of Kuwait. I always had the feeling that our comments weren't very well thought out. If there was a weakness there, we hadn't done a lot of planning for what happens after the war.

Betts: What you said a moment ago, was there an expectation that as this was going on, as the Republican Guard was moving against the Shiites and the Kurds, that still Saddam was about to fall and that things would be okay for the Shiites and the Kurds after a little while? It doesn't sound as cold-blooded and deliberate a decision to let them go down?

Cheney: I wasn't involved in the decision, so you're asking me to some extent to speculate here on what was going on. I don't recall a conversation with the President that I was involved in about those kinds of issues with respect to the Shiites and the Kurds. I come back again to the notion—you couldn't calibrate it that closely—but to the notion that Saddam wasn't going to survive. This was evidence that he had problems. The military would be very unhappy given what had happened to them. I'm guessing, speculating, that stuff figured into the President's thinking when he talked about that. But I don't recall any more specifics than that.

Betts: But you don't think that had you been getting different advice from the experts, had the experts been saying that Saddam will not leave as a result of this, would that have changed the objectives at all do you think?

Cheney: Well, it might have. Again, you've got to remember what we'd been through here in the run-up to this. We'd invested one hell of a lot in working within a coalition, in getting the Arabs on board, and the Saudis, and the Egyptians and the Moroccans. Having the Arab League embrace and endorse it and the Syrians had sent troops. We've got the UN Security Council, which had blessed the whole thing. We'd been managing the Soviet account and the Chinese account and all of the others, putting together this coalition to make all of this happen. Going to the Congress and getting the Congress to agree that we could use force, the go-to-war resolution from the Security Council. Now, while it's without question true that this was a U.S. military operation—and I think it is also true that we could have done it all by ourselves, without the forces of any other country being present, although we still needed Saudi permission to come use their bases—all of that served to clarify our objective. The objective is to liberate Kuwait.

If we had gone, and gone through that process, and sought approval from all of those folks for a plan to topple the government of Iraq, we'd have never gotten it. If we had decided on our own that we were going to go to Baghdad and get rid of Saddam, we'd have been on our own. There wouldn't be anybody else with us. I was just back out in the region. I met with Sultan Qaboos [bin Said] last week and the Emir of Qatar and had a nice session with [Hosni] Mubarak in Cairo when I went through. People still talk about it, especially when I show up. We still reminisce about those days. I can remember being up at Aswan a couple of years ago with Brent and the President. We did sort of a nostalgia tour through the region and Mubarak entertained us up there for the day. We talked about this and asked this question, "Should we have gone on to Baghdad?" kind of thing.

At that time—this was two or three years ago—the view was overwhelmingly no. What you did was you came out and you organized the international community, you deployed forces and we stopped aggression. We liberated Kuwait, and that was all a plus. As soon as you guys then start running around the region toppling governments, even Iraq, then you have a whole different can of worms here. Then you have the United States showing up—and that's a big problem. I think they would have had great difficulty supporting it.

I think some of them look back on it now, they're living over there in the region, you've still got Saddam in Baghdad. Probably some of them, if they had to vote today, might vote to say, "Jeez, we wish you guys would have gone to Baghdad." At the time, that was not an option and the whole way in which we had built the coalition, devised the policy, conducted the campaign was as a coalition. There were certain understandings about what we were about and what our objective was and those understandings did not include our taking Baghdad and getting rid of Saddam. I don't know what the hell we'd have done if we'd have captured him. What do you do, shoot him? Noriega was an indicted drug trafficker. I suppose you could have a war crimes trial or something. Hell, the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] would have come to court and filed a writ of *habeas corpus* and we'd have to release him.

Zelikow: There were a lot of questions about, after you drive into Baghdad, what then do you do next. If he is running back to Tikrit or even if you do capture him, what do you do next? Do you now install the American military government?

Cheney: Sure. I mean, this was a can of worms. It's a tough part of the world to work in.

Betts: I'm sorry; I'm drawing a blank. Oh, the allied contributions to the war. The general impression is they were token and politically useful but not militarily essential. Were there any particular respects in which the allied contributions really were very important, useful, filling a needed niche beyond the political, diplomatic function?

Cheney: The Brits were valuable and made a significant contribution given their overall level of resources. They're always great allies. That relationship works better than any of the other relationships. The French were difficult. They didn't want to deploy where Norm wanted them to deploy going into Kuwait. They wanted to be clear out here on the left flank. So we put them clear out on the left flank and I don't even think they saw an Iraqi. But they were there.

It was very important for us, and I think for some of our friends in the Arab world who supported us, that there be a coalition of forces. It was a lot easier for Fahd and Saudi Arabia, from a political standpoint, if it's not just U.S. forces in the kingdom, it's also the Egyptians and the Syrians and the Moroccans and all of these other forces. The Pakistanis, everybody who showed up. It was very important to have the Arab League on board and have the United Nations sanction this whole thing. The meaningful commitment of troops, even if they didn't play a significant military role, didn't suffer many casualties, didn't bring anything to the party except a bunch of hungry guys and we had to feed them instead of their own home country having to feed them, it was important to have them there.

One of the things that was special about this whole operation was the way the President decided from the very outset that this was going to be sort of a combined political, diplomatic, military kind of operation. That he was going to use the United Nations, that he was going to work with allies. That's his style, but it was a great strength for him too. It really worked. There were concerns—I could remember going to talk to King Fahd when I asked him for approval to deploy the force to Saudi Arabia. His basic response was, after a two-hour briefing, "Okay, we'll do it. We'll do it because I trust George Bush and because I know when it's over with, you'll leave."

Betts: My last question, about estimates of U.S. casualties before the ground war. From the outside, bits and pieces, we pick up that there was a range of studies with different assumptions and a range of estimates, but that probably the lowest estimates were still higher than what we wound up with. I guess my question is, what do you recall about both that range of estimates and whatever role they played in thinking about either the timing or the cost and benefits of the decision for the ground war?

Cheney: People were always asking—the Congress, the press—how many people are you going to lose in this operation. We never had an official estimate, at least one that I dealt with or the President dealt with. It was just pure windage. I'm sure there were people running around the building who had cranked out some numbers and said, "Well, we think it is going to be 10,000 or 5,000," or whatever it might be. But to the best of my recollection, there never was a so-called official estimate. We didn't know. A lot of it depended upon what happened. We were pleasantly surprised, consistently, throughout the operation. The first night of the air war we assumed would be our heaviest night in terms of air casualties. We lost one aircraft.

The ground war we thought would be especially difficult getting through the berms and the wire and the minefields and so forth when we first launched. I remember briefing the President, I think it was a Sunday morning after church. We went upstairs to the residence and I think we had lost four guys getting through the wire. The Marines had lost four guys getting into Kuwait, getting through the first barriers. There was an enormous sigh of relief, because we thought those would be the toughest problems. We were amazed at the number of casualties we took. We did everything to make sure that we didn't get bogged down in something. I was fairly confident that in fact the guys could do what they said they could do.

Betts: You in the White House weren't asking for specific studies and specific estimates?

Cheney: I sure don't recall any specific number that was ever settled on as the official thing. Has anybody has come across that in the paper trail in the notes? I sure haven't.

Masoud: I wonder though if you had in mind a kind of acceptable threshold, even informal.

Cheney: It doesn't work that way.

McCall: If you're going to pull the sword out, it's going to get bloody.

Cheney: Yes, and you assume you're going to suffer casualties. We did a lot of stuff to make sure they were minimal. We bombed the hell out of them before we launched the ground war, very successfully. It still went better than we had any reason to expect. We had the plan, the ground war and the Marines were going to launch into Kuwait but sort of hold them. Freddie Franks was going to come around from the west. We ended up accelerating his departure, his HR, 12 hours or something like that. I remember signing off on that because it was going so well. But you can't plan an operation on the basis of, "This is going to go better than we think." You plan it on, "We have to be prepared for any eventuality. We want to make absolutely sure we win and we achieve our objective and minimize our casualties." Of course when we pushed, the whole thing collapsed. So it went faster than we had any reason to believe it would.

Zelikow: Going back to the decision for war again for a moment, since we're on the Gulf War. One thing that puzzled me, I had the same puzzlement that you expressed. You didn't express it as puzzlement; I felt it as puzzlement. I was a little fly on the wall, but I'd been at Aspen with the President on that first day. When all the debate started in October, the public debate, it was puzzling to me because I thought the President's intentions had been clear from the first 24 hours, from the very start. It always seemed obvious to me that the President was going to see this through whatever it took and it was just a matter of, what is it going to take? But it was going to be whatever it took. So this was to me just the logical working out.

When you commented that you saw it that way too, that compounds my puzzlement a little bit. How come other people didn't? In your own building—you're at the Pentagon—you understand that, but the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff doesn't. Now I heard you give an answer to this and I want you to just reflect on that, because I'll tell you what I heard you say. What I heard you say in a way is, maybe they kind of heard it, but they didn't entirely believe it. Or, they

didn't really believe that. "Maybe he thinks that, but we don't really know if he's completely serious about following through on that belief. When he sees what's really involved, he may change his mind. So we're just not going to put all our chips down on the table." Now, I don't know if that's right, but as I say, it's puzzling to me.

Cheney: You're talking about the military now?

Zelikow: I'm talking about General Powell in particular as an example of this.

Cheney: You ought to talk to General Powell, obviously.

Zelikow: I mean, he's quoted with Woodward as just shocked, the President coming out and saying these things—

Cheney: "This aggression will not stand."

Zelikow: Right. But even later, he seems to be surprised that the President is committed to war at a point where it seemed to me that that latent commitment was already apparent and was apparent to you in the same building. So I'm just trying to understand that.

Cheney: I told you what my view was. There was never any doubt in my mind and I think Brent was of the same view, if you talk to Brent. I'm trying to remember, there was a time that Brent and I and the President had a discussion on the telephone and we were worried. There was concern that you've got the Russians participating, trying to find a compromise way out. I think there were probably people out there, I would guess at State—and maybe General Powell was in the same camp as well—thinking there is going to be some kind of compromise, they'll work something out. I thought they might withdraw because that seemed like the smart thing to do if you were Saddam Hussein, but I never thought, I never sensed in my dealings with the President, that that was an option. He was very clear.

For Congress, there were an awful lot of people who didn't want to go to war. It wasn't that we wanted to go to war, but I was convinced that he was going to do whatever he had to do to make it happen. It was my job to support that effort, which I did. You'll have to talk to General Powell about why he felt the way he did or why he thought it was still an option to do something else. I think there were people—Sam Nunn comes to mind immediately—who opposed us all the way through.

Zelikow: Let me push this even further. At a late point in this, I sensed—and again, more from the peanut gallery that I was in in the OEOB—that opinion had even shifted to the point where we really felt we needed to have the war, because folks had gotten to understand Iraq better as a result of all the work that had been done in the fall. As you got to understand Iraq and the Iraqi military potential really well, it was scary. Our estimates of where they were in their WMD programs—

Cheney: The nukes.

Zelikow: —became much more ominous as we worked through the fall of 1990. I can't speak for Brent on this, but I think Brent might agree that by the end of 1990, there was almost a sense of, "We kind of need to have this war," because we need to do something to him. We need to mess him up.

Cheney: I remember it more in terms of—

Zelikow: That's not looking for an excuse, that'd be too far. But really a sense of, we need to have a confrontation over this. Almost an active, there is almost a not well-articulated hope that he will not withdraw.

Cheney: There was a concern, I guess. I would state it not so much in terms of, "We need to have a war" kind of thing. Rather, we've got all these folks over there, we're all tuned up and ready to go, and he pulls out. Then what do you do? You going to leave half a million people in the desert? Probably can't really do that. You going to go ahead and invade anyway, after he's left and done what you told him he had to do, which is get the hell out? He's jerked our chain. We've spent billions of dollars, got everybody all buzzed up, and there's no issue. He's gone back to Baghdad. There was that concern.

Zelikow: And the WMD stuff is untouched—

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Which we now more fully appreciate.

Cheney: But the WMD stuff—I had a briefing from the Israelis. [Ehud] Barak and I guess Arens came to see me before he invaded Kuwait—it was back in '90 at one point on one of their trips—and briefed us on what the Israelis had on the Iraqi nuclear program. It was substantial. It was a legitimate area for concern. I testified to that during the course of the build-up for Desert Storm and took a lot of flack on the Hill because they said, "You're being too dramatic here, he doesn't have that kind of capability." Obviously he did.

Zelikow: In fact, he had even more than that, more than we knew.

Cheney: So there was that concern, that he might just leave us dangling out there. If he does in fact pull out, once you get everything out. I think there were folks who still thought there were ways to resolve this without resort to war as late as early January.

Zelikow: In the government?

Cheney: Yes. I always took the meeting with Tariq Aziz—what was that, January 9th, in Geneva? I remember sitting in the President's private office with him, and Dan Quayle was there and maybe Sununu, maybe Brent. We watched the live coverage as Jim came out of the meeting in Geneva. You could tell by the look on his face that it was war, that he was not going to do it. You just, if you knew Jim well you could see. In a sense, I supposed it was partly a feeling of failure on his part that diplomatically they hadn't been able to achieve the objective.

It was after that session there wasn't any doubt in anybody's mind what was going to happen. I think up until that point there were still some folks who were holding out the hope that something other than war would be the answer, because it was the 12th when we did the congressional vote. We still had a lot of folks like Sam Nunn and others who—

Zelikow: Do you think Baker was holding out that hope, that he actually wanted to get it resolved diplomatically?

Cheney: I think so.

Zelikow: If they would of course agree to all the conditions.

Cheney: Sure, it had to be an acceptable settlement. But I think Jim was more willing to accept and more hopeful that there would be some kind of diplomatic resolution before we actually had to go to war. I don't find that surprising. It didn't track with my understanding of where we were going. He was more hopeful than I was, but I had a different mission. My job's defense. I'm supposed to get the forces over there and get ready to go to war. Jim's the guy who has to run around and negotiate with everybody and hopefully pull off a settlement here if he can. If he's not going flat out, he's not doing his job. I don't see any contradiction there in terms of what his assignment is and what mine was.

McCall: General Scowcroft has said that going into that meeting with Aziz, that he was actually a little bit afraid that there was going to be a settlement. Did you share that fear? Did you want it? General Scowcroft has expressed that he was concerned because he wanted to see the Iraqi situation solved as decisively as possible. Did you share any of that sentiment?

Cheney: Well, I certainly by then didn't want to see him pull out. We'd gone to a lot of trouble, and if he just suddenly withdrew and left us hanging there in mid-air, then we had a real problem.

Zelikow: The problem being what, just so future readers don't misunderstand.

Cheney: Sure. What do you do? Do you pack up your marbles and come home? He's intact. He had everything he had to begin with. He's raped and pillaged Kuwait. He's taken home a lot of loot. Then, "Oh, I didn't mean it." You've got a problem. You still have the strategic problem that he's demonstrated he's got the biggest force in the Gulf. He can certainly try to intimidate all of his neighbors. We put a big force over there and the question then is, how do you use it if the provocation has been removed? So it was a problem.

It's hard now to go back and try to recreate all that. What Saddam did, consistently, time after time after time, was stupid. You need a stupid opponent sometimes and we had it, in terms of his taking hostages, setting the oil fields on fire. He wasn't the swiftest, smoothest operator. Now he's managed to survive since and you've got to give him some credit for that, I suppose. But he was a good foil for us to have because he consistently got it wrong.

Masoud: I'm wondering—you may have discussed this when I was out of the room—but have we talked about the decision to send you to Saudi Arabia in August? It seems to me that that's a pretty high-level delegation and you're going there to try to convince the Saudis to let you put troops there. Had you thought, *What if they say no? We'll have egg on our faces.*

Cheney: The way it happened, I think it was Thursday when Saddam—

Zelikow: You mean—

Cheney: I'm going back to walk up to—

Zelikow: You mean pre- the meeting with [Prince] Bandar [al Saud]?

Cheney: The Aspen, wasn't it the night before the Aspen deal?

Zelikow: The invasion occurs the night before the President leaves for Aspen in the morning. The President comes back from Aspen. There is that initial NSC meeting just before the President flies to Aspen.

Cheney: Before he left.

McCall: You go on the fifth.

Cheney: But this is probably Friday morning, I'm guessing.

Zelikow: I just have the dates.

Cheney: Thursday morning, maybe it's Thursday morning. Anyway, we have that first meeting. It's kind of ill-formed, nothing much is working yet. The press comes in at some point and asks if you're contemplating military action. The President right then said, "No, but I'm willing to think about it." He went off to Aspen. I was supposed to go to Aspen because we were going to brief on the new base force and our new strategy. That got scrubbed because of the Iraqi thing. Then we had another meeting—

Zelikow: The President still gave the base force speech.

Cheney: Yes, he did. He went and gave the speech, but nobody paid any attention to it because of the Gulf crisis. And Maggie Thatcher was out there, so what. Then, at one point we had a meeting, was it maybe the next day? I ended up in my office with Bandar and had General Powell up. We briefed Bandar on sort of a first cut on what we might be willing and able to send. As I recall, it was a couple of hundred thousand troops. It wasn't the full up, later on package. It was a pulled down, off-the-shelf kind of contingency plan. But it was intended primarily to convey the notion to Bandar that if we came, this was going to be a meaningful force. He took it and headed for Saudi.

Then we went up to Camp David, I think the next day, on Saturday. I brought Schwarzkopf up and we had a lengthy meeting up there and went over everything. During the course of that we got word that the Saudis were probably not going to allow any forces to come in, as I recall. You're getting mixed and conflicting signals during this period of time. Flew back by helicopter to Washington and later that afternoon I had a phone call with Brent where this question of a delegation came up. When the President had talked to Fahd earlier, he'd talked about sending a team over to sort of work with the Saudis.

When Brent and I talked that afternoon, that's where we decided that I would go chair the delegation, head the delegation. Schwarzkopf and I guess Bob Gates, Paul Wolfowitz, we had Chas Freeman, who was our ambassador out there and happened to be on home leave. In a telephone conversation, I believe, with the President the next morning, we decided that we would leave around noon the next day, Sunday. There were ongoing conversations between the President and the Saudis, King Fahd. I don't remember how many phone calls in particular, but we took off on Sunday and flew all night. Landed in Saudi Monday afternoon. I was supposed to meet with Fahd around four, something like that. That got pushed back to about 7 o'clock.

Bandar came to brief me. The concern that had been expressed by some of the State Department types was that if we came with a big force we'd scare the hell out of the Saudis, that they were worried. They kind of cautioned us not to come on too strong about bringing a whole bunch of troops to the kingdom. Bandar led me to believe that was garbage. He told me the story that a lot of people have heard before, but he reiterated then that what they were worried about was that we wouldn't come with enough, that there would just be a provocation. He talked about Jimmy Carter sending the F-15s, when the Shah fell and announcing when they were halfway there that they were unarmed. He said, "We don't want that." This is Bandar talking to me privately in the guest house there.

Then we went and met with Fahd and spent about two hours. We'd gone over the brief on the plane on the way out. We had the CIA briefer with us. I decided after looking at his presentation I didn't want him to present. It wasn't sexy enough. Norm went through his brief and included some of the intelligence stuff in his brief. As I say, it was about a two hour session. At the end of that time I'd been told by our experts, Freeman and others, that we might have to wait around for a couple of days to get an answer. Dead wrong. Finished our presentation, the king turned and had some words in Arabic with Abdullah the Crown Prince, who was there. Faisal the foreign minister. Sultan wasn't there, his number two was. Bandar was there and had been interpreting back and forth for me, everything. He clammed up as soon as they started talking in Arabic so I couldn't tell what they were saying to each other.

Later on Freeman told me that this thing about talking about the Kuwaitis, that Fahd was making the point which we tried to make, that if you're going to ask us for help, you have to ask now. We can't wait. The Kuwaitis waited and there wasn't anything anybody could do for them. Abdullah saying, "Now with the Kuwaitis, there still is a Kuwait," and Fahd saying, "Yes, they're all living in our hotels," something to that effect. But he turned back to me and said, "Okay, we'll do it." At that point.

There'd been a lot of conversations, I'm sure, within the Saudi government prior to the time I'd arrived. Bandar had been there. Bandar clearly was an advocate and the king placed great store on him. It did not take him a long time to make the decision once we were in there making our presentation. I don't know what all transpired inside the Saudi government between Saturday, when the basic notion was they're not eager to have U.S. troops come to the kingdom, and Monday, when he accepted the force. Part of it turned on this notion that he'd asked me and I had assured him that we'd come, we'd bring enough force to do the job, that when it was over with we'd leave.

He made his statement to the effect that he'd known George Bush a long time and he trusted George Bush and he knew we'd keep our word. So then I went back to the guesthouse, got on the telephone, called the President, who was in the Oval Office with Maggie Thatcher at the time when the phone call went through. Told him of the king's decision and asked the President's permission to deploy the force. He said, "Go." Then I called Colin Powell and told him to start the troops moving. So that was the sequence.

Zelikow: And then people started working on a speech to give on Tuesday.

Cheney: When I left Saudi, I had to go to Egypt to see Mubarak, flew into Cairo. He was down in Alexandria, though. We couldn't get the big 707 into Alexandria, so we had to land in Cairo and take a little bitty twin engine King Air down to land at Alexandria. When we landed down there we parked next to an Iraqi jet. The Iraqi Vice President was flying around trying to put out the fire. I had to cool my heels outside Mubarak's office waiting while the Iraqi was in there talking to him, which turned out I think to be good because he was really pissed, Mubarak was, by the time I got in.

I had told him what we were going to do, that Fahd had agreed we could send troops to Saudi Arabia. I needed a couple of things from him. I needed overflight rights, because Egypt's right on the line to get into Saudi. Also they were neuralgic about nuclear carriers going through the Suez and I told him I needed approval to send a carrier through. I think we had the *Eisenhower* up in the Med. He said, "When?" I said, "Tonight." He said, "Okay," signed up for that. Finished with Mubarak and took off and headed for Washington, when I got a phone call from the President saying stop in and see King Hassan in Morocco. Somebody had to fax us the landing maps and so forth for Rabat. We flew in there.

I saw him late at night. I'll always remember that session because he had a couple of his staff people there and I think I had Wolfowitz and somebody else with me. I didn't want to talk in the bigger group about the fact we were getting ready to deploy forces. We were still trying to keep that under wraps until the President could announce it. I told him I had something sensitive to say to him, so he took me in the side room and he took his interpreter in with him, although I sensed he spoke pretty good English, but he had the guy with him who spoke French. He said, "Now, is this classified?" And I said, "Yes, Your Majesty, it is classified." He said, "Okay, just a minute." He pulled out this little gold box that I guess had a piece of the Koran in it and gave it to his aide and made him swear on pain of death that he wouldn't reveal what he was about to hear. I thought, *Boy, I could use one of those in the Pentagon. Great way to enforce some discipline.* But anyway, then he turned back to me and we went forward with the conversation.

I explained we were going to send troops and President Mubarak supported it. He committed at that point, he'd send forces as well. Then I flew back to Washington. Got back, went in and saw the President. Then he went out and made his television announcement. I think we saw drafts. Gates was with me and there was stuff flying back and forth between our plane and the White House. They put together the statement; we saw what they were putting together.

Zelikow: If you've got the energy to go on a little while longer, I think I'd like to circle back now.

Cheney: Back in the Congress now, you're going to go back that far?

Zelikow: Let's not go back that far, unless there are some things that are on your list that have to do with the years of Congress that you want to be sure to get out now.

Cheney: Let's see here, we talked about the '88 campaign and why I wasn't involved in that. Talked about Iran-Contra, Intelligence Committee, Newt and the military reform caucus. Goldwater-Nichols, Lebanon, Grenada. We covered a lot of that stuff to the extent that it relates to the Defense Department job.

Masoud: There were two items that you wanted to talk about. One was the people, key people to you at DoD.

Cheney: That's a long conversation.

Masoud: The other one was you were going to go through a typical day at the Pentagon. We don't have to do that now.

Zelikow: That's actually a very good—

Cheney: Day at the Pentagon?

Zelikow: That's a good place to get you back in your job in early '89. Maybe you can even work the people into your description of the day. It's interesting, I was particularly struck by the way you mentioned that you replaced 39 of the 44, because you saw the press commentary, which was very much that Cheney mostly has inherited Tower appointees. Atwood, Wolfowitz, Steve Hadley were all people that Tower had brought in. Clearly, even if you didn't change all those people, you plainly did not passively accept them. You made an affirmative choice in each of those cases of your own.

Cheney: They all had to pass muster with me.

Zelikow: So let me let you then go back.

Cheney: In terms of sort of a typical day, we lived in a townhouse out in McLean, out near the CIA. I would be picked up at home in the morning by the driver. We had an armored Cadillac

limousine that we used all those years with a chase car behind it. One of the worst accidents, probably one of the greatest dangers I was ever in as Secretary, was the day we were speeding down Constitution Avenue and a local cop jumped off the curb for some reason, right smack in front of the car and hollered at us to stop. We never understood exactly why he did it, but the guy slammed on the brakes and the chase car hit us in the back end. It was scary riding around in the limousine, even though it was heavily armored.

But I'd be met there in the morning and usually in the car would be a CIA briefer with the PDB. That's the first thing I would see on the way to the office, probably a 20-minute ride because I'd usually go in fairly early, 7, 7:30, something like that.

Zelikow: Would you also get, in addition to the PDB, would you get the Secretary's INR [Bureau of Intelligence and Research] morning summary and the defense intelligence daily, the DIA morning summary?

Cheney: Most of that stuff would come to the office.

Zelikow: So the PDB is the only thing—

Cheney: The PDB is the main thing. Usually the early bird would be in the car too.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: The early bird, that was the crucial document. It had all the press clippings.

Masoud: I'd read that at the *NewsHour*.

Betts: That or the Friday Follies.

Cheney: So I'd have that in the car and usually I'd get through the PDB on the way to work. Sometimes there'd be special reports of various kinds that they'd bring to us.

Zelikow: The briefers, they're in the car with you?

Cheney: The briefer would be in the car with me.

Zelikow: You might ask him questions about it.

Cheney: Yes, although you were always aware there were others in the car, so you had to be discreet. Arrive at the Pentagon, would drive into the basement and take the elevator, the Secretary's elevator, upstairs to the office. By the time I arrived, 7:30, 8 o'clock, my military assistant would already be there in the office next to mine. Usually Addington was there, my civilian assistant, special assistant. I had recreated the civilian special assistant's job. It had been eliminated during the Weinberger years. I think primarily because Powell in his role as the military assistant in the Secretary's office had done so much, they'd sort of pushed the civilian aside. There was no civilian special assistant during the Carlucci years. I wanted a civilian

special assistant, and Addington was, again, an excellent choice. This is not your average special assistant's job. There are special assistants, and then there's the special assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

Zelikow: Sounds like it's more like a Chief of Staff.

Cheney: Yes, although I had it more so that he had to work the civilian side, the policy side, the political side. Over here is the military assistant and I don't want to mix the two roles up. They have to work together; there are some things that overlap. But I don't want the military assistant in political matters, personnel matters. I didn't want the military selecting civilians. Addington's got to worry about that. Relationship with Atwood, one of Addington's jobs was to keep the two offices, mine and Atwood's, tied together effectively. Sometimes that required a lot of care and feeding and Dave was great at that.

He was also very good at reviewing stuff. He was a CIA-trained attorney. He worked in the Reagan legislative liaison shop. I'd hired him. Originally he came to the Pentagon, he was going to be a Tower guy. But things weren't working out all that well so I hired him on the Hill, to work for me in my whip office. Then lo and behold, Tower goes down in flames. I get the job and he ends up back down in the Pentagon anyway. But very talented, capable guy, very key player throughout the whole four years. Finished up, Terry O'Donnell was my general counsel—we'll talk about Terry in a minute—but Terry only stayed three years, and then he had to leave primarily for family and financial reasons. When he left, then I put Addington in the general counsel's job. So Dave finished as the general counsel of the Department.

Military assistants, I've talked about Owens, Lopez and Jumper. But in a day they ordinarily—especially Lopez for example, Jumper did pretty much the same thing, little different sequence with Owens—but because I had an interest in intelligence, I got a lot of stuff coming to me. Frankly, one of the problems is there is so much. Trying to ratchet it down and figure out what's important, what you need to look at, what you can ignore. I would use the military assistant to sort of interact with the Joint staff and the DIA and the stuff that was coming in on a regular basis and screen all that for me, especially when we had an operation going of some kind, things that had come in that had related to that. So that he would understand, this was likely to be my focus for that particular day. I'd spend some time with him first thing in the morning.

When we had an operation underway, say Desert Shield and Desert Storm or Panama, we'd then go down into the command center in the building and get briefed. General Powell and myself together would be briefed by the Intel and the Ops guys off the Joint staff. So this would be Mike McConnell, who was during the Gulf War for example, Navy captain, later made admiral and then ran NSA. And Tom Kelly, the J3. We'd go through the sort of traditional kind of Intel-Ops briefing about what was happening, what was going on, what some of the major issues were.

This would vary depending upon, we would not have that morning brief if things were quiet. While we were engaged in Iraq or Panama, that would become a major focal point then. So I'd be engaged. Atwood would usually attend those sessions, Wolfowitz would usually come in, the Undersecretary for Policy. I've talked about Powell and Atwood and Addington and the military assistants, they were all key players.

Let me say a world about Wolfowitz. I knew Paul Wolfowitz before I ever got to the Pentagon. We had some close mutual friends, Ken and Carol Adelman. Ken had been deputy UN ambassador in the Reagan years, ran ACDA for a while, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. I'd met Paul socially previously at the Adelmans', for example, and knew him by reputation. Knew he'd been the ambassador to Indonesia, Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East, involved in the [Ferdinand] Marcos stuff in the Philippines back in the Reagan years. I had a lot of regard for Wolfowitz already, and Tower might have wanted him in that job, but so did I. It wasn't a close call. I signed off on Wolfowitz. Paul did a superb job for us. He runs SAIS [School for Advanced International Studies] today, there in Washington.

Wolfowitz had two qualities that were invaluable. He was able to give you a fresh perspective on an old problem. He could come in and talk about something that you thought had been discussed and debated about ten times before, and say, "Yes, but did you think about this," and give you a unique way of looking at things. The other thing was, he was tenacious. Sometimes he'd come in and I'd throw him out. It never fazed him. He'd come back the next afternoon and hit you again. That was invaluable. He had enough conviction and enough self-confidence that even if he'd come in and he'd triggered a negative reaction from me, it didn't bother Paul. He'd come back; it wasn't personal. He'd come back around and hit it again. He was very bright, very creative, very thoughtful. [redacted]

We had a couple of great ones in Steve Hadley. Steve had been, I think, an active duty officer on the NSC staff back during the Ford years, an attorney by this time when he came on board for me as Assistant Secretary for ISP [International Security Policy]. Played a major role, did all of the arms control stuff with the Russians. He was a significant player with the Europeans, was my man with Jim Baker lots of times on a lot of Jim's travels and summits and so forth. I did not attend presidential summits but Hadley would go travel with Baker, be my representative there, sort of my eyes and ears. Had a great relationship with Jim and his people and helped keep all of that stitched together. Also very well regarded by Scowcroft, works with Brent today on a lot of things. So Hadley was an important player in all of those relationships.

The ISA job, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, [Richard] Armitage had it during the Reagan years. We had Henry Rowen initially. Henry was there for a couple of years, was very good. Stanford, Hoover Institute economist, CIA, National Intelligence Council, really gave me again a different perspective on what was going on in various and sundry areas. Later replaced by Jim Lilley when Henry went back to California. That was sort of heart of the policy operation. Scooter [I. Lewis] Libby played in a lot of that too. Scooter was on a par with Hadley and later Lilley in terms of his influence there. He was more sort of a deputy, if you will, for Wolfowitz in terms of keeping everything going, but again, a very creative guy.

Other prominent individuals that I'd deal with on a regular, daily basis, Pete Williams. Pete was a Casper, Wyoming boy, Stanford grad. Long-time reporter, news director local TV station in Wyoming that I'd brought to Washington about three years before I went to the Pentagon, in the middle of my congressional career, to be my press secretary on the Hill. Then when I went to the

Pentagon I took him with me, made him the Assistant Secretary of Defense. Again, did a superb job. Was sort of the Department's public face, handled a hell of a lot of the briefings. Bright as hell. Since gone on to NBC, on-air correspondent there for NBC and one of their rising stars.

Terry O'Donnell, who was the general counsel. Terry was again somebody I'd worked with in the Ford Administration. Brent and I both know him very well. He'd been Ford's personal aide, the guy who sat outside the Oval Office door and executed the schedule every day, worked for me in my capacity of Chief of Staff. Air Force Academy grad, Vietnam vet. Father was Rosie O'Donnell, very prominent, commanded one of the bomb groups over Japan in World War II and later was CINCPAC-AF. Still close to Terry today. He's my personal attorney, partner at Williams and Connolly. He and Addington worked very closely together. A lot like Hadley, smart as hell, totally trustworthy.

I mean, it was a very, very good group of people we had. When you add it up, the Atwoods and that group, the policy types, Dave Gribbin, who ran the congressional shop for me. Dave and I went to high school together. He'd been my AA [Administrative Assistant] on the Hill when I was in Congress for ten years and ran the leadership operations when I was policy chairman and whip and so forth. Now works for me, runs the Halliburton congressional office in the Washington office. After we left the Pentagon, he was Dan Coats's chief of staff for a few years. Dave and I go back 40 years, just somebody in whom I had great confidence. Knew the Hill, was a product of the Hill. We were able to assemble a really first-rate team.

This is where I put my priorities that I mentioned earlier, where I was interacting with these individuals on a daily basis. Spent a lot of time, I guess, there were a couple of other individuals. I'm afraid I'm going to forget somebody. Sean O'Keefe, comptroller. Sean was a ten-year veteran of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He knew where all the bodies were buried on Capitol Hill, invaluable from my perspective. I can't remember a time when I ever went to Sean and wanted to do something on programs and so forth that he couldn't figure out a way to do it. My experience in my other tours in the executive branch at OEO or the Cost of Living Council, there was always stuff you wanted to do that you couldn't do. The regulations wouldn't let you hire this guy, you couldn't pay him this, and you couldn't do that with the programs. That never happened at the Pentagon.

Part of it was the can-do spirit of the place, part of it was Doc [David O.] Cook, who was the administrative officer. Doc was the guy, when I got ready to get sworn in, informally and unofficially, before we had the formal ceremony so I could go to work, I was going to have the chaplain of the house, Jim Ford, swear me in. I got a phone call, the Pentagon. It was Doc Cook. "I swore in the last 17 Secretaries of Defense and I'm going to swear in you. You salute smartly and let Doc swear you in." They never disappointed me. And Sean was part of that, he teaches up at Syracuse now, a professor. Superb as comptroller. You sort of had to work the dual track. You had Gribbin in the congressional shop working the authorizing committees primarily, and then over here on the appropriations side of things, I would use O'Keefe to work that track. They obviously had to work very closely together and did, but Sean was very good. Then towards the end of the tour when I needed a new Secretary of the Navy, we moved Sean over and he held that job the last year of the Administration.

Service secretaries, Don Rice had been the assistant director of OMB for national security defense issues under Nixon, came out of the RAND Corporation. Good solid, strong background, did a good job for us. Mike Stone, the Army secretary. Mike had been the deputy under Jack Marsh. Jack was an old friend of mine, we'd worked together for Ford, and was the longest serving Secretary of the Army but was stepping down after eight years with Reagan. Originally was going to put Rich Armitage in that post and then Rich decided he didn't want to take it, so went with Mike. Mike did a great job for us as well too. Larry Garrett on the Navy job, had moved up from Undersecretary. The service secretaries, I didn't spend as much time with them. It was sporadic. I'm trying to think if there's anybody else. I'm sure there are some folks I'm forgetting at this point, but that covers the bulk of it.

The average day, it depended a lot on what time of year it was. The rest of the day after that morning brief, Intel-Ops brief, if we had operations underway, might involve a meeting with the White House. Every Wednesday, when Baker and Scowcroft and I were in town, we'd have breakfast in Brent's office. Friday mornings I'd usually have a session, breakfast, with Bill Webster out at CIA. Sometimes he'd come downtown and Atwood and I would try to do that together. Again, some weeks it wouldn't work because I was out or he was out, but that was something we tried to do on a regular basis.

We had regular sessions, if it was the right time of year—and I can't remember the names of all the groups—but to go over budget, the budget request. Where you'd have the chiefs in and they'd make their presentation. You'd have David Chu there from PA&E, Planning Analysis and Evaluation shop. I used him fairly extensively. He was intensely disliked by the services, but he was great at coming up with the tough questions and raising important issues. You need a PA&E as a foil for the services if you're not just going to get run over in the normal process. I encouraged David to be a bulldog on a lot of that stuff and raise the tough questions. We would spend a lot of time on things like major aircraft review.

When I first arrived we had the problem, we had to get a budget together. We had only 37 days and I had to go before the Congress and lay out the Bush defense budget, as contrasted with the one we'd inherited from Reagan, so that had become an intense focus for us at that period of time.

On personnel—

Zelikow: By the way, now that you're in Dallas-Fort Worth, you ever get over to Bell Textron Helicopter to talk to them about the Osprey?

Cheney: No, but every once in a while something happens and somebody will slip me a note.

Zelikow: I'm sorry, you were about to go to personnel.

Cheney: On personnel, we'd brought Steve Herberts back. Herberts had worked for Rumsfeld when Rumsfeld was the Secretary of Defense. Bright guy I'd known on the Hill as a staffer, was at Seagram's then working for Bronfman, but he came back and helped us staff up the place on a volunteer basis. Kim McKernan who'd worked for me on the Hill, very intimately involved in

putting together the personnel operations in terms of recruiting people and bringing folks in. So we spent a lot of time on personnel.

The pattern, as I say, would vary. The regular pieces of it would depend upon what month it was, where you were in the cycle, whether or not you were focused on budget, how much you were dealing with the Congress during that period of time, whether or not you had congressional testimony and hearings to deal with. I had a session with the President usually every other week, standing, again dependent on scheduling lots of times, where I could go in and talk about anything I wanted. Would submit weekly written reports to him, which he got from all the Cabinet members, short memos on what the highlights were.

Zelikow: Did you take those seriously?

Cheney: Um-huh, I did. One of them figured in a lawsuit after we cancelled the A-12, had to testify about it in court at one point, matter of fact.

Late in the afternoon, 4 or 5 o'clock, we'd sort of wrap up the official part of the day with General Powell and Don Atwood coming to my office with their military assistants. We'd try to do that every day when we were in town. Then I might stay later in the evening, lots of times there were social functions, a lot of entertaining of visiting dignitaries. We'd use Blair House to host a dinner for the Korean defense minister. A certain amount of diplomatic activity during the day, review the troops, those kinds of formal arrival ceremonies that related to the Defense Department itself.

Masoud: How often did you give press conferences?

Cheney: I don't remember.

Masoud: Did you have a philosophy about press conferences?

Cheney: I had a philosophy about the press. It was more a matter of we'd do one when it was needed.

Zelikow: What was your philosophy about the press? [*Laughter*]

Cheney: Well, Pete would brief every day. As you'd get into something like the Gulf War, the press corps would explode in terms of size. You'd end up with a lot more demand. I did a lot of press, especially during the Gulf conflict. We'd give a lot of briefings, do the morning talk shows. We got so that we could line up and do four of them at one time. We'd do ABC, NBC, CBS, and CNN just back to back. They'd have the cameras set up and I'd move from chair to chair. We could knock those out fairly fast.

The press was important. There were some very talented guys, men and women who knew a lot about the building and the business and who did a good job of covering the place. There were some cheap shot artists who were lazy, didn't do their homework. There were a whole lot of folks who showed up during the Gulf War who didn't know anything at all about the place and

the press. Our press corps regulars put a sign up down in the press room that said, "Food critics corner." What it referred to was that we had all these guys who now because there was a war on and maybe their National Guard unit had been called up and sent to the desert, they had to have a war correspondent. So they'd get down there now, but yesterday they were the food critic on the newspaper, today they're the defense correspondent for the newspaper. So that's where the sign "Food critics corner" came from.

In the normal routine flow of things, we tried to provide them with a lot of information. I generally had the feeling the building was under covered in the sense that it is so big and complex, there are a ton of stories there that never get told. The press really is only able to skim off the cream. I had strong feelings as well about our credibility, the importance of being as accurate as possible and establishing credibility, especially with the public. I had problems in the sense—and where I would part company—I wanted to make sure that the press didn't interpret to the public and make the determination about whether or not we were successful. So especially during the conduct of military operations like Desert Storm, we went out of our way to make certain that we didn't get everything filtered through them, but rather provided an enormous amount of information ourselves directly to the public.

CNN was a big help in that regard. During the military operations, we'd send McConnell and Kelly out every day to brief in the morning, be part of Pete's regular briefing. Lots of times there'd then be a briefing in the afternoon, delayed from Saudi. The press didn't like it. We gave them a lot of information, but they didn't get to be the filter. We didn't want them to be the filter, that was a conscious decision. I often argue that the Gulf War was the best covered war in history. They didn't like that.

A lot of them had the notion they wanted to be able do in the Gulf what had been done allegedly in Vietnam, go out and get on the helicopter, fly out into the field and to the battalion fire support base or with a company in the boondocks and cover the war. They couldn't do that over there, it didn't work that way. There were so many of them, it was just a whole different style of operation. We were operating at night. If they didn't come with us, if we didn't provide them with transportation and communications and so forth, there wasn't any way for them to cover the war or report back. And we used the pool system, and they didn't like that. We established that and maintained it. There was a big flap afterwards, a group of people including Kay Graham of the *Post* and others who sat down—as there is, I think, after every one of these operations—and reviewed their relationship with the Pentagon, made a bunch of recommendations. Pete had to deal with all of that stuff. And he did; he dealt with it effectively.

My attitude towards the press was that they had a job to do but I couldn't let them get in the way of my job. My job was first of all accomplish the objective. Secondly, do it at minimal cost, as low a cost as possible. After that we could worry about the press. I think we had generally good relations. As I say, from an institutional standpoint, a lot of them griped after the war was over with that we'd had too many restraints on them, but I thought one of the reasons that things went as well as they did, that the public was as supportive as they were, was because we didn't let Dan Rather be the sole arbiter of whether or not we'd succeeded in our venture. We'd show them themselves. They could look and see what we were able to do.

We also had some other advantages. I think there'd been such a drumfire of criticism from the press over the years about the U.S. military that expectations were very low. When we finally went out, and they could see us actually operate in Desert Storm, I think the American people were stunned at how good we were. That helped a lot, that really helped to build that level of support that we had throughout that period.

Zelikow: Could you comment on your relationship with Woodward, which seems almost like a special case. He's doing work in which people are talking about the Administration's inner councils and material that is going to be published while you are in office, in the case of *The Commanders*. This is a prime opportunity, as some of your colleagues learned, to ruin your reputations with your friends. So I'm curious as to how you thought strategically about dealing with a reporter like that.

Cheney: First of all, you're nervous because it is Bob Woodward. My track record with him earlier, for example, in the Ford Administration, him trying to deal with the Nixon pardon, wasn't all that positive. You'd look at Woodward out of the corner of your eye, treat him very carefully and very gingerly.

When he first came to the Pentagon after I'd got there, he was on a whole different project. He was going to do sort of an institutional book on the Defense Department that really took off from the Tower issue and controversy and nomination. So he spent a lot of time researching that book and then Panama came along. He couldn't very well not do Panama within the bigger framework of what he was doing, so he set aside his research up to that point and he went and researched the Panama story. He got that pretty well put to bed and bingo, Saddam invaded Kuwait. So again, he was sort of side tracked, he's probably done enough work for three or four books there.

He decided then to go focus on the run-up to the Gulf War and to bring it out early. But I mean, by the time he's covering and getting into the subject of *The Commanders*, he's already spent a year and a half crawling all through the building, developed relationships and sources and so forth. I mean, he had been working it pretty hard up till then and he was ideally positioned to be able to do something like that. So then he focused on the run-up to the Gulf War and ended it with the night the war began and then published early, I guess the book came out right after the war was over, as I recall. He had a lot of access. I don't think we gave him any. We spent time with him, but I would have done that with anybody.

Zelikow: Would you?

Cheney: Did with Rick Atkinson and some others as well too. Woodward, again it's been a long time since I looked at his book and I can't say that I read it from cover to cover, I jumped around. But I thought he treated us pretty well. And it was the first thing out on the war.

Zelikow: In the spring of '89 you'd already commented about the need to get that fiscal '90 budget together and to contrast it with the Reagan budget. Then there's this interesting fight in the summer of '89 over that budget. Let me offer you just a couple of impressions, to provoke a reaction. First, that budget does seem to have a distinctive stamp on it because of the whole way in which you tried to re-work the process, taking on some of the major weapon systems that got a

lot of the attention. Second, it looked to me like you and your colleagues had worked very hard to cut a deal on this with [Les] Aspin. That you and Aspin had both worked out what the components of the package were going to be and that you were going to bring this in for an up or down vote, that Aspin was going to lobby very hard for it to get the up vote, because it was going to attain what he had. And third, and here I may be mistaken, I'm just guessing from what I could tell—

Cheney: I'm trying to remember.

Zelikow: Third, there is a very close vote in the committee in the HASC [House Armed Services Committee], on the up or down package, which would have been a tremendous precedent if you'd gotten this voted as up or down. It's basically an even vote. [Ron] Dellums and [Pat] Schroeder are hanging back until the very end and at the very end they vote against Aspin and pull the package down, which surprised me. I wondered if it surprised you, because if Aspin can't deliver these Democrats, how are you going to cut a deal with him to manage these budget problems? Then it occurred to me, why do Dellums and Schroeder want to kill this? Schroeder is not from Long Island. I can think of some reasons, but when I begin to think of those reasons and then think about how Aspin is probably playing, that got me thinking, I had some questions. Now, tell me if there are any grains of truth in this description at all. Has this refreshed your memory about any of this?

Cheney: Yes, parts of it have. I'm not sure I can relate it just to the '89 budget. I've got some general views about the Congress and the House especially, in how I tried to work with that institution. I don't think there was ever any realistic expectation that they would take exactly what I gave them and pass it. That would have been a pipe dream. I'm a Republican; it's a Democratic Congress. I know them well; I've been there for ten years. Also knew Les Aspin and Les was a weak reed. I'm trying to remember the details of how all of this worked.

Zelikow: It was an up or down package, there was a tie vote in the House Armed Services Committee.

Cheney: No, this is a different, this has to do with Les's relationship with the fellow Democrats. Who the hell was his predecessor as chairman of the Armed Services Committee? I can't remember who that was, the old guy they pushed aside.

Zelikow: He did not leave voluntarily.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: I can't remember.

Cheney: This was a piece of it. I'd have to go back and check the history books. I'm fuzzy on it now, I'm getting old. Les always had problems delivering his committee. This was true throughout the time I was Secretary and it was true before that. On the authorizing side, you couldn't count on Les because he couldn't deliver the Democrats. Even if he could put together

the bloc on the committee, he couldn't deliver on the floor. The guy in the House among Democrats who could deliver was Jack Murtha. It wasn't Aspin.

Zelikow: On appropriations?

Cheney: Yes, Jack was the chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. I remember going through the '89 budget, I remember we had 37 days. We had to put something together and we did it fast. But my attitude was always that you had to give them something to fight about, especially the authorizing committees. If I hadn't had the V-22, I would have had to invent it. The thing about going after—

Zelikow: And you had 14-D and the C-17.

Cheney: But especially the V-22 that we took out. It was a great example. They weren't going to take my package and buy it lock, stock, and barrel. But I wanted them fighting over something I didn't care a hell of a lot about. Frankly, the V-22 let me demonstrate that I was not just a rubber stamp for every defense program that came down the pike, that I could sit down and look at a system and make a decision and move to scrap it. It also let me demonstrate the hypocrisy of the Congress. My old buddies up there on the Democratic side of the aisle who would scream and rant and rave bloody murder about the outrageous defense budget, but if you tried to cut something, hell, they'd be the first ones to try and get it back in.

The place where I did my deals that I could count on was Murtha. Jack would come down, Jack and I were good friends because we'd served together on the Ethics Committee my first term. We did the Abscam stuff. Jack was one of the guys who was approached by the FBI undercover agents on Abscam and had turned them down. But he'd been approached and that cast a cloud over Jack for a period of time there. I'd defended him and stood by him and we hung the other seven guys in Abscam. They all went to jail, but not Jack. We'd gotten to be close friends as a result of that. We'd worked together. He was a guy on the House Democratic side who, for example, would take on the difficult assignment on congressional pay.

At one point, he and I conspired together with Trent Lott and the Speaker, Tip O'Neill. We couldn't get a pay raise through for members and there hadn't been one for a long time, but we did arrange to double what you could get from outside sources. You could go outside and work, make speeches, write books and earn outside income in those days. You can't now. One day we arranged with the Speaker in the chair and Jack going down into the well of the House. My job was to guard the microphone on the Republican side and Trent's job was to get Bob Walker, who would try to torpedo this whole operation if he was there, to get him off the floor, which he did. We doubled the outside income that members of Congress were allowed to accept from $15,000 to $30,000 a year, I think was what it was at that point. So Jack and I had done a lot of business together over the years.

As chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, he was crucial. The appropriators, a lot of the time and attention went to the authorizers. That was where a lot of the big battles were and that's the stuff that the press covered. That's where Sam Nunn was, on the authorizing side, but what really counted was appropriations. You could get something authorized, but if it wasn't

funded it was irrelevant. You could get funds appropriated for it and if it hadn't been authorized, you could still go do it sometimes. One of my memorable events, the last year I was there I was trying to get Addington confirmed as general counsel and Sean O'Keefe as secretary of the Navy, had some stuff we were trying to put through. I couldn't get them through and then we had this constant battle between the authorizers and the appropriators. The Senate authorizers wanted me to commit that I wouldn't spend any money that hadn't been authorized. In other words, they wanted me to say it doesn't matter if the appropriators have appropriated funds, if we haven't authorized it we want you to promise not to spend it.

I had the authorizing bill and the appropriations bill. Both had passed and both were pending on the President's desk. I went, got the President to agree to this, and I went back to the authorizers, Sam Nunn and his committee. Called Sam on it as I recall, and said, "Look Sam. If you guys don't spring my nominees for confirmation, we will veto the authorizing bill. There won't be any authorizing bill this year, and sign the appropriations bill. You guys will be irrelevant for the rest of the year." The next day they reported out my nominees and the President signed both bills.

The place you could count on, the deals I always had the greatest confidence in, were with Murtha. Jack would come down at the beginning of the session and he and I would sit down and would do it on the back of an envelope. There'd be certain things he had to have as the Democratic chairman of the subcommittee and certain things I had to have. We could deal with each other honestly and straight on that stuff and on that back of the envelope would emerge the shape of what he could do and what I could do. That was always much closer to what finally emerged than anything that was going on on the authorizing side.

Zelikow: That's very helpful.

Cheney: That might give you a few pointers in terms of where to look.

Zelikow: Because, as you said, that's not what the press was watching.

Cheney: Les Aspin and Nunn and company, that was where the sexy stuff was and the big speeches and the big debates and all the rest of it. A lot of the appropriations took place in closed session. We passed the appropriations bill one year in about 20 minutes, without a vote. Three hundred billion dollars, whatever the hell it was, that was Murtha. One of the keys to that was we had a little provision in there for Joe Moakley. Why Joe Moakley? Joe's chairman of the Rules Committee. Joe's the guy that gave us the closed rule so we could bring the appropriations bill up and not have any amendments. Passed that sucker right through the House. There might have been a two-week debate over the authorizing bill, but the game was over here in appropriations. That's where you got your heavy lifting done.

McCall: Are there untold stories about strategies regarding the Congress when it came to the votes on Desert Storm or on issues of whether you'd take it to a vote?

Cheney: Yes, there was a debate over whether or not even to take it to a vote, Desert Storm. I recommended against going to the Hill.

Masoud: You recommended against going.

Cheney: Against asking for a vote.

Masoud: Okay.

Cheney: We'd started as early as October, Brent and Jim and I, in our Wednesday breakfast talking about this sequence. November got to be a key date because we had the chair of the Security Council in November and that let us control the agenda. We concluded that we might have to go for a vote with Congress, there might be one. If there was to be one, we wanted to get the Security Council on record first, if we could, giving us the authorization to go to war. We thought if we got the authorization to go to war from the UN Security Council, how the hell can the Congress vote you down? That wasn't a decision necessarily to go to Congress at that point, but we did decide we could control the process. If we couldn't line up the votes in the Security Council, then we wouldn't ask for it. But if we could—and eventually we were able to—we did, Chinese abstained. That's when we set the January 15th date that would allow us to go to war. So we had that in our pockets.

I was still worried about going to Congress because I felt that they might turn us down. If they turned us down, you were in a hell of a mess because you still had to go. You couldn't not go. Once you had 500,000 troops in the desert and Saddam in Kuwait, you couldn't go to Congress and have them vote no and say, "Okay, bring everybody home." That just was unacceptable. I also believed that it almost didn't matter whether they voted for you or not. Even if they voted with you and approved it and you had a train wreck and got a lot of people killed, it wouldn't matter. They'd be all over your case. There wouldn't be anybody who'd stand up and say, "Well, I voted for it and it was a disaster." If, on the other hand, they voted against it and you went forward and it was a success, they'd forget all about having voted against it.

The way the Congress was going to view the operation was whether you won or not and how well it went. They'd cover their fannies whichever way it went. Now, maybe that made me a cynic about the Congress. The President wanted to go forward and get their approval. The difference between me and the President was he only served two terms; I served five. The other thing that was working here, he had a very strong feeling we really ought to try to get it. Bob Dole was in arguing long and loud that we ought to go for it and that he thought we could get it passed. I believed also, and testified at the time, that we didn't need it. We had ample precedent: Truman in Korea, UN Charter. The Kuwaitis, a UN member had come and asked us for assistance. The Senate had already ratified the UN Charter by a two-thirds vote and had made provisions for that. We were perfectly justified in going forward with the forces we had at our command without any additional authorization by the Congress. And I so stated, in my testimony before the Congress. Not everybody bought it; it created quite a stir when we did it, as I recall.

But the President basically made the decision. Benefit of hindsight, he was right. I mean, I really think the best debate I have ever witnessed in my life—and it was far better than any I ever participated in—was the debate over whether or not the U.S. ought to use force in the Gulf. Both the House and Senate, I mean, they really rose to the occasion. The biggest problem we had were the Senate Democrats. Aspin supported us, give Les credit for that. Steve Solarz was very helpful

and we did well in the House. The close vote was in the Senate where we only got, I think we had ten Democrats who came with us. We won by five votes or six votes, something like that. But Sam Nunn was against it, fought us all the way. Sam later told me it was the biggest mistake he ever made, to vote against the Gulf War resolution.

I always felt Sam made the decision because he wanted to run for President in '92. He didn't think he could run for President if he was on the wrong side from the standpoint of the bulk of the Democratic Party on this issue. Therefore, he led the charge against and turned out it was wrong. Al Gore got to be Vice President because he voted with us on that issue. I don't think [William J.] Clinton would have picked him in '92 if he, Gore, had been one of the Democrats who'd voted against it. It had long-lasting ramifications, obviously. In the end, because of the quality of the debate, because we did prevail, because we were so successful with the ultimate operation, I think it really did a lot to boost public support, confidence. It was great success story for George Bush. I was wrong to argue against going up.

Zelikow: It was a damned close-run thing.

Cheney: Well, it was. Could have gone the other way.

Zelikow: And if it had—

Cheney: We still had to go to war.

Zelikow: Right. But then—

Cheney: That would have been a real mess.

Zelikow: Yes.

Cheney: Especially if we'd lost or if we had gotten bogged down, hadn't been successful. If we'd had to go, then I think there certainly would have been some impeachment resolutions introduced. Don't know that they would have ever gotten to the floor, but there would have been absolute outrage if the Congress voted us down and we went ahead anyway.

On Aspin, there was a point at which—I'm trying to remember how it worked—there was a vote in the Democratic caucus to strip him of his chairmanship. This was back in the late '80s when I was still in the House. Came very close but they didn't do it. He was gun shy from that point on. He had to be very careful. Usually what happened with Les was that you couldn't count on him. He couldn't make a commitment and deliver on the commitment. Usually when we put together the authorization bills, at the end of the day you'd go to conference after the House and Senate had both acted and Les would be the last one you could get to agree because he couldn't promise to deliver. So you'd have Nunn and John Warner or Strom Thurmond on the Republican side, and you'd get Bill Dickinson on the Republican side. Les would be the loose end that you could never quite tie up until the very last minute.

Zelikow: We've been wearing you out. Do you have the energy to go a little longer?

Cheney: A few more minutes? It's almost 4 o'clock.

Masoud: At some point we should try to discuss what we want to discuss tomorrow, war game that.

Cheney: Let me think about it tonight.

Zelikow: One thing I wanted to turn to next, because it flows a little bit out of this discussion of budget issues, is restructuring the base force.

Cheney: Right. That's a good time to talk about it; it's on my list here too.

Zelikow: Okay, well, let's go ahead with that then.

Cheney: What happened, we did the '89 effort. Then as you come around to the fall of '89, where you get the collapse of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe, people fleeing out of Hungary, Germany, et cetera. The Wall comes down in November. Out of that, it was clear that the circumstances are radically different by the end of '89. If there had been any doubts about the Cold War ending, it pretty well was resolved by then. [Mikhail] Gorbachev had made the decision not to call out the troops and the world was shifting under our feet. It was clear we were going to have to come up with a new package, if you will, new strategy, force structure, budget, from the standpoint of the Defense Department.

I convened a meeting of the chiefs in my office. It was along in November, early December. This is the time that you are putting together the package that you are going to go up with in '90, anyway. Basically had a conversation, bottom line of which was, "If we don't do it ourselves, somebody will do it to us." That we're better off if we try to respond to these events and shape events and direct them rather than simply let Congress come along and whack away at the budget. We also had the defense planning guidance going through during that cycle, run by the policy shop, Wolfowitz and company. Joint staff is involved in a lot of that.

Zelikow: This is the cycle for the fiscal '91 budget?

Cheney: I think of it as '90, because that's the year in which we're doing stuff. But yes, it's at least fiscal '91. Anyway, during the course of the spring—

Zelikow: Just to get the timing, because the Administration makes a formal announcement of the fiscal '91 budget around the time of the State of the Union.

Cheney: End of January.

Zelikow: Right. These discussions had already begun, but procedurally, a lot of this is already going on, revising the Administration's budget request after it has already been formally put forward. You're basically going to be revising it as it is being worked on the Hill, during the course of 1990.

Cheney: Yes, what we're working with then is the follow-on to what we'd done in the spring of '89.

McCall: Some of this also ties into CFE [Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe], because the President is coming down and saying, "I want more cut, I want more cut."

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: Also, he's making the point that we need to put a floor under it and manage it, in the way you describe.

Cheney: Right. Let's see, you've got the defense planning guidance going forward. We're shifting from the old Cold War scenario of all-out global nuclear war that begins in Europe, two weeks warning time, et cetera, and then shifting to the regional focus. There is a debate, there'd been back in '89 before Colin came on board—Crowe was still chairman—where they're working on the defense planning guidance where you begin to ask questions about, what are you looking at in the Persian Gulf? This is before Saddam invades. But do you defend the Saudi peninsula, the Arabian peninsula? At one point Crowe wanted to drop that off. Wolfowitz was involved and came to me on it. We insisted on identifying Saudi Arabia as a strategically vital part of the world for us and something we had to defend. Up till then, Persian Gulf scenario was that the Russians were going to invade, you're going to go into the Zagros mountains in Iran, even though they're not very friendly towards us at that point, and defend the Iranians.

So you've got those kinds of debates going on. You also have Cold War ending, Wall coming down. You've got the budget you've got to submit at the end of January. But you then get into, as you go through 1990, into this whole debate over the budget at large. Bush ultimately coming down saying that we're going back on his commitment on, "Read my lips, no new taxes." Budget meetings out at Andrews. [Richard] Darman's involved, Sununu, congressional leadership. We get sucked into that to some extent. No question, what's Defense going to do for us at that point? All of that culminates in the fall of '90, in the budget agreement, the first one's shot down by Newt. He's then the whip because he succeeded me in that job in the House. Having to cobble together a second one, which finally gets approved, but this is where George Bush signs off on a tax increase.

It kind of gets obscured and buried because of Desert Storm, but then once Desert Storm is over with, we're back again. The President's got a big problem on his hands for the rest of his term. Our part in that was to pony up some budget reductions and force structure reductions, which we did. We had the separate operation on the way of the base force being pulled together, the Joint staff and OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] and Wolfowitz and company. We used that as the basis to justify the numbers we came up with, that we contributed in the course of the debate over what's the budget going to look like going forward. That's where we came up in part with the 25 percent reduction in force structure, as I recall.

All of that's tied in part to the new structure that we'd put together that we briefed the congressional leadership on just before the onset of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The President's

speech is built out at Aspen, that I'm supposed to go out and participate in Aspen. Then we were going to brief down through the fall. We never got to do the fall stuff because we were doing Desert Storm. But all of that was tied together in this flow of events down through the course of 1990, leading into the final package that on the one hand is the new strategy and the new force structure. On the other hand, the savings that we offered up as DoD's contribution to that budget package that was finally agreed to in the fall of '90, which was, I guess, for fiscal '91.

Zelikow: What was your conception about what needed to happen strategically? What were your priorities in this force exercise, apart from the budget point?

Cheney: The other thing that needs to be mentioned here, through the spring of '90, was the major aircraft review. One example where we sat down and reviewed all of our big programs, a major effort inside through the spring. Testified to that before the Congress as part of a normal legislative cycle and later on that spring. This is where we cut back on the B-2 buy, on the C-17 buy and went through and made some of the other cancellations and so forth. We got zapped on A-12 too. That was another big piece of it that I would add into that cycle for the spring of 1990. Now, I'm sorry, my strategic considerations?

Zelikow: What are your priorities? You're in this base force exercise, you're getting briefed on it, what do you care about? What are you trying to do? What do you think you're bringing to the table?

Cheney: Well, we'd bought into—I bought into anyway—this argument that the old scenario was no longer valid. That we would have adequate warning time before we had to regenerate global forces. In other words, a couple of years before, we would be faced by the kind of global threat the Soviets represented at the height of the Cold War. I thought the regional focus was absolutely accurate and on target, that there were certain regions of the globe we had to worry about. We could not have a hostile power dominate Western Europe, the Gulf, Japan, some of those places where we had those kinds of commitments and obligations, and that we could reduce the force accordingly and move away from that old Cold War scenario.

I had another problem too, though, that was very prominent in my mind, and that was that we had to find some way to keep the whole thing from coming unraveled on us. I was probably more concerned about having a story to tell and a rationale for why we need to preserve some significant capability rather than I was with what the absolute levels were. That you couldn't just let the thing start to come away, because Congress is going to nickel and dime you to death if you let them get away with it. "Peace dividend, peace dividend," we heard that over and over and over again. We kept trying to make the argument that this is not about a peace dividend. This is about making sure we have enough force to deal with what is a very uncertain situation out there.

A major concern for me through this whole period is that I don't know what the hell is going on in the Soviet Union. I don't think anybody does. Gorbachev clearly is an improvement over his predecessors. Gorbachev appears to be committed to Glasnost and Perestroika. But I was then very skeptical about whether or not he would succeed, whether or not he would be able to deliver, and exactly where the Soviets were going with the whole thing. I'd met Gorbachev when he came on a state visit during the Reagan years, I guess it was '87, and I was invited to the state

dinner. For some reason I was seated next to Nancy Reagan. Gorbachev was on the other side. We had some others at the table; Richard Perle was at the table, Jim Billington, who spoke Russian and runs the Library of Congress.

We got into a debate with Gorbachev, this is still the heyday of the Gorbachev era on economic policy. We're asking him if there weren't lessons to be learned by the Russians from the Asian tigers, the Taiwans and Singapores and Koreas that had done so much to rejuvenate their economies and grow and take off. What we got back from him was absolute, utter, total, 100 percent Marxist BS. You know, it was, "They're exploiters, they were being exploited, the masses were being exploited." I mean, the man didn't have a clue about what to do with his economy other than try to make Communism work.

While he was talking Glasnost and Perestroika and the rest of it, I came away from that experience skeptical about whether or not he was going to be able to pull off this transition to whatever was going to come next. So I was a real skeptic, I would have to say, about how events were going to unfold there. I wanted to make certain that we didn't rush out, in what could turn out to be a very brief moment of improved relations with the Soviets, and give away the store. I wanted to make sure that above all else, we retained what could turn out to be very essential capability. Gorbachev could be gone tomorrow and a new guy come in and be exactly like the old crowd. I took it as a major responsibility for me as Sec Def to make sure we didn't lose what we had to have in order to deal with what could turn out to be a very nasty set of developments.

Zelikow: So you cut in Europe, you're cutting back to about 150,000. There is also this notion of Atlantic-Pacific contingency forces for the Saudi peninsula, which is actually kind of a new idea, which you described a moment ago. The consolidation in a way and restructuring of the CINCs. Did you have—

Cheney: Another thing we have to figure in here is the SIOP review.

Zelikow: The nuclear targeting review?

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: Yep. Also, Navy is cutting back its shipbuilding. You're moving away from the forward strategy of the Reagan years.

Cheney: Six-hundred ship Navy is history.

Zelikow: You're going down more to about 450 ships.

Cheney: Um-hum.

Zelikow: From that process, which is a difficult process for a lot of people—

Cheney: Base closings, BRAC [Base Re-Alignment and Closure Commission].

Zelikow: And difficult for some of the services, these are painful changes in some cases. What do you look back on from that process as the things you're proudest you did or the things you regard as the most frustrating experiences from it? Because you had the experience of trying to radically turn American defense strategy and defense posture, without just letting it go into free fall. Because you'd made these cautions about the way the pendulum always swings—

Cheney: There are still some bad guys out there.

Zelikow: So having been a great steersman through such a period, what are you proud of and what do you recall as being really, really hard?

Cheney: I suppose we avoided a train wreck. I do think we were able to retain essential capability that we had to have. It wasn't as bad as it might have been if we hadn't been out in front on a lot of these issues, sort of directing things. Going through this process, just over the horizon is a war, the need to use the force. We didn't know about it at the time. You couldn't foresee until the balloon went up in August of '90 and you have to start dealing with that scenario and sequence and set of events as well. But we were also, at the same time, bringing some rationalization to the whole process. The fact of the matter was there was a hell of a bow wave built in during the Reagan years. Even without the end of the Cold War and the cutbacks, we couldn't afford all the stuff that we said we wanted.

One of the things that I felt best about during that period of time, while I was clearly concerned about restoration of a hostile Soviet Union if you will with all the nukes, we also were undertaking a major review that demonstrated that we had a hell of a lot more nuclear weapons than we needed to cover the target base. I mean, we weren't blindly walking down the road out here ignoring our responsibilities and obligations on the one hand to be frugal and to take a hard look at our situation. I wasn't just doing a Weinberger saying, "Hell no. Hell no. Hell no." On the other hand, we were trying to do it in an intelligent fashion that preserved our credibility, that would allow us to retain the support we needed to have from the public and the Congress so that we didn't give away the store.

It's a whole bunch of different pressures you're trying to balance here at one time. I don't know that there is any one thing that you can zero in and say, "There, that's the key accomplishment." I think of it as a whole bunch of cross pressures coming from several different directions and you want to emerge from all of that having preserved what's essential for U.S. security. Maybe reallocated resources in a way that gets you a better result than would be the case if the cuts came willy-nilly and you didn't do things like review the SIOP and figure out what you could give up out of your strategic systems.

Zelikow: I assume you've heard, there is an argument in the land that basically says—and Aspin makes this argument—that they were slow. They didn't really see what was needed. The changes that you saw that happened, which were basically changes in the force structure that we've now had for about the last ten years, looks pretty much like the force structure that came out of this base force exercise and the fiscal '92 budget plans. Basically the force structure of the fiscal '01, fiscal '02 budget plans.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: But the argument is that we really shape that on the Hill. The Pentagon ultimately adopted a lot of things that we forced on them, that the intellectual and conceptual initiative for a lot of this, the momentum for a lot of this, is coming from the Hill and not from the Administration. I mean, you may disagree with that, but how would you apportion initiative in these changes?

Cheney: Yes, I do disagree with that. Les was afraid of his own shadow. He could not deliver his own committee. You just recounted the story of '89 and how he was unable, for example, to even have Pat Schroeder and Ron Dellums support him. There were a lot of smart people on the Hill who were giving a lot of thought to these kinds of issues and Les was one of them. He was very knowledgeable about substance in this area. So was Sam Nunn. So I don't want to claim it all for the Defense Department, but the charge that somehow we didn't do anything, or we had it all imposed on us from outside, just isn't true.

I think the record is replete with examples that in fact we moved aggressively. I moved aggressively in late '89, well even before that, with the budget that we first submitted. But certainly by late '89 we are actively and aggressively off to the races. We've got the base closing reauthorization through and set up, the BRAC, ran that process successfully twice, which the Democrats had proven unable to do. They have totally lost credibility on that process. Bill Clinton hadn't been able to close anything. I think the major SIOP review, I mean, we inherited a SIOP that nobody had really taken a very close look at in a very long time. That was totally initiated internally. The defense planning guidance that Wolfowitz pulled together, the efforts that Colin put together with the Joint staff in terms of the base force, what that ought to look like, and that was a Joint staff driven process. That wasn't imposed by anybody on Capitol Hill.

The substance of what we did in terms of the thrust of the policies, most of that was generated internally inside DoD, just like the package the President put on the table in '91 after the Gorbachev coup attempt. A lot of the stuff we did there was made possible because of a lot of work we'd done in DoD in advance to know what we could give up, what we could put on the table, and what we still had to preserve in terms of satisfying our security requirements.

Zelikow: So in a way, you felt that you succeeded in that you did retain the initiative in structuring the debate and shaping the debate, and Congress was working then off a plan you were submitting, rather than basically scrapping your plan and working off a plan they had prepared, where the initiative then shifts to the Hill and away from the Administration.

Cheney: The battles with the Congress were basically at the margins. To the extent I had any frustrations there—I mean, I wasn't surprised by it—was the tendency of Congress to want to be parochial in their pursuits and to force us to spend money we didn't want to spend on stuff we didn't need. I used to berate them frequently on it, but they deserved it. I was able to get away with it, as I mentioned earlier, because I was a member of Congress. But MREs [Meals Ready-to-Eat], you'd get down into the weeds in terms of what you had to have and it was very hard to kill anything. But we did kill a lot of things and we did change the direction very significantly.

To suggest that somehow Congress made all that happen, I'm sorry, but I don't think the record demonstrates that. I liked Les Aspin; he was a good friend; we served together for a long time. But in terms of working with the Hill, he was the least effective guy up there, from my perspective, in terms of what I had to deal with. Murtha, yes. Murtha could deliver. Sam Nunn, lots of time Sam could deliver too. Danny Inouye, Ted Stevens—those guys, if they made a commitment, they kept it. They'd produce the votes. Things would happen, you'd get your stuff done. That almost never was the case with the House authorizers.

Zelikow: I think this may be a good break point for the day. I think we've worn you out.

Betts: It's been a long day.

Masoud: Did you want to just briefly, though, tell us what you want to talk about tomorrow, Philip?

Zelikow: What's on my list is U.S.-Soviet relations, arms control, nuclear targeting review, that whole basket of connected issues, which I think will take some time. Then I also want to be sure, I want to go back through Panama and go through that a little bit again. Going through some details, I want to go through the Philippines crisis and I want to go back over Iraq. There are a number of things we did not touch on and I think we need to spend some more time.

Cheney: There are some more things we need to talk about.

Zelikow: Up to and including Provide Comfort.

Cheney: There was the post-war operation in northern Iraq. Okay.

Zelikow: And Bosnia, the Balkans. You were "a reluctant warrior."

Cheney: I was, agreed. Much better every day.

Zelikow: Somalia. If we cover all that I'll feel pretty good about our session.

McCall: Ambitious.

Zelikow: Actually, I think we've covered quite a bit today.

Cheney: We covered a lot today, we really have. I'll go back, I have a whole bunch of notes here now.

Zelikow: We've covered some of the stuff, we've done some Panama and Iraq. We don't need you to repeat yourself.

Cheney: Well, I'll go through these notes I made earlier to see if there's anything that jumps out at me.

Zelikow: There are some general thoughts, too, that were in the briefing that we provided to you as basically softballs tossed up to you about misunderstandings about the Administration that you want to be sure are corrected, misunderstandings about the personalities. Again, I just remind you that we want you to hit those targets, that if there are some things where you've long thought, *I wish I could set the record straight on X*, come tomorrow with your thoughts on whatever "X" is. We'll try to be sure to give you the chance to do that.

Cheney: All right.

Masoud: Especially as a former Chief of Staff, since the performance of the Chief of Staff in the Bush Administration was such a big deal, you might have some comments on that.

Cheney: Yes, we do. That's something you ought to have on there too—Sununu.

Zelikow: I have some more domestic politics questions. I know that since you were Defense Secretary you insulated yourself from all political matters. [*Laughter*] But I do have a few more questions about that.

Cheney: Okay.

March 17, 2000

Zelikow: Before we plunge back into policy detail, I wanted to get your reflections on one global question. Just to reflect on the job of Secretary of Defense and what you liked best about that job. Then I also want you to think about what you found most frustrating about it.

Cheney: Over the years I've had the opportunity to compare notes with others who have held the post. A couple of them are close friends like Don Rumsfeld and Frank Carlucci. I know Mel Laird—well, I've talked with Mel about it over the years—Harold Brown and others. I always considered myself extraordinarily fortunate to be there when I was there.

One of the things that determines what kind of tour you have is when are you there. You have absolutely no control over the events that occur on your watch. If you talk to Mel Laird and really press, when he thinks about the job or at least as he has described it to me, he talks about "that damn war," obviously referring to Vietnam and all that that entailed. I'd heard Mel in 1966, three years before he became Secretary, raise questions in a private conversation about the Vietnam War. Then he ended up presiding over it in the Nixon years. It was an extraordinarily

difficult task for him and I think extraordinarily unpleasant. I don't think he ever had a good time, in that respect.

From my standpoint, getting to preside as the Cold War ended, Soviet Union imploded. We did Desert Shield and Desert Storm, successful military operations, having inherited all of that equipment that Reagan had bought in the early '80s. Having the opportunity to work with Baker and Scowcroft and for the President. It just all came together, it fit. Colin Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. I consider myself extraordinarily fortunate to have been there when I was there, to get to deal with the issues I got to deal with and work with the people I got to work with. I'm sure there are other circumstances under which it would not have been nearly as rewarding.

The best parts of it—there are so many different things. I would include certainly on my list the people in the military. When I was there we had a superb group. The country doesn't realize—didn't then and I don't think they do today—what an enormously talented group of people we've got in the U.S. military forces, uniformly high quality. I suppose that part is the part I miss most about it. I think I've touched on all of the rewards and satisfactions. When I think about the Desert Storm experience, my trips in the Gulf, the time I spent with the troops, as well as coming home celebrations and ceremonies, I'd never seen anything like that in my life. Everything from the session at Universal Studios in Hollywood with the President when we did a big TV spectacular—I don't remember whether Bob Hope presided or not but it was one of those kind of things. Parade down Constitution Avenue, ticker tape parade up Broadway. You know, those things just don't happen very often, especially to a politician. So all of those were major highlights.

At the same time, wrapped around that is the memory of the memorial service we had the morning before we had the parade in Washington, up at Arlington, for the families of the guys who didn't come home. Bush had to speak that morning—President Bush did—I didn't have to. I just had to sit on the stage. I don't know how he got through it. It was very, very emotional. The audience full of wives and kids and families of the 148 who were killed in action. Finished the ceremony with a fly-over with a missing man formation in the aircraft. It brought home in very stark terms the cost and what's involved when you commit military forces and use them. Even a venture as successful as that one was, with casualty rates as low as they were, there still were folks who paid one hell of a price for it. You never forget that.

Masoud: When people talk about committing military force, this is the President's decision. He's the lonely man in the dark room. But it seems to me that the Secretary of Defense is also the lonely man in the dark room. Did that ever strike you, that this decision to commit force and sending these boys is also your decision and your charge?

Cheney: I knew, obviously, I could have a major impact, both in terms of whether or not we did it and in terms of how we did it. But there's no question who is the President. He's the guy. If it ever got to the point where I didn't want the responsibility that I'd been given. . . . Ultimately he is the one where the buck stops and his burden was greater than mine.

I mentioned it earlier in the interview, a dinner I had the night before last with a retired general who had done three tours in Vietnam, talking there about what it was like when we did Desert

Storm. His experience spanned that total time of some 30 years and how much the Vietnam precedence affected and influenced people's attitudes and anticipation, reaction to events, how it shaped the policy. It had a big impact. But one of the things I did—coming back to the responsibilities of the Secretary—was about two days before we began the Gulf War operation, I went down early in the morning with just my wife, we went down to the Vietnam Memorial. Nobody else around, just me and Lynne and security people. I did it primarily, I wanted a very stark reminder of what happens when you screw it up. That it was very important for us not to forget those lessons from 25 years before. And we didn't. I think we learned a lot from that experience. Clearly, it shaped a lot of what we did.

Those are the kinds of things I suppose where you most intensely feel the pressures and are aware of the so-called burdens of the office. When you think about the consequences and what's happened to some of your predecessors.

Zelikow: Can you recall any occasion where President Bush wanted to use armed force and you had recommended against it?

Cheney: Can I recall any occasion when he wanted to use armed force? You mean where we fundamentally disagreed?

Zelikow: Where he overruled you. Where you said, "I don't think we should use our troops on this problem," and he said, "Yes, we should."

Cheney: No.

Masoud: Somalia?

Cheney: Somalia, that was at the tail end and I was reluctant. I was always reluctant. You had to have a damned good reason to commit the force and you always had the feeling—I suppose General Powell was even somewhat more conservative than I was—and you're always a little nervous about the State Department. Lots of times they're eager to commit the assets but they don't have any assets. It's the Defense Department's troops that get deployed. In Somalia, what we ended up with, there was a desire to do something. The commitment we made was very much viewed by us at the time we did it as a humanitarian activity. This was not a go-to-war operation; this was to go to Somalia to restore some stability so that humanitarian relief organizations could get in and feed starving people. Later on, obviously, it became a significant military operation, but that was after we left. It's important I think to look at what we did in Somalia at least in terms of our initial involvement. The decision we made was very different from what eventually emerged after they had the battle in Mogadishu.

Zelikow: The reason I put the question that way is it does emphasize the responsibility of a Secretary of Defense. Although you're right—the buck stops in the Oval Office, he's the man—it's hard for me to imagine the President authorizing use of force unless basically the Sec Def had given him permission. Now that's an awkward way of putting it—

Cheney: I hear what you're saying. It would be very hard for a President to override the advice he was getting from the Secretary and the Chairman. If you come in hard and say, "Boy, that's really a bad idea, we don't want to do that," he is going to think very seriously before he overrules your judgments. Certainly that would be the case with the Presidents I've worked with, might not have been true with others. They would have hesitated a long time before that.

Yes, I can conceive of a situation in which, especially if it were a fairly small type of operation, where you might end up giving him options. Do it or don't do it, deal with the crisis with diplomacy, sanctions, covert action or overt military action, and leaving him more of a choice. When it comes right down to committing American troops to combat, yes, I think it would be hard for a President to go against the advice of the people he'd put in charge of the military.

McCall: Can I take a different approach to that? In late September, early October, whenever the annual UN address is made by the President addressing the new assembly, he met with Thatcher up in New York. At that point he was eager to find a pretext to go in after Saddam, basically. Mrs. Thatcher was trying to persuade him, "This is not the time to do it, we're not ready." Did you get a sense of that from the President? He relates it in his book to some extent.

Cheney: October of '90?

McCall: Yes, about that time frame. He was seeing that the hostages who were being held provided a good pretext to go in. Mrs. Thatcher and General Scowcroft were both speaking strongly, "Mr. President, it's too early to do this because if you do it now and it doesn't work you're not going to be able to follow through later." Do you remember anything of that?

Cheney: I'm just trying to think here. Part of the difficulty, my mind works in chronological order. We've jumped around enough now that it's a bit of a—

McCall: We've confused you.

Cheney: I still think about Betts jumping in yesterday and the first question he asked was, "Well, what about the end of the war?" There was a lot of stuff before that.

The thing we looked at early on was the possibility of using our Special Ops force to go in and take down the American embassy in Kuwait and rescue the Americans who were holed up in our embassy there. We spent a fair amount of time on that and decided in the end not to do it. Partly because if you were to do it right, you wanted to use overwhelming force right in Kuwait City, in order to stun the Iraqis enough so you could get in and get out and minimize your losses. We concluded that if we did that, that the Iraqis wouldn't be able to tell the difference between that and the actual invasion, that it could easily get out of control at that point. We concluded we didn't want to do it, so we held off on it. There was that kind of planning going on.

There were discussions, I want to say from early September, when we first began tasking Norm and his people to start thinking offensively and prepare for us the proposals for how they'd use the force to liberate Kuwait. There were activities, some of which I directed, looking at various possibilities. How we would use the force we then had in place or were about to have in place to

move against Iraq. This was prior to the decision we made then later in October to double the size of the force, to send all the additional units over there and so forth. So we were looking for ways—that's part of our responsibilities, to have options available for that kind of thing, to go sooner. But I don't recall the President saying anything to me along those lines, or Brent. This was part of this ongoing discussion and dialogue of how do we make the transition from thinking defensively and how we were going to protect Saudi Arabia, to thinking offensively and how we were going go liberate Kuwait.

Zelikow: Let me pull you out of the chronology again. One thread of my original question that you haven't answered yet was the part about your greatest frustrations in the job.

Cheney: Greatest frustrations. Well, I suppose in some respects they centered on the Congress. I loved the institution, served in it for ten years. For a long time my highest aspiration was to be the Republican leader in the House. I don't regret any of the time I spent there at all and I felt I was relatively successful in dealing with the Congress from the perspective of the Pentagon. Still, if I'm asked what my biggest problem was as Secretary of Defense, I'd say the Congress. That's also my biggest problem as the chairman and CEO of Halliburton. It hasn't changed that much, for other reasons.

You're torn, especially if you have been part of the institution and you revere the Congress and its constitutional role and responsibilities. At the same time, to experience the frustrations that go with the difficulty of getting them to make intelligent decisions about resource allocation and forget parochialism for a minute. They get to the point where they are so focused on jobs in their district that it's very hard to get them to move off that and to make sound decisions from a strategic standpoint or in terms of saving money. I'm convinced we still waste an awful lot of money in the Defense Department because we spend it on things we don't need to spend it on. We do it because Congress directs that it be done, not because we've got a bunch of admirals and generals in the Pentagon who sit around trying to figure out ways to waste the taxpayers' money.

Same thing happens with respect to the procurement scandals. We're so burdened down with regulations and red tape that the way we do business makes us inefficient. I look at it today, we [Halliburton] now own—this is to give you an example—we own and operate the Davenport dockyard in the United Kingdom. The Davenport dockyard has been part of the British Navy since the 1600s. We've taken it over. We now maintain the British nuclear submarine fleet in that dockyard, their Triton boats that they've got and their other subs. We've taken the work force there from about 13,000 when it was a government-run facility down to a little over 4,000 now. Saved them a lot of money. We could do that in dozens of facilities that are currently owned and operated by the U.S. Department of Defense. We can't, primarily for political reasons.

We [Halliburton] operate the U.S. Air Force base at Incirlik, Turkey, do it very efficiently. We've got the camps in Kosovo and Bosnia and so forth providing support for our troops that are over there now. Save tons of money for the United States Army doing that. Can't do it in the states, primarily because of Congress. They don't want somebody coming in, taking a Department of Defense installation, a maintenance facility, supply base or something like that,

and running it more efficiently. It's going to take jobs out of the local economy. I suppose that dimension of it is the source of my greatest frustration in those years, as I think back on it.

We were able to overcome it sometimes. We got the base closing commission working pretty well. I got Jim Courter, who was a good friend of mine, former member. We made him chairman of the base closing commission. We took that legislation, Dick Armey came up with the idea originally. Did two rounds, I believe, on my watch—there had been one done before that by Carlucci—and got some bases closed. But you had to cobble together this machinery that made it impossible for anybody to make individual decisions. It was a take it or leave it proposition, both over at the White House as well as on the Hill. They had to vote for it and go.

Zelikow: Let's return then to the narrative and focus on the issues of U.S.-Soviet relations, arms control, and some related force-planning issues like the nuclear targeting review. I think perhaps a good place to start might be in 1989, which is the year in which you begin to become known as the Administration's skeptic on Gorbachev. Did you wish to position yourself this way? You clearly noticed that the press was beginning to paint you in this way. Did you see this as the logical culmination of a very successful program of background briefings?

Masoud: If I might follow up also, something that wasn't clear is, were you skeptical of Gorbachev because you didn't think he could achieve reforms, or because you didn't think he was sincere about them and was just an unreconstructed Marxist?

Cheney: No, what I said, the skepticism I expressed was exactly what I believed. There was nothing subtle or complicated about it, just I was a skeptic. I also had that feeling, I'd spent four years on the Intelligence Committee. I had probably a better understanding than most of the enormous efforts they'd gone to over the years against us. I'd spent a lot of time on Afghanistan. I was a believer that the United States needed to do everything we could to win the Cold War. A great believer in deterrence, I had accepted the Peacekeeper missile, ten warhead Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles in my district when nobody else in the country would take it, because they didn't want it in their backyard. I think my record was very consistent, in terms of my attitude towards the Soviets and my belief that the U.S. success during the Cold War depended very much on military strength and capabilities.

Having said that, I think like everybody else, Gorbachev was a breath of fresh air. This was a whole new proposition for us. I would give him great credit today for having had the wisdom not to try to preserve the empire. He didn't call out the troops the way they did in Hungary in '56 or Czechoslovakia in '68. He let it go. As it came apart, whether he wanted to do that or did it reluctantly, the fact is it happened. It dramatically changed the strategic equation. I recognized that; I think everybody else did. What we did inside the Department recognized the fact that the Cold War was ending, that the Soviet Union was collapsing, the old Soviet empire was collapsing, that the threat to the United States from Soviet capabilities was significantly lessened as a result of that.

I also had to believe that what had driven the collapse was the fact they couldn't keep up. It became clear as Reagan engaged in a significant military build-up and pushed SDI [Strategic Defense Initiative] in the early '80s, that that really drove the Soviets to distraction. Here is a

place where it comes back again to what I did in the Department, a couple of sources for some of my convictions.

Every few months we used to have what we called a Saturday seminar. Paul Wolfowitz would organize it. We would get in experts on the Soviet Union from various places around the government and academia and spend a Saturday morning in the conference room next to my office talking about what was going on over there. We did this pretty much throughout the time I was Secretary, trying to track and understand what was happening and what it meant from the standpoint of U.S. policy. The group would include people like Fritz Ermarth and George Kolt, who were CIA experts in Soviet affairs, to a guy whose name I've forgotten now, State Department expert on ethnic minorities inside the Soviet Union, Stephen Sestanovich. A lot of people whose names you would know. That was designed to follow what was going on over there, make sure I understood, an opportunity for Paul and myself—Steve Hadley would participate in these kinds of things and others—to make sure we were on top of developments and we understood what was going on over there. It just wasn't enough to read the reports. We did all of that too, but I benefited from the interaction and the discussions and the conversation.

Apart from that, I had Henry Rowen working for me. Henry, as I mentioned before, was the Assistant Secretary for ISA the first two years I was there and then he went back to Stanford. Hoover Institute background, economist. Henry was of the opinion that the official community estimates on what the Soviets were spending on defense were wrong. That they had just bought into a lot of the official numbers they got from the Russians. We knew what they were buying in terms of quantity; you'd count the tanks and the missiles and the aircraft. If you then tried to assess what percentage of their GDP [Gross Domestic Product] they were paying in order to acquire that, the official estimates were somewhere around 14 or 15 percent, as I recall.

Henry's argument, and I think in the end he turned out to be right, was that it was probably double that. That their economy was smaller than their official estimates indicated and therefore the percentage of their GDP they were spending to acquire that much hardware was really closer to 25 or 30 percent. And that that was an enormous strain obviously on their system and that, as much as anything, was what drove Gorbachev ultimately to recognize there wasn't any way that they could sustain that, that they had to change. That carried a lot of weight with me.

Another story I like to tell. It's anecdotal and you don't want to base your whole policy on one anecdote, but it was telling. There was a guy, I cannot remember his name now, a young Russian, crippled, had bad legs, who came to visit me at one point when he was in the States. This must have been '89 or '90. He had been actively involved in the pro-democracy movements and had emerged as one of the young reformers. Gorbachev obviously was still in power at this point. He came, I think Wolfowitz or somebody arranged for him to stop by and see me, and talked for about an hour about what was going on in Moscow.

As he got ready to leave, I asked him where he was going. He said, "I'm going to California." I said, "Why are you going to California?" He said, "Well, I'm going to see President Reagan, the father of perestroika." Of course, I sat him back down on the couch and said, "Now explain this to me. I thought Gorbachev was the father of perestroika." He said, "Ronald Reagan is the father of perestroika." It was his assessment that it was in fact the Reagan policy of firmness, the U.S.

military buildup, the threat of SDI, that all of those things had precipitated the circumstances, caused the conclusion on the part of Gorbachev and those around him that they could not compete with the United States on those terms and they had to fundamentally change their system.

So those are the kinds of things that obviously had an impact on me. But I started from a pretty conservative point of view. You see it reflected in my voting record, my speeches. It wasn't an artifice, that's what I believed. When asked, I said what I believed. I also had the strong feeling that as Secretary it was my responsibility, more than anybody else's in the Administration, to make certain we didn't give away the store. There were going to be enough other people out there who were arguing that this was the new day, the Cold War is over, we can dismantle the defense budget and take down the force. It had been difficult enough to maintain adequate capabilities when the Cold War was raging at its height. I thought it was going to be even more difficult now with the changes that were going on in the Soviet Union. As I said, I really sensed that one of my obligations, one of my responsibilities, doing what I was doing as Secretary of Defense, was to make sure that there was a voice someplace in the Administration saying, "Hey, wait a minute. Let's make sure this is for real before we walk down that road." Does that answer your question?

Masoud: Yes, certainly.

Zelikow: I'd like to tick off a series of issues, but you don't necessarily have to spend a lot of time on all of them. I think the most urgent arms control issue in 1989 and '90 was probably CFE [Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe], because it was driven by other things. I think, however, that DoD's role on CFE is reasonably well documented. Unless you have a particularly strong view on CFE that you want to get on the table, I'm prepared to pass over that and move onto the next subject.

Cheney: Yes, I would say on CFE, it was sort of front and center in the arms control agenda when we arrived. We spent a fair amount of time on it. It got caught up in other things like the new strategy for NATO and some of those kinds of discussions, but there are people who can give you much more detail on where we were on CFE and how we developed the position. Talk to Steve Hadley. My eyes start to glaze over when I start to count APCs [armored personnel carriers] and all the rest of that. It was a major activity; it was significant; we were generally supportive of it.

Zelikow: Yes, you were.

Cheney: It also coincided with the opportunity that obviously existed for us to reduce our forces in Europe, so there were a lot of things working here in tandem to take us in that direction.

McCall: Let me ask a slightly different, more general question. When you arrived at DoD, the Administration was already three months old, basically. As you mentioned, some of the issues such as CFE and other items on the agenda were inherited from the Reagan Administration. But there had been a certain amount of discussion before you arrived about what the direction the

new Administration should take. Did you feel, coming in as late as you did, even though it's not that late in the year—

Cheney: Two months after the inauguration.

McCall: Did you feel that most of these things were already in place and you were playing catch up and that you had less influence then? Or were these things that were still very fresh?

Cheney: They were still very fresh. You inherited a lot from the Reagan Administration, but also knew George Bush is going to want to take that, but he's going to want to build on that and have his own agenda of issues to work. So much was changing. You couldn't argue that there shouldn't be new policies out there. There had to be new policies out there. You had to respond and hopefully to shape the events that were occurring. Also I knew Brent Scowcroft very well. I'd watched Brent work in the Ford years. I'd sat on the Aspen strategy group with him during the intervening years. I knew Brent's general views in this area. It would have been weird if arms control hadn't been one of the centerpieces of the Bush Administration policies.

I didn't have the feeling that somehow all the decisions had been made by the time I had arrived, that wasn't the case at all. There was an awful lot of work to do. In a sense, they were just cut out of DoD until you got a Secretary over there who could make things happen. That was more my sense, that there had been a vacuum there because the top job was empty and because Tower had been consumed in trying to get confirmed, nobody was really running the show. You did have people off doing things, and I don't think—I've never talked to Brent about it—but I would assume they were to some extent eager to get somebody in over there so they could begin to do things. As long as there wasn't a Secretary, it was going to be hard to make things move in the direction they wanted to move in. But I never had the sense that gee, they've made all the decisions. We wasted a lot of time in meetings if that was the case.

Zelikow: There was an early dust up—I was involved quite a bit with the May '89 CFE initiative. The President basically needed to intervene. In the memoir, Admiral Crowe was presented as having been reluctant to make some of the moves, which were fairly bold at the time—a year later they would look less bold—but were needed to really break the ice and get some momentum going in that negotiation. I just note that on that occasion as on the January '90 issue of troops and the rest, you seemed fairly supportive of where the President wanted to go.

Cheney: There was another issue here too, that has to do with some of the things we talked about yesterday, in terms of civil-military relations. The pattern had developed during the Reagan years of an OSD position and a JCS position on a lot of issues, especially in the arms control arena. I thought that was a really bad idea. You get to the point—

Zelikow: That's a very important point. I'm very glad you raised it.

Cheney: If you talked to Frank Carlucci, when he was NSC advisor, as I say, he used to have to referee the battles between State and Defense, between Weinberger and Shultz in those days. But then if you go back and look at the period after that, even after Frank became Secretary, you would end up in these situations where when it came time to sit down in the interagency and

have a debate or discussion over various and sundry policies, OSD had a position, JCS had a position. Lots of times they were at odds, in conflict. I didn't want that. Colin Powell and I worked hard to avoid it. For the most part we were successful. As a matter of fact, I can't right now think of any fundamental disagreements that we had.

We tried to get our own act together internally in the Defense Department. That, I think, enhanced our ability to operate in the interagency. It also meant, I think, that we did a better job of serving the President. He had a direction he wanted to go in, and if he had the Secretary and the Chairman pretty much marching arm-in-arm, it was tough for anybody else in the building to go in a different direction.

Zelikow: It's interesting, because there was that divergence right there at the beginning and then after that Hadley and Howard Graves were almost invariably in lockstep.

Cheney: It was deliberate.

Zelikow: Lithuania is an important issue, especially as you get into 1990, May of 1990. I'm still trying to take this chronologically, I'll come to START later. START reaches its climax a little bit later. In May 1990, the big issue is whether or not to go ahead with the trade agreement with the Soviet Union, despite the fact that the Soviet Union was attempting to strangle Lithuania economically. Do you remember staking out a position that you thought was important and distinctive in the debates on how we should handle the Soviet Union through the Lithuanian crisis?

Cheney: I don't. I have a general recollection—it's only general—that we were a little more forward-leaning, at least in terms of our preferences at Defense, at establishing and dealing with the parts of the old Soviet Union that were coming off of it. Not only the Baltics, but also Ukraine, Belarus, et cetera. Brent and the President were a little more cautious about how rapidly we recognized those entities. I can remember, I thought it took a long time for us to get military attachés and ambassadors assigned to Kiev to represent us in the Ukraine. Brent was always nervous about how aggressively the Defense Department moved in some of these areas.

Obviously, in the end, they guided. It was a presidential call to figure that out and it was a very important subject and set of issues. With caution being exercised legitimately by the President and Jim Baker and Brent, not wanting to be too forward-leaning here to make life more difficult for Gorbachev, for example. Whereas my guys, partly Paul Wolfowitz, myself, and others, were a little more interested in, "Let's get those relationship established as soon as possible and begin to nail down the independence, if you will, of those former Soviet republics." But it was a matter of degree. There weren't major differences or conflicts here. In something like policy towards Lithuania, frankly I don't remember the discussions.

Zelikow: Since you've moved forward into the 1991 arguments, which really pick up speed in the summer of '91 and are delicate. Most of the issues you just described are from very late in 1991, if I recall.

Cheney: The "chicken Kiev" speech.

Zelikow: That would have been July ’91, I think. Then the issues of recognition would have come up in the fall, around November and December of ’91.

Cheney: Then the Soviet Union went out of business end of December.

Zelikow: In August.

Cheney: Well, the coup in August.

Zelikow: It formally dissolved at Christmas. You were portrayed as being extremely, acutely pro-[Boris] Yeltsin, strongly in favor of encouraging the breakup of the Soviet Union, and believing that we were being needlessly cautious in attempting to preserve the old empire. Now, I don’t think that’s an exaggerated statement of the press portrait of the Cheney position.

Cheney: I would disagree with the word extremely, that would be an overstatement. But yes, it would be fair to say that I believed that the breakup of the Soviet Union was a good thing. That Yeltsin having gotten himself elected, democratically elected, as the President of Russia—this is pre-coup, but he’s already the democratically-elected President of Russia—warranted significant recognition and treatment, if you will, from the United States.

Still, you had this anomaly where you had a democratically-elected President of Russia and Gorbachev still running the old Soviet Union for a few months there, as I recall, in the summer of ’91. Then you had the coup attempt in August of ’91, Yeltsin atop the tank and the whole bit. Yes, it would be fair to say, out of the people in the Administration, I was further down that road and less concerned with trying to protect Gorbachev than would have been Brent or the President or Jim. But again, it’s a matter of degree here; this is not an either/or proposition.

Zelikow: Because I was trying to figure out whether there were basically any ways in which that difference of opinion found tangible expression, “There is this particular thing we want to do and we disagree.”

Cheney: I can remember having Yeltsin in for an audience when he came to visit the States. It must have been early summer June ’91, sometime along in there.

Zelikow: It was relatively early. It was while Yeltsin was still not being welcomed with open arms by the President. It was seen as a signal.

Cheney: But I wouldn’t have done it if Brent had said, “Don’t do it.”

Zelikow: But you don’t recall any arguments about this. More folks kind of saying, “Dick, you really need to trim your sails here.”

Cheney: No, it was the kind of thing, it might have come up in the interagency. Maybe Wolfowitz and Hadley in a meeting representing the Defense Department with Condi Rice and some of the folks, with [Robert] Zoellick over at State, NSC.

Again, it's a matter of shading here and emphasis and to some extent timing. I guess it's not an original thought, we've already voiced it. I thought the breakup of the Soviet Union was a fundamentally good thing and that we should take advantage of the then-existing set of circumstances to nudge it along.

Zelikow: On the complex of issues associated with Germany and European security in 1990, my memory is that Defense was supportive but not deeply engaged in the German diplomacy. There was a critical phase connected to the NATO summit and the run-up to the NATO summit in early summer of 1990, in which we were trying to do a number of things to change the alliance, changing flexible response and taking some actions on our shorter range nuclear forces and the like. Defense was in general supportive on some big changes.

In a way, the interesting part of the story is the dog that did not bark. Defense is being very helpful in that process and not a major sticking point. So those events strike me from the Defense perspective, it's interesting that Defense was so supportive through such big changes, dovetailing perhaps with your notions of oncoming base force. So I just call attention to that and give you the opportunity to comment, but you are not obligated to tell a story here unless you think we're missing something.

Cheney: No, certainly we supported German reunification. I can recall, I did the [David] Brinkley show at one point—I can't remember, maybe '89, maybe '90—where Sam Donaldson asked, as the last question on the show, whether or not the United States supported the reunification of Germany. Was that our long-term objective? This was before it got to the point where anybody was really talking about it. I said yes, that certainly was our long-term goal and objective, but I hadn't thought about it. It was sort of a gut reaction. I can remember walking out, scratching my head, saying, "I want to make sure I'm tracking here properly." Up to that point we hadn't really thought about it. We'd gotten so used to living with a divided Germany—and this must have been '89—but no, there was no reason for us not to support it. It was very important to the President. It's also the kind of issue where DoD is not a primary player in that question. That's going to be primarily Baker at State and the President and Brent dealing with those issues.

On NATO, we would be more directly involved because of the extent to which NATO is just a special organization. I'm over there at least every 90 days as Secretary for NATO meetings of various kinds. We're heavily involved in this whole question of what's going to be the new NATO strategy. The Cold War is ending, the Soviet Union is imploding. Do we need a NATO? What are they going to do? What's our mission? What kind of forces are we going to have still committed to NATO? All of those kinds of issues. We would have been in those discussions and debates, with the strategy question always feeding back ultimately to these heads of state summit meetings, where the President and Mrs. Thatcher and [Helmut] Kohl and others would sit down and deal with these issues. I did not attend those summits, traditionally Secretary of Defense doesn't. Again, not the most immediate players in that, aside from there being the DoD position and we'd been involved in the interagency and heavily engaged in putting together the Administration's position. I was not at the table when you'd sit down across the table from the

Brits and the Germans and others. It wouldn't be at the Defense Secretary level. We like to think we did all the work and they just went and ate dinner and issued the press releases.

Zelikow: Let me turn to START. Again, this is a story that I think is reasonably well documented. There is a strong negotiating record here. If you thought your eyes glazed over about APCs—and we could talk about telemetry encryption—but just focusing on START I for the moment, running up to the START I agreement. Do you recall any issues concerning START I that seemed to have great moment for you, or on which you thought you took a really distinctive position that might not be apparent from the documentary record?

Cheney: I'm sorry, I'd have to go back. I'm trying to remember what was in START I, what was in START II, what did we do when?

Zelikow: START I was the agreement you inherited.

Cheney: It had been negotiated—

Zelikow: It had been negotiated some during the Reagan period. The negotiations accelerated during the Bush period, culminating finally in the agreement.

Cheney: When was that agreement?

Zelikow: Ninety-one.

Cheney: For START I?

Zelikow: I believe so.

Cheney: Early '91?

Zelikow: I'm trying to remember.

Cheney: Because I remember September '91 was when we laid out all of the initiatives that we'd put forward, so it had to be before that.

Zelikow: Yes. Then September '91 was the whole series of unilateral initiatives. Then in '92 is the now very rapid movement to START II, which culminates really as the Administration's going out of office, at the very end of '92 and the first few days. It is signed January 3rd, I think, '93. Up to things beginning to go forward with a rush in mid '91, nothing about those START negotiations that really stand out for you?

Cheney: No, we would have been heavily involved in it, but I must say, trying to resurrect those discussions and debates, it's hard for me to do at this point. I'd have to go back and refresh my memory. There were other issues that clearly related to that. The question of what are we going to do with our own strategic forces, Midgetman, single warhead systems, de-MIRVing [Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles] the force. These were issues that Brent and I used to

discuss. This was an area where Brent had strong views and a lot of experience and where we didn't always agree in terms of what the right answer ought to be.

General view, the summits used to make us nervous over at the Pentagon, because what would happen of course would be you'd have the negotiations underway and the working groups are working inside our government, maybe some staff stuff back and forth, and you'd end up just before the meeting, the pressure would really mount. *We've got to have a concession, we've got to have something we can put on the table*. That's oftentimes when you get into difficulty. That was just a generic problem that existed every time there would be a summit meeting, whether it was in a ship off Malta or where ever it was. DoD would get ready to have its pocket picked shortly before the summit occurred. But we usually had something we could put on the table too.

Zelikow: Let me ask then, going from there to the nuclear targeting review, and then the series of very rapid movements in '91 and '92, which are pretty durable legacies. Even today, that's still pretty much the force structure. Can you recall where the initiative came from to have a serious fundamental review of the SIOP and our nuclear targeting? From the President or from the Sec Def?

Cheney: My recollection, I think it came primarily out of Defense. Initially, just in the process of looking at the SIOP—and a lot of this is still classified, I assume, and therefore I need to be discreet in what I say here, obviously.

Zelikow: Well, there is an unclassified chronology that Steve Hadley and Frank Miller developed for the nuclear targeting reviews so they could be briefed.

Cheney: Then I'd refer you to that in terms of timing and so forth. It became increasingly obvious—in effect, the SIOP gets updated periodically. It's one of the most important items, processes, documents obviously that you're responsible for as the Sec Def because it lays out the options for nuclear war. It is in fact the plan for applying weapons to targets in the old Soviet Union and on your adversaries. As you add capabilities to the force, 50 new Peacekeepers for example, 500 warheads or new Trident submarines or whatever it might be, then you have to figure out what targets you're going to go against and so forth.

There's a fairly elaborate procedure there that had been followed over the years. But it was clear as we looked at that and reviewed it—and I remember going out to SAC [Strategic Air Command] at one point fairly early on and spending the day going through that process and looking at those kinds of issues and working closely with Frank Miller and Steve and others on it—that when you started to peel back the layers and really look carefully at what was actually happening here, and not look at it just in terms of categories of targets, which was the way it was traditionally presented to the civilian leadership, but started looking at the number of weapons that were actually going down in a particular geographic area, it didn't make a hell of a lot of sense, frankly. It was clear that there were places where there were one hell of a lot of weapons going down because we just added stuff over the years and had never really gone back and looked at it in those terms. There hadn't been much coordination across categories of targets.

The net result was that I concluded, based on my work—especially with Frank, and Steve was part of that, and Wolfowitz as well—that we needed to do a comprehensive review of the SIOP. In the past, there had been efforts to do it but the civilians had sort of been shut out. That was more the legacy I think of the Weinberger years and they hadn't had a Secretary who would really drive the system. I recruited Colin Powell to the task and got Colin on board for the same basic thing that I wanted to do. He was in wholehearted agreement. Then we got, I believe it was Pat Butler.

Zelikow: Or John Chain?

Cheney: Chain was the SAC commander at the time. We got Pat Butler, who was then on the Joint staff and Pat was involved.

Zelikow: Lee Butler.

Cheney: Lee Butler, not Pat. Pat used to be a speechwriter for me in the Ford White House. Lee Butler later had the SAC command.

So in effect what we got was a team that we pulled together of OSD and the Joint staff, and with that sanction and that backing we really started to dig in great depth into what was actually going on inside the SIOP. I kept Brent informed of what I was doing so he was very knowledgeable about it, but in effect, what we concluded from all of that was we had a lot more nuclear warheads than we needed. That we could cover the target base and do what needed to be done with fewer weapons. That had all kinds of ramifications for us in terms of budget, in terms of how many platforms we needed, in terms of the kinds of decisions we made. We wanted to preserve the triad, but do you take down the force to lower levels? How do you do that? How do you preserve the triad? But it also offered up the opportunity to put stuff on the table in the course of strategic arms control talks, because now we had something to trade away. I think it was a very important development. It's something I feel especially good about that we did while we were there because it badly needed to be done. As I say, it hadn't been done for a very long time.

Zelikow: One of the big questions that lingers from this episode really is the simple one of, "How was Cheney able to do it?" A lot of people had broken lances on this and somehow you did it. I've heard one person assert that this is a SAC initiative. Let the record reflect that Mr. Cheney chuckled at that suggestion. I have not heard anyone claim that the White House insisted on it. But this is remarkable because actually there was another nuclear posture review done by the Clinton Administration, as you know, that did get shut out and was not successful, which then just highlights the question of how come you did it. Do you feel like you've already answered that question?

Cheney: Yes, and I've told you the steps I went through. It's understandable why there's resistance to doing something like that. There's a dynamic that works inside the building. When you get to be a senior four-star, it's your last post and your last billet. When you get through with that tour, you're going to retire. You might have been the most hard-charging, aggressive, creative one-star in the history of the service, but by the time you get that fourth star and you're

running one of these major commands, or you're the chief of the service, you get judged by your peers based on what you don't lose. You don't want to be the guy who's there when they dismantle the United States Air Force or whatever else it is you're to be protecting.

As I said, there's a natural reluctance. If you get into this whole question of how many nuclear weapons do we really need on Kiev, for example, and you conclude you don't need as many as were obviously going to go down on Kiev, then you start to say, "We don't need as many bombers or as many missiles or as many submarines." It has major ramifications in terms of the number of platforms and the size of the force. Force structure is very important in terms of the military. They also, over the years, had been jerked around so often by the Congress: We're going to build a B-2 force, and then we end up buying 20 of them. We're going to go with road mobile or rail mobile MX missiles, and then of course that turns out to be a pipe dream, we can't afford it.

From the standpoint of the establishment, if you will, inside the building—especially the military establishment—it's not surprising there's real reluctance to get into some of these questions and some of these issues. I think probably a number of reasons why I was able to do it, partly it was the relationship that General Powell and I had established. I mean, on these kinds of issues, this is the kind of thing we'd talk about in my office in the evening, figure out how we were going to go do it. I think it helped to build a good working relationship between OSD and the Joint staff and not be in a position where they were at loggerheads all the time, which was oftentimes true in the past.

It helped that the Cold War was ending and that circumstances had been substantially altered. As a result of that, it was more difficult to argue that we don't need to go back and look at these basic kinds of questions.

Zelikow: And you spent a lot of your own time, right?

Cheney: I did.

Zelikow: You invested your own personal energies in getting the answers you wanted to get.

Cheney: Yes, there was another thing that worked here too, and I'm just trying to recreate in my own mind some of my thinking. In a whole other part of the DoD arena, cruise missile technology, we had developed the capability—with standoff conventional weapons, which we demonstrated conclusively in Iraq—that we can go in and hit key nodes and shut down a country. Take down the power grid, shut down their transportation system, their telecommunication system, whatever it meant. It meant pinpoint strikes with accurate weapons, but a conventional warhead. You give me a few cruise missiles, I can shut down any country in the world for a period of time. Then you went over and you looked at the SIOP, apply nuclear weapons, these enormously powerful weapons, and we were just blanketing stuff.

Why wouldn't it make sense to think that if I'm trying to shut down the Soviet capacity to move troops to the border with Europe, and what I'm trying to do is deal with the threat of Soviets overrunning Western Europe, there are obviously some key transfer points in the rail system

between Soviet and European gauges. What I need to do is take out those key points, shut them down. Why do I need several thousand weapons to do that? So you start to ask those kinds of questions and dig into it and then come back and say, "Give me a different cut. I don't want to know what the percentage increase is and the number of leadership targets we're going to take out as a result of the addition of weapons this year; I want to know how many weapons are going down within ten miles of the center of Kiev." That forces you to go back and look at every single one of those categories of targets and see. And the number that came back was mind-boggling, because this whole system was geared to preserve platforms and not to go down and really do a good job of targeting.

And we know a hell of a lot more about targeting now than we did back in the '50s, when we started the SIOP, because we've gotten into the business now of precision targeting and figuring out which wing of which building you need to take out to shut down the Iraqi intelligence. So a lot of that kind of thing we went into, just asking questions, continually asking questions and sending the guys back for more data and more information.

Zelikow: Let me explore for a moment your notion of how deterrence works. Because there are really two layers to this. The first layer is, "Here are the targets I want to hold at risk." Then, "Yes, but we only need one weapon to hold that target at risk, not 30." All right, that's one level. We're not really having an argument about which targets you hold at risk; we're just talking about the most efficient way to do that. You've already described that actually the system had very large and accumulating inefficiencies that were being addressed during the targeting review.

The next layer past that is, "And what kinds of targets do I actually need to hold at risk at all? What's the relationship between what Omaha tells me we're holding at risk and what the Russians actually think we're holding at risk, to the point that any of this makes any difference to the Russians, whom we're trying to deter?" It sounds like you spent some time thinking about these issues as Secretary, and I'd be grateful if you'd share your reflections on how, in your head, nuclear deterrence works, as you began to think about these matters from the Pentagon.

Cheney: One of the problems I had as I looked at this complex of issues was that you had this system that allows you to do withholds, not to strike certain categories of targets. Let's assume that you've concluded that the right strategy is to withhold leadership targets. You've got to have somebody over there whom you're going to have to deal with when it comes time to stop the war, for whatever reason. Let's just assume that you decide to withhold that target. Or you're going to strike only military targets, you're going to withhold industrial targets.

Then you start asking what does a withhold mean? Is the other side going to know you've withheld? *I'm only getting hit by 600 nukes, not 700 nukes. They're not hitting the following categories*. That's crazy, not going to happen. We had a precision built into the system in terms of the kind of advice you provide the President, as to what he's doing as he makes these choices, that I think frankly was probably totally unrealistic in terms of expecting that somehow it made sense to withhold targets and that that would send some kind of a signal to the other side, because it clearly wouldn't. I mean, a nuclear attack is a nuclear attack is a nuclear attack in my mind, once you go to that level, with respect to dealing with the Soviets. As I say, so I wasn't

that big a fan of the way the structure was put together anyway in terms of how it worked and how a President would actually operate.

You can't help but spend time as you look at those kinds of issues and think about the circumstances under which you get the President out of bed in the middle of the night and say, "Mr. President, the Soviets have launched and you've got 25 minutes to decide whether you're going to launch or not and here are your choices. What do you want me to do?" It's not very realistic. So when I started to think about deterrence, I cared a lot about survivable assets. Because survivable assets were the only assets that were really going to allow you to make an informed, intelligent decision about how to respond. The nuclear Navy and the ballistic missile base submarine struck me as especially valuable, something I would not want to give up.

Zelikow: Which would move you away from a force posture that relied on launch-on-warning.

Cheney: Yes. I don't think launch on warning is realistic, personal view. We're geared for that; it's probably important that the other side understand that we're equipped to do that, but I think realistically, most Presidents wouldn't do it. Not unless you had an awful lot of warning time. You know, you had a crisis building over a period of weeks, so everybody is leaning forward and stood up and you're high alert and you've got a fully generated force and then you're ready to roll. Then, maybe under those circumstances you might launch on warning. But short of that, I think it would be very hard for anybody in those circumstances to pull the trigger on the basis of warning information, satellite input, saying they've launched.

Zelikow: So, survivable assets.

Cheney: Survivable assets are very important.

Zelikow: Survivable assets that are able to destroy what kinds of targets in the enemy country?

Cheney: I would say obviously you're going to go after their military targets, prime military targets. You clearly want to go after their strategic forces. I think you want to destroy their economy. Those are all legitimate targets.

Zelikow: So then in force sizing, did you get into the issues of how much of their forces, how much of their economy do we need to be able to hold at risk? Then how do we communicate to them that this is what we are able to do? Or do we just think it is self-evident?

Cheney: They can sit down—they do their own targeting—they can sit down and look at the number of weapons we have and have some idea of what we can hold at risk. A lot of it has been in the public literature, doesn't take a genius to figure out what you're going to go after. We know they've spent a lot of time thinking about it, expended vast sums digging those deep underground shelters they've got that they think would protect them in that kind of an attack. So my conclusion obviously was that we could do what we needed to do with a lot fewer weapons than we'd built and deployed.

Zelikow: Did you feel by the end of the Administration, before we come back to the arms control piece of this, but as far as nuclear targeting, review of nuclear posture had gone, that you had pretty much reached a successful culmination? If the Administration had been returned to office, did you feel there was still unfinished business to do in this realm or did you feel that your work was done?

Cheney: We'd done a couple of things. Not only had we done the review—that provided us with good information and hopefully information that would be available down the road for others, that would allow you to make intelligent, informed decisions about arms control strategies and how many warheads you could go down to. We put that proposal on the table ourselves and, as you've mentioned, got START II signed up to before we left office.

We did another thing too, though. We changed the structure in Omaha and for the first time tied together the Navy and the Air Force strategic capabilities here. Went to SAC commander rotating between the Air Force and the Navy, which was a new development. So all of a sudden every other commander out at SAC is a Navy admiral. Pulling those together better helped a lot. In the old days you still had your targeting done in a central location, but you didn't have a kind of joint command that we established out in Omaha on our watch. So there were some changes like that.

Zelikow: The President and Brent would have been, I assume, very supportive. You would have briefed them from time to time on your progress, Brent especially.

Cheney: Yep.

Zelikow: Were they, or especially Brent, prodding you in any particular direction or just welcoming what you were doing?

Cheney: Brent was supportive of it. I don't know whether I ever had it in one of my weekly reports. It was more the kind of thing I'd likely have briefed the President on orally, because of the sensitivity of it. In terms of trying to direct us, I think we probably had them over—I have a recollection, I'd have to check, I'm fuzzy on this—of having them come over and doing a briefing in the Sit Room in the White House for Brent and the President at one point, sort of on the results of our targeting study. People whose minds are sharper than mine would have to go back and look at what was communicated.

Brent, in terms of the arms control stuff, he would have been driving that process and had a great interest in it. De-MIRVing was something he believed was very important, and I think he was right. The notion of land-based MIRVs being a destabilizing factor and moving to single warhead systems, that obviously became an integral part of the START II agreement. Brent, my recollection is Brent was the prime driver behind that. The study would have helped facilitate that, just because it gave us the flexibility and the leeway to have some things we could give away.

Zelikow: What were the origins of the September '91 move, the unilateral pull back? The targeting review would have laid the conceptual groundwork in which this was possible. You've

described the origins of that review. It was well advanced, I take it, by the summer of 1991. Do you have any strong recollections about the origins of the decision—so things are happening in the Soviet Union, let's do something very rapidly to try to get some of these weapons out of the way.

Cheney: Well, things were happening. I was fishing for steelhead on the Dean River in British Columbia —it was a great trip—when I got the call to come back to Washington because Don Atwood called me to tell me there was a coup underway in Moscow. Blew a great fishing trip. But I was a loyal troop, and there was a picture that ran later on of me getting off the plane out at Andrews with my fly rod in hand. Jim Baker was at his ranch in Wyoming. We all flew back. I can remember, I think it was Brent, in my recollection it was Brent, in effect saying that the President wanted to be able to respond to what had happened to Gorbachev in this aborted coup and wanted to take advantage of these latest developments to really try to make a major breakthrough in the arms area. What could we do?

I'm trying to recall all the initiatives now. As I recall, we took the bomber force off alert, the first time since the '50s. We re-deployed all of our tactical nukes off our ships at sea except for the submarines with their missiles. Re-deployed some of the stuff back from Europe. I think made the offer, as I recall, for further reductions in strategic forces in September.

Zelikow: So really the White House kind of framed the question that you folks—

Cheney: Said, "We want a major initiative. Go tell us what you can do," kind of thing. But I would—

Zelikow: But the idea of doing it unilaterally and not trying to burden the bilateral negotiating process.

Cheney: I think that was Brent and the President.

Zelikow: But not a problem for you. Under the circumstances, you thought that—

Cheney: I'd have to give General Powell some credit in this area. I mean, he certainly influenced my thinking on it. He was not a big fan of tactical nukes. He'd been looking for, was eager to find, roles and missions. He had to do his—I can't remember, every two or three years the chairman has to do a review of roles and missions. He was looking for something to kill. He never believed in this notion of an 8-inch Howitzer firing a nuclear round and that the Army somehow needed a nuclear mission. So he had consistently chipped away at this notion that we needed tactical nuclear weapons in the U.S. Army, for example. This fit with that, and he had been arguing successfully, and I think correctly, that this was a mission we could get rid of. That kind of thinking would have found us receptive, not resistant, when they said they wanted a package of stuff that we could put on the table. I think it was Brent and the President who basically said, "We want to do something. We want to do it unilaterally. We want as big an impact as possible."

McCall: How did this go down further down the ranks?

Cheney: Nobody marched on my office, but they wouldn't. I don't recall any significant resistance to it, I really don't. At this point the services were more concerned about hanging onto their basic force structure. I don't know that there were many senior leaders in the U.S. Army who were eager to retain the right to launch nuclear weapons out of their artillery pieces, the short range missiles. We'd had some trouble with some of that stuff anyway: storage, warheads, and so forth. There had been some problems that had developed. It was old, difficult to maintain. If there was resistance to it down in the building, it never surfaced at my level.

Zelikow: I think you've also partly already answered the questions about the origins of START II and some of the shaping issues there. Did you and Brent disagree about the future of land-based ICBMs [Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles]? You mentioned that Brent was very strongly in favor of moving toward a de-MIRVed posture and that you agreed with that.

Cheney: I recall a debate, not so much within the context of START II as within the discussion over what we were going to do with land-based ICBMs, in connection with the authorization-appropriation process in the Congress. It was figured in the budget debates discussion one year, maybe in '90. Brent arguing basically for going to Midgetman, single warhead ICBM. Of course, the ICBM force had been MIRVed with the Minuteman's freeze and with the Peacekeepers. The other option was to go with a road mobile or rail mobile Peacekeeper, in effect, as I recall. I remember discussions with Brent on that. I think that one even went to the President but I can't remember whether we ended up with a compromise of some kind. In the end, we didn't do either one, obviously.

Zelikow: Do you even remember which side you had in the argument?

Cheney: Yes, I would have been probably an advocate of the rail mobile system for Peacekeeper. I'd been a Peacekeeper advocate in the Congress and it was something we had in hand, we had 50 of them. They were being deployed. Midgetman was still a hypothetical construct, nobody had built yet, recently, a new single warhead system. And the Soviets were going to road-mobile MIRVed systems as well. But I must say, I think in the end Brent was right and of course in START II, in the package, we finally went with that, part of that was to de-MIRV the land-based force.

McCall: Can I interject a question here? Where did either rogue nation capabilities or non-Soviet proposed Soviet capabilities figure into calculations for deterrence and also for what your support would be for one system or another?

Cheney: The main way that the issue of rogue nations having capability came up was in connection with SDI. I think of it within that context, not within the context of the SIOP or our overall strategic forces. Of course, there what we did, we did modify SDI in fairly significant ways, downsize it, redirect it. In the direction instead of the total shield, the ability to deal with—I can't remember—limited. . . .

Zelikow: I do remember Brilliant Pebbles.

Cheney: Brilliant Pebbles was a part of this. It was important, SDI was one of those things we wanted to keep alive although we had to downsize it to keep it going. There was fairly strong support for it, Wolfowitz, civilian, OSD side of the house. Military didn't like it at all.

Zelikow: SDI?

Cheney: SDI. Because it took money away from programs that they would rather have, so there was never any great enthusiasm on the part of the uniformed military for SDI.

Zelikow: Did you like it a lot?

Cheney: I thought it was important. I thought it was important for us to try to develop that capability. I am to this day a deep believer that there is a growing threat out there from non-Russian areas. If anybody had gone through the Gulf War and talked to the Israelis every morning about how many SCUDs had come down that night and knew how ineffective we were in terms of dealing with the SCUDs, you begin to think about that vulnerability that clearly exists still today to a ballistic missile threat.

Even if it's a short-range, cobbled together crude system like what the Iraqis used against us over there, I thought—did then and think probably still today—it is the biggest single vulnerability we've got. Whether we're talking about forces deployed overseas or eventually a potential threat to the homeland here in the United States. That some form of defense is appropriate and doable. We may not be there yet, but we certainly need to make the investment and keep working the issue. Also, it was an important part of the Reagan legacy. Brent was never a big fan of SDI. I think he probably is more supportive today than he was then.

Zelikow: Did you think, to follow up on James's question, did you think our offensive forces were configured the way they needed to be to deal with post-Cold War threats and rogue state threats? Or was this an issue that you would have dealt with in the next Administration?

Cheney: There clearly was a need to reassess what we had. Without question what we had, had been developed as a result of the expected threats and scenarios of the Cold War. Big land-based forces, able to take on the Soviets in Western Europe, and a Navy that could fight a global nuclear conflict. We all know what the Cold War force looked like. We always had this discussion, and Les Aspin occasionally used to say, "Gee, it still looks like the old Cold War force. You've still got big heavy divisions," and so forth.

The intriguing thing is, the first time we had to use it in the post-Cold War period, lo and behold we're up against Soviet-style divisions with Soviet equipment and that's what we're doing down there in the desert with the crazy Iraqis. That was the most immediate threat. Fortunately we had the forces to deal with it, but there were problems we started to look at. One of the problems I remember from Desert Storm was when we took 7th Corps to the desert and decided we were going to move them clear out to the west and have them do the end around. We didn't have any way to get them there, because our divisions are rail mobile. We've got railroads in the U.S., we've got railroads in Europe. Thank God for the reunification of Germany and the heavy equipment transporters the Russians had bought for the East German forces, because those are

the trucks we sent to the desert that let us move all the Abrams and all the Bradleys out to the desert and launch that flanking maneuver that 7th Corps ran against Saddam Hussein.

Zelikow: I don't think that I had understood that we had used East German heavy transporters.

Cheney: East German HETs, that's what allowed us to do it without tearing up the tanks before we ever got to the launch point. So there clearly are things that need to be done, but the difficulty, especially in that period of time I was Secretary, was that it wasn't clear yet what. You could see certain weaknesses in the force. Frankly we weren't really equipped—you look at things like Panama, and all of the Army vehicles are basically tracked vehicles. No armored vehicle that isn't tracked. Now that may sound silly, but that creates a problem. There are just a hell of a lot of places in the world where you don't need a tracked armored vehicle, rubber tires are great and a lot more efficient and capable of doing whatever you need to have done.

I think you can make a strong case that the Army needs to invest in a fairly significant modernization program. The difficulty at this stage, even at this late date, is it is not exactly clear what that ought to be. Buzzwords out there like it has to be lighter and more lethal. Okay, but what does it look like? What kind of hardware are you going to buy? What kind of weapons systems you going to put on them? How are you going to deploy it? All those kinds of questions. As we've seen in the end, the areas we really care about—like the Gulf, and the world's supply of oil—heavy forces are probably still going to be required. So maybe it makes more sense to invest in pre-positioning your heavy stuff in theater over there so you can get to it in a crisis and respond appropriately. It's not clear, even at this late date, I don't think, exactly what that force ought to look like. Certainly we haven't got the money, or haven't up till now, appropriated the money to build it.

McCall: There were a lot of unexpected twists in the Gulf War, not just the HET issues and things like that, but also the capabilities of our forces vis-à-vis Soviet forces, or Soviet-style forces.

Cheney: Yep.

McCall: I'm thinking of Sable rounds going through berms in and out of a T-64, or something like that. A lot of that has come public more or less in terms of lore and not in a systematized fashion. How was this digested within DoD, these sorts of lessons?

Cheney: One of the things that I felt especially good about in connection with the Gulf War was the ability of our people to be flexible and adapt, to find new ways to solve old problems. The civilians get a lot of credit for that too. I mean, we had an awful lot of civilian technicians in the field with the troops. Things like J-Stars weren't really operational yet, but we used it. But stuff happens, you're absolutely right. We talked about the heavy equipment transport. I can remember going down, the first heavy division that slated to deploy to the Gulf in that kind of crisis is the 24th, down at Fort Stewart, Georgia. Barry McCaffrey was commanding then.

So after we alerted them and got ready to go, I went down and spent a day down there as they were loading out. Spent time with the families and time with the troops on the line as they loaded up all their gear and so forth. The problem we had with the 24th, they were supposed to go down

to Charleston by rail and then load out on these seven fast ships that we had to get them over there. But the first one pulled in and the guys loaded it up, and when they got through loading it up, it was stuck in the mud in the bottom of Charleston harbor. Couldn't be moved.

Zelikow: The ship?

Cheney: The ship. Turned out we had not figured out how deep the ship was going to sink once you put all the hardware on it. So all of a sudden you've got a 12 or 14 percent increase in your lift requirement in order to get the 24th Division to the desert, because you're going to get eight ships, not seven, if you weren't going to stick them in the mud in the bottom of Charleston harbor. Stuff like that happens all the time.

A good example of something that worked well was the old F-111. When you think about Bob McNamara, what did he call it, the TFX [Tactical Fighter Experimental]? Going to be the Air Force, Navy aircraft. It was too heavy ever for the Navy to use off carriers. We ended up, of course, it was basically a nuclear bomber. I guess we used it against [Muammar] Gaddafi in that raid into Libya. But basically based in the UK with a nuclear mission, sent them to the desert and it turned out with their—I guess it was their infrared sights—flying over the desert at night, they got great return on all the Iraqi tanks. Because of the heating rate, as the sun went down, the steel would cool at a different rate than the sand. So then the guys went and hung what was it, four 500-pound bombs or something like that on each aircraft and sent out a two-plane mission. From 10 or 12,000 feet they could—

Zelikow: Tank plinking.

Cheney: Tank plinking. They could put a bomb on each one of those tanks and it was devastating. But you know, nobody ever sat down before the war and said, "Well, let's see, the F-111 is going to be a great tank killer." That's what the A-10s were for, or other systems. But it turned out that old, decrepit 30-year-old aircraft was a pretty damn good tank killer. So there was a lot of innovation like that that went on that I felt good about, frankly, and I thought was one of the strengths of the U.S. forces.

McCall: How was this digested afterwards? For instance you talked about lift capability, the ability to project forces into the Gulf. There were a lot of stories about the sea lift issues and the air lift issues.

Cheney: We did a massive "lessons learned" study after the war, did it in a couple of ways. I want to say, was it Scooter Libby maybe, working out of OSD for Wolfowitz and company and working also with the Joint staff. It was a major, major effort underway. I think some of it went to the Congress to look at all of the various issues. One of the other things I did was, in the run-up to the Gulf War, there were a lot of things I didn't know about the operation. So we'd set up—I don't think we talked about this, this is the problem with going out of order—set up with Tom Kelly a series of seminars that they ran for me down in the Joint staff. They'd take a day and they'd brief me, "This is how a cruise missile works. This is the technology, this is how we operate with it. This is how you put together the plan for refueling all the aircraft you are going

to have over Iraq on the same night. This is how you penetrate a mine field and get through the barriers." All of the operational questions that I didn't know about.

We did a whole series of those on the run-up to the actual beginning of the operation. Then when it was all over with, I had them repeat all those. We did about, I'd say, 37 separate briefings. We'd bring guys in from the service and guys who'd actually been out in the field, the sergeants and lieutenants, the captains who had actually been out there operating. So you'd get the Apache helicopter crews that took out the early warning radar sites in Iraq the first night. They'd have to come in and brief me, tell me what worked, what didn't work. The service chief would usually come in and sit down with the two of them. We did that, as I say, in I think 37 separate categories after the war was over with. I thought that was a way for me to obviously pulse the system and signal the importance of a lot of these things, but also to find out and get some idea of what worked and what didn't work. There were still and are to this day controversies on things like Patriot, how well did it work and those kinds of issues.

McCall: Did you feel that after that after-action, AR or whatever you want to call it, that there was a method for institutionalizing this in order to get this down into the training and how this was going to be disseminated, these lessons learned?

Cheney: No, I would see it from my level in certain ways. I mean, we invested money and did a much better job of pre-positioning than we ever had done before, for the Army. We got the Army, all of a sudden, very interested in the ships, pre-positioning ships like the Marines had. We invested in certain capabilities to take advantage of the lessons we'd learned there. The Army used to pooh-pooh the Marines' floating supply ships, MPS [Maritime Prepositioning Ships]. But it was clear that initially, the only heavy stuff we had in theater were those ships. We had a *Diego Garcia* we could marry up to the Marine battalions when they first landed in Dhahran. So, there were decisions made, follow-on decisions, to deal with that stuff.

On the other side of it, though, there was also a concern that—and here I'm trying to remember who, this used to be repeated frequently—that we learn more from defeats than we do from victories. There was a danger here that for the military, just as there was for the country, that we not think this sort of thing is too easy. That we not fall into the trap of assuming that every time we send 500,000 people someplace to fight a war, we're only going to lose 148 in combat. You've seen it in Kosovo. There are places in the world where things don't work the way they do in the desert, or as easily or as difficult as they do in the desert.

But I'd go back and look at that study that was done. As I say, it was a massive effort, it was lessons learned out of Desert Storm. I believe it was OSD that did the bulk of the work with the services and with the Joint staff. I think Scooter Libby's the guy who headed it up.

Zelikow: We got on this topic really as a way of thinking about nuclear issues, offensive, defensive systems, arms control. Before we leave the area of weapons of mass destruction entirely and just go back to ordinary, run-of-the-mill crises, let me just ask for a moment about biological weapons and the Soviet program. There has now been a wave of public disclosures of information that hitherto was rather highly classified and not all of which was known even by the U.S. government. I assume you became aware of the lingering concerns we had about the Soviet

biological weapons program. I was curious about whether or not you considered that an important issue or whether it prompted you—if it had any policy implications for you in your evaluation of the Soviet Union or arms control.

Cheney: It came up as we got intelligence reports and as I recall, some defectors, people who came out as the Soviet Union fell apart and loosened up. That the Soviets, in violation of the biological weapons convention that they'd signed back in—it wasn't a treaty as I recall, just an executive agreement in effect.

Zelikow: No, it's a real live treaty.

Cheney: But there's no verification involved, I guess. It was one of the problem arms control agreements. But anyway, in clear violation of that, they had in fact maintained and continued a robust biological weapons program. The intelligence reporting showed that. Of course, we'd gotten rid of ours. It was a classic case of the Soviets lying, cheating, stealing, whatever you want to call it, not complying with a solemn agreement they'd entered into with the United States to end their biological weapons program. The evidence was conclusive. It wasn't a "maybe they're doing it;" it was in fact clear-cut violation. And I thought it was important for us as we went forward, especially with Gorbachev and later Yeltsin, that we hammer them on their noncompliance and that we get that problem fixed, that they should come into compliance.

I don't know what the status of it is today. It was an issue that made everybody uncomfortable. To some extent, in terms of it affecting our policy, we didn't run out and start up a biological weapons program obviously. It just served to reinforce my skepticism about the Soviets. Also, I did not like the chemical weapons convention. I had been, at the end of the Reagan Administration, in January maybe, at a meeting I think in Paris to which I was invited by George Shultz. He was going over, sort of his swan song. Part of it was to sign or had to do with the chemical weapons.

Zelikow: I believe that was the signing.

Cheney: I think that was it. Anyway, I went along. I think Shultz was just being nice to me because I'd worked with him some during the Reagan Administration and known him all the way back to the Nixon years. But I never liked—

Zelikow: I'm not sure that was the signing. I'm just not sure.

Cheney: I can't remember exactly. I do remember going to Paris with Shultz and chemical weapons was the item on the agenda and began a national conference. Later on Brent and I used to argue about the chemical weapons treaty and we still argue about it today. I don't like entering into arms control agreements on the notion that we have to do something about the problem. I think then you start to operate and get people operating based on the arms control agreement even though it may in fact not do what needs to be done, even though it may not deal effectively with biological weapons or whatever it's targeted at. The arms control agenda takes on a life of its own and what becomes important is the technical compliance, but not substantive compliance. So you can have the Iraqis signed up to a nonproliferation regime and inspections by the

International Atomic Energy Agency. And over here, on the side, they've got a nuclear weapons program, but everybody is happy because over here they're dotting the i's and crossing the t's. Part of my skepticism on some of the arms control agreements.

The strategic systems, START and so forth, I never had that much problem with, because you can count by national technical means. You know how many missiles they've got. You know how they test them and what forms and so forth. But when you get into the area of chemical and biological weapons it's much tougher. As I say, I was and today remain a skeptic about those kinds of agreements. I think the Soviets' failure to comply with that treaty is proof, if you needed any, that you have to be very cautious about those kinds of treaties.

Zelikow: I notice in your account you've made a couple of references to meetings with foreign counterparts, not a lot. Do you think that mil-mil diplomacy really accomplishes a lot? It gets a lot of emphasis and attention in the last ten years.

Cheney: Accomplishes as much as what the State Department does. [laughs] It depends. I think the U.S. Secretary of Defense carries a special portfolio around the world. We shouldn't ignore or underestimate how important it is to the Koreans to have the U.S. Secretary of Defense show up for their annual bilateral whatever it is that you do with the Koreans, where you sit down and you consult, and you have an agenda, and you have a communiqué that's issued at the end of it, and are seen to be cooperating.

It's important to set that tone at the top levels. I think it has an impact on everything from arms sales and how they design their force and joint training exercises, interoperability of the forces. I think we got some significant benefits in the Gulf War because we could move in on the air base at Dhahran and it was all ready to go, better than any base we had for our F-15s because that was exactly what the Saudis had built and designed.

I think the military cooperation and the meetings, sometimes they're interminable—I can remember a couple of absolutely deadly evenings that I'd still like to forget today—but you have to do a certain amount of that. I remember one, when we went to the Philippines. Eddie [Fidel] Ramos was the defense minister and I think Cory Aquino was then the President, but this was a disaster in several respects, partly because I was burned in effigy while I was there. My wife was with me and we were in a hotel downtown Manila and turned on the *Today* show one morning. And on the *Today* show was running film footage, I guess probably broadcast live at that point out in front of the hotel of me being burned in effigy, and I didn't know about it until I turned on the *Today* show and could see they were torching me. This was after the Philippine coup attempt. She had been embarrassed by all of that and in fact refused to see me on that trip. But Ramos hosted me, good guy and he did a good job. They were trying to make up for some of the problems and the difficulties, so he put on a dinner for me that just went on and on and on, and all these troops from every island in the Philippines came in to entertain and the entertainment lasted about four hours.

But it's an important part of the job. As I say, there were times when it would get a little old. But you could control it. A lot of stuff I would delegate to Atwood if it was somebody I didn't especially want to spend a lot of time with. Don was good at picking up the slack on that kind of

thing. But it was also the U.S. Secretary of Defense, the guy who speaks for and nominally is in charge of the world's most formidable military forces, especially after you do Desert Storm. You know, when you hit town, everybody notices.

Zelikow: What I'd like to do now is shift gears and go to Panama. Do you need a break?

Cheney: Yes, I need to make a short phone call here too. So why don't we take a short break.

[BREAK]

Zelikow: On Panama, I wanted to start the story a little bit earlier. Not with Just Cause in December, not even with the October abortive coup, but go back to the spring of '89, shortly after you come on board.

Cheney: All right.

Zelikow: Because in the spring there is a lot of attention being given in the Administration to Panama, especially in May. This coincides with the time at which the decision is made to pull out General Woerner and send General Thurman in. My question for you is, when you came into office, did you come into office already predisposed towards taking military action if necessary to remove General Noriega from power? Had you already formulated a view about American vital interests and intervention in Panama?

Cheney: No, I can't say that I had. I had been involved in the Central American policy debate, which by this point has raged for some years. It was focused especially on Nicaragua and El Salvador and the Contras and the controversy over the Reagan Administration policies. Then of course, the follow-on to that, the year I spent as the senior Republican of the Iran-Contra committee. Central America was front and center during that period of time in ways it hadn't been before.

I'd been a congressional observer in the first presidential election in El Salvador, when they held those. I'd been to Nicaragua and spent time with what's his name, the Contra leaders and the Sandinistas.

Zelikow: [Enrique] Bermudez.

Cheney: And the bad guys too. I've forgotten their names now, the Sandinistas. So this wasn't a new area for me at all. It had been—now we sometimes forget—but it had been a fairly significant set of issues in the mid-'80s. As I say, I'd been in at the heart of the greatest embarrassment the Reagan Administration had dealt with. Panama was viewed as an area—Noriega was clearly a problem. The Reagan Administration had been heavily engaged in trying to talk him out of power. Hadn't worked, but this wasn't a new issue. He'd been around for a

while. It had been difficult. You had the whole legacy of allegations of narcotics and corruption and so forth.

Then we had the election. I don't remember when the election was, but I can't say that I'd entered office as Secretary of Defense expecting to commit forces to Panama. We had forces in Panama. I hadn't been to Panama. We were there already. Because of the debate that we'd had before, there was an absolute significant body of opinion—I didn't share that view—but a significant body of opinion that said the U.S. did too much when we put 50 advisors in El Salvador. You know, send thousands of troops to topple a regime in Central America? It wasn't an everyday conversation or discussion. There wasn't anybody who was really arguing that at that point.

Those of us who had been supporters of the Reagan policies were just trying to get something going by way of providing support and sustenance for the folks who were opposed to the Sandinistas. Not just the Contras, but politically inside Nicaragua too. Try to continue to work in El Salvador against the guerrillas and support democratic processes there and so forth. At this stage, a lot of those issues were still in doubt.

Zelikow: When did you begin seriously considering the question of readiness to use force? Because the White House was clearly beginning to contemplate that possibility in the spring, at the time that they wanted the change of command. President Bush had actually staked out during the campaign a fairly hawkish, fairly aggressive stance on Noriega and actually had distinguished himself from the Reagan Administration in that particular area. So I'm trying to get a sense of when you really begin considering the fact that, "Gosh, we may have to think about going to war down there and how do I think about that?"

Cheney: I don't recall. I was just trying to think of the evolution of my own thought. I don't recall any specific thing on Panama until a conversation with Brent about Woerner, at which point I then engaged in finding a replacement, Max Thurman. Called Woerner in and relieved him. I thought that was sometime in the summer but I don't recall the date. Maybe June, July maybe. We had a lot of other things going on too. Panama was still an issue—I don't want to downplay its significance—but it was just one of many things we were doing: CFE, I'm getting confirmed, I'm appointing people, I'm trying to get a budget through the Congress. Battleship blew up, what was it, the *Iowa*, the problem on there. The Alaskan oil spill. There was a lot of stuff kicking around at that point. The whole Gorbachev developments in Eastern Europe.

So Panama would have been just one of many things, and I don't recall any serious conversation about using military force there until after we got Max Thurman in place. Then what I recall is that our conversations with General Powell were about doing contingency planning in effect. The code name then for the operation was Blue Spoon, I don't know who came up with that one. I guess they used to have a computer in the basement of the Pentagon that kicked out code words and somehow it kicked out Blue Spoon for Panama. We thought that didn't make a lot of sense and so we ended up with Just Cause. We unplugged the computer after that. [*Laughter*] People working for us came up with things like Desert Storm and Just Cause and so forth.

There were times once Max arrived where we started running exercises in Panama, sending troops out to operate in various places, partly to bug Noriega, but to keep our guys on their toes and to sort of test the Panamanian reaction and begin to understand. Max was doing some of that at the theater level in Panama. We had another problem, we had a guy who had been working for the CIA who'd been imprisoned.

Zelikow: [Kurt] Muse, I think.

Cheney: Imprisoned by the Panamanians. We'd actually planned an operation to go in and get him at one point. In the end we did that at the same time we took down the PDF in December. It would be after Thurman's arrival that I would begin thinking in terms of possible use of force within the Panamanian context.

Zelikow: Let me play the role of critic here for a moment, that's our job. A critic could make the argument that you're already in a position where you put someone in charge who's developing a war plan. You've already used terms like "bugging him." It's almost as if you are kind of hoping you can pick a fight that will give you an excuse to go get him. You're already beginning to lean towards a situation where you're going to find yourself committing forces there. Then the question would be, what's the American vital interest? How are you analyzing the vital interests of the United States in sending our people to combat to topple this ruler, in a situation where you're sliding towards it already?

Cheney: You had a couple of other things, though, you have to remember: You had the elections. A democratically-elected government and Noriega wouldn't let them take power. What's his name—

Zelikow: [Guillermo] Endara.

Cheney: —Endara beaten in the streets by the "dignity battalions." It was a pretty messy situation. Remember, we didn't pull the trigger until the final act when one of our people was killed, off-duty, at a roadblock in Panama City. That was the action-forcing event in my mind and in the mind of the President and I think the rest of us who were involved. That clearly crossed over the line because we had a right to be there. We had thousands of troops stationed in the canal zone. We had for nearly 100 years. Our ability to send people down there to deploy them obviously was threatened if in fact our off-duty military personnel were going to be murdered by Panamanian forces. That was the action-forcing event.

Now, clearly we were leaning forward. We had troops down there that we had deployed; we had contingency plans ready to go in case we needed it. And it's a good thing we did. But if we'd been as forward leaning as you suggest, we wouldn't have missed the opportunity that the October 1st coup attempt represented.

Zelikow: Then it's interesting, it's just interesting to hear the way you're describing it. I don't want to over-interpret what you've said. For instance, you haven't really said anything about outstanding indictment and so forth. Is it alone sufficient to justify the use of force, for instance.

Cheney: For an indictment?

Zelikow: That he's been indicted. Because some people even in '88 thought so after the indictment came down.

Cheney: I always—

Zelikow: The indictment, the rigged and broken election. You basically have a bad guy running a place we care about. That situation's there by mid-'89.

Cheney: I think he even declared war on us at one point, didn't he in one of his speeches or something? I have a vague recollection of that.

Zelikow: A machete was waved.

Cheney: Right. There was a lot of provocation, but the indictment was always viewed—I thought at least—as something we'd rather would not have happened. Now, it happened back in the Reagan Administration. It clearly put us in a posture where now we've got an indicted drug trafficker who's in charge in Panama, and it made it more difficult to deal with the situation, not less difficult. The action-forcing event was the death of the American serviceman.

Zelikow: That's very helpful because that tells me something about the way you perceive our interests. I know you can't speak for other people, but clearly for you, some kind of action-forcing event like that was necessary in order to have a compelling case for intervention. But don't let me put words in your mouth.

Cheney: No, I think that's true. I think if you look at the other issues that were there, I mean we obviously marshal all the arguments we could once we decided to go. Restore the rightful government of Panama that's been democratically elected, et cetera. But the action-forcing event, the thing that crossed the line for me—and I think this is an accurate statement for the President too—was when our guy got killed. Then you're in a situation where American lives are clearly at stake. You've got thousands of Americans down there, not only the military community that was there for good and legitimate reasons, a lot of other citizens living down there as well. That was the event. At that point, we felt justified in using the force.

Zelikow: Why did you think Noriega or his people, however well controlled they were, were being so belligerent?

Cheney: Who the hell knows? The villains of the world sometimes do stupid things, that's why they're villains. He was one of those. I think he also never believed we'd do it. There were two guys out there who seriously underestimated George Bush. One of them was Noriega, the other was Saddam Hussein. He'd watched the trauma and the turmoil of the '80s down there. Ronald Reagan had the Iran-Contra embarrassment. Hell, we had trouble even providing the M-16s to people fighting against the Sandinistas. We had trouble getting an officer. You couldn't put one guy into El Salvador until you took another one out, because there was a congressional ceiling on the number of advisors you could have down advising the Salvadoran military.

We looked fairly helpless as contrasted with the way we used to operate in the old days in Latin America, where the U.S. felt free unilaterally to intervene and sort of throw its weight around. We did not do that in Panama until we had the ultimate provocation. At that point obviously we did and I think Noriega was stunned by it. He had no idea that George Bush would actually do that. A lot of other people were stunned by it too. I think of Panama and I think it was the right thing to do. I don't have any doubts about that at all. But I have to say, I think it also was very important because it gave us the opportunity to go through the process of using force and that was very important later on.

McCall: Could you elaborate on that a little bit? What sort of lessons learned in terms of the planning and working together in Panama seemed to be helpful the next time around?

Cheney: The President had the team together. We had to address these issues. We'd done force planning, contingency planning. We had to work the diplomatic circuits. We had to deal with the press and the public and the Congress. We had to figure out what our goals and objectives were and actually mount the operation. It significantly enhanced our interagency capabilities, as I say, partly because back in October we had not responded that well when the first coup attempt was undertaken against Noriega by his own people.

It's like anything else, if you've done it, you have a better feeling about how to do it. About the kinds of information you need, the kinds of decisions you have to make, the relationships among the principals in the operation, how the President likes to operate. I mean, when we did Panama, we did it at night of course. General Powell and myself in the command center and the Pentagon and I had a hot line to the President in the White House, to give him periodic updates and reports. How the chain of command works, those were all useful things to exercise. We didn't think of it in those terms, I mean we did the best thing we could. We obviously had no idea that a year later we'd be doing Desert Storm. But as I say, because administrations don't get training in those kinds of issues of crisis management, the only way to learn it is to do it. We got to do it in Panama before we had to do it in Kuwait.

McCall: Further along the same line, were there any negative lessons learned? I'm thinking in terms of intel. I know there was some criticism about intel and operational, certain disjointedness in that. That there were measures taken after that to make the information flow, work better between—

Cheney: What problem are you thinking of, what issue?

McCall: There seemed to be a HUMINT [Human Intelligence] problem. There seemed to be a disjoint between what was coming in from the field and how that was being delivered to the services. Also some discussion back and forth between Agency, DoD, what was going through the NSC. Part of this ended up being handled through deputies, so on and so forth.

Cheney: I'm not familiar with that. I don't recall there was a problem.

Zelikow: This is also a shakedown for you, establishing the civil-military relationship in an actual use of force. What do you remember about what you got out of that experience, or anything that was difficult for you or frustrating for you? Or did this work very smoothly in your judgment? That is, the chain of command, your role in the chain of command, your oversight over military strategy and military planning.

Cheney: It worked reasonably well. I came away from it, though, telling myself I was going to be tougher the next time around, in terms of questioning why we did certain things. We talked a little earlier about the F-117s. I got thoroughly briefed on what was going to happen, what units were involved, when we were going to do it, how the thing was going to flow. We had a weather problem as I recall, planes flying out of Pope carrying the brigade of the 82nd got delayed by an ice storm or some such thing. Like everything else, stuff happens, and it did in Panama too. You've got to be able to adapt and adjust to that.

One of the things that was fairly prominent in my mind—well, I'll start thinking about it now—one was this enormous desire on the part of the guys to use the force once the decision is made. So the Air Force has got to have a role, and the Air Force doesn't just want to send in the C-130 gun ship, they want the 117 stealth bomber to go down and drop bombs. I didn't think we needed to do that. I'd questioned it when it was first laid on me, and the response was to send two instead of four. But I looked at that afterwards, it got to be a bit of an embarrassment. There was some story in the *New York Times* as I recall, Michael Gordon or something, wrote a story: There was a dispute with the Air Force about whether or not they hit the target even. Minor stuff, but it reinforced the notion that it was part of my responsibility to lean on the system and when I saw something goofy, to say, "That looks goofy. Let's check it out."

The role of the press was a significant item here too. We had developed over the years and had actually practiced on a number of occasions this notion of a press pool when we were going to do a deployment like that. We had press people on standby. You'd call them up, put them on an airplane. They'd show up with a bag. They wouldn't know where they were going, but they would then deploy with the force and be able to cover the operation. We did that in this case, but once we got them on the ground down there, pretty well kept them bottled up so they didn't really get to cover much of the operation. Part of that was a lack of coordination between our operation at the Pentagon, the press operation, and what was going on in Max's command down in Panama. It turned out that the guys who were down there on their own got to cover more of the operation than did the people we had sent with our forces to cover the operation.

That created a bit of a flap we had to deal with, but that's a continuing problem in every operation. I can remember getting a phone call from New York—we had reporters trapped in a hotel, in the Marriott or something. They ended up on the telephone calling their home office in New York, and then we got a phone call from the home office in New York to Pete Williams, saying you've got to rescue my guys and get them out of the hotel. What they wanted us to do is to send troops over to get them. Of course the troops had other things to do, other missions, and they were going to put our guys at risk to go rescue some reporter who was too stupid to stay in the hotel and stay out of trouble. That was a problem.

[redacted]

Zelikow: Any other reflections on Panama that you'd like to get on the record? Any misunderstandings before we move off Panama and on to something else?

Cheney: No, not that I can think of. I think the Panama operation in the end worked pretty well. As I say, you always have some foul-ups. Because I'd looked fairly closely at Lebanon in the past, to Grenada, been there right after the Grenada operation, involved in the Goldwater-Nichols debate, I look at Panama and say, "We fixed those problems." My general conclusion was we had. It wasn't perfect, but we hadn't done badly.

Zelikow: Those problems, which you mentioned yesterday, you had especially emphasized a variety of command and control environments.

Cheney: Fuzziness over command, who's running the show, not a joint operation. You know Max Thurman was very good as the CINC, the theater commander. Felt we had good, tight control over the operation, chain of command, worked well. Military got to plan and execute the operation the way they should. I thought the interaction between the civilians and the military was pretty good.

Zelikow: And no regrets on any judgments you had made personally? No kicking yourself about?

Cheney: I must say if had it to do over again I'd tell the Air Force to forget it about the 117's. As I say, I cut it in half, but I could have been tougher.

Zelikow: All right. I want to turn to the Philippines. There was this mini-crisis that happened before the Panama invasion. You remember the setting. Aquino is the President.

Cheney: Now, let's see. Aquino's the President. There's a military revolt, I guess a coup attempt would be the best way to put it.

Zelikow: And Aquino has put in a request with our ambassador—who I think was Nick Platt, if my memory is right—for some military support.

Cheney: She wanted us to bomb the rebels.

Zelikow: Yes.

Cheney: That's what I recall. [laughs]

Zelikow: Not to put too fine a point on it.

Cheney: I still remember when I went on my visit to the Philippines then a little later, going to their equivalent of the Pentagon, Defense Ministry headquarters, and going up the stairs to Ramos's office. There somebody had put a 50-caliber round right through the wall. There would still be smoke stains, because there had been earlier coups, you know. They had never quite cleaned up after the last one. It was quite a place. But yes, there was an attempt by some in the military, disloyal units, to overthrow her. She asked for help. It happened, this is I guess about the time of the Malta summit. President and Brent—

Zelikow: Folks were en route.

Cheney: Right. President and Brent were en route, in the air. We ultimately decided we didn't want to bomb the rebel positions, which is what she had requested. Rather that we would put some aircraft over Manila. We thought if we had U.S. aircraft in the air, that would ground the Philippine air units that were disloyal, which it did. Allow the rebellion to be put down, which it did.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Zelikow: Let me get you to reflect constructively on that episode for a moment, because this is the problem of the President being out of town when something happens.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: That can happen again.

Cheney: Sure.

Zelikow: What would be your suggestion—or maybe folks thought about this at the time—if something else breaks again, the President's out of town, but we need to really get our act together at a very high level that engages someone like the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the JCS. How should we best do that? How should that interagency deliberation be organized in the President's absence? I'm assuming, because radio communication with an airplane and some of these out-of-town places can be awkward or have security issues.

Cheney: Well, I would disagree with that. I think in this day and age communications isn't really a problem. We spend a hell of a lot of money on it and it's pretty good. The way you cope with that, that's what the deputies' committee is for. Somebody's always on the road someplace. It's rare when you can have an NSC meeting that hasn't been scheduled long in advance when somebody's not there. When the balloon first went up in the Gulf, Baker was in Mongolia, as I recall.

Zelikow: Siberia.

Cheney: Siberia. Someplace way the hell out there and then came back through Moscow. The coup attempt in Moscow, Jim's in the mountains in Wyoming, I'm on a remote wilderness river in British Columbia, Pete Williams is on a pack trip in the Wind Rivers. You know, everybody's scattered, so you come back together to deal with it.

But to deal with it in a moment, the way it should work is the deputies' committee is set up and established to function in exactly that kind of setting. To receive intelligence, to formulate options and to communicate up to the next level to the NSC members and to the President various and sundry options. In the end, obviously, if it's the use of force, it's a presidential decision about whether or not you're going to do that. You might have to be consulting with one or another through communication channels of various kinds, but as I say, I think the communications capabilities these days are very, very good and that's the way to manage it.

Zelikow: Imagine a scenario in which the President is traveling and he's accompanied by, say, the Deputy National Security Advisor, which is common enough. Let's suppose Brent had been there and Brent calls the meeting in the Sit Room to discuss what to do.

Cheney: No problem.

Zelikow: All right. That's basically a principals meeting that Brent chairs of the principals' committee, which then prepares recommendations to give to the President on the road.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: That doesn't create any issues.

Cheney: No problem.

McCall: Can I ask a different question? You were talking about the chain of command issue and how advice flows. There's sort of a tension with both the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense offering advice to the President in an NSC meeting, because they're both principals.

Cheney: No, they're not. Chairman's an advisor to the NSC. He's not a member of the NSC.

McCall: Okay, but did you find a tension between what might be coming through General Powell and through yourself?

Cheney: Well, there might be if you didn't pick the right chairman. As I mentioned when we got into the arms control area, we worked hard to keep that glued together. I did not want—and General Powell was generally very good about this—did not want to get into a situation where there's split information and advice coming in from the Defense Department into the NSC or into the President. It was my job to manage that. Because of the relationship I had with General Powell and because of his understanding of it all, I mean he'd been there and seen it. He'd been the assistant to the Secretary and the NSC advisor and he'd watched it in other Administrations. He'd been over cleaning up the mess after Iran-Contra in the West Wing. So we had a pretty good understanding of how we wanted to operate functionally even when we disagreed, which we sometimes did.

We were able to go in and give the President good advice and let him ask all the questions he wants and make sure everything gets looked at. General Powell wants to make certain we're adequately considering the sanctions options. "Come on, Colin, I'll take you over and make your case to the President." That's how you manage that sort of thing. I don't think we ever got to the point where there were fundamental differences between us that led to debates or differences in front of the President, for example. I think we managed it fairly well. I feel good about it. As I look back on it, I think the President was well served by it. I also think we avoided the kind of mess you get if you've got the Chairman going one way and the Secretary going another.

McCall: Were there more complications during the Desert Storm period or the run-up to Desert Storm, in terms of how that information flow was handled? How much leeway you gave to the Chairman?

Cheney: Were there complications?

McCall: Were there more complications then? Or was that just the usual friction if there were?

Cheney: No, I think there were some differences between us in terms of how we looked at the situation. Maybe it was more pronounced then because what we were doing then was more significant. I mean, if you're talking about a budget item or a weapons system or part of the ongoing sort of management of the Pentagon—that stuff you deal with every day. In the end, the departmental position will be determined by the Secretary. If the Chairman has a different view, you want to make sure that gets communicated to the President, if it's a presidential-level decision. By the same token, if you guys are at odds all the time, then you probably picked the wrong guy for Chairman.

In terms of Desert Storm, there were differences, clearly. We had somewhat differing views when the crisis first developed. I thought it was more serious than he did. Initially, he and I had a session in my office—I think Wolfowitz was there, some others—where General Powell said, "Wait a minute, it's Kuwait. Does anybody really care about Kuwait?" My view was different. My view was that this was a strategic threat to the United States, because if Saddam could take Kuwait, having the biggest army in the region, he could intimidate everybody else and potentially control the world's oil supplies. Then sit there for however long it took and generate enormous wealth and use it to bad purposes. He didn't have to take Saudi Arabia to be able to intimidate the Saudis and dominate the region, all he had to do was take Kuwait and get away with it. Eventually that became the accepted and established view.

I think there clearly were differences in terms of how forward-leaning we wanted to be. General Powell was reluctant to surface military options as quickly as I wanted them surfaced. We got that sorted out and got the options up and ready to go. As I've indicated previously in our conversation, I was convinced from the first, by the time of my trip to Saudi Arabia. The President came down from Camp David and said, "This aggression will not stand." I took that as an indication of whatever it took, he was ready to go. I don't think General Powell reached that point until much later. I think Colin was closer to Jim Baker in terms of leaning, if you will, towards the diplomatic side of solutions, whereas Brent and I were closer to the military end of the spectrum. These are not giant differences. We're not talking about 180 degrees here; we're talking about a relatively narrow set of differences. But I always felt the President, Brent, and I were in alignment and the generals and Jim eventually got there, but were more oriented towards hoping there was some kind of diplomatic resolution and probably more prepared to go farther than we were.

There were a couple of times when I did things—to describe them as differences isn't the right thing—where I used my position to goad the military or to get things to happen that weren't happening the way I wanted them to happen. The western excursion, I don't know how much discussion or thought there's been on that. We had the frustration that came with the first

briefing we got. I think it was Bob Johnson, who was the Marine Chief of Staff, came back and briefed us on the first cut at the offensive options air war/ground war. Air war looks pretty good, ground war nobody likes. Right up the middle into Kuwait, a lot of dissatisfaction with that. This is before we've made the decision to double the size of the force. We're starting to look for ways that we could use what was there offensively against the Iraqis.

In the policy shop, working for Wolfowitz, we had a guy—I'm trying to remember his name now, he was a retired Army three-star, long-time career guy who was back working as a civilian—who sat down and put together a proposal to go clear out to the west. Put maybe a brigade of the 82nd or some kind of force out there astride the Amman-Baghdad highway. To do several things: to cut the road, because that was the main source, the main way in which they were getting around the sanctions. To do something about the SCUD threat, which we anticipated from western Iraq into Israel. And to offensively, aggressively occupy some Iraqi territory. So we looked at various possibilities: send in an armored brigade, brigade of the 82nd Airborne, a helicopter unit, maybe part of the 101st, various possibilities for doing that.

Then I took the plan that he had developed and laid it on the Joint staff and said, "Staff it out." Basic message being, if you guys don't come up with a plan, we're going to. That sent a hell of a ripple down through organization. I can remember, I guess it was December, by then we'd doubled the size of the force. We've got the plan then that we ultimately used, that we're looking at. We were in Riyadh and they're briefing us on the plan for the ground war. They got through laying down all this stuff, going through all of the various elements of it, the divisions.

At the very tail end of the brief, they had one more subject to bring up. And by god, there was the western excursion. They laid that up, not as part of the operation, but all the arguments why we didn't want to do that. The thing still had life months later, just because I had said, "Staff it out, take a look at it." But it helped. It conveyed the notion that one way or another we were going to get a plan here that would allow us to figure out how we could use the force to liberate Kuwait. Up till that point we didn't have one, weren't satisfied with what we'd gotten from the military.

As I say, I think looking back on it—and I mentioned this earlier—there were legitimate reservations on the part of the senior military because they didn't know if we were going to do it right. If we were seriously committed to it and were we prepared to do what needed to be done, call up the Reserves, all the rest of it. I think we ultimately proved we were. But it got easier from them once they came back, General Powell said, "Well, Norm wants six aircraft carriers. He wants three more divisions plus the Marines," et cetera. And we said, "Okay, you've got it." Then there wasn't any doubt that we were deadly serious and we meant business.

I'm trying to think what else I did where I was leaning on the organization. I suppose there was a point at which I did the morning news shows. As I recall Colin was out in the Gulf at this particular point—might have been even when he went out to talk with Norm to see what additional stuff Norm wanted—and I was asked then about the possibility of deploying additional forces. I basically confirmed we were prepared to deploy more forces and that was big news. But it also sent a hell of a signal to the organization that we were serious and we meant business.

McCall: You mentioned yesterday there was an issue of trust-building. Do you feel that was the catalyst, that period right in there where after that it was just a snowball effect, that the civilians are serious?

Cheney: To the extent that there was reluctance to develop options, to come forward with an acceptable plan, that was pretty well dissipated by, I'd say, the end of October, first of November. That was the point at which the President signed off on the additional deployment. We didn't announce it until after the election, but he'd signed up to it at that point. There couldn't be any doubt in anybody's mind then that we were deadly serious. He'd called up the Reserves by then. We'd issued the stop-loss order, no rotation. We were marching down that road. I think all of those things helped persuade people that we were headed in the right direction.

They could also see the planning process unfold. We'd already made some decisions by that point that were radically different from what had been done in Vietnam. Because we did call up the Reserves, because we did deploy as units and bring people home as units, none of this individual rotation stuff. We're planning the air war and we're talking about giving them the whole load the first night of the war, none of the process of gradual escalation. The military's getting to do the target planning, not the NSC or the State Department. All of those things helped to reinforce the notion that we were serious, but also we wanted to do it right. I sense that after that November decision, that what Brent and I used to refer to as the "reluctant generals," the reluctance pretty much died away.

McCall: You also mentioned yesterday in terms of some of this lingering Vietnam syndrome, that there were lessons learned from Vietnam that you were very self-conscious about. You didn't really get into detail yesterday. Were there any overriding things besides issues like keeping the White House out of targeting, letting the military do what it needed to do?

Cheney: The air war, that was a good example. The plan that was put together for that first night of the air war that included using some up till then fairly sensitive stuff. The range of targets we went after, the numbers of aircraft we put up. It was a very robust effort and I think that the whole question of the relationship between the civilian and the military, how that relationship was going to work out, the extent to which we were going to get political support from the President, all of those things. Each time that we came up to one of those decision points, George Bush did it right. I think that as much as anything helped reinforce the notion that we weren't going to make the mistakes that were made then.

What else? The President had a great ability to demonstrate his concern for the troops in wanting to relate to and be engaged with the military, but never in a way that interfered with the chain of command. I can remember, Tony McPeak came back. Tony had been out to the desert. He was still F-15 qualified in those days and had actually been flying exercises with the troops. This was shortly before the air war. Came back and I took him over to the White House, and he and I had lunch with Brent and the President upstairs in the residence one day. Just let Tony brief the President on what was going on: what was going to happen, how it was going to go down— sort of one fighter pilot to another, harking back to his World War II days. He asked a lot of great

questions, but it also gave him a great reassurance that the guys knew what the hell they were doing. That it was going to be okay; it was going to work.

So as I say, I always felt his engagement was the way it ought to be, the way it ought to work. Not, "Gee, I can't do that because there might be a political cost involved, even though it places an additional burden on the military." Like calling out Reserves. So he got it right.

Zelikow: Go back a little bit, I'm just sweeping back through. We've run forward through the Gulf story again some, and I just want to play sweeper again and make sure to try to nail down a few—

Cheney: What have we forgotten?

Zelikow: Well, at the beginning of that, you recounted a conversation you had with General Powell where you both discussed the stakes involved in Kuwait. You recounted what struck me as a fairly well-developed analysis of our stakes. I was trying to get a sense of when that conversation might have happened. Would that have been a conversation, say before the weekend Camp David meeting? Is this the kind of conversation that occurred right after the invasion?

Cheney: It was. It was that very first weekend. I think it's before Camp David.

Zelikow: The other thing that struck me—

Cheney: It may even have been that morning. I have the recollection of having a meeting in my office that morning before we went up to Camp David. It was either then or the day before.

Zelikow: That's very helpful, because another striking thing about that, if you'll forgive my saying so, I thought it was a fairly sophisticated argument about national interests. So I was wondering how you came to those analytical judgments. Were people writing memos?

Cheney: Who briefed me? Who gave me the talking points?

Zelikow: Or were you just sitting back and reflecting on what you thought was at stake? In other words, is this a top-down story, where you really reflected and you made these judgments and communicated them.

Cheney: No, that was my view. I'm sure I would have talked to—

Zelikow: I mean, I'm sure you couldn't let it just sit there and that'll do the job. That was not conventional wisdom on the date you've described.

Cheney: No. I don't have a specific recollection with respect to Paul in this case, but it's the kind of thing Wolfowitz and I would have talked about. Wolfowitz was very good at those kind of constructs, if you will, and understandings. I think Paul and I were pretty much in agreement through most of this process. Again, he'd been involved, Paul was the guy who'd driven the

defense planning guidance the year before that had said, "Saudi Arabia is vital. We have to have the Saudis. We have to have the defense of the Arabian Peninsula as a key strategic interest of ours." Bill Crowe at that point—this is before Colin had signed on board, you know—had been the guy to try to knock it out.

So from the standpoint of the military, I think they looked at it on a relatively narrow basis. As I say, that changed. But initially, Colin was arguing, "Hey, it's the Kuwaitis. You know nobody really likes the Kuwaitis." And they'd been through the tanker army in the Gulf, you know the ones at Earnest Will a year or two before, when we put flags on Kuwaiti tankers. I think they were still back in that mode and that mindset and the Kuwaitis were hard to deal with. The Kuwaitis were of the view at that point, had been for a long time, "We don't really want your aircraft carrier to show up in our waters. Over the horizon out of sight, that's okay, but we don't want to get too close to you guys." Of course, eventually that all changed, but at the time there was not a lot of enthusiasm for Kuwaitis. They're still to this day not that well liked by their neighbors. But the construct, the notion that this was a strategically important development that the U.S. had to resist and oppose, was something that I can recall us arguing at the very outset.

Zelikow: I mention this because what scholars will do later is they'll go back and pick through the papers and try to find, "Ah! This is the key memo that explains how Cheney arrived at this thinking." So it's helpful actually to get your version.

Cheney: That's what I remember. I mean it was nine, ten years ago.

Zelikow: There is an initial set of issues, some issues that involved rules of engagement for cutting off sea transport to Iraq. There were other things, there was a major issue that came up certainly by September very strongly about do we want to do this with the UN or not. Are we going to do this through the UN or not? Did you have a strong view on the issue of going to the UN? You mentioned yesterday your attitudes about the Congress; we don't have to go over that again.

Cheney: I think we had the UN engaged early on.

Zelikow: We had the resolution of course, that initial resolution.

Cheney: Initial resolution. Then it came up in connection with the naval blockade. I have a recollection of being up at the President's house in Maine out on the deck where we had a conversation about whether or not we'd stop a ship that was en route that looked like it was going to violate the blockade. We did not yet have UN authorization. The UN hadn't sanctioned that piece of it. They wanted to wait. I think it involved getting the Russians on board, I believe, to support the UN Security Council resolution of some kind, with respect to that.

Rather than stop the ship, the President made the decision to wait and get the Russians on board. Get the UN behind us, even if that means that particular ship's going to get through. It was pretty clear early on, sometime in August—by this time we've clearly got ships in the region, I think it was late August maybe—that the UN was going to be a player. There was never really any doubt about trying to use the UN. You look at George Bush's background, his time as ambassador. I

don't recall any big debate about whether or not we ought to rely upon the United Nations for help there. That wasn't necessarily true of the Russians.

Zelikow: Thatcher did not agree with us, but that was a different problem.

Cheney: The Russians on the other hand, Gorbachev kept meddling. Especially as we got closer and closer to actual onset of the war, trying to find ways to get us to back off, accept some kind of a compromise so he could broker a deal with Saddam and so forth. It was endless. It just went on and on and on and became a source of frustration. For somebody like myself, I finally would have said, "To hell with it. How many divisions has he got in Saudi Arabia?" The answer, of course, is zero. The President said, "No, we're going to keep him on board. We're going to manage the process." He spent a lot of time himself doing exactly that.

It was clear that what he wanted to do was the right call, but it wasn't my portfolio. I didn't have to worry about the Russians from a military standpoint, certainly at that stage. So he clearly set the tone from the beginning and was consistent throughout. He wanted this to be an international effort. We wanted the support of the international community and we wanted the Arab league. We wanted the United Nations and we wanted to do everything we could to build that broad political diplomatic base as well as an international military force, even if it was going to be basically a U.S. operation.

Zelikow: You've mentioned some of the discussions you had with Powell. Do you recall any about what our stakes were, and readiness to go forward, question of viability of sanctions? Do you recall conversations about this with Baker?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Did Baker ever ask you, for instance, "Can we really do this?" I mean, militarily is this feasible? Because one reason why Baker might have been uneasy is he really didn't know how hard this was going to be on the military side. I don't know whether he discussed that with you or discussed any concerns he might have had about that.

Cheney: I'm sure there would have been some conversations with Jim about it. I recall having him come over to the Pentagon—this was a few days before we started the war, I think this is maybe early January—and sit down with General Powell and myself. We briefed him on what was going to happen.

Zelikow: Just the three of you?

Cheney: Just the three of us. On the air war, I think it was the air war at that point, target categories. There had been some discussion of targets within the so-called "group of eight" with the President. A problem, for example, that the relative featureless terrain as you came up out of the Gulf over Iraq meant the cruise missiles with terrain-following radar system wouldn't work. We needed more relief than you could get because it was so flat, so we flew some of the stuff through Iran. We wanted to fly some stuff through Turkey, but we hadn't gotten approval from

Turkey and so that was taken off. There had been some of those kinds of conversations with Jim and the larger group earlier.

In terms of actually briefing him on the operation, Colin and I got him over, as I say, I think it was a couple of weeks before and actually went through the operation with him and filled him in on it. I think that gave him a lot of confidence that we knew what we were doing.

Zelikow: On the air war and your confidence, to flip back again to, say, September or October. There's an air war plan that gets developed. There's some jockeying within the air staff and with CENTCOM about who's writing that plan and what it looks like. But you learn about the "instant thunder" idea.

Cheney: "Instant thunder"?

McCall: "Rolling thunder"?

Cheney: That's another war.

Zelikow: I may be garbling the name, but there was a name that had been put together by the Air Force for this strike plan that they'd come up with, which in part they had devised as a desperate stop gap because we didn't have enough land forces on the ground right away to thwart an offensive. So we very quickly needed an air option to deal with an attack until we could get more forces on the ground to defend Saudi Arabia. I just want you to talk about your attitude towards air power and how that was influenced as the weeks went on by the success of briefings and strategies you were hearing about.

Cheney: Can I suggest we go ahead and get lunch and let me think about that for a few minutes while we eat?

[LUNCH BREAK]

Cheney: Fire away. Whatever we were going to talk about.

Zelikow: We're still on Iraq and we were about to talk about the air war. Before the break I had started with a rather long question about how the air war plans were developing. First, as a way to provide protection for Desert Shield and then developing into the plan that might win the war. That then was a vehicle for getting you to talk about your attitude towards air power and how those attitudes might have evolved.

Cheney: In terms of attitude toward air power, I guess I had a lot of confidence in what I thought the Air Force would be able to do. The Navy's role was important but somewhat restricted relative to the Air Force. As you went through this process as I did as Secretary of Defense, not

having served in the military, while I suppose I read widely in the area, I learned a lot, the important logistics.

We'd been through the exercise of trying to figure out what we were going to put on an aircraft carrier. In spring of '90, we'd done the major aircraft review and that led to ultimately we canceled the A-12, which was going to be the main aircraft on the carriers. We ended up going with the F-18/E and F model, which is now just going into the force. There had been a lot of analysis that I had participated in. For example, how many attack aircraft are there on a carrier? How much of the carrier air wing is devoted to defending the carrier and how much of it is available to go hit targets? Of course, the Navy didn't have the precision-guided capabilities then that the Air Force already had. So you start to discriminate and make judgments based upon the discussions and the debates you have and in terms of developing options and thinking about them.

A lot of it is influenced by General Powell. I spent a lot of time with Colin. I'm sure I absorbed without even thinking about it a lot of his attitudes and views. He's my principal military advisor and we spent a lot time together, we spent a lot of time talking about these kinds of issues. One of the views that he had expressed that I came to share was that we could not count on the Air Force to win the war. You had to have the other option, you had to have the ground option ready to go. We never really argued about that; I didn't argue to the contrary.

I think you can go back and look at it in the final analysis and say that as I look at the Desert Storm, that our Air Forces were more successful than I would have expected. That the air campaign that we ran against the Iraqis was devastating and clearly set the stage for ultimate success and the utter collapse of the Iraqis and Kuwait. So the ground war effort that we made—it was essential to make, but we probably could have done with less. We didn't need as big a force as we put over there, but you know, why take a chance. We didn't want to do that.

We had the situation shortly before we launched the ground campaign where we got into a dispute. I got a phone call one day from, I guess it was Brent, to the effect that Bill Webster and CIA had been in to see the President that morning and had basically said that we had not destroyed as much of the Iraqi armor as we thought we had. We'd set a yardstick for ourselves that we wanted to get rid of 50 percent of their armor capability before we launched the ground war. We thought we were pretty close to that, so we're getting close to launching the ground war. All of a sudden the CIA comes in from left field and says, "You haven't done it." Needless to say that caused a little concern in the Oval Office.

It led to a meeting in Scowcroft's office over at the White House. I took General Powell and Mike McConnell, the head of intelligence of the Joint staff, and we met with Webster and a couple of his people. What the Agency had done is they'd used only one source, the overheads. They had not counted a tank as killed unless the turret was 50 feet away out in the desert and you could visually see from the overhead that the tank was killed. That gave them a very narrow count. Our guys were saying that up from that field, given our bomb damage assessment and all of the various and sundry capabilities we had, we were convinced we were right. We were able to persuade Brent and the President that we were right.

So that was a case where in the fact the Air Force and the Navy had delivered, and we'd done what we said we were going to do. When challenged by the CIA, we were able to show that we had in fact achieved what we set out to achieve. Coming out of that, the Desert Storm experience, I came away convinced that we really had a unique capability there. It's one thing to talk about, to plan it, to buy it, to go through all the exercises, but when you actually go out and do it and you saw what we could do to the Iraqis with standoff precision-guided munitions, it was a phenomenal capability. Even today I think to some extent the capability is ahead of the doctrine. I think we haven't spent enough time thinking about how we can deliver a strategic blow with conventional warheads on precision-guided munitions. We still have a tendency to think in terms of nukes as strategic weapons, when in fact what we've got now in the Air Force with the B-2s, the precision-guided munitions and so forth, can deliver a strategic blow against any nation in the world.

McCall: You alluded to the bomb damage assessments. Did you all go back afterwards to take a look at those assessments at the conclusion of the air war, after the ground war is complete, to re-look at how that was evaluated? Did you come away with any thoughts?

Cheney: Nothing that I can recall right now. I went back and did the post-brief after the war on the various systems and issues and so forth. I don't recall anything that stands out on that point.

Zelikow: Let me ask you about targeting. The question of what targets should we bomb and what targets should we rule off-limits out of concern for the civilian population, collateral damage. What kind of philosophy did you bring to this question? How closely did you try to screen targets, in part to satisfy your own concerns and in part to prepare to be able to satisfy concerns from the White House?

Cheney: Of course we worked off that basic plan that had originally been put forward. As I recall there were four phases to the air war. We talked about categories of targets. You're clearly going to go after their air defense system; you're going to go after their Air Force; you're going to go after their telecommunications capabilities. We made the decision to take down the power grid the first night of the war. That was fairly significant because it shut down the country and it affected everything—water supplies, the sewage system, and everything else get influenced once you do that. That was a fairly major step that we decided to do that.

We decided on the other hand not to destroy their refineries. We did hit them, as I recall. But we were careful in terms of what we went after because we didn't—early on when the crisis first developed, somebody suggested bombing oil facilities in Iraq. This wasn't in the military, this was over in the White House. Then someone said, "Wait a minute. Who is it that's dependent on foreign supplies of oil? Do we really want to be in a position where we're going to start blowing up oil facilities in the Middle East?" We didn't think it was a very good idea. So we were careful what we did with regard to that, because we didn't think it was in our self-interest to totally destroy the Iraqi oil industry, although obviously we could have.

Things that were put off limits. I mean, you clearly didn't want to hit civilian targets. We tried hard to limit collateral damage and we were generally successful, not totally successful but generally successful. One of the targets we looked at and rejected was this monument that

Saddam had built in downtown Baghdad of the crossed swords, the hands coming up out of the ground. We had some interesting arguments about that. In the end, the lawyers claimed it wasn't a military target and therefore we couldn't hit it, so we didn't. It was one of those I wanted to go get but I wasn't allowed to. We made those kinds of judgments.

Zelikow: That's pretty fine discrimination.

Cheney: I thought it was.

McCall: Cultural and religious significance.

Cheney: It was a memorial for the Iran-Iraq war.

McCall: Yes.

Cheney: I can't remember all the details to it, but I thought it would be a gross insult to him for us to go knock it out. But we didn't do it. Going after all of his known hangouts and palaces and so forth, that was all legitimate targets. Again, there would have been a discussion about that.

Zelikow: As command and control facilities and so forth.

Cheney: Yes. It's the place from which he commanded the Iraqi armed forces and therefore a legitimate target.

Zelikow: In reading the press coverage of the Kosovo war and the bombing offensive in Kosovo, did it strike you that the targeting criteria had changed on what they were willing to do in Kosovo, or did that sound pretty much like the same sort of targeting approach you had taken in the Gulf War?

Cheney: My sense of it was that it was different. I had the impression they were straining to find targets in Kosovo. Kosovo is not a target-rich environment. What they were really after was some of the Serb forces, but you didn't have large formations or anything like that. We had whole divisions we could go hammer. Armored formations and artillery emplacements and logistics chain to support all of that. I mean it was a very robust target we were after, but we had a lot of things we could hit. The impression of Kosovo, as I say, they were searching for stuff to take out. I don't think we hit any foreign embassies. I don't remember, not that I recall. Not that directly.

Zelikow: Were there any notable examples of what you would call political or White House interference or scrutiny over the targeting in your campaign?

Cheney: No. There was some concern expressed when we hit the one underground facility that turned out to have a lot of civilians in it. We didn't know it at the time, I still think it was a legitimate target. It was identified for us, as I recall, as one of the communications nodes. The Iraqis had made the mistake of putting a lot of civilians in there. It was a bomb shelter. Of course when we went after those kinds of facilities with a 1,000-pound or 2,000-pound laser-guided

weapon, it would penetrate and did a lot of damage and killed several hundred people. There'd be a flap over something like that, certainly in the press.

Our response to that then was to rein the troops in anyway, but that was really done at the Pentagon, not at the direction of the White House. We informed them of what we'd done, but they never came down with a heavy hand on us in terms of saying, "Hit this. Don't hit that." They would have been briefed on the categories, the President, Brent kept up to speed on what we were doing. You know, we had sessions just about every day.

McCall: The way that the incident with the bunker has been portrayed is that it did alter target selection. Do you recall conversations with General Powell or anything about that, about how to redirect and risks to take or not to take?

Cheney: Yes. Also I'm trying to remember the timing on it. It came later in the air war. Again, when you think about the phasing we were going through anyway, it didn't require that much of a shift in terms of emphasis with respect to what we were doing. Early on you're trying to take out his own air capabilities and air defenses. Then you go after the strategic targets and chemical and biological stuff. Isolate the battlefield and then work over the forces, the divisions that are deployed down in Kuwait. We went through that natural progression. I can't remember the exact directive we gave after we hit the bunker, but we did modify their guidance slightly.

McCall: Similarly, this is a period in the latter stage of the bombing campaign where there was a public perception, or the press was raising the issue of, "Are we bombing the rubble?" Do you remember how you wanted to counter that in terms of explaining where you were in the campaign without giving away too much?

Cheney: I don't remember worrying about it that much. The press said some pretty outrageous things. I remember Wolf Blitzer going on the air the first night of the air war and announcing the Republican Guard had been destroyed. I sent Pete down to say, "Wait a minute, Wolf. Back up here a little bit. This thing just started and we're going to be around a while, and the Republican Guard's not going down the first night of the air war." They weren't even targeted the first night of the air war.

Zelikow: We discussed a lot of the issues surrounding the conclusion of the war yesterday and I don't think we need to rehash that. After the war, there is the cease-fire negotiations, the SOFA [Status of Forces Agreement] negotiations. This is a little unusual. You have a military commander conducting the cease-fire negotiations. There are precedents for this, but it has some unusual features. The instructions presumably to Schwarzkopf for those cease-fire negotiations would have come from you in the chain of command. I'd be grateful for your reflections on those instructions, the issue of the armed helicopters and so forth, and what reflections you might have on the process that might avoid these sorts of issues again in the future.

Cheney: I'm trying to remember the process.

Zelikow: I think you'll have trouble remembering it.

Cheney: Well, I do. Have you looked at it?

Zelikow: It was not a memorably good process.

Cheney: The helicopters I thought was Norm's idea. There had been a request from the Iraqis and he signed off on it?

Zelikow: Yes.

Cheney: I don't think that came all the way up the chain. I think he did that based on the request they'd made of him that they needed helicopters to be able to move around and so forth. He didn't see it as the big deal that it turned out to be later on. I'm just trying to think whether we would have sent out an execute order to him, specifying the conditions.

Zelikow: In effect, what you've got is a general out there who's now playing diplomat in a sense.

Cheney: Yes, but remember we've had the communications. The President, myself, Colin Powell and Norm, all of us on the phone. Jim Baker present, Brent Scowcroft present, when the decision has been made in the Oval Office to cease military operations. The timetable when that's going to happen: "By X date, that will be the end of it." Then the President went out and announced that that was where we were. I don't know who else you would have had handle the cease-fire other than the commander on the scene.

Zelikow: Then it's just a question of then how do you give him the guidance he needs for what turns out to be a fairly complex problem. My impression was that the process for managing the war itself was very good. The process for actually devising a longer-term peace arrangement through the UN, to kind of get a UN foot on Iraq's neck without having to have direct military occupation, but to get the benefits of an occupation, was also very well done and very ingenious. But then in-between, in the gap between that, there is a lot of stuff that just wasn't thought through. There was just no real contingency planning for what we're going to do.

Cheney: Such as?

Zelikow: For cease-fire negotiations. How you draw the lines, what are the rules for the cease-fire. What Iraqi military operations are permissible. A series of issues arise. I had the impression there wasn't really a process that then produced guidance for the Secretary of Defense's instructions to the CINC on how to conduct those negotiations.

Cheney: I don't recall any extensive discussion of it at all. I'm just trying to think what State or NSC would have done. I'm guessing UN Security Council resolutions would have been cited as authority.

Zelikow: In general, but—

Cheney: Probably involved in the process of what we were doing throughout was trying to get his compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions. But I don't recall any guidance beyond what we gave him that day in the Oval Office. There may well be some, but I just can't—

Zelikow: Or any strident requests for him to get guidance, "I've got some hard decisions to make here. You need to give me some Washington instructions on how to proceed?"

Cheney: No, he had a pretty free hand.

Zelikow: Then also for these very short-range contingencies, the revolts break out, the first revolt in the south. We discussed some of that yesterday. You did have an impression that the government was caught a little wrong-footed.

Cheney: I think that's a fair statement. I was not that intimately involved in what had happened to me at that point. From my perspective, I'm focused on the war. The war's over with, now we're getting our guys out and bringing them home. Once you deploy the force and you're conducting operations, the military in Washington, the Defense Department sort of takes on greater importance and significance in the councils of government in terms of what you're deciding to do. Out in the field, the CINC all of a sudden carries a much bigger stick than the ambassador.

Once the war's over with and you re-deploy the force, then you return to a more normal kind of peacetime dealings and operations. State resumes the lead diplomatically and Defense steps down. It's the way the thing works. The same thing happened to Panama. So the focus in the period after the war is over with, after the cease-fire's in place, from the standpoint of the Defense Department is that we're going to be setting up the no fly zones and so forth, but basically our mission's over with and we're coming home. The response and U.S. attitude and approach to those things going on inside Iraq wouldn't have come out of the Defense Department. It's more focused at NSC and State.

Zelikow: It does circle back to you for Provide Comfort, for the Kurdish revolt in the north, later in '91.

Cheney: Right, we're asked to go in and provide some relief. You've got hundreds of thousands of Kurds up on the border and slopping over into Turkey. I think we had John Shalikashvili take over; he took care of the operation for us, supervised it, really made his mark. Later helped him get to be chairman. We went in then and provided humanitarian relief, basically.

Zelikow: What did you understand as the political-military objectives for this operation, beyond the simple notion of let's try to keep these people from starving to death? Where does this go?

Cheney: The Kurds had been set upon before, unfortunately. They're a long-suffering people in that part of the world at the hands of the Iraqis and the Iranians and the Turks and everybody else. But you had a special problem because of the refugee flood into Turkey. Turkey's a NATO ally. We were concerned about having a problem as a result of the war against Iraq somehow slopping over and beginning to adversely affect our friends the Turks, who let us use their bases,

had been supporters, had been supportive of the whole effort. That would have been a factor in addition to the humanitarian concerns. Again, as I say, we would be called upon to go undertake the humanitarian mission. The politics of it, the decision about how to relate to the dissident groups inside Iraq, those kinds of things, would not be something I spent a lot of time on. You have to go talk to Scowcroft and company about that.

Zelikow: Let's talk for a moment about military strategy for the United States after the Cold War, which is an issue you're probably engaging more and more in '91 and '92.

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: We talked a little over lunch about the military history you're reading. If you think back on some of the big choices America is making, say in the Second World War, think about choices, about priorities. What's going to come first, or what's the relationship between this campaign and that campaign, Mediterranean versus Northwest Europe or Pacific and so forth. I'd like you to just try to recreate the way you might have been thinking in '91 and '92, as issues like Bosnia and Somalia are beginning to rise, which we're going to come to. What do you think of as the great military priorities for the United States? What are the things the American military needs to concentrate its resources to do? This is after the Gulf War. The base force exercise is well along. This is the next turn of the wheel.

Cheney: The decision was made before the Gulf crisis came along that we were going to be taking the force down, re-deploying from Europe. Not everything, but a lot of it. Shrinking the size of the force, cutting the budget and so forth. A lot of that was put on hold while we did Desert Storm, but as soon as the war's over with, then a lot of the forces we took out of Europe to execute Desert Storm are coming home. A lot of units being disbanded, people being let go. Resuming that sort of post-Cold War downsizing was an important consideration that kept us busy inside the Department during that time.

In terms of thinking about the strategic position, we wrestled with it. What are the future threats going to be? How would you change or modify the Cold War force to deal with that? How concerned do we have to be about the continuing capabilities of the Soviet Union and/or Russia after the Soviet Union goes out of business? What kind of relationships do we want to develop with the Baltics and those other parts of the old Soviet Union? But in terms of focusing on the threat, where the threat is going to come from, it's not immediately clear where. You're all of a sudden faced with the fact that you'd had the Soviets as your targets all these years. And now that that's quickly dissipating, what's going to replace it? There's no quick and easy answer to that.

We wrestle with that throughout that period of time. We fall back on this notion of a regional strategy at the sizes we have to maintain enough forces be able to deny an adversary the ability to control a region vital to the United States. That's sort of the formulation we used. You can quickly tick off the Gulf—but we'd just dealt with a hell of a problem there pretty effectively. Europe, in Europe you're engaged in the ongoing debate over what's NATO's role going to be in the future and how many forces are we going to need and how do we keep our allies in engaged and with forces committed as well. Japan, Korea, same kind of considerations. But there's no

immediate answer to the question, "Okay guys, what's the grand strategy for the future now that we've defeated the Soviet Union?" To some extent we're still searching for it today.

Zelikow: If I make this sound more coherent than it is, you stop me.

Cheney: Okay.

Zelikow: I'm just putting together some things you've said. Earlier you said, "We want to maintain a strategic nuclear capability that is survivable and that holds at risk certain things," which you briefly sketched.

Cheney: Right.

Zelikow: You've talked about basically regional capabilities, in an uncertain condition, but to preserve regional stability against problems that might arise. You focused on three regions: some continuing residual capability in Europe, regional capability in the Gulf and Southwest Asia—whatever you want to call it, CENTCOM—and in the Far East. I think we've talked a little bit about Europe and Southwest Asia. We haven't talked much about the Far East. There are two things just to ask you about. First, late in the Administration, North Korea's coming back on the radar. That's when the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] problems start really getting back on the front burner. This is late '91 into '92. Also there is China and the related issue of Taiwan—Taiwan was mostly a back-burner issue.

Cheney: Yes, except when they sold them the F-16s.

Zelikow: In '92, yes. Let's start on China for a moment and just get your sense of how you thought China was emerging as a strategic challenge for the United States and whether or not you were completely comfortable with the White House approach on China.

Cheney: You know a thing that comes through too, that keeps coming back to me, is to hear you talk about our overall strategic position. To some extent you get a shift away from threats, to thinking about capabilities.

Zelikow: Yes. That's what I heard you say.

Cheney: Right. That's very much what we did. We couldn't know for sure what the future threat was going to be. We'd had an enormous impact, I think, of reducing the threat by virtue of what we'd done in Desert Storm. We bought ourselves some time there, lots of things started happening. We had a peace process going in the Middle East and got the Madrid Conference and the things that flow out of that. Good things are happening because of Desert Storm, because of the President's political and diplomatic success internationally, because we're working with Gorbachev in a major world crisis instead of having the Cold War rear its ugly head in the Iraqi confrontation.

The thing with China is in better shape than it is today. You're still in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square and that had required us clearly to put the military relationship on hold, which

we did. Brent went to Beijing with Eagleburger; we'd been through that whole exercise. But even in spite of all that, the President—we used to joke about him being the guy running the China desk, with some justification. But he knew more about it than anybody else did. The China role in the Desert crisis through the UN had been important. They had a veto. They could have shut us down anytime they wanted in the UN Security Council and they didn't. Sometimes they abstained, but that account had been managed very carefully and very successfully throughout that whole period of time. And it's still too soon to have a big public re-embrace, if you will, of China, but at that stage, we don't see China as a strategic threat.

Zelikow: At that time.

Cheney: At that time. The relationship with China is good enough that we can get away with selling F-16s to the Taiwanese. You could imagine what would happen today if you sold F-16s to the Taiwanese. That wouldn't go over too well.

Zelikow: Did you support that sale?

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Did you support that sale for strategic reasons or political reasons or both? When this is coming up through the bureaucracy—

Cheney: The policy basically is one China, but the resolution of the China-Taiwan differences has to be by peaceful means. In the meantime, it's in our interest to continue to support. We've got the right, if you will. We've preserved for ourselves over time and our conversations through administrations with the mainland that we would re-supply Taiwan with their defense requirements. Now you can argue about whether an F-16 constitutes re-supply or additional enhanced capability, but I didn't have any problem with it. I thought it was the right thing to do.

Zelikow: Regardless of the politics, you would have supported that sale?

Cheney: Yes. What politics? You mean Texas?

Zelikow: Yes.

Cheney: No. I suppose that gets involved in every arms sale. No, I would have supported that.

Zelikow: I mentioned that because Brent highlights the political aspects as being very important in the decision to make this sale. So I wanted to clarify that you supported the sale on the merits.

Cheney: Yes. I didn't do politics, okay?

Zelikow: So, regional capability in East Asia.

Cheney: We maintained our levels in Korea and Japan, did not significantly downsize there immediately the way we were doing in Europe. Concerned about leaving a vacuum in the Western Pacific. Didn't want to do that. Wanted to maintain stability in the region and so forth.

McCall: Let me just follow up on the way things are being cut, versus in Europe. Can you shed any additional light into the notion of what should be handled in terms of alliance burden-sharing, in terms of what the new mix of forces might look like in terms of the contributions, especially in view of German unification?

Cheney: Burden sharing is always an argument. It's usually on the agenda whenever we get together with allies. Most Europeans are not doing their part. Weren't then, aren't today. So we were continually pushing it, partly because Congress always made it a big issue too. The dominant concern then is to keep them from cutting too much. It's not as though we're going to be able to get them to increase their level of commitment or send more troops or commit more dollars. We were just trying to hang on to what we had.

McCall: Part of the notion as I recall is also that the U.S. was going to change what types of forces were going to be our contribution to the NATO mix, since we were pulling out ground troops.

Cheney: Well, we've talked in the past and I just don't remember the timing on it. There's been a theme that's been around for a long time that the U.S. ought to focus on those things we do well and capabilities that we have that others don't—logistics and intelligence and air assets and so forth—and shift more of the burden of the ground forces to the allies. That's not a new idea; it's been around a long time. I suppose you could say we've made some success in that regard recently. We got the Germans now willing to deploy occasionally outside the borders of Germany. You've got a lot of European ground troops in Kosovo, but you've got Americans too.

Zelikow: Going into these last episodes, the "operations other than war" episodes, we could call them, Bosnia and Somalia. Let me just ask you about one criticism or description of the Administration in the last year, year and a half after the Gulf War. A number of people have commented that they had the feeling folks were getting tired, just physically tired.

Cheney: That we were? The policymakers?

Zelikow: The top leadership, the top policymakers. That there had been this just extraordinarily intense period of about two and a half years and that folks were both intellectually but also even physically running down. That the Administration in the last year and a half looks like a runner that's just trying to get through—frankly, doesn't look as fresh as it did and that it shows. There are a few changes in positions, Gates moves out, there are some other reshuffles. There are even reshuffles in your inner circle, people like Sean O'Keefe going over to Navy and other people moving around, though less so at the Pentagon than in some other places.

Cheney: Yes. O'Keefe had to replace Garrett because I'd let Garrett go.

Zelikow: I was just wondering if you would comment on that description. Was that a fair description?

Cheney: Were we tired?

Zelikow: Running out of gas?

Cheney: I don't think so, at least not from the standpoint of the foreign policy and defense stuff. Part of it was we'd had a hell of a success. What do you do after you've done the ticker tape parade on Broadway? The President's 91 percent in the polls. We'd had one of the most successful military operations in history. What the hell's next? You know, what's the encore? Of course what happened was the focus shifted to a large extent, I think, off national security, foreign policy and defense kinds of issues and onto domestic issues.

Zelikow: Now there was still a lot of activity among START—

Cheney: Still a lot of activity but—

Zelikow: START II and the Soviet Union.

Cheney: But if you weren't blowing something up, you couldn't get CNN to cover it, if you're in the military. It shifted so much. I'm not complaining about it; it was a natural kind of thing. But there was this intense focus, this great success. Everybody comes home, or nearly everybody comes home. The series of celebrations and so forth around the country that summer. Then you've got the coup in Moscow in August. It's still a very active period and I think a fairly creative force. I think the stuff that we did do in September '91, with respect to nuclear capabilities and START II—we didn't stop working; we didn't crawl into a hole someplace. There's continued efforts. There's the Mideast peace initiative, the peace process. It continues to be an active period.

Now maybe it didn't get the attention and the focus that the war had, but the war engaged people who aren't ordinarily engaged in politics and policy. I can remember going down to throw out the first pitch in Atlanta for the Braves—this is right after the Gulf War—flew down and had dinner with Ted [Turner] and Jane [Fonda]. Had a rainstorm that night and so the game got postponed. Waited and waited and eventually we didn't even play the game. But I spent a couple of hours down in the dressing room with the ballplayers. These are 20-, 21-, 22-year-old kids. They don't know a Republican from a Democrat. They never vote, never participate in the political process. They're ballplayers. Great guys, but they're ballplayers. But they'd all watched the war. They could tell you what we blew up when and who hit what and who the players were. There was just this intense involvement by the entire country in that process and in those events. And then it's over with. Then you get on with the rest of your life. So I think people, to say that we were tired and worn out, I don't think so. I guess I would quarrel with that interpretation.

I think the country had been on such a high that it was hard to get anybody up for anything less than a replay. I can remember going to the University of West Virginia. Joe Lopez was from West Virginia, my military assistant, got me to go there for a football game that fall. West

Virginia's playing South Carolina and it's to honor the troops. They've got all of the Guard and Reserve units and everybody on active duty in the area from West Virginia, they've invited them all to the ballgame as the guests of the University. So the end zone is absolutely packed with guys who were in the desert. They had me out at half time and gave me an award and all this kind of stuff, and people are yelling and cheering—this is six months after the war is over with. And as I walked off the field and went down past the end zone where the guys were all sitting, they start chanting, "Let's do it again! Let's do it again!" I mean these are the guys that had been over there and come home. So it was hard to get people up for anything other than what we'd just done.

As I say, I look back on that period, I think it was an active period. I think there was a lot of stuff going on. I would take exception to the notion somehow we were tired. The Administration had problems, but they didn't really lie in the national security, foreign policy area. They were really in the economic and the political arena.

Zelikow: Bosnia. You of course have gone on the public record with your attitudes about that.

Cheney: I opposed military intervention in Bosnia.

Zelikow: Right. I'd like you to just recount whether or not that belief was sorely tested during '92, whether or not you had any difficult discussions with our allies about what America ought to contribute to some sort of multi-national effort during the Bosnian war. Actually, during the eve of the Croatian phase of the war, or the subsequent Bosnian phase of the war, which really gets going in '92. Or was this always pretty clear cut for the Administration?

Cheney: I think a lot of that came up after we left. The Bosnian situation, I can't say that we handled that whole situation well as an Administration, looking back on it. Again, I wasn't involved in the diplomatic side of it. I'm an observer and I'm rarely critical of the Administration on things. Our immediate gut reaction was, "My god, we can't have Yugoslavia come apart. We can't possibly get into a position where we allow Yugoslavia to be dismembered and these entities that are spinning off to become free and independent states." I think that was a mistake. That's the benefit of hindsight. But it's sort of a natural gut reaction for U.S. diplomats to say partitions are a bad idea.

There were guys a lot more knowledgeable than I was about that part of the world. Larry Eagleburger had been the ambassador to Yugoslavia. Brent had been the attaché there at one point, many years ago. So they dealt with all of that stuff and the question that I got asked repeatedly was about the possibility of committing U.S. troops. It came up in the press, it came up with Congress, and came up in the Administration. Nobody came up and said, "We want to commit troops." None of the principals. But there'd be conversations and discussions about it. My views were well known and Colin Powell's views were well known. We were in total agreement and we thought it was a bad idea.

Zelikow: When you made public statements about this, was there any concern that you were getting out in front of the President or did you already know at that point that the President

agreed with you? Or were staking out a position publicly as a way of letting the rest of the Administration know where the Pentagon stood?

Cheney: I was answering questions. I was telling people what I thought. I did not have the impression that I was foreclosing options. Nobody ever objected that I was aware of. It was my impression the President agreed with me. If I thought there was any need to say, "Wait a minute, I've got to go check," I'd have gone and checked. So I never had any lack of confidence that I was expressing a view that did reflect the view of those of us in the Defense Department, but that it was also consistent with the President's point of view. It may also—

Zelikow: So this is not a salvo being fired in an ongoing argument going on in the Administration?

Cheney: No, I wouldn't have done that.

Zelikow: Okay.

Cheney: This may be one of those areas we talked about yesterday, where the President wants to deploy force, his senior military advisors don't want to deploy force. Do they influence his thinking? It may well be—I'm speculating—it might have been that if General Powell and I had gone over and said, "Hey, we want to go send troops to Bosnia," that we could have gotten authorization to do that. We didn't believe in that. We thought it was a bad idea. So we probably helped influence, if you will, I'm guessing helped influence, the thinking on it. General Powell and I were head to head, had strong views on it, but we weren't freelancing. The other thing I guess I'd mention too, there was a Canadian general who commanded the UN force that was over there.

Masoud: [Lewis] McKenzie?

Cheney: McKenzie, yes. We had him down. Colin and I spent the afternoon with him at one point. That was enough to—if you had any notion that this was a good idea to send U.S. forces to Bosnia, that took care of it. You didn't want to do it after you talked with him and the problems and the difficulties they were dealing with.

Zelikow: The question of how this would spin out, though, if you support the breakup of Yugoslavia and partition.

Cheney: Well, I didn't say that. After the fact—

Zelikow: You're prepared to see that happen and not try to stop it.

Cheney: After it was all over with. I didn't go in and argue for the partition during the events. After it was all over with, I look back now with the benefit of hindsight, maybe we should have been more tolerant of partition and less determined to try to keep Yugoslavia together.

Zelikow: But that leads to war, partition leads to war. I think there would then be a war, as occurred. Then the question is, if there is a war going on between Serbia and these other countries, Serbia versus Croatia, Serbia versus—

Cheney: Let me emphasize again, I was not in the councils of government then arguing for partition. This is an after-the-fact judgment.

Zelikow: I understand. I'm trying to elicit your attitudes. I have to sometimes try to put things provocatively in order to understand your thinking. This is helpful, because then if you have a war, though, as a result of the breakup of Yugoslavia, what's your attitude as the Secretary of Defense towards that war? Do you view this as a regional problem that does not strongly affect the interests of the United States? Do you view this as a problem of importance, but one that the Europeans should handle? Clearly you don't view this as a problem that plainly does affect American vital interests.

Cheney: Right. It was my judgment at the time, and frankly still is today, that this was not a strategically vital part of the world for the United States to put at risk or to pay the price that would be involved for us to go in and intervene militarily in that conflict. Very difficult conflict. No good guys and bad guys. Historical animosities that had been rampant in that part of the world for hundreds of years that we did not fully understand. Very difficult terrain, difficult area to operate in. There were those like Maggie Thatcher, who to this day I've heard her argue the case. You know, *This is Germany, 1939. You've got to stop the Serbs. They're going to overrun Western Europe if you don't take them out.* I never believed that.

I was not unsympathetic to the problems that were occurring on the ground in the old Yugoslavia. You know, the mortar round hits the market and 40 people are killed on a Saturday morning kind of thing. But I firmly believe that sometimes you have to say no. That just because there's a problem out there and a tragedy occurring, it doesn't mean the right response is U.S. military force. It may be you can't do a damn thing about it, and that they are in fact going to continue to slaughter each other. The question then is, does this involve an interest that requires the United States to commit our troops and to take casualties and to expend, if you will, our national treasure trying to keep these folks from slaughtering one another? The answer sometimes is no, it's not worth it.

I still believe that today. I think it's a mistake to be in Kosovo. I think the legacy of Kosovo is yet to be written. I don't think we have any idea how the hell we're going to get out of there. I think the consequences of it long term may be far more complicated than anybody currently anticipates.

Zelikow: Just to pursue this a little bit further, did the Europeans ever come to you and say, "We're prepared to shoulder the principal burden of addressing this militarily, but we need American backing as a participant in our coalition?"

Cheney: I don't recall that at that stage. Now maybe they did to Brent or Jim or somebody.

Zelikow: But not to you?

Cheney: No.

Zelikow: Your defense minister colleagues weren't basically saying, "We'd be willing to do something if you'll just at least back our play?"

Cheney: No, my recollection is there were differences among the Europeans. You know the Germans have got a relationship with the Slovenians and the French have got a relationship with the Croatians. I'm not even sure I've got all the relationships right, but that they were divided themselves as to what the best way to respond here was, politically and diplomatically.

Zelikow: If they had been less divided and had basically had a military plan in which they would take the lead with their ground forces, but needed American forces to back them up, to perform certain functions that they can't perform well, would you have been willing to back their coalition even though you didn't think it was necessarily in our own national interest?

Cheney: I would be more tolerant of a situation in which they put their people at risk on the ground and we don't have to commit U.S. troops on the ground, but that wasn't really an option at that point. As I say, the Europeans didn't have their act together and they're basically saying, "Let us solve it. There will be a European solution for this." I seem to recall [Francois] Mitterrand being rather outspoken on those kinds of issues. I wasn't eager to get involved anyway, so I didn't have any problem with that. I didn't feel under pressure from the Europeans to intervene.

Pressures came from the press and the ability of CNN and the networks to sort of set the national agenda and to define for us what's important. It's a continuing problem. It's gotten worse instead of better. It's one of the byproducts of having a wired world. Now what's important is what you've got videotape on. If it didn't have video on it, it didn't happen. If you've got videotape on it, it's a major national crisis and you have to do something about it. If you'd had a lot of videotape of the slaughter in Burundi, we probably would have had a hell of a lot of pressure to go into Burundi. Part of the job of government and of Presidents and their advisors is to make those judgments that yes, sometimes we get involved when our national interests are at stake, but when they aren't, we say no. You have to make choices. My judgment could be wrong, people can certainly argue whether it was. The Balkans did not represent that kind of interest for the United States.

Masoud: What national interest was engaged in December of that year in Somalia?

Cheney: Somalia, as I mentioned yesterday, that was perceived again at the time—you've got to remember, later on in October '93 you had the battle of Mogadishu and a whole different set of circumstances—but when we went into Somalia, it wasn't to go to war. It wasn't to go in and do anything other than provide some security and stability to allow the humanitarian organizations to go in and feed people. That was the basic mission we were given, essentially a humanitarian one. So I didn't see that as the kind of commitment that would have been involved in the Balkans. I think we made that distinction. Now, you can argue that once you got into it, sooner or later you were bound to get sucked into the—

Zelikow: Mission creep.

Cheney: Yes, mission creep. But I think we have successfully resisted that. Of course, we made the commitment and then left.

Zelikow: Did you notice when the UN passed the new resolution in March '93, that changed the mission and broadened substantially the mission and reconfigured the peacekeeping force. Did you notice that? Because I have heard [John R.] Bolton and others explain, you know we really did work very hard to keep this mission very limited there at the end of '92 and the beginning of '93, that there was a real change. I was wondering whether you thought so at the time.

Cheney: What I remember is Bill Clinton having a ceremony on the south lawn of the White House with Bob Johnson, who's the Marine who was commanding the operation at that time. It was the same Bob Johnson who had been Norm's Chief of Staff and had briefed us on the plans for the ground war back in 1990. He got the general there and bunch of other uniformed officers and they marched across the south lawn—I remember the TV shot, still—to mark the end of the successful humanitarian mission in Somalia, along in the spring. That was the time to get out. They didn't. Wasn't it Jonathan Howe, didn't he play a role?

Zelikow: He did.

Cheney: As a UN representative in effect, in getting the U.S. to deploy more forces to send in Delta and some of the other units that ultimately ended up when they decided to go after [Mohamed Farah] Aidid, he became the target, then that changed everything. I think a lot of us believed at the time it changed everything. That was confirmed when they got into that shoot out in Mogadishu and never did get Aidid. Very hard thing to do, to go track down one individual like that. So yes, I think there were a lot of us at the time who thought that it didn't take the battle in Mogadishu to recognize it. That sort of crystallized it for everybody, that that was a different mission than the one we'd been asked to go in and do. We'd been asked to go in and secure the roads and the camps and provide security so you could feed people.

Zelikow: How do you then view these issues of humanitarian interest? Clearly some humanitarian missions you think are worth commitment of our armed forces and some circumstances. Other humanitarian missions might be defined as the prevention or mitigation of genocide or large-scale killings, might or might not be justifiable, depending. Is it pretty much dependent on the individual circumstances? Do you have a bright line that's in your head?

Cheney: Partly it's a question of when you're willing to put your people at risk. Humanitarian missions, you get asked to do a lot of things with the U.S. military because you have the capability to move things and people. You've got air assets and naval assets and you can do things nobody else can do. So if there's an oil spill in Alaska or a hurricane that hits Florida or a typhoon that goes through the Bay of Bengal and wipes out half of Bangladesh, you've got assets that are relevant to helping people deal with those kinds of crises. You do it when it makes sense.

It's different when you're sending people into combat. That may still be a humanitarian thing to do, but there I think you cross over into the realm where you really have to ask yourself the tough questions about what is in the U.S. strategic interest. This isn't just a matter of delivering excess MREs to hungry people. We're going to put our people at risk, we're going to engage in combat, we're going to take military operations. The prestige of the United States is at stake. We have to have some idea what our strategic objective is. It has to be an objective you can achieve by the application of military force, not just because you can't think of anything else to do, you send in the Marines. And those kinds of things have to be taken into account and considered. I think when we get in trouble, one of the ways we get in trouble is when we can't think of anything else to do, so we call out the troops. Wrong answer. You've got to have an objective that can be accomplished by the application of military force. That begins to narrow in what's a suitable operation. If you give me that kind of objective, give me some forces and I can begin to think about how to make it happen.

I'm not sure what the military objective is in Kosovo now. Got a lot of troops deployed there, rising level of violence in the society, but are we a police force? I mean, where are we going with our diplomacy in that part of the world? Is Kosovo going to be an independent sovereign state or is it part of Serbia? What the hell's going to happen in Montenegro? How long are we willing to stay there to keep the Serbs from slaughtering the Albanians and the Albanians from slaughtering the Serbs? How many of our people are going to be put at risk? Am I going to get to go build more camps for the U.S. forces in Kosovo? It's good money. It's not a very good policy.

Zelikow: I'd like to begin our wrapping this up.

Cheney: Okay.

Zelikow: I've got two things, and I want to be sure you have time to address any issues we've left uncovered.

Cheney: I can't think of any. Go ahead.

Zelikow: I'm glad to hear that.

Masoud: Is it all right if I ask one more Gulf War related question before we go on?

Zelikow: Absolutely, don't resist for a moment.

Masoud: Readiness obviously is a big issue. Was there any thought that you're putting 400,000 troops in Saudi Arabia and this is going to harm our readiness for any other crises that may arise?

Cheney: Well, we still had some forces left over. November '89 the Wall comes down. We've got over 300,000 troops in Europe. We've got 18 divisions in the Army, and we're on our way to a 600-ship Navy, et cetera. Then less than 12 months later you're doing Desert Storm and we get to use all that excess capability we had. Today it would be tougher because we don't have as large a force. But we could have dealt with any other contingency that might have arisen. I wasn't worried about that.

The other thing, when you talk about readiness and training, the troops were never better. You'd send them to the desert, there's nothing else for them to do but train. There sure as hell aren't any dens of iniquity to hang out in over there in Saudi. There's no beer; there's no rotation. You don't have the normal problems of new guys coming into the unit and your experienced hands leaving that you normally get in peacetime, anyway. They are there for the duration, they've got a mission and they're going to practice for the mission. Our discipline problems were the lowest in history. The force was at an all-time peak as a result of that deployment. We got to exercise the Reserve call-up and guys got more training. The force was in its best shape, I think, probably in history in that run-up to the Gulf War. It was damn good. If you had to do something, I'd say that was as ready as we've ever been. And, frankly, we got somebody else to pay for it. The allies chipped in over $50 billion.

McCall: Made a small profit.

Cheney: Baker still asks me how much the war really cost.

McCall: Let me ask you one small question, follow up on the Reserve and National Guard call-up. There were some glitches with the National Guard and some of the readiness issues. Do you feel that those have been properly addressed?

Cheney: I haven't looked at it recently enough to have a really informed opinion on that. As I mentioned yesterday, the round out brigades didn't work, not without a significant additional period of training. You couldn't just call them up and deploy them. You could call them up, give them some training and then deploy them. So in a major scenario that might work, but they weren't ready to go at the point when you needed them.

Betts: Since that time we've changed some of our reliance on where in the Reserves we draw our combat strength. It's actually shifted obviously to the National Guard. Do you see this as a problem in view of what the problems had been in the Gulf War?

Cheney: It depends on your view of what's going to happen in the world. I think there's definitely a place out there for National Guard combat units. I don't think you should assume that they're going to be ready to deploy in an immediate crisis. You need to have a system that's designed to take that into account—if you can call them up. It depends in part on the size of the unit. Clearly the smaller units are better able to get the kind of training they need in peacetime to exercise together as a unit. When you start to talk about a brigade that's based in three states, there isn't any way they're going to get to function under those circumstances in peacetime ordinarily. How much time do you plan to have them work up a train and get ready to go? So most of it's a question of time.

Zelikow: I wanted to ask you one large question, again just trying to get you to reflect back on the totality of the experience. If we were writing a *Kings of the Pentagon* book and profiling you, suppose we were to ask you this. What do you look back on as the toughest decisions or choices you had to make as Secretary of Defense? The ones that caused you the most soul searching or anxiety? Take a moment to reflect on it.

Cheney: I think we touched on that. I felt personally responsible, from a professional standpoint, on the one hand for having aggressively supported the use of troops in the Gulf, the deployment and the go to war decision. And for how well we did, that is, the extent of which we had prepared for and then executed that. I wasn't the commander; I wasn't Norm Schwarzkopf in the field, but ultimately it was my responsibility. If it came a cropper, if we didn't do it well, there might be a lot of reasons to explain or account for that. But in the final analysis, I was the one who was responsible, given my role as Secretary of Defense. There'd be plenty of blame to go around, and there'd be others—the President I suppose would pay the ultimate price for having made the decision to go. But I would have let him down, I would have failed in my assignment, in my basic responsibility. So I suppose that would have to be the most burdensome, the one where the most was at stake.

You make a lot of decisions during the course of 25 years in government. I did. It's rare, for most public officials, that you're involved in those kinds of life and death decisions for the people under your responsibility and direction. There's no place else where you carry that kind of responsibility.

Zelikow: Are there choices you look back on that you wish you could have done differently?

Cheney: I wish I could have done differently? Well, I suppose there are still those questions that circle around how we ended the war, how much time we spent preparing for that. You're so focused on making sure you win that you don't devote enough time. If I had a checklist to go back over with, I'd probably allocate more time to some kind of effort that would have focused on the end of the war and how you end the war. That wasn't front and center; what you're trying to do is execute and win the war by defeating your enemy. You're worried that the things you spend your time thinking about, that you wake up in the middle of the night in cold sweat about, are the "what ifs" that get you into trouble. *What if we don't get through the mine fields*, all the various and sundry things you can think of that might go wrong. But an area where we could have done a better job was the ending, the wrap-up, the conclusion.

Zelikow: Another global question, untold stories. Are there some stories, good or bad, from your tenure as Secretary of Defense that you've ever thought to yourself, *Boy, folks should be sure to take a look at that*? Or even mindful of classification, what you could at least say is when some such and such opens up, take a look at that subject. Or take a look at that, because you're going to find an interesting story there. Any guidance that you can give people who are writing about this period about what things they should look at that they're not already looking at?

Cheney: I don't know what it would be. It's such a public process now anyway. You know, there aren't many secrets left. There's so many people focused on them and so much discussion, everybody writes books. The news media is insatiable in terms of the demand for coverage out there. I can't think of anything right offhand.

Zelikow: Let me talk to you about politics then for a few more minutes before we go. You mentioned that you don't do politics, or didn't then.

Cheney: I was joking.

Zelikow: But you must have been conscious of some of the problems the Administration was having in the second half, especially on the domestic and economic front, including in your party, in the Republican Party. Did you have a view on the budget deal of October 1990? Were you in one of the camps on the question of whether the President ought to cut that deal?

Cheney: My only involvement—we talked earlier—was in terms of what I could pony up from the Defense Department. So we were part of those conversations. I was not in the room when the decision was made as to whether or not he was going to support a tax increase. The budget deal was put together by folks that I wasn't involved with. It's Darman and Sununu and company. Did I have a view? Frankly, I liked the speech that he gave in New Orleans when he said, "Read my lips, no new taxes." I thought that was the right policy. I thought that it was a mistake to then increase taxes because I was sympathetic to the point of view that it's a mistake to go raise taxes.

And I didn't have a lot of confidence in the Democrats. I'd served the minority up there for ten years and I've got some nice friends over there on that side of the aisle, but I didn't trust them. If I had still been in the Congress—this is something I've thought about from time to time. Part of what influenced how that unfolded—might not have changed the overall direction, but influenced what unfolded—was the Tower nomination. It was when Tower got defeated and I got pulled out, I was no longer there as whip, that's when Newt moved in and ran for the whip's job and won by one or two votes. Newt then had a platform and I was no longer there to be a buffer. My success in the leadership had been that I had—

Zelikow: Between Newt and Bob Michel.

Cheney: Yes, I was the bridge between the old guard and the new guard. I would have, in the final analysis, if I were the whip and the President's put forward a package, I might not have liked it, but I would have supported it and worked to get it passed. Newt chose the other course. He decided to oppose it, and that hurt. The first one went down and then he had to go back and cobble something together. They finally got a package passed. But to some extent, that was the price—I don't want to overstate the case here—but to some extent that was the price that was paid when I went to Defense. It had that kind of consequence, I think.

Zelikow: Did you have many dealings with Sununu or Darman on your issues as Defense Secretary?

Cheney: A few, not many. The deal with OMB basically was I would sit down with Dick and we'd come up with a number that we were going to shoot for to get the blessing of the President. I think once or twice the President would be involved in a three-way conversation. Brent would too, but that's all I had to do with OMB. After I had that basic number, then I was free to go ahead and put together the budget. I didn't have to go through the normal process of OMB clearance, which was a blessing. It really helped a lot.

Secondly, with respect to Sununu, John was a problem. He may have been an advocate of my coming on board, but a lot of us had difficulty with him. Smart guy, arrogant, didn't know what

he didn't know. During the transition he was selected to be White House Chief of Staff. He called and wanted to come see me in my capacity as a former Chief of Staff. I had the impression somebody told him to come do it, the President or somebody, to go around and talk to all the guys who'd had the job. So I made time in my schedule and I took some time and sat down and thought about what I'd want to tell him. He came to my office on the Hill and walked in and said, "I'm here, what kind of advice and counsel have you got for me as Chief of Staff?" He leaned back in the chair, looked at the ceiling and started twiddling his thumbs. He complied with the request to come see me. He didn't give a damn what I had to say about the job.

We had two other run-ins. One, he had a candidate for an Assistant Secretary of the Army job that I had somebody else for. We had a real shoot-out over that. The President signed off on my person and Sununu backed off. After that, didn't mess with personnel. The other problem we had was the aircraft out at Andrews. Terry O'Donnell, who was my general counsel and who had been Ford's personal aide and therefore knew everything there was to know about how the West Wing works, got contacted by the Air Force guys out at Andrews and was told that Sununu was misusing the aircraft, taking personal trips and so forth. I got Terry and called John and went over to see him and sat down with him and said, "Look, John, here's the problem. These are the rules. This is the way it's supposed to work. You're not doing it the way it ought to work. You're going to get in trouble, it's going to be public, you're going to embarrass the President. You really ought to clean up your act." And he said, "Absolutely, you're right. Boy, I really appreciate your coming over here." Called in somebody else to make sure they understood they were to work with O'Donnell and get this sorted out. Never did a damn thing about it. About six or eight months later, of course, it all blew up, became public and embarrassed the President.

He was bullheaded and wouldn't listen to anybody else. In the end, I think, got the President in trouble. They ultimately made a decision to let him go. They still have a good relationship with him today. You still see John at various functions. I get along fine with him today, but that was not a warm and friendly relationship for a lot of us. As I say, he didn't bother me very much after he'd made that run at my personnel one time. Dick left me alone in terms of budget, so I didn't have any complaints.

Zelikow: I'm actually kind of surprised that an Assistant Secretary of the Army's job would have to go all the way up to the President for a decision.

Cheney: It's a presidential appointment, so it has to go through the White House personnel office. Requires Senate confirmation at the Assistant Secretary level.

Zelikow: But you'd actually have to take your time personally though, this couldn't be handled on paper?

Cheney: He had somebody he wanted and I didn't want him and I had somebody else I wanted to put in to that slot. The personnel shop reports to the Chief of Staff in the White House. You're not going to get a White House clearance if he doesn't want clearance. If you don't get clearance, it won't go to the President to sign off and send the nomination papers to the Hill. You don't get nominated; you don't get the job. It was one of those 44 slots that require Senate confirmation, presidential appointment.

Zelikow: When the Chief of Staff problem became acute in the latter part of 1991, your name surfaced as a possible replacement for Sununu as Chief of Staff. It's not such a crazy idea, people were surfacing Baker's name and you'd been Chief of Staff even before Baker. So did anyone discuss this with you?

Cheney: I need to know where you got your information from.

Zelikow: Well, it's in a book.

Cheney: Really?

Zelikow: Yes. It's in the *Newsweek* book on the 1992 campaign.

Cheney: Interesting. I've never read that book. Yes, there was a brief period, I guess late '91 sounds like it makes sense, when obviously a decision had been made that Sununu was leaving. As I recall, it was on a weekend. I got a couple of phone calls at home about whether or not I would have an interest in returning to the White House as Chief of Staff. Brent was the guy who called, my old buddy General Scowcroft. I respectfully declined. I don't know all the details and the background. In the end, of course, Jim took it. They brought Jim back in, or I guess Sam Skinner. Sam Skinner came back in.

I always had the impression Baker had a hand in that, but I couldn't confirm that. My recollection is Brent was calling me from Camp David and the President was up there. I never asked him if he was calling on behalf of the President. I assumed he wouldn't have called if he wasn't. At the same time, I wasn't eager to go do it. That would have been a big enough shift and important enough if the President really wanted me to do it, for him to call himself. And for there to be an understanding that you had to have absolute, total authority to go run the shop. That meant hiring and firing people, and I don't think they would have given me that kind of sway I had in the Pentagon. The White House was too close, full of loyal retainers, people who had been around a long time. You would have been, as I think Skinner was, severely constrained in terms of how much authority you can have. Getting rid of Sununu helped, but it didn't solve all the problems.

Zelikow: It highlighted a problem, which is that they needed someone to run the reelection campaign. As you know very well, the reelection campaign of an incumbent President is run above all by the White House Chief of Staff.

Cheney: Yep. Did it once.

Zelikow: Yes. What did you think was the answer for how this should be done again? Did you have a view or were you just staying back and hoping that somehow this would get better and this problem would be solved?

Cheney: I didn't see it as my problem to solve. At the time, you had over at the campaign, I guess Bob Teeter was over there by '92. Fred Malek was heavily involved. Bob Teeter is somebody I know very well.

Zelikow: Going back again to '76.

Cheney: Yes. Been through the wars with him. Bob did all my polling when I was a Congressman. We'd been close friends, still are. I always thought Teeter would have made a better choice as Chief of Staff than Sununu. That was the choice back in '88 and the President decided to go with Sununu. I don't know that the thing was fixable in '92, I just don't.

Zelikow: What about Teeter for Chief of Staff in '92?

Cheney: Well, he was running the campaign by then. If you got rid of Sununu and put him in, I suppose over there maybe it might have worked, I don't know.

Zelikow: Because it was clear, surely, did you think or did anyone think that Skinner could run the campaign from the White House?

Cheney: I don't know; nobody asked me. I was not personally responsible for what was going on in the West Wing.

Masoud: But did you personally think that he would have been able to run the reelection campaign?

Cheney: Skinner?

Masoud: Yes.

Cheney: When I'd done it, what, 20 years before, as Chief of Staff, Bob Teeter was one of the six. There were six of us who did it. There was Teeter and Baker and Spencer and myself, and John Deardourff and Doug Bailey as our ad guys. It was a good team. We didn't win, but we almost pulled it out and closed a 20-point gap, 30-point gap, I guess. I would have had a lot of confidence in Bob Teeter in that kind of setting now. Bob gets rapped for the '92 campaign; I'm not sure that it's fair to put that burden on him. I think there were some other things that could have been done.

One of the reasons we all loved George Bush is because he is intensely loyal to his people. If you're one of those people, he's a delight to work for. When it's time to really put the hammer down and throw somebody over the side, it's not something that he enjoys doing very much. Most Presidents don't. I thought he should have changed Vice Presidents in '92. I thought if he really wanted to go all out and do all those things you had to do to prevail and win, and to change the whole dynamics of the campaign, change the terms of debate, grab the offensive, get yourself a new running mate. He wasn't willing to do that. Those are personal choices he made. I don't mean to be critical of them. It was his Administration; he was the guy with his name on the

ballot. But I think there was a scale of change needed that in the end wasn't possible. The main reason was because of some choices the President made over the years.

Masoud: Did you personally advise the President that he needed to change Vice Presidents?

Cheney: No.

Masoud: You didn't tell him that.

Cheney: No. That message was conveyed. Baker and Teeter conveyed it. But he didn't want to do it.

Zelikow: So they couldn't get the Sec Def to come over, so they got the Sec State to come over?

Cheney: Better him than me. He was older than I was, wiser. You know, Jim deserves a lot of credit for that as well. He had a different relationship with the President, a much more personal relationship. One that went way back 30 years to their early days together in Houston. He was willing to step up when the President really needed him. I think if he could have figured out a way to get me to go do it so that he didn't have to, he would have. There's no doubt in my mind at all he would have tried to engineer that.

Zelikow: Did the two of you ever talk about this?

Cheney: Not at great length. Not at great length.

Zelikow: Because surely the two of you understood this better than most other people would have.

Cheney: Sure. No, I always remember when Jim got the job at the beginning of the Reagan Administration, he came to see me. He had a piece of paper, had his name on one side and Ed Meese on the other. He was negotiating a contract over who was going to do what in the Reagan Administration. What he came to see me about was to make sure he had all the key functions on his side of the paper: personnel, scheduling, paper flow, all of those key items that he wanted. Then the other stuff he left to Ed Meese. Jim's organized, knew exactly what he needed to do. He went around and figured out how to do it and then he made it happen. He was a superb Chief of Staff for Reagan, really did a great job. But he called four years later and he said, "Dick, in order to get out of this damn job, you had to lose an election. I'm going to become Secretary of the Treasury." And then laughed like hell.

I thought about calling him back when he went back in, but I didn't want to rub it in. It's a tough job. He was the right guy to do it for George Bush. But as I say, the President had to be willing to make some pretty fundamental changes on the domestic political side. He just wasn't willing to do it. I always felt we had a problem in the economic arena. We had some great guys in Darman, and Sununu's a smart guy, I don't mean to knock John's intellect at all. Nick Brady and Michael—Counsel of Economic Advisors—

Zelikow and Masoud: Boskin.

Cheney: Boskin. Really talented guys, but the President never came down on an economic philosophy or strategy or broad set of policies. Gave a great speech at the Detroit Economic Club on economic policies.

Zelikow: That was already in August.

Cheney: It was a one-trick pony and that was it. When he got into the foreign policy arena, he loved it. He knew it; he could talk about it endlessly. It was a subject he'd mastered and that he'd spent most of his professional life on. In the economic arena, he didn't have that kind of conviction and it came through. I always felt that we had competing camps in economic policy and he was unwilling to make a decision to say, "Okay, we're going with these guys. This is the policy." He'd get ratcheted back and forth.

I think the VP thing was a big deal too. I don't mean to be critical of Dan Quayle, but unfortunately Dan got labeled in '88 the way the announcement was handled. He wasn't ready for the questions that had to be answered and he never recovered. The President made that decision personally. I don't think it was a matter that he was trying to defend the wisdom of his earlier decision in '92. I just think he really couldn't bring himself to pull the trigger.

Zelikow: Let me get you to reflect for a moment because this is a good lead in to it; George Bush's management style. How would you describe how George Bush ran his Administration? That's certainly in the areas that you dealt with as a manager. You don't have to get into the particular substantive issues except as illustrations.

Cheney: He gave me a lot of leeway. He had a sense, the first day we talked about the job, the day he offered me the job, spent an hour or something up there in the residence, just the two of us. It was never a detailed set of instructions about what to do: these are my concerns; we need to worry about . . . We talked more about a policy sense or a strategic sense. We're worrying about Central America, the Middle East, the Russians, arms control. In terms of the Pentagon itself, procurement reform was mentioned and was high on his list of concerns at that point. Then you were pretty free to take the ball and run with it.

The places where your performance really mattered and where he would be heavily engaged and you'd be interacting with him maybe on a daily basis, maybe several times a day, would be in the middle of the Panama or the Desert Storm operation. Again, there it was just part of the team. You'd have your mission: we're going to liberate Kuwait. I knew what my brief was, I had the Defense portfolio. I had to deal with that. He would have expected me to work with Baker, work with Scowcroft. Had enough confidence in me to manage my piece of it without having to checklist or having to tell me day by day to do A, B, C, or D. Assumed that I had the intelligence and the understanding to come to him if I needed something from him or if there was a decision that rose at the presidential level that he needed to make, that I would come to him. On something like, well, like the Dugan matter, and tell him this is what I need to do, make sure he's on board and then go do it.

He relied heavily on Brent, I think, for a lot of stuff. But again, as I say, we had this unique set of relationships on his national security team, so a lot of stuff happened without anybody having to talk about it. You didn't need to have elaborate detailed instructions. You're the Secretary of State; go do what the Secretary of State does.

Zelikow: The formal National Security Council meetings were regarded in general—there are some exceptions—in general as being relatively sterile. How did the President work through issues where he was in the room? Or would you more often find yourself in a meeting with Scowcroft and Baker, where you might be accompanied by Powell, sort of the group of eight? Or maybe the President might involve himself in such a meeting. If you could just convey a flavor of how frequently the President tended to sit down at the table and hash these things out, or whether you really felt that these things got hashed out mostly among the other principals and then interactions with the President were more episodic and bilateral.

Cheney: It really depended on where you were in the cycle, whether you had an ongoing military operation and what the subject matter was. Formal meetings of the National Security Council were fairly rare. You had to have a certain number of them. There were certain subjects that needed to be discussed in that environment—it's time to review the review of U.S. policy toward whatever, that would be a good place, so occasionally you'd have those.

In terms of sort of the heavy lifting involving the President, say, in the Gulf War, it was much more likely to be the gang of eight or even a smaller group. He'd be there, he'd preside. He was much more comfortable in that kind of a situation and I think we were too. The meeting might be in the Cabinet Room, might be around the fireplace in the Oval Office, might be upstairs in the residence, in his office up there. He was comfortable in that kind of a setting. It was not a formal sort of arrangement. It would involve Baker and myself and Powell and Scowcroft, Quayle, Sununu usually. Sometimes Bill Webster, Bob Gates—Bob Gates would usually be involved. That's where a lot of the management of a crisis would actually take place.

Separate, apart from that, if you move off that to more normal peacetime operations, he did an awful lot in the diplomatic arena and the State Department arena, between himself and Jim and Brent, that I wouldn't be directly involved and didn't need to be directly involved. When Jim was on the road, he'd send in cable just about every day keeping the President briefed and up to speed on what was going on.

Zelikow: Would you get a copy of those cables?

Cheney: No. Not unless for some special reason I needed to, if there was some subject that came up. That was just sort of routine reporting back. The President wanted that kind of intimate involvement with what was going on in the State Department and Jim's travels, if he's meeting with Gorbachev or the Chinese or wherever he was. Of course, Brent would be there for all of that. He would meet more often with Jim, when Jim was in town. In my case, he did not get that deeply involved on a daily basis with what I was doing, but I was off running the Defense Department. I had a session with him, I think it was every other week, where I'd go in and talk about whatever I wanted to talk about. That was basically my nickel. Then the other entity that was important was when Jim and Brent and I got together, just the three of us, which we tried to

do weekly if we were all in town. I guess that was a Wednesday morning breakfast in Scowcroft's office.

Zelikow: Would you like to have a one page or five or six issues that your staff would compile from among the various requests?

Cheney: Sure. Once word got out down in the bureaucracies that this meeting was taking place, people would latch on to that as an opportunity to get decisions, get things resolved. Stuff would start bubbling up. We tried to let each other know in advance what we wanted to talk about. There'd be some interagency coordination before the principals sat in. Sometimes there'd be some things we'd talk about that we'd keep just to ourselves and not share with anybody else. It became a way to get decisions made and things resolved, issues surfaced that needed to be addressed.

Zelikow: Without getting into the specifics, what kind of things would you keep to yourselves? I don't want you to divulge any personal confidences, but just what sorts of—

Cheney: Well, we would have discussed at that level the issue I mentioned earlier, using the UN Security Council resolution as leverage on the Congress. We probably would not have put that back down into the—we wouldn't want that to leak. We wouldn't want the Hill to find out what we were doing, that back in October we're planning how to leverage the Security Council so that when we need it we can use that with the Congress, turned out in January. That would be a sensitive political matter, a small "p" political matter that we'd discuss. Things like that.

Zelikow: I'd be grateful if on tape you could go over again your own thinking about your political plans after you left the government. I had asked you the question over lunch. Were you planning to stay in the Bush Administration, in a second Bush Administration? If so, remain at the Pentagon? Then you proceeded to answer that and I'd like you to repeat that answer.

Cheney: I didn't know. I mean, I really enjoyed the—

Zelikow: You were not looking to leave the Pentagon though. You were not already thinking that you wanted to reshuffle to something else.

Cheney: No, what I would have done is to sit down after the election and make a conscious decision, *Do I want to stay or not?* The President might not want me to stay; they might want somebody else in the job. Certainly that break between Administrations is a time when he ought to make those kinds of decisions. He might want to shuffle the Cabinet around; he'd done a little bit of that before. I might want to get back into elective office. I'd given up a promising career, some would say, in the Congress. It's always an option to go back home to Wyoming and run for the Senate, for example, where there were Senate seats coming up. In the end I didn't have to make that decision. We lost the election, so I was out on the street like everybody else.

Then the call for me was to decide what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I put together a package: a chair over at AEI [American Enterprise Institute], so I had staff support and a stipend. Several boards, I went on the Morgan Stanley board and the Procter and Gamble, Union Pacific

and so forth. I went out on the lecture circuit, making 75 or 80 paid speeches a year. I all of a sudden had more money than I ever thought I would have, but I didn't see myself for the next 20 years out on the lecture circuit. My jokes weren't that good. They were okay, but they got old after awhile.

I thought I might want to take a crack at elective office myself. Either go back to Wyoming and run for the Senate or maybe even run for President. So what I did in the '94 elections cycle, the '93-'94 period, was, in addition to the other things I've mentioned, I set up a Political Action Committee to raise money for candidates. This was when the major push was on for the Republicans to take control of the Congress and we were successful for first time in 40 years. I did 160 campaigns around the country during that election cycle, speaking for candidates, raising money. In part that was by way of testing to see if I really wanted to go back full time to the political wars.

Two questions, one, if I said I was thinking about running for President did people laugh or did they sign up? And I got a few of them to sign up. The other was, was I really prepared? Was I really prepared to do whatever I had to do in order to win? Was I ready to make the commitment that it takes if you really want to run a national campaign? After the election was over with in '94, I went to Wyoming over the holidays with my family and sat down and thought about it and concluded I didn't. That I had had a great career for 25 years; it had been unplanned. Had a hell of a tour; it was going to be hard to top that and that I was still young enough to go have another career and do other things. I wanted to spend time with family, make some money. I guess then I was 53 and it was time to move on. So I made that call at the end of '94, and then by August of '95 I'd been approached by the folks here at Halliburton. We announced that I'd come on board as chairman and CEO here and actually took over the following January.

Zelikow: Was anyone involved in your discussions about a possible presidential bid after the November '94 election other than your family?

Cheney: No. Well, I would have talked to people like Stu Spencer, Dave Addington, who was running my PAC for me, had been my special assistant in the Pentagon. A few folks like that, Terry O'Donnell.

Masoud: But you also had to make a decision not only not to run for President, but not to run for Senate.

Cheney: Not to run for anything, yes.

Masoud: You just decided you were done with elective politics.

Cheney: Yes, I made a complete break. I've still got a lot of friends who can't believe it. Not that I should have run. They just don't think anybody walks away from a political career or walks away from Washington. You know, the city's full of people who worked in prior administrations and can't bring themselves to leave, and I didn't want to do that. Plus, after the Ford years, I'd made the decision I was going to run for office, loaded up the U-haul truck, the kids and the dog and tied the station wagon on the back and went home to Wyoming with limited

economic prospects and ran for Congress. But I was 37 years old and I was prepared to do that and I'd never held elective office. By the time I'm in my mid-50's and it's the end of the Bush Administration and I've completed 25 years in government, I looked at it and said, "Well, I can make one more major career change here. This something I've never done; let's go do that." It was that kind of decision.

Zelikow: If you had run, how did you appraise your prospects in '96? In retrospect, I can think of some of Republicans who might have wished you'd made a different decision.

Cheney: I still get a few people who come around and say they wished I had, although the memories fade with time. Yes, there were a lot of folks who were willing to sign on and there was a fair amount of support out there for me to go do it. It was less the political piece of the equation that led me to decide not to than it was the personal side of it. I really wasn't prepared to give up my privacy, to make the commitment to have to deal with all of the issues and questions that you have to deal with. To devote myself for that length of time to the fundraising, and the campaigning, and the chicken dinners and just everything that goes with it.

What would have been my prospects? I don't know. Bob Dole would have been a tough opponent. That's rank speculation. If I thought it would be easy, I might have jumped at the chance. I had some friends tell me, at one point they came and said, "Dick, we had dinner last night, and over dinner we all decided that if we could appoint a President, you're it." And I said, "If you can get me the job by appointment, I'll take it. I don't want to run for it." It was the prospect of the campaign that really, more than anything else, turned me off.

Also, people had an image of me developed primarily as a result of the Gulf War, but that was different. That was certainly an important part of governing, an important part of the Bush Administration, but it's not running for President. It's managing a crisis, running a war. You can be deadly serious, make important decisions, be successful, obviously as we were in that case, and have the country behind and really stir you on. But that's not dealing with the abortion issue. As soon as you take—and I think that's part of Colin's problem when he decided not to run—as soon as you move out of that arena that we were so successful in over into the political arena, where you're dealing with all those issues that everybody's mad about and divided on, how are you responsible in talking about gasoline prices today? The politicians all demagogue the issue. I wasn't comfortable doing that. I wouldn't have been very good at it. So for a lot of reasons like that, I concluded that I'd had my day in the sun and it was time to move on.

Zelikow: Did you reconsider this for the 2000 cycle?

Cheney: No. Never looked back.

Zelikow: Are you and Colin still close?

Cheney: Yes.

Zelikow: Did he consult you about his political plans?

Cheney: Yes, we did talk about it before he made his decision.

Zelikow: He has an interesting passage in his memoirs about the last day of the Bush Administration. He wanted to say goodbye or thought that maybe he should say goodbye. There's this odd sensation that he records and maybe you've read this part of his book.

Cheney: I'm trying to remember.

Zelikow: It's a little bit poignant. He doesn't know really whether to go over or whether he expects you to call on him, but he wants to say something and doesn't quite know how to do it. It was a little bit poignant because it seemed to capture an ambivalence of a relationship that on one hand was extremely close and personal between people who clearly had become very attached to each other, but on the other hand a relationship that also had a professional quality to it where he didn't really quite know how to cross the bridge, the professional bridge.

Cheney: He was the Chairman and I was the Secretary.

Zelikow: Yes, and I was wondering whether you had any thoughts on that or any thoughts on that last day as you left office. Any reaction to that story?

Cheney: I don't. It was a big disappointment to lose to Bill Clinton, which has only been reinforced over the years. You guys didn't come to hear partisan diatribe, but I'm not a Bill Clinton fan. I wasn't a Bill Clinton fan then, never have been. I've been enormously disappointed by this Administration.

At the same time that I was leaving—I'd left before. Hell, I'd been involved in losing campaigns. I was an experienced hand, if you will, at getting kicked out by the voters. So that piece of it wasn't traumatic and by then I had a whole bunch of very attractive options in front of me. I was able with just the Morgan Stanley deal to match my salary as a Cabinet member and everything else was gravy. So I was looking forward—well, the other thing that happened that January is that my daughter got married. We'd gone out and had the wedding in Jackson Hole, this was about the 12th of January, I think. Just a week before the inauguration. So we were all caught up in that, the family was caught up in that as well.

By the same token, when it comes time to leave, from the election to the inauguration itself, you're really sort of wrapping up your affairs. You still have to deal with some issues, we've still got START II and the Somalia thing and so forth, so there's things happening. But you're clearly in a mode of departure. And it is bittersweet. We had a hell of a run. You know, because I'd been through the process before, that you're not going to see or work with these people again, probably. A few of the relationships you're able to keep up, can't keep up all of them. I felt very good about what we'd done. I felt very good about the people we'd put together to do it. So there are a lot of good-byes, a lot of people parting company. That's all I guess the kind of thing you would normally expect. But also, I didn't want to go around and throw my arms around people and say, "Gee, it's been great." We had military ceremonies and Pentagon-type ceremonies and pinned ribbons on people and did a lot of those things, had pictures taken with a lot of folks and so forth. But there's a limit to what you can do with all of that.

I guess the other side of it that you're aware of, I wasn't aware of this until I left. I had a muscle spasm in my back, a knot I guess would be the way to describe it, in the muscle in my back that had been there virtually all the time I was in the Pentagon. I didn't realize it till I left and it quit the day I left. It's the tension that you live with all that time. And it literally, I still recall, all of a sudden it was gone. It was because you're so intense while you're there and the responsibilities are substantial, you're tense without even knowing it, without even thinking about it. All of a sudden you can relax and that comes the day you walk out of the place.

So I won't say I don't miss it, I do. There are days when I have very fond recollections and memories of all that and especially the people and especially guys like Colin Powell, but we see each other from time to time. This weekend, I'm headed for Washington tonight. Main reason I'm going back is because some of us are having a surprise birthday party for Brent tomorrow night, it's his 75th birthday. So the President's going up and Colin's going to be there, probably Jim Baker and myself and some others. We're going to surprise him without his knowledge, he's not supposed to know about this, on Sunday night.

Zelikow: I think that's a good note on which to conclude. We said in our schedule that we would end at 2:30. It is precisely 2:30.

Cheney: All right, I've enjoyed it. It's been a lot of fun. I didn't know how much time we would need when you first proposed this, but it turned out to be very interesting.

Masoud: Is there anything else you want to add before we go?

Cheney: Listen, by tonight I'll probably have four more hours for you. But no, I can't think of anything right now. We did an awful lot.

Zelikow: It would be helpful if you see folks like Baker or Colin in particular, if you would urge them to cooperate and do this. Two full days is a lot of time. It was a big deal for you to pull aside that much of your time to do this. But I think as you reflect on it, I think you see that we needed two days to do a thorough job. Maybe we weren't even thorough enough, but I think we did a reasonably thorough job. It's hard, if they haven't really sat down and done this and thought about what it means, but urge them to help leave this legacy.

Cheney: I will do it. All right, gentlemen, I enjoyed it. Good luck.