GEORGE W. BUSH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH CONDOLEEZZA RICE AND STEPHEN HADLEY

June 22, 2011
Palo Alto, California

Interviewers
University of Virginia
Russell Riley

Southern Methodist University
Seyom Brown

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Russell Riley: This is the joint interview with Condoleezza Rice and Stephen Hadley as a part of the George Bush 43 Oral History Project. Thanks very much for inviting us to Stanford for this occasion. We've had a brief conversation before the tape began about the ground rules, but again the fundamental one is that this is completely confidential. The only people who are allowed to report what goes on in the discussion are the two of you.

Although we're going to focus mostly on the second term, according to our prior arrangement, I wanted to begin by asking some questions about the transition from the first to the second term. We talked a little bit about this in the first interview, but not so much related to the White House and where the National Security Advisor role fits into this. I have some questions, and Seyom does too, about the transitional area, some questions about President Bush and his own development as President, any changes in his ways of thinking or doing business that you may have witnessed from 2001 to 2005.

Then, the thing that we really didn't get to very much last time was the key geographic areas, the issue areas. I think it would be useful to tackle those one at a time, as interesting subjects for which to get two different frames of reference. We don't need the play-by-play narrative on this as much as we do the general narrative, what the important developments are, how you're thinking, and so forth.

Let me start by asking this question: As you're transitioning into a new arrangement of people in late 2004 and early 2005, I'm sure you're looking back at the experience of the first term. How well did you feel the national security-making process worked during the first four years?

Condoleezza Rice: Let me start and then maybe Steve can—For most issues, the National Security Council structure that we had put together—And by the way, Steve and I were present at the creation, literally. We started together. He was also a Vulcan. So when we knew we were going to be National Security Advisor and Deputy National Security Advisor, we started plotting what kind of National Security Council the President should have, and talking to him about it. We put a lot of thought into the structure.

It was sort of funny: Because of the prolonged postelection period, the Florida period, there were times when we thought, as we were planning, that we might not actually ever be National Security Advisor and Deputy National Security Advisor, but we spent a lot of time thinking it through. We thought that a couple of things we'd done had been really spot on; for instance, putting the Treasury Secretary in the position of being always at the National Security Council. As you know, the 1947 Act names only four members, so the President has a lot of discretion

about whom he invites. We thought economic issues were becoming important enough that the Treasury Secretary ought to be a regularly attending member, and so he was. We thought that worked very well.

Of course, we had come into this thinking we'd be a National Security Council, only to find that the homeland issues suddenly after 9/11 were very critical, and now we had a Homeland Security Council. Some of the sorting of what Homeland would do and what the NSC [National Security Council] would do worked more smoothly than one might have thought. That was partially personalities. Tom Ridge was very easy to work with. That would be true later on with Mike Chertoff as well. Even the National Economic Council that I oversaw through the National Security structure, for instance—things like the Argentine near-collapse in 2001 through 2003, because Larry Lindsey and the NEC [National Economic Council] guys just thought that the NSC had more heft than the NEC did in bringing the right people to the table. On most issues it was working really, really well.

The place that it was really hard was when we got to Iraq. That was because this was the most complex undertaking that any administration had ever undertaken, because it wasn't like World War II, where you ended the war and then you had the peace. We were sort of still fighting the war and trying to bring in elements of the peace, and the complications then between the roles and responsibilities of Defense and State, personalities as well, but I think you can overplay the "It was Don [Rumsfeld] and Colin [Powell]." This was more structural, because State wasn't structured to do the kind of big reconstruction and big phase-four operations. Defense wasn't really structured to do phase-four operations. The last year or so, 2003, 2004, was very tough for the National Security structures.

The other thing that was hard to work through the structures were issues having to do with detainee policy, the kind of War on Terror legal framework, because again this was uncharted territory. It was just very hard to get all of the moving pieces working. I actually think once we moved to 2005—First of all, we had a lot of experience with some of these areas that really helped inform. Secondly, when I moved to State I was determined to restructure State in a way to be better able to do these things. And third—He's going to blush when I say this—he was just a better National Security Advisor than I was. I was, I think, a better Secretary of State than I was National Security Advisor.

Stephen Hadley: We may have to work on this part of it.

Riley: I don't think we have to work on it. We have you here and you can speak for yourself.

Rice: I absolutely think that's true, so we can explore that further. Now you've got a chance.

Hadley: I have a couple of things and they're elaborations on what Condi said. One of the ways we handled this—You know, the charge of a National Security Council staff and really a White House staff is to integrate across the stovepipes. You get a set of objectives and you bring the whole government together, all its various resources, to accrue that objective. The goal of the National Security Council and the National Security Council staff has to be integrating across agencies.

One of the things that Condi did very clearly was in the organization of the NSC staff. We ended up in the first term, and refined it a little in the second term, with five Deputy National Security Advisors in the key areas that were bulwarks of the President's policies: communication strategy, War on Terror, Freedom Agenda, economics, and then someone in the end who did some of the regional issues. So we had a structure that gave priority to the President's priorities but was basically flat. Condi basically said, "I don't want to just be dealing with senior directors; I want to be dealing with directors as well."

So we had a flat NSC staff. We emphasized in the NSC staff putting together ad hoc teams to deal with an issue, where you pull in functional people, regional people, and have your lawyer and your communications people sitting around in a room brainstorming a policy. We integrated within the NSC staff. We also then had the potential seams between the National Economic Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the National Security Council. We solved that problem by—First, many times those meetings were joint. It would be a joint NSC–HSC Homeland Security Council meeting, or a joint NSC–NEC meeting, and the National Security Advisor and either the Homeland Security Advisor or the head of the National Economic Council—We would basically cochair the meetings.

Secondly, we had a lot of dual-hatting within the NSC staff. The Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economics was also a deputy to the National Economic Council. The Deputy for Counterterrorism was also the deputy on Homeland Security Council, and their job was to keep the two principals aligned and in line. So we did that. We also did dual reports on the staff level. Our intelligence person was also dual-hatted to the Homeland Security Council. Our communications persons worked not just for Condi but worked for the Communications Director of the White House; lawyering worked in the same way.

Again, the whole structure was to be flat, to have dual reports that would help move across the seams. Then, within the NSC, the culture was sharing information, sharing credit, and working together as teams. That worked pretty well.

Second, there was a lot written about the Vice President and his staff. I will say, in terms of the Vice President, Condi and I had no objections or anything else. He was the most team player I had ever—

Rice: Very transparent.

Hadley: Very transparent. He would do two things. We would get together—We would have meetings and talk through an issue, and the Vice President would always be the first person to say, "This was a great discussion. Now, how are we going to bring it to the President?" Do we do it formally in an NSC meeting? Do it informally? Do we do it in the Oval Office? Do we do it in the Residence? The Vice President was the biggest protector of Presidential prerogatives to make decisions.

When I was National Security Advisor—Condi is right: the two areas where we had the biggest troubles were Iraq and North Korea. The Vice President would call me up and he would say, "Steve, I need to vent. I've got to tell you what I think." He would lay out what he thought. At

the end he would always say, “But I’m just the Vice President. You and the President are running the train. Thanks for listening.” You know, you can’t do better than that.

Now, his staff was very conservative. We tried to make it one staff. His staff people sat in on our senior directors’ meetings. Scooter [I. Lewis] Libby and I, when I was Deputy, would try to meet every other week and just sort of see where things were. There were some tensions there, particularly on North Korea, and a couple of other issues where their staff just disagreed. But the notion that somehow the Vice President was running his own foreign policy—

Rice: It’s just not right.

Hadley: It’s just not right.

Rice: Let me say a word about North Korea because we can come back to it. When I moved to State, the Vice President and I also were perfectly willing to sit in front of the President and debate, and debate in a really spirited fashion, not mean-spirited, not personal, but pretty sharp. The Vice President would say, “It won’t surprise you that I disagree with Condi about this.” We’d go at it in front of the President. But it wasn’t an uncomfortable relationship. I actually think the fact that we were able to do that in the second term was really a good thing. It was a very good idea.

Seyom Brown: To what extent were there—

Hadley: I want to say one other thing before we lose it and then I’ll stop. There were three other devices we used that were interesting, and that were less NSC. One is Don Rumsfeld and George Tenet, working together, developed an integration of military and intelligence/covert operations, which was really unprecedented. It was formed in Afghanistan and in the Afghan campaign. But it really continued in terms of Iraq, in terms of what General [Stanley] McChrystal was doing. You saw it all the way up into the operation to capture [Osama] bin Laden. We now have a fusion of intelligence, covert operations, and the military like we’ve never had before. It is a huge capability for the President and for the country. It was done initially informally by those two.

We had real trouble getting a similar fusion between State and Defense; I think that’s fair to say. In a way, we never got it until Ryan Crocker and David Petraeus decided to form a real team in Baghdad. The third thing we did, and it was mostly second term, although Condi did it informally but we regularized it in the second term, was the Tuesday afternoon meeting. We would meet every Tuesday at four o’clock.

Rice: Principals only.

Hadley: Principals only: Condi, [Robert] Gates—first Rumsfeld, then Gates—the Vice President, the DNI [Director of National Intelligence], the Director of CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Deputy National Security Advisor, and my deputy, who was the notetaker. We met every Tuesday afternoon from 4:00 to 6:30. I served tortilla chips and hot cheese dip.

Rice: That we all looked forward to getting.

Hadley: It had a big impact on both attendance and mood. In those sessions we would vet all the tough operational issues and all the sensitive political issues, just among the Principals. The Vice President would sit here and Condi would sit here, and they would debate it across the table, because on many issues, like North Korea, they were the outliers in terms of views. It was candid but without the pressure of the President being there. You could get all those things out on the table. People knew exactly where everybody stood and you could have the kind of spirited discussion that you might be a little reluctant to do in front of the President, but it got all the issues out.

Rice: Never a leak out of it.

Hadley: Never a leak.

Riley: Was there paper?

Hadley: There is a set of notes from those meetings that Jim Jeffrey and then Judy Ansley did and they're with the Presidential papers. They will make some of the most interesting reading coming out of the administration.

Riley: OK.

Hadley: But those were some structural things, both structural and personal things, that really were all to this issue of trying to integrate and fuse, which is the biggest challenge.

Brown: You're describing here the meetings that are part of the structure that you instituted. What about informal conversations with the President, beyond these meetings?

Rice: Pretty frequent. First of all, the Vice President met with him every week for lunch. I met with the President every week. Don met with the President every week. I also would stop by for dinner every once in a while, maybe once a month or so. We talked on the telephone all the time. Look, I knew the President very well.

When I became Secretary of State, I thought, *I'm not going to lose the connectivity that I had when I was down the hall*, because the worst thing that a Cabinet Secretary can do—I told Hank [Henry] Paulson this and he wrote about it in his book. I said, "You'll get really busy running your department and they'll have a million things for you to do. You only have one client and actually it is the President of the United States, because he is the one that the American people elected. It is not because you want to suck up to him; it is because he's the one with ultimate responsibility, so never lose connectivity."

The President would call Steve every Sunday morning, and when I was National Security Advisor he would call me every Sunday morning. I would talk to the President every Sunday morning as well but Steve and I had such a good relationship that when I knew the President—I would wake up and I would see something in the newspaper and I would think, *Oh, that's going to send him off,* because it says—I'm creating: "State Department Says President Doesn't Know What He's Doing." That would be the implication of some article. So I would call and I would say, "Now Steve, before the President sees this article—"

Hadley: "Tell him to call me."

Riley: "Tell him to call me before he—" Right? Or sometimes Steve would call me and say, "You know, I think you'd better call the boss."

Hadley: I'd get her on the treadmill, and I'd say, "Condi, are you on the treadmill?" "Yes." "Have you seen the paper yet?" She'd say no. I'd say, "Take a look at page A10. He's going to be really spun up about this one." She would say, "I got it." At five after seven, when I would go into the Oval Office, I would come in and the President would be on the phone and he'd put his hand over the mouthpiece and he'd say, "It's Condi." He would put it down five minutes later and say, "Condi was concerned about A10 in the—" [*laughter*]

It leads to a terribly important point for the National Security Advisor, what Condi and I did, which is: You are in a unique position either to encourage the President to have confidence in his Cabinet Secretaries or to really undermine his Cabinet Secretaries. This is the perfect example. There are two ways you can handle this example. The way you handle the example if you want to make yourself look good and your Cabinet members go by, is you wait until 7:05, then you go in and you say, "Mr. President, you probably saw that article on A10. You know, it's outrageous. I told Condi that she's got to get control of her building and stop these leaks. I don't know what they're doing over there. Don't worry, Mr. President, I'll call Condi and I'll take care of it."

Rice: Right.

Hadley: That's making yourself look good and undermining the confidence the President has for Cabinet Secretaries. The other way to do it—and this is what Condi did with Colin and what I did with Condi—is you get the Secretary of State on at five minutes after six, and you say, "There's going to be an article there. The President is going to want to know what you're doing about it." With Condi or Colin, you didn't have to say more. They would say, "I'll get on it." Then you say, "And once you've got it, you probably ought to call the President directly."

Rice: Right.

Hadley: It is all the difference in the world. The times of tension between—It is always the National Security Advisor and the Secretary of State because the Secretary of Defense is too powerful. It's when you had the Secretary of State and National Security Advisors who try to make each other look bad and themselves look good in the face of the President, and it is a real temptation. The thing I say to young people is, "Do not do it. You need to encourage the President to have confidence in his Cabinet Secretaries and to communicate with them directly."

The President would have a tendency to say, "I've decided that you should call Gates," or "Call Rumsfeld," and I would say, "Mr. President, I'm not in the chain of command. You've got a phone there. Pick up and hit that third line and you'll have Don Rumsfeld. You ought to give that order to him directly."

Rice: Steve was better at that, because the President, for a variety of reasons—he was busy; he was doing a lot of things—would say, "Call Don." You really do have to say to the President, "You need to talk to him." I would say sometimes, "You need to have Colin in." Or, "It might be a good thing to have dinner with Colin. Can I set that up?"

Once, knowing how to handle the Secretary-Presidential relationship, I can remember when we were getting ready to go into Afghanistan—the period between September 16th, when the President decides we're going to invade Afghanistan, to October 3rd or whatever it was, when the war launches—it just felt like a slog. Every day the military is coming in and they're not quite ready. And we can't quite get the basing rights with [Islam] Karimov. Every time the President sits through these meetings it's like, "Well, Mr. President, yes, we'll have that to you basically as soon as we can."

The President is on a different clock, because even though he's made the decision that he's not going to do something spasmlike in response to September 11th—He's not just going to fire off some cruise missiles—he knows that there is a sort of clock with the American people that they expect something to happen. He knows there is still a safe haven in Afghanistan. If there is another attack from Afghanistan, then what has he been doing?

It finally came to a head one day about two weeks after September 11th. I went out to the Agency with the Vice President to review some materials. Somebody bursts in the door and gives me a note saying the President is on the phone. I go speak to the President and he says, "I was just thinking about it. When am I going to get a military plan?" You know how he could be. He was all spun up. I said, "Mr. President, I'm at Langley. Why don't I get in the car and come back?" So I'm on the road from Langley and I get outside the gate and he's on the phone again. Then I get outside the White House gate and he's on the phone again. He just wants to say, over and over, he needs a military plan.

I get up to my office and I call him and say, "I'm coming right over." He says, "No, just make sure I have a military plan." So I call Don and I say, "Don, the President is kind of spun up. You think by tomorrow we could have a military plan?" Don goes, "Got it." The next day Don comes in. There is this orderly presentation. The military knows what they're going to do. They know how they're going to do it. So that's what you do, instead of saying, "Yes, Mr. President, I know what you mean. The Pentagon, they're just not on it."

Hadley: That's exactly right, and with Colin and with the Vice President and with Don, they'd all been Chiefs of Staff or National Security Advisor; they knew what the President needed. What they didn't always know was what the President was thinking. One of the things that the National Security Advisor is—All the other Cabinet Secretaries really look to you to be the person who actually knows the President's mind.

Rice: Yes.

Hadley: I would do the same thing with Don. You have your morning meeting with the President and something's got him. You go back and pick up the phone with Don Rumsfeld or Condi: "I was talking to the President today. He is concerned about A, B, and C. You have your weekly one-on-one meeting with the President, so you may want to address those this afternoon."

Rice: Which gives you time as the Secretary, by the way, because one of the problems if you're a Cabinet Secretary—and I fully understood this when I went over to State—When you're National Security Advisor the organization is very flat. When you're Secretary of State or

Secretary of Defense the organization is very hierarchical. I would very often know what was going on in Colin's building or Don's building before they did, because it is working its way up to them. We'd be on our morning call and I would say, "Well, you know State is going to present—"

I'd go over there, and it gives you time, if the National Security Advisor does that before you go to see the President, to have gotten completely informed by your building so that you don't sit there looking like an idiot when he asks you something that is making its way up through your building.

I know we're doing a lot on structure, but I think it is important. The other danger point comes with the President's morning intelligence briefing. Presidents don't get to be President of the United States unless they're decisive people. So he sees the intelligence brief and it says something that might, by the way, be an assessment, a judgment, or completely out-of-date by what is going on in the actual negotiations. The President wants to act, based on that information. It really turns to the National Security Advisor to say, "Mr. President, let's step back. I'll call Colin; I'll call Don. Let's see what they're doing about that." The intelligence briefing, the PDB [President's Daily Brief] can very often present things in a way that looks like nothing is being done about it. You then have to make sure that he isn't making a policy call based on a piece of intelligence.

Hadley: Further structural things: One, encourage your key national security Cabinet Secretaries to have a weekly meeting with the President, just one-on-one, maybe with the National Security Advisor and Vice President and Chief of Staff, to go over issues. Two, encourage phone calls. Three, encourage—As Condi did, you might want to have Colin in for a dinner to sort of talk these things through. Four, have a conference call in the morning with the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, two or three days a week, just to give people a heads-up. Talk about the issues of the day that need to be resolved.

On the intelligence thing, in the second term we structured it so that we would try to save those intelligence pieces that really invited a policy conversation. Mike McConnell—We'd work out an agenda for the week as to what intelligence pieces were going to come to the President when. We would try to do the War on Terror pieces on Tuesday, because on Tuesday, in addition to the Vice President, the Chief of Staff, and the National Security Advisor, you had in the Director of the FBI, the Attorney General, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security Affairs, and the Homeland Security Department head. On Tuesday, when the President got his briefing that was heavily focused on the War on Terror issues, the policy people waging the War on Terror for him were present so they could hear the President's reaction to the intelligence and there could be some policy discussion.

On Wednesday we would have what we called "deep dives," intelligence pieces on any number of subjects, which invited a policy discussion. To that we invited the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and of course the intelligence—

Rice: And sometimes the Treasury Secretary.

Hadley: The Treasury Secretary, or Bob Kimmitt, who had a big political and military background, who was Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. He would come. You would have those conversations. For example, our strategy about whether we should push for Ukraine and Georgia to get MAP [North Atlantic Treaty Organization Membership Action Plan] was basically handled and the President reached his decision on a couple of those Wednesday meetings.

Thursday, the head of CIA came and he gave the President an operations briefing on what were the covert operations, because the President wanted the CIA Director to report to him directly on those issues, not through the DNI. So on Thursday Mike Hayden would come and would give an operational briefing. We tried structurally to do some things that would address the problem.

Rice: In the second term.

Riley: Because, in the first term, Tenet was doing the daily report, right?

Rice: Yes, that's right. And that's fine because we didn't yet have a DNI, so George was doing the briefings. But this tendency to jump to a policy conclusion—

Hadley: That's the problem, without his policy people there.

Rice: —without his policy people there, and sometimes without a framework for what was actually going on. I finally told the Agency, for instance—I said, "Stop reporting on diplomatic activity, because you don't know what you're talking about. You don't know what Dan Fried is actually out there talking to the Europeans about."

Riley: This is second term you're doing this, right?

Rice: This is second term. Because it looks like this is a problem that nobody has a solution for and nobody is working on. The Agency, through no fault of their own, would always be hours, sometimes days, behind what was actually going on.

The other thing, just as a footnote, that the Agency had to be careful of was that they would start telling the President what his counterparts were going to say or do, when of course the President actually knew these people. The President would say, "He's not going to tell me that. Come on, he's not going to bring that up." Or, "I know this person." That briefing had several danger points in it that could a) undermine the President's confidence in what his policy people were doing, or b) undermine the President's confidence in what his intelligence people knew. So you had to be careful how that morning briefing was used, because the President loved it. It was a great time of day. It was one thing for him to kind of process it; it was another for him to start getting locked into decisions.

Brown: Could I just ask about what the President wanted? Was he more interested in having the National Security apparatus present him with options and their implications if you were working toward a big decision, and then he would decide? Did he, on the other hand, want the process, whether it is in front of him, whether he is sitting there or not, to actually converge on the decision?

Rice: It depended on the issue. Both happened. There is also a kind of caricature of National Security decision making, that you give the President an options paper that says, "Your options are one, two, and three; A, B, and C." Most certainly if you do that, A is, We should go to all-out war; C is, We should capitulate; and B is what the State Department actually wants to do. I found that structure untenable. What happens more, because President Bush was a very interactive person, is you go into the National Security Council and, yes, he knows he has option A, option B, option C, but people talk it through.

We used to often say, "I might change my mind." The Vice President, in particular, would say, "I'm going to say this, but I might change my mind by the end of the time we talk." So it wasn't that [Richard] Cheney wants option A, Powell wants B, and Rumsfeld wants C. That's not how it worked. We would talk and massage them, sometimes in front of the President, sometimes in the Principals Committee. I would—and I know Steve did this too—I walked back with the President after the NSC meeting and I'd say, "So, what did you think of that?" He would say, "Well, I want people to talk about it a little bit longer." In that sense he's looking not to have to make a sharp that or that.

Sometimes he would say, "I'm going to do *that*." Then you would go back and if you were smart you'd try to bring the Cabinet Secretaries to that, so the President didn't have to overrule one of his Cabinet Secretaries. It wasn't as if he didn't look at options and look at the implications of them; he did. But it wasn't, "Now we'll look at option A—blah, blah, blah. Now we'll look at option B." Sometimes, like on North Korea, they would emerge as two quite separate options. Then the President would say, "I'm going to do this and if this doesn't work I can always come back to this."

Brown: Sometimes, if there were these divergent options, really massive in their implications, like the surge, would he go off on his own and then come back and inform you guys what the position was?

Rice: He would almost always go off and think about it. He rarely, in a meeting, would say, "I'm going to do that." He would say, "I want to think about it."

Hadley: It all depends. I remember one meeting when we had this intelligence that North Korea was having an enrichment program and we had a meeting in the [Situation] Sit Room. He came in and sat down and he said, "Here's what we're going to do. I want to put together the six-party talks, because I want to get China in the room and use China to put its leverage on North Korea." He didn't have any discussion; he didn't hear options. He had thought about this idea. My guess is that he talked to Condi about it because he usually talked to Condi about everything before he did it. He just came in and he said, "This is what I want to do." The rest of the meeting then was—

Rice: How do we do it?

Hadley: —about how to do it. But with whom he talked could be crucial.

Rice: It's not as if the person is—

Hadley: He talks to himself. He has ideas.

Rice: In some ways, when I would go and he would have one of these sessions with me, it was like he was talking to himself with me in the room.

Hadley: That's exactly right.

Rice: He would say, "You know, I've been thinking, and until we get China involved in this, we're not going to be able to solve this problem." That happened one day. It just sort of hung in the air; we didn't do anything about it. Then he would come back to it over a couple of days. "You know, I've been thinking again. Maybe I ought to call Jiang Zemin and talk to him about this problem." I remember saying to him at one point, "Maybe you need to vivify for the Chinese what it looks like if the North Koreans get a nuclear program." So he gets on the phone with Jiang Zemin, and he says, "You know, some people want me to bomb North Korea." That gets the Chinese on board.

Brown: Would he, for example, if it is China, decide that he should call Henry Kissinger and talk with him?

Rice: Henry would come by from time to time. Once in a while, George [Shultz] would come by.

Brown: Sometimes he would say, "When is Henry next going to be in?"

Rice: He would just talk it through with people. But it is very important to understand that this was a President who had ideas. It wasn't as if he was a blank slate to which you were presenting a set of ideas. He was strategic in the way he thought about things. It was clear to him very early on that China was key to North Korea. He brought it up with me, and we sort of talked it through. It just kind of lay there for a while. Then we would talk it through. Then we started talking about how to engage the North Koreans without doing it bilaterally, because he hated the idea of our giving the North Koreans that status. That's where the six-party talks came from.

Hadley: If we did it bilaterally, of course, then everybody else was off the hook. The thing that is important about what Condi just said is the academic literature has a notion of a decision process that is a point in time and is basically two dimensional. The real decision-making processes are three dimensional and they change over time.

Rice: Right.

Hadley: People have a series of conversations with all kinds of people thinking about it themselves, and a decision emerges over time as a result of those conversations. When you did have a kind of flat point-in-time meeting—My definition of a good meeting was where the group went through an intellectual process and came to a point of consensus that was a position that nobody had when they walked in the door. That is a good decision process.

On the big things, the President was very comfortable making a decision, knowing his team would salute. But on the *big*, *big* things, like the surge decision, he knew before he formally made the decision where he wanted to go, but he also knew Condi was initially not on board, and Don was not initially on board, and the Chiefs were not on board. He knew that if he made that very important decision and didn't have those people lined up: a) if Condi wasn't on board, he

was uncomfortable; b) if the Chiefs and Don weren't on board, it wasn't going to be sustainable, because he knew that Congress would hate the decision, and any division within the military would be used to kill the decision. There was a case where it was a process partly of him reaching his own decision, but partly, if you read the minutes of the meetings in the first week in December in 2007, it is very clear what he is doing. He is asking a series of questions that are gradually bringing Condi to the point where she says, "Mr. President, my problem was this, and you fixed this."

Rice: Right.

Hadley: "Therefore I think this makes sense." The same thing with the Chiefs. He is running a process that is bringing everybody else behind a decision that he has kind of made, but he is also refining that decision to address the concerns that people had. It is a very interactive process.

Rice: This is where the National Security Advisor is important. I knew that Steve wanted the surge, just because I know him. But you could never tell it at the meetings. You could never tell it in the interaction, that he wanted that. He was really just pushing, "What are the issues here? What are the decisions that have to be made?"

I knew from July that—The President and I had talked, year after year, about whether we needed more troops. He would always ask the military and they would say, "Mr. President, we have what we need." I knew he was getting more and more uncomfortable with that. I also knew where he wanted to go, but I was very concerned because I thought if we put more American troops in to do what we were doing, we were just going to get more American troops killed. I knew him well enough to say, in the Oval Office alone, "Mr. President, if you put more American troops in, doing what the military is doing now, you will just get more Americans killed."

I came back from a trip to Iraq where I had had an absolutely horrible set of meetings with the Iraqi leadership, where I had literally said to them, with the Ambassador sitting there, just Zal [Zalmay Khalilzad] and the translator—I said, "Listening to you people—We're not getting involved in your blood feud. The fact of the matter is that Americans understand that there are some people who are resisting us because they think we occupy their country. There are some people who are al-Qaeda. We understand that. But Iraqis fighting Iraqis—We don't get that. We have a saying: 'You can hang separately, or you can hang together.' When I come back here in six months, I expect you're going to be swinging from lampposts." I looked at the translator and I said, "Did that translate?" He said, "Oh, yes."

Then I went back and told the President, "I don't know if [Nouri al-] Maliki can pull this off. So given my discomfort with the Iraqis and with the military, until these are solved, I can't support it." But we really started working through exactly that.

Riley: I see. Let me just refine the question, because I think I know part of what Seyom's talking about. I'll give you an example out of another project. When we interviewed people who worked with President [William J.] Clinton, there was often a sense that somebody was whispering in his ear out of view. He would come up with ideas that had fingerprints on them, but people couldn't

quite figure out whose fingerprints they were. I think part of what Seyom is getting at is the discipline within the administration in terms of who has the President's ear.

Hadley: Let me tell you what I did on it. In terms of meetings—and Condi had the same policy—I never expressed my view in the NSC meetings, *ever*, because my job, what I was doing in the NSC meetings, and the reason I never sat next to the President but always sat down the table, as I was watching the President and his interaction and the faces of everybody else.

Rice: I did too.

Hadley: My job was to make sure that he heard from all of his Cabinet Secretaries and that he understood what he heard. If you watched him—I could tell that there was something he did not understand, but he's President and he didn't want to ask the dumb question, so my job was to ask the dumb question. I'm the dumb guy here. I ask the question that is really the President's question that he can't ask but he needs the answers to.

Riley: Right.

Hadley: So you're running the process in the meeting. You then give your views privately after the meeting when you go back to the Oval. He will say at some point, "So, Hadley, what do you think?" I never gave him a view that Condi and Bob Gates and the Vice President weren't aware of because I would use that Tuesday afternoon session for two things: I would start out and tell them what I thought was on the President's mind with respect to an issue, not to try to bias them, but so they could take it into account in their own thinking.

Secondly, what I tried to do was to tell them where I was heading so they wouldn't be surprised by what I might be saying to the President, but also so if they didn't agree, as sometimes they didn't, they would have an opportunity when they made their presentations to the President to say, "Mr. President, there is a view out there that we should do X and Y," which they knew because I had talked to them about it.

One of the things you did with your Principals—If you're doing it right, they have confidence that in your interactions with the President you are telling them what is on the President's mind, and you're not putting a thumb on the process. Any ideas you have are in the process for them to respond to. On the surge—The first piece of paper I had done on the surge was in October of 2006, the Bill Luti piece, where I said, "Go run a surge," to see what it would look like. I gave that piece of paper to Pete Pace so he could include it in his process.

Rice: I think that's exactly right. I don't think this is a difference between us, but I would go back to the Oval with the President sometimes and I would say, "So how'd you react to that? Tell me what you're thinking." Then he could talk about what he was thinking. I would on occasion say to him, "You know, Mr. President, telling Colin that he can't send Jim Kelly to North Korea doesn't make any sense at this point. What do you have to lose? Why are you so opposed to that?" "Well, I don't want to give Kim Jong-il the status of sending an American Assistant Secretary." I would say, "It's the Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs; it's not you." "Well, I want to be absolutely certain that he doesn't say anything that shows that I'm softening," he would say.

Then you go back to the Principals—and you never speak for the President. You say, "OK, Colin, I think the President may be leaning toward Kelly, but you've got to come in and you've got to tell him what Kelly is going to do. Let me tell you, his range of tolerance for what Kelly would do is not very wide." Then a very smart person like Colin comes in and he's got Kelly on a really short leash. Now, the urban legend about this is that it was the NSC process that put Kelly on a really short leash. No, Colin Powell did, because Colin Powell knew that the President—

Hadley: Thanks to Condi.

Rice: Thanks to my conversation with the President, he knew that the President's tolerance wasn't very great and if he was going to get this to happen, he had to make the President comfortable with it. So that's how I think you introduce your own view.

Hadley: That's a perfect example of a National Security Advisor playing a constructive role to sort of broker the process and get the President where the President wants to go, and the Cabinet Secretaries aligned with that and also comfortable with the President going there.

Riley: But you're also suggesting that, if you keep the channels properly functioning, that the voices are all being voiced through those channels, that you don't have out-of-channel or back-channel communications.

Rice: I don't remember ever feeling that the President had heard something someplace and I didn't know where it was from. Often he would say to me, "The Vice President brought up, at lunch, blah-blah-blah. What do you think?" So I knew it was the Vice President. Maybe I would say to Steve, "Can you check this out with the Vice President's staff?" Or maybe, if I didn't think—Because sometimes the Vice President didn't even say to his staff what he'd said to the President—

Hadley: Most of the time.

Rice: Most of the time. So I would go down and say to the Vice President, "The President said you were interested in—" This idea that somehow the President was getting ideas that I didn't know where they had come from—Even if they were coming from the outside, he would say—I'll give you an example of this, on Sudan: The President talked a lot to his friends in the religious community about Sudan. This is early on in the administration. He would say, "I was talking to the people who do Christian relief efforts in Sudan. Isn't there anything that could be done about this?" I would say, "Let me get to Colin." Then Colin would come in with some ideas. But I never felt that there was a little bird whispering in his ear, that I didn't know who that little bird was.

Hadley: Three caveats: Remember, the President is getting a lot of information from talking to a lot of people. The President would get advice on the rope line.

Rice: Oh, yes. True.

Hadley: Or he would get advice when he had to meet with congressional folks.

Riley: Sure.

Rice: That's true.

Brown: Or he'd get meetings from friends who would come in from out of town.

Rice: Right.

Hadley: The idea to make Bob Gates Secretary of Defense came from an old friend of his. One of the things you've got to do as National Security Advisor is not be defensive about that, and not try to cut all that off. Actually you want the President to have a lot of information sources and if you have the right relationship with the President, the President will let you know those things he has heard that have an impact on him. You have to be comfortable with that and not try to think you have an exclusive channel.

Two more structural things that we did: At the end of the first term in September and October of 2004 there were a lot of leaks coming out of the intelligence community to the *New York Times* that were designed to try to discredit the President and get him not reelected, no question about that. Very tough. We ended up sort of having to shut the interagency process down so as not to have leaks. It had a real impact on the President's confidence in the intelligence community. One of the challenges of the second term was how to rebuild that.

One of the things we did was we started to have—particularly on the deep dives on Wednesday, we had the actual intelligence officials who had written the PDB items, or the intelligence item, come in and present them. It wasn't the President's briefer briefing folks; it was the actual people who prepared the piece who came in and briefed the President so he could see face-to-face the folks who were writing this.

He of course would ask them their histories, where they were from. They were real people. He would always say, "We're really interactive here and I'm going to push you, but you need to understand that I'm not pushing you to change your view. Your view is your view. I'm pushing you so that I understand what your view is, and for you to understand my perspective." Remember, by 2007, 2008, he's talking about Iraq, a problem he has now been dealing with for seven or eight years, with some people who had actually started to work at the Agency after we invaded Iraq in 2003. So the guy has a little bit more knowledge than they do.

Structurally we did that to try to help him rebuild his confidence in the intelligence community.

Rice: Could I just say that's what I also meant about when they come in and report on foreign leaders? After six years, he's seen these people seven, eight, nine, ten times. He's taken their measure.

Hadley: These intelligence people had never met them. Third structural thing: Very consciously in these Tuesday sessions, we would talk about—and we would bring Josh Bolten in—how to take an issue to the President. Sometimes you do it in the Situation Room, but when you're in the Situation Room and the President is sitting in that chair, he is Commander in Chief at its most exalted. He feels he is there to make a decision. Sometimes you don't want him to make a

decision, you want him to listen. So the next down is we would brief an issue informally in the Oval Office, a little more relaxed, not a formal setting.

If we really wanted it to be a listening and exchange session—

Rice: You go to the Residence.

Hadley: —we'd go to the Residence. Do it in the afternoon, Cokes and pretzels. Or maybe even on a weekend, jeans and shirts.

Riley: Pretzels create a different environment than salsa and chips?

Rice: After the President choked on one, needless to say.

Hadley: There is a certain intensity when he eats a pretzel. But again, these are things we did to try to have—Because the whole point of the NSC system is to get a process tailored to the President and his leadership and management style that gets him the information he needs and has a process of dialogue so that he gets to the point where he is comfortable making decisions.

Rice: I know we're going on for a bit, but I just want to make one other point about the NSC process.

Riley: This is just wonderful.

Rice: The NSC process ought to get the President to a good decision; it can't execute those decisions. That's what you have Secretaries for. I think the problems we had in Iraq were actually not problems of decisions. The decisions were clear; everybody knew what we were going to do. They were problems of how those decisions would get executed with structures that were really just not up to the task. That is when I made a decision that was something of a mistake. I tried, because things were coming unstuck in Iraq, to insert the NSC into the execution of those processes because I was thoroughly dissatisfied with the way the execution was happening in the Pentagon. That made it extremely difficult—That made my relationship with Don more difficult, even though it never, by the way—Don and I have remained friends. Steve can attest to this—He used to come to my Christmas sing and sing "We Three Kings," and play "Twelve Days of Christmas," and so forth.

Hadley: I think it was "three geese a-laying" or something.

Rice: "Six geese a-laying." Anyway, it wasn't an unfriendly relationship, but that was really hard. The NSC is a decision-making process. It is really hard when there is a gap between the decisions and the executions.

Brown: But you have to fill that gap in at the NSC level sometimes, because however the decision is, the implementation can go in different directions—

Hadley: But there is a right way and a wrong way, and this was an experiment.

Rice: Yes.

Hadley: There is another experiment we did. If you go back to the Tower Commission report, which was [Edmund] Muskie, [John] Tower, and Brent Scowcroft, and I was the draft person on that report—If you look at the section on the NSC process, which is what the Tower Commission's report—and read the section on the National Security Advisor, it is really quite good. It is the model Condi tried to follow and the one I tried to follow. It's Brent's model. There is one thing in there that is very interesting, which says that the NSC can never be involved in execution. That's dangerous. That came of course from the [Oliver] Ollie North—where Ollie North was executing out of the NSC.

Rice: Right.

Hadley: That actually is the one part of the Tower Commission I disagreed with, because you don't do the execution—

Rice: But you have to help direct it.

Hadley: You have to coordinate and ensure that it is done. That's what we did when we brought Doug Lute in. After we had the decision to do the surge in Iraq, and what we called the silent surge in Afghanistan, Doug Lute was brought in and his whole job was to focus 100 percent of his time on the execution, not by doing the execution, but by overseeing the execution, making sure the agencies had task deadlines. When an agency was falling behind, if it was State, he would either call Condi or come to me and say, "Condi needs to know that her people are not performing on X."

Rice: As Secretary, you might not know. You're sitting up here.

Hadley: Then I would call Condi, and Condi would say—Because the problem on execution is too much is done as "business as usual." "Business as usual" doesn't work.

Rice: Everything falls to the second, third—But just on the Iraq stabilization group, because it is an important distinction, the piece that we couldn't do out there was we couldn't actually execute on the ground, so it was frustrating for the NSC. I think the Pentagon didn't like the fact that we would say, "How come there are still these attacks on the electrical grid?" That was the tension.

The piece that came out of that that was right, and again it slid a little bit from me into the gray area—[Lewis Paul, III] Jerry Bremer is out there and stuff just keeps appearing in the newspaper. Now Jerry is a really good guy and I'm quite certain he wasn't intending to continually surprise the process, but when you wake up on a particular morning and Jerry has published in the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* the seven steps to the Iraqi sovereignty, and nobody has seen them, including the President of the United States, you have a problem.

That was supposed to be a direct relationship between Don and Jerry. That was supposed to be a reporting relationship where it just wasn't materializing on a day-to-day basis in the way that Jerry was making decisions. He's out in Iraq; he's got to make decisions. He can't wait for the bureaucratic processes to catch up with him out in a war zone. So at that point, out of the stabilization group, I got Bob Blackwill, who kept a close eye on the ground, and every day I simply talked to Jerry, which was not wildly popular in the Pentagon, but that, I don't think, was a mistake.

Hadley: We need to back up a step because I realize there's one step that's missing. After we did Iraq in 2003 and it is decided that we need to have somebody out there and it is Jerry Bremer, we had been hearing, partly from Don Rumsfeld, all this stuff about how the interagency is broken and Washington is broken and Washington is the bottleneck and decisions out of Washington are the problem.

Rice: Yes, it's taking too much time.

Hadley: Lots of complaints. So we got, and negotiated, a document, which the President signed, and which Colin Powell, as Secretary of State—

Rice: Signed off on.

Hadley: —he saw, which basically said that DoD [Department of Defense] has the lead for postwar Iraq. Not the exclusive, because Jerry Bremer had a lot of State Department people and he had the benefit of all the State Department work that everybody says we threw away, but in fact we did not throw away and was available to Jerry. But we shut down the interagency process. The deputies committee stopped meeting on Iraq.

Rice: The interagency process went to the field.

Hadley: We said that we're going to do the interagency coordination in the field, Jerry Bremer with the lead. Jerry then reports back to Don, and Don keeps the President and the NSC involved. Washington is out of the picture, Don. You've got the lead, because that's what that document said. And Don, you have an interagency team in Iraq and your guy Jerry Bremer is going to chair it and you're going to do the interagency coordination out there, so Washington would be no longer a problem. It did not work.

It did not work because it was fractious in Baghdad. Jerry Bremer and the military commander did not talk to one another, and the link back to Don Rumsfeld did not work. Don didn't really keep the President informed. So Condi then had this jury-rigged system of the stabilization group to try to fix that problem. It was imperfect. After the surge in Iraq we tried to fix it another way, which was the Doug Lute approach. That, I think, worked better.

Rice: I think so. But on the political side, it *did* work, because from then on—I'll relate an incident to you. I went to a football game—

Hadley: You're right. In terms of not surprising the President and linking Jerry to the President, she did—

Rice: And in terms of the politics, what we were going to do politically in Iraq to get from where we were with the governing council, to an interim government, to sovereignty transfer, to a constitution and an election—One reason that we knew we had to do something—This gets into Iraq, but it is an important story.

Riley: Sure.

Rice: One reason that we knew we had to do something was that all of a sudden, Jerry's seven steps come out, and [Ali al-] Sistani, who none of us to this day have ever met, but we hung on his every word because the guy could kill us in Iraq or help us in Iraq, and mostly he was helpful. He had great instincts. I remember calling him the Ben Franklin of Iraq. He was never going to run for office because he was a cleric. He was a quietist; he didn't believe in the Iranian model. He was terrific. He blasts us, saying, "An unelected Iraqi government cannot write the constitution for the Iraqi people. Only the elected representatives can do that."

So we're in an NSC meeting and everybody is talking about how Sistani has said this, and maybe that's not right. The President looks at us all and says, "How did I get on the wrong side of elections?" All of a sudden you start thinking, *Man, how could this have happened?* Well, it's because this process isn't working in the field. These decrees come out, and so Jerry and I start talking.

I'm at a football game then, and Bob Blackwill, who had gone out into the field to help out—

Riley: You're in Washington, or Alabama?

Rice: In Washington. I'd gone to a Ravens' game that day because I get a chance to take a Sunday afternoon off. I always carried a secure phone with me. There is an aide in the back of the box, who says, "Bob Blackwill is on the phone for you from Baghdad." It's three o'clock in the afternoon in Baltimore. Maybe it was Washington. I can't remember which game it was, but it is nine or ten o'clock at night in Baghdad, and I'm thinking, *What in the world is he calling about at this hour*?

Bob says, "Jerry is going to release a revision of his seven points, and I thought you'd better know about it." I say, "You know, that's something the President of the United States may want to see before the world sees it. Why don't you tell Jerry to wait until he can send it back to Washington?" Bob says, "I think you'd better tell Jerry." I then get Jerry on the phone—This is all in the owner's box at the football game—and I say, "Jerry, I think this is something the President might want to see. As a matter of fact, why don't you get on a plane and come back here and talk to the NSC, because this is a big decision. We've had one false start on this. If we mess it up again, we're just in deep trouble."

Jerry says, "Absolutely. I'll be there Wednesday." This is Sunday. I go into the Oval the next morning and tell the President what I've done. He said, "Did you tell Don?" I said, "I wanted to tell you first." He said, "I don't know if Jerry needs to come back here." I said, "OK, do you want to read about how Iraq is going to get to sovereignty in the newspaper?" He smiled and said, "OK, so when will he be here?"

That process got better, I think, with Jerry. Jerry doesn't get enough credit for moving from this governing council thing, where they changed Presidents every month, and where he could never find half of them because they loved traveling the capitals of the world on behalf of the new Iraq, to a transitional administrative law, which became the framework for the constitution, to the interim government with [Ayad] Allawi as Prime Minister, to the transfer of sovereignty that takes place about a year after the statue falls, then to the elections and the writing of the

constitution. I don't think people give enough credit for how well Jerry shepherded that process along. Once we got it back into the NSC structure, then everybody could have a say.

Riley: Let me ask you: In retrospect, how would you structure an apparatus to best deal with this kind of policy execution?

Rice: I think the Doug Lute thing worked pretty well.

Hadley: It worked OK. It's probably not ideal. It worked because a) you had somebody focused exclusively on execution; b) we started having metrics, in the sense that you would take the strategy, you would have a set of tasks, assign the agency, assign the office, and you had deadlines; c) what we don't still do very well as a government is have metrics not just on the input side, but also on the output side. Then the State Department committed to send 74 people in the next six months.

Riley: Right.

Hadley: What's the schedule of the deployment of those people? When will they be designated? When will they be deployed? When will they show up in Iraq? Doug constructed that matrix and would birddog it with the State Department and when they would fall behind he would call Condi. So Condi would pull it up, give them a big kick, and it would get done.

The thing we didn't and still don't do well, executionally, is if you're trying to produce certain kinds of effects on the ground, are you producing those effects? Those kinds of metrics we still do not do very well. Doug had a series of interagency groups that he pulled together to oversee the execution. It's not ideal.

Rice: But structures are not a substitute for people, either. I actually think that when we got ready to do the surge and Doug was there, we had a better alignment. Part of it was that both Gates and I had been high Principals in the National Security Council; we knew how to work that system. Gates had been Deputy National Security Advisor for Brent; I had been National Security Advisor. So we kind of knew how to do that. Doug was important and almost like an alarm going off, but there was no pushback from Gates or from me.

Hadley: Condi and Gates had to be joined at the hip, which they were, and understood that they together needed to cooperate if it was going to be good. Then of course you needed Crocker and Petraeus—

Rice: Petraeus had the right personality.

Hadley: That's what really made the execution. As Condi says, Doug was a bell ringer and a bit of an enforcer.

Brown: Can we talk about the substance of the surge just a little bit since you're on it?

Riley: Let's by all means do that, but one other question about this: I'm assuming it also works because there is an exhaustion factor within the government, too. You've had some very rough

couple of years and maybe there were people who were willing to try something at this stage that they weren't earlier?

Rice: Part of what I found when I was Secretary was that there was a lot of, "The State Department is not part of this war. They're not pulling their weight." Bob Gates helped there when he said that there are more people in military bands than there are in the Foreign Service, which is true. The State Department had limited capacity. But I learned something else. When I actually started to dig down, there were reasons people weren't agreeing to go to Baghdad and it had nothing to do with ideological opposition to the war.

Let's say I'm a 35-year-old Arabist who is serving in Cairo, and I've got my family with me, so I've got kids who are 10 and 12. It turns out that if I want to go to Baghdad, my family has to move back to Washington. Of course I don't want to go to Baghdad. We did a simple thing: The family can stay in Cairo. That way, TDY [Temporary Duty], you can come back from Baghdad from time to time and see your family. You don't have to ship them all the way back. Just a very simple thing like that, and all of a sudden we had many more volunteers for Baghdad of the level that we wanted. We were getting mostly older people who didn't have those considerations, or young people who didn't have those considerations. But it is the 35- to 40-year-old who has the right experience to go into a difficult circumstance like that.

So some of it was just weeding out stuff that was making it difficult for State to do its job.

Hadley: It's important because if you're going to do whole-of-government in a place like Iraq, you have a problem that the other agencies—Agriculture, Justice, Treasury—not only are they not expeditionary, i.e., ready to go into a war zone, they're not even deployable overseas.

Rice: That's right.

Hadley: State Department was deployable overseas but it wasn't really expeditionary, like the military, to go into a combat zone. That was a huge gap.

Rice: We did several things. Part of the problem, by the way, is congressional oversight. If I want USDA, [United States Department of] Agriculture, to send some—because I had then responsibility for the whole-of-government, so State Department was supposed to mobilize these resources. I want three agricultural experts for Baghdad. You know, the oversight committee for Ag doesn't see why they ought to be in Baghdad, as opposed to dealing with Iowa. The whole-of-government concept sounds good, but it is actually difficult because it's not as if these agencies aren't doing other things.

We made a decision early on that we weren't going to send Homeland people to Baghdad and get accused of ignoring the security of the United States in order to have people serving in Baghdad. Treasury turned out to be more deployable than I would have thought. They sent people quite easily. The problem is that you're sort of stuck then with a lot of contractors because you can't quite mobilize the U.S. government. That's where we came up with this idea of a civilian response corps. It would look more like the National Guard and be deployable. So if you were a prosecutor in Arizona and maybe you wanted to give a two-year commitment like a National Guard officer does, that would allow you to have those civilians who can do it.

We did a lot of things to make the State Department expeditionary. For instance—I think I mentioned this to you last time—I had as many officers in Germany with 80 million people as I had in India with a billion people. So I moved 300 people out of Europe, to say I really don't need helpful people about British politics. I can talk to Tony Blair any time I want to. By doing that we freed up more people to do—It turns out there is a part of the Department that loves the expeditionary life, people who love being in the highlands of Guatemala. They also don't mind being in Kabul.

So, figuring that out, and then finally we came up with these structures, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which were brigade commanders who had in their team the reconstruction person, the diplomat, all of those people. Then I had to make a call that we weren't going to try to have two chains of command. Those diplomats reported to the brigade commander, which was wildly unpopular in the State Department. But when I said, "OK, how are you going to protect yourself without it?" Then all of a sudden, people said, "Oh, well, yes, maybe it will work after all." It was partly that there was some underbrush that needed to be cut to make it work.

Hadley: So you see the problem for the Bush administration: You've got wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that require a whole reconstruction of how we do business, and new kinds of relationships and capacities and structures and all the rest. At the same time, we've got the more traditional War on Terror, of which Iraq and Afghanistan were a part but not the whole. That, of course, requires you to bring down the walls in the intelligence, and with the Department of Homeland Security.

Rice: Then you've got all the normal stuff.

Hadley: You're renovating, you're reforming, and you're waging war simultaneously on a number of different fronts, and that made it pretty challenging.

Riley: And there's no relevant experience like in World War II?

Rice: A little bit of Vietnam—

Hadley: This is a different kind of war.

Rice: It is a different kind of war.

Brown: Related to the process and who the President talks with and consults with and so on, the surge was not simply about numbers, obviously. As I understand it, this was part of your point with him, that it was objectives. But more than that, what was going on was a fundamental change, as well as debate, within the military about counterinsurgency and how you conduct it.

Rice: That's right.

Brown: Working its way through in '04, '05, and then published in '06, was this new manual of the Army and Marine Corps. Of course Petraeus was the major author, John Nagl and someone—To what extent was that change in grand strategy for conducting counterinsurgency—To what extent was the President exposed to that in the period here where he is beginning to—

whether he shifted or not, or whether you shifted—to what extent was he apprised of that series of beliefs and—?

Rice: Steve should speak more to this, but one thing that we have to realize is that we had a National Security Council meeting in which we addressed Iraq three times a week, in addition to the President's intelligence briefing in which he addressed Iraq, and all the time that he spent thinking about Iraq, so as things are unfolding, of course, he is aware of them. But Steve then structured a process where he would systematically encounter the whole counterinsurgency by having people in, like Eliot Cohen.

Hadley: You'll want to look at the President's book, because he talks about being aware of Petraeus, and being aware of the counterinsurgency doctrinal development, and he was very much so. One of the elements of this is that basically the Army had to relearn how to fight counterinsurgency.

Brown: [George] Casey was against it, wasn't he?

Hadley: That's a little too strong. Casey took it part of the way, but in parallel with what Casey was doing, there was really a revolution from below of people who had—The commanders in Iraq were given a lot of freedom. The story of Tal Afar, which is actually in one of the President's speeches in 2006, is an example where—and I've forgotten his name, famous in song and story, an Army colonel [H. R. McMaster] who becomes an advisor to Petraeus in revising the counterinsurgency strategy—He had actually implemented a counterinsurgency strategy in Tal Afar with great effect. We learned about it and it was showcased in one of the President's speeches in 2006.

So there is this group of people in Iraq who are faced with these challenges of dealing with the challenges they have on the ground. They are rediscovering, practically, on the ground, out of necessity, the techniques of counterinsurgency, even though it wasn't a sort of counterinsurgency grand strategy at the top level. What Petraeus does when he goes to Iraq to write the strategy is he pulls these guys in and he mines their experience from Iraq and turns it into doctrine. Then at that point some of the people from the Vietnam era recall a little bit about the lessons learned there.

One of the great strengths of the military is they topple Saddam [Hussein]. They find they are in a different kind of war in Iraq that they're not really trained and equipped for. They then have to figure it out on the march, if you will, and they do. So you have Petraeus developing the doctrinal roots of the counterinsurgency. You have people on the ground learning it and doing it. And then you have the President at the highest level embracing it and making it the cornerstone of the surge, because you're right, it is as much the change in strategy as the numbers.

So you can say that in some sense that's why, for example, this *Washington Post* reporter—I've forgotten his name [Thomas Ricks]—can write a book, I think it is *The Gamble* [*The Gamble: General Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq*], that says Ray Odierno was the author of the surge because he was developing it on the ground as the number two commander in Iraq, and he was. You can say that Dave Petraeus was the author of the surge because he had developed the doctrinal basis drawing on that experience, which he did. You can say that the

President of the United States was the author of the surge because he was the one who basically gave the order, adopted the strategy, and empowered all those people down the road, which he did. Like all successes, it has many fathers.

All of those processes are going on at once. There is a fourth process in the development of the surge, which is one that Pete Pace is owed a lot of gratitude by the nation for, because Pete Pace says, "All right, if we're going to do the surge, I want the surge to be George Casey's policy. I want it to be George Casey's strategy." Because what Pete Pace didn't want to have happen is a split within the Army about "Casey failed; the new team succeeds." He didn't want that within the Army.

Secondly, he didn't want to have a split within the military, because a split either within the military, or between the military and the Commander in Chief—A split between the Commander in Chief and his military in a time of war is a civil/military crisis of enormous proportions. A split within the military would have been used by the Congress to defeat the surge.

So Pete Pace very artfully is bringing the military to the table on behalf of the surge so that at the end of the day he can say to the President of the United States at the last hour, "Mr. President, your military supports the surge." That includes the outgoing regional commander, [John] Abizaid, who was initially skeptical; the outgoing commander Casey; and the incoming commanders of Petraeus and [William] Fallon, and all the Joint Chiefs. Pete Pace does that so that when the President announces the surge, and the silence is deafening throughout the country, and the Congress initially says, "We're going to fund the Defense Department; we're not going to fund the surge. We're going to put operational constraints so that you can't deploy the people"—all the things that Congress can try to do—

They assume they're going to be able to have military leaders who will support their view, help them defeat the surge. They have a set of hearings and all the military is in the same boat, as I used to say. Some leaned right, some leaned left, but they were all in the same boat and the boat was balanced. That's what Pete Pace did, working behind the scenes. It was terribly important.

Riley: Can you talk about the relationship with the Iraq Study Group? Did that ultimately prove to be—?

Hadley: I will give you my thing on the Iraq Study Group. The Iraq Study Group was something that the President supported because we knew we were going to have to change the policy but we didn't know exactly what it was going to look like and we needed a landing zone out there that would have bipartisan support. There was some skepticism, but Condi and I prevailed upon the President to embrace the Study Group, and the reason you know that is because [James A., III] Jim Baker, no fool, wouldn't have done it if he didn't specifically have the blessing of the President of the United States, and he did.

Second—a little-known secret—most of the ideas in the Iraq Study Group came from testimony from administration witnesses, because we all went in there and we told them exactly what we thought we should be doing. So they saw pieces of the surge as it was being developed in our thinking in the Iraq Study Group report.

Third—They had 70-some recommendations. I used to remember them. We embraced and told the world we embraced all but three of them, which were: talk to Iran; have a firm deadline for withdrawal; and there was one other, which I can't remember. So we actually were prepared. The President thanked the Study Group, met with the Study Group, and said that we had adopted all of their recommendations.

But it got swamped in the public mind for the following reasons. The way that we set it up was the Iraq Study Group, I think, was going to come out on December 7th, and the President was going to give his speech on the surge on the 11th or 12th, so they were going to be coincident in time. Of course, the Iraq Study Group said, "If your local military commanders think it is advisable, you could do a surge." That was the hook.

But the President decided that in that time frame he wasn't ready to give the speech. Not because he hadn't decided on the policy, but Bob Gates had just come in as Secretary of Defense. He wanted Bob to go to the region, and he wanted publicly for it to be perceived and factually to be that Bob would come back and say, "Mr. President, I've looked at the situation on the ground, and I think the surge is right and I support it." The President called up and he said, "I'm comfortable with the speech, but I don't want to give it until Bob gets back."

The speech then gets delayed until January. So the Iraq Study Group comes out and the speech is delayed. The press line is, "The President thought he was going to be able to embrace the Iraq Study Group, but he can't because it's not the right policy, so the President is going to have to make up his own strategy and will announce it in January." Well, that was ridiculous because the President had largely already decided on the strategy. The reason that that got some currency is when the Iraq Study Group came out, two groups condemned it. In the region, the Saudis and our friends all basically said, "This is a cover for retreat."

Rice: Yes, I saw them not too long after that and they were—

Riley: "They" being?

Rice: The Saudis, the Egyptians—the entire Middle East moderate, anti-Iran group.

Riley: And you're speaking with the Foreign Ministers?

Rice: Yes, I was with the Foreign Ministers, but I also went to the region and I saw the King; I saw [Hosni] Mubarak. Not popular.

Hadley: Their narrative and the *Wall Street Journal* narrative was the same: that this was the people around [George H. W.] Bush 41 providing a cover for a retreat and surrender. Well, once it is characterized that way in the region and in the *Wall Street Journal*, the President can't embrace it, even though we implemented 97 percent of its recommendations. So in the end it did not serve as the landing zone we had hoped for, because it was characterized unfairly by the *Wall Street Journal* and the region, and also because of—and I didn't see it at the time—the effect of the President's canceling his speech that was supposed to be given five days after the report was released and deciding to do it in January, which he did for completely unrelated reasons, but which the press read as a rejection of the—

Rice: There is one other part of that narrative, too. If the conservatives, meaning the region and the *Wall Street Journal,* saw it as retreat, the *Washington Post* and others saw it as vindication. It was the adults, the realists, 41's people. Of course, it comes on the heels of the congressional defeat. You have the Republican congressional defeat.

Hadley: That's true.

Rice: There were a lot of people on the Hill saying, "If you just had adopted this. If Jim Baker and—" So the President can't do it for the reasons that it is associated with a retreat, and he can't do it because it is really an assault on his leadership. I remember talking to him about it and he said, "I'm Commander in Chief. I don't care what—" I said, "Let's talk about that before you go out and say that." [*laughter*] When these *Washington Post* things started appearing, and the *New York Times*—I'm sure you experienced this too—

Hadley: "The adults are back in charge."

Rice: Yes, the adults are back in charge. He was furious. Then the chore is not to have him react so badly to it that now we're in a fight with Jim Baker, who we've told, "Oh, yes, Jim, go do this." There was a terrible moment there.

Riley: What terrible moment?

Rice: Where I thought he was going to call Jim and say something rude, not because he was mad at Jim, but he was mad at the reaction.

Riley: Sure.

Rice: So all this carefully laid work of how it was going to be a landing zone and everything kind of comes unstuck from both ends and Steve and I are on this little lily pad in the middle of the ocean, which is roiling around us, about the Iraq Study Group. I did something then. The President and Steve and I talked about it. I said, "I'll go out and challenge the assumption on Iran and Syria." I did. I challenged it in a very direct way.

Hadley: Right.

Rice: I said, "You know, you can talk to the Iranians all you want. It's not going to get you anywhere. Diplomacy is not just talking." I felt a little bad. In fact, I called Jim and I said, "Jim, this is not at you." But somebody had to back off the Iraq Study Group at that point.

Hadley: That's right.

Rice: I was getting ready, as it turns out, to do this Neighbors' Conference. The Iranians would be there, and so forth. We could say we're having this Neighbors' Conference. I basically said, "You don't have to be a grand strategist to know that an Israeli-Palestinian deal would be a good deal, but who has actually gotten one done?" I was probably the most aggressive against the Iraq Study Group on the diplomacy side, partly because we needed to back off—not the Study Group and not the people on the Study Group, but this perception that it was 41's policy coming back.

Hadley: Rather than an out-landing zone to bring us out of hostilities and out of the combat zone, we had constructed a landing zone that turned out to be right in the middle, and we had to abort the mission, which we did. We aborted the mission and we said, "Stay tuned, we'll give you our strategy." Then in January we rolled out our strategy, which was the same strategy we had before the Iraq Study Group.

Brown: The *Wall Street Journal*, was it an editorial or some op-ed piece?

Rice: They did op-eds. You had Fox News saying these things.

Hadley: And we met with them.

Rice: I met with the Fox guys. "Oh, is he going to retreat?" "Is he going to take this line?" It was chaos. I think those few days after the Iraq Study Group was released had to be two or three of the worst days, because you're trying to pull the President off the ceiling because he doesn't like the way they're talking about him. You're trying to pull the Arabs off the ceiling because they're just sure we're going to be out of Iraq tomorrow. You're trying to keep the conservatives from assuming you're about to roll up your tent and go home. It just broke out all over.

Hadley: As my grandmother used to say, quoting Robert Burns, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley." Well, this "ganged aft agley."

Brown: During this period, of course, there is a good deal of concern about congressional reaction.

Rice: Yes.

Brown: Particularly because it is right after the election. To what extent was Karl Rove involved in any of these discussions with respect to the alternatives?

Rice: Steve can speak to this, but let me speak to Karl Rove's role more broadly because it is true here. Karl was trusted by the President. Of course, Karl had a voice. But Karl assiduously stuck to what he knew, which was the politics. Karl was not in there trying to tell Steve that the surge ought to be done for these military—Karl was a voice, but not a definitive one in most, in any of, these debates. It's just not how he saw his role. He was a smart guy who understood politically where we were going, but I never heard Karl say, "The President can't do this for political purposes." It's just not the way he operated. And I don't think, by the way, the President would have allowed that.

Hadley: Early in the first term the issue came up about who should attend National Security Council meetings. At the end of the first term we started having the communications people there and congressional people there at the meeting because policy becomes communication and what Congress will support. The issue came, should Karl Rove be at the meeting? The President said, "No, I never want Karl at an NSC meeting, never, not once. I've talked to Karl about it and he understands. Because I do not want to suggest in any way that I am making national security decisions on the basis of domestic politics."

That didn't prevent Karl from coming in and offering his two cents about the surge and how the country would react, which was very useful. But in terms of the formal process involving the surge, the President didn't want him there. That's the thing that so surprised me, when David Axelrod, who is in a way Karl's equivalent, is attending all these NSC meetings and going on the Sunday shows, explaining the foreign policy of the United States. George Bush would not have had it.

Riley: Anything about the White House Chief of Staff and his role?

Rice: Andy [Card] was at every NSC meeting. If there was a reason he couldn't attend, then Josh, and then Joel [Kaplan], who was Deputy, would attend. But again, the process that you want to set up, since you know that these are all trusted advisors of the President—Of course, State is going to be presenting more of a State view, but you would also like the Secretary of State to be able to get out of the head of the State Department and just talk about things.

It was similar with the Chief of Staff. Rather than the Chief of Staff being somebody who was presenting the inside view, or the domestic view, Andy was a trusted advisor to the President and he would just engage in the discussion. Occasionally, he would say, "I don't think this is going to fly on the Hill." He had a better perspective from which to say that than the Secretary of State did.

There was less bureaucratic role-playing. I've now experienced two of these, both with 41 and 43, and it is a little bit of a caricature of good NSC processes that the Secretary of State presents on behalf of State. Yes, sometimes the diplomatic this or that. But when you get into these discussions, as Steve described them, where people walk in thinking one thing and they come out thinking another, it is because they've talked as human beings, all of whom are trusted by the President, and the Chief of Staff very much was involved in that way.

Hadley: We had very good Chiefs of Staff. The deal we had was we kept them fully informed and they let us be National Security Advisors. Josh was the most self-effacing sometimes. He would say, "I don't have much to contribute." I'd say, "Josh, you have a lot to contribute because you're not a prisoner of any of these bureaucracies. You've got good sense and you know politics, and you need to know what the President knows. When you have reactions you need to explain them." He said, "That's fine," but he didn't try to get in the way of being National Security Advisor.

On the other hand, I would use him and involve him when the issue was bigger than just a national security issue. For example, when we were doing the surge in Iraq, I would ask him to convene a White House meeting bringing in Karl Rove, Legislative Affairs, Congressional Affairs. For example, the Crocker-Petraeus—When they come back after the surge in September and give their testimony, we have an elaborate choreography of how we're going to do the run-up to, during, and after that. That gets done not in the NSC meeting, because it is not really foreign policy; it is about domestic politics and communications and congressional relations.

I would go to Josh and say, "Josh, I need you to convene, at the table in your office, all these White House groups." Sometimes we'd have Bob Gates come over. Sometimes Condi would come over. The Vice President would be there. We would work those kinds of broader strategies,

and Josh would be at the chair running those and I would give the foreign policy perspective. So if you do it right, the Chief of Staff can be a terrific asset for supporting the President and giving the President what he needs.

Rice: We were just fortunate. Both Andy and Josh were easy people to work with.

Riley: We talked a lot about process. How was the President, himself, different when you came in in 2005, from President George W. Bush in 2001?

Rice: That's a very interesting question.

Hadley: I was at Harvard, not exactly Bush country—

Riley: He got his MBA there.

Hadley: —taking my licks after the administration. Joe Nye, who is a wonderful guy, said, "You know, people have talked a lot about the first term and the second term, and some people think things went wrong in the first term and got fixed in the second term." He said, "I have a theory." I said, "What's that, Joe?" He said, "I have a theory that actually Presidents learn on the job and that a second-term President is very different from a first-term President." Of course Joe is absolutely right.

One of the differences between second term and first term is that I'm working with a second-term President, and Condi is working with a first-term President. I'll give you an example. I'm going to get this wrong, but the thematics are right. It's pretty clear we're going to have to go into Iraq because Saddam is not going to leave and the diplomacy is fracturing. The President decides he's going to meet with his congressional leaders and talk about Iraq and give them a preview of the policy. So we all come in and sit down. I'm sitting behind the President.

Riley: In the Cabinet room?

Rice: Cabinet room.

Hadley: Uncharacteristically, he has Condi sitting across from him, right next to the Vice President. All the congressional leaders are there. He says, "I want to talk to you about Iraq. Condi is going to explain our policy." Condi, who never shows you anything, just gives a little— Nobody gave it another thought.

Riley: For the tape, she jumps a little bit.

Hadley: She jumps a little bit. She did not know this was coming. Of course she gamely and ably sets out his policy. Fast-forward to the surge. The President says, "We've got to have the members of Congress in and I've got to explain why I did this." So he has them, and the idea that I would have led that briefing would have been laughable. He's out there, "Let me tell you why I'm doing this."

That's the difference between a first-term President and a second-term President. When it happened the first time, Condi initially winced and then I winced, because the message he's

sending to the Congress is, *This is Condi's policy, not my policy*. When you're sending the troops to war—I'm not criticizing the President. I've said this to him, actually, and he says, "Yes, you're right." It has got to be the President's policy and it's got to be out of the President's mouth. But the President felt a little more comfortable with Condi doing it in the first term.

Riley: Sure.

Hadley: In the second term it would have never occurred to him not to do it himself. That's the difference between a first- and second-term President.

Rice: There are two other differences. One is, how he worked with the military and the Pentagon changed dramatically. In the first term he was more deferential to the generals, and Don, on matters of—I used to teach civil-military relations and I would always say, "When you have a good functioning, civilian-controlled system, you want the civilians to tell you *why* you're about to do something. You want the civilians to tell you *where* you're about to do something, and basically you want the civilians to control *when*. What you want is the military to tell you *how*."

But we all know that how blends into when and where and so forth. In the initial stages—and we tried to push the President more on this—the military would come in and do these briefings. They were, as military briefings are, 131 slides of PowerPoint, of which only three said anything. So you try to push them, to say, "What does that mean?" He was reticent about doing it. I asked him one time, I said, "Why didn't you push on it? I could tell you weren't comfortable with that. Why didn't you push on that?" He said, "I don't want to be Lyndon Johnson in the basement of the White House choosing targets."

So he went in with a preconception of how the Commander in Chief receives information from the military. Now, he would push on things like collateral damage: "How many civilians am I putting in danger?" I remember with Afghanistan he was very intent on maybe trying to get food bombs dropped first. Was it possible to do humanitarian assistance before the military action so that the Afghan people would know we weren't the Russians? Those things would come out. But when it came to the military side of it, he was reticent to push.

Riley: Don't lose your train of thought on this, but I want to ask on this specific point: Is he reluctant to push out of some sense of deference to the military, or is there a lack of confidence in his own grasp of the core issues?

Rice: Probably a little bit of both. I mean, the military can be a little overwhelming to you. They come in and they—Just a little aside: We were trying to do Liberia and we eventually did it with 100 Marines on the ground and 2,500 on a ship. But when the Pentagon presented the option, it sounded like we were going to have to send 300,000 troops to overthrow Charles Taylor. They do have a way of presenting that, if you're not accustomed to it—And no President going into that situation, unless he has been in the National Security Council—not President [Barack] Obama, not President Clinton—would have known how to do this.

I think some of it was, as Steve said, *If I ask this question, am I going to expose that I don't know something that I'm supposed to know?*

Riley: Sure.

Rice: Some of it was deference because he didn't want to be Lyndon Johnson. He clearly thought about this.

Hadley: Let me say one other thing. Remember, he's got Don Rumsfeld, who has already been Secretary of Defense—

Rice: And Colin Powell.

Hadley: And he has a sitting Vice President—

Rice: Who has been Secretary of Defense, and a Secretary of State who has been Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Hadley: There is a sense in which he thinks, *Well, I've got all these heavies to handle this military stuff.* By the second term he basically says, as every President finally does, and hopefully our current President will—He says, "War and peace is my issue." And it is.

Rice: Going all the way back to [Abraham] Lincoln. He just can't find it in himself to say, "This General is a jerk," until one day he wakes up and thinks, *This General is a jerk.*

Hadley: He says, "[George B.] McClellan, lend me your army." It's not McClellan's army; it's *your* army.

Rice: It takes Lincoln a long time to say, "This guy is a jerk."

Hadley: "This is my army."

Rice: There is some of that in every President, but the rear-area security story is particularly interesting. We have these Principals meetings with these 131 slides—

Hadley: This is 2002.

Rice: The run-up to the war. It's the fall of 2002. We're still, particularly the President and Steve and I—I don't think anybody else believed it, but we're still hoping Saddam will decide to take a nice retirement someplace, and we're working every angle to try to make that happen. The Egyptians come in and say he'll take a billion dollars. The President said, "I'll pay tomorrow if he goes away."

Fine by us. But we know that diplomacy is breaking down. So we start pushing the military planning. It is probably November or December of 2002. The military starts coming in and they've got the plans for how they're going to encounter the army, but they hadn't thought much about what happens as they push through. So in the Principals meeting, as they're presenting these 131 slides, none of which says what happens behind them as they push through, since we're going through with the light footprint, Steve and I concoct a phrase, "What are you going to do about rear-area security?" Meaning, who is going to fill in behind you as you push forward?

They hate this question. Basically they say, "We've got it covered." Or, "The Brits will do it." Totally unsatisfactory answers. We can't get an answer. Finally, I get it on the National Security Council agenda with the President in the chair. Before we go in, I say, "Mr. President, here's what this rear-area security really means: It means there could be chaos behind us as we push through. The military doesn't have an answer for how they're going to fill in." So he gets in the seat and he says, "OK, so now we've got this rear-area security thing; this is something Condi wanted on the agenda." I'm dead.

Hadley: Toast.

Rice: They give a half-hearted, half-baked answer. Steve comes to me afterward—I'm sitting at my desk—and he says, "I would have resigned if he'd done that to me." I said, "Steve, come on, I'm not going to resign because he—" "Yes, but he really hung you out to dry." I had told the President before, "You really hung me out to dry on that." He said, "What do you mean?" He didn't mean to.

So we could never—We got it back on the agenda, but never quite in the way—and it turns out that the rear-area security problem, the fact that we don't have enough troops to deal with the chaos afterward, that we don't have enough troops to secure the weapons depots, becomes a big problem just before the election, when it turns out that the insurgents are using weapons from depots we were supposed to be guarding. But we could never quite—Now, in 2005, 2006, 2007, this would never happen.

Hadley: It's a little bit like the Bay of Pigs for [John F.] Kennedy. You learn, and next time you're not shy about asking the tough question.

Brown: Did the President blame Rumsfeld for that, for the lack of adequate attention to rear-area security?

Rice: What happens is—It's not a matter of blame, but I do think the President got increasingly uncomfortable with the answers he was getting from the military. By 2006, he is at the place where he no longer has confidence in the Pentagon about these issues, and he really gives you the green light then, not just to push the Pentagon, but to look at alternatives.

It's happening in different places. It's happening in State, where we're looking at some alternatives. Pete Pace has drawn together this group of colonels. Pete came over to see me at State and he said, "I want you to know we're doing this." It is August of 2006. He says, "I keep seeing the numbers of trained Iraq security forces go up. We've got X number in the country and the problem is getting worse." So I have to go back and ask the first Principals questions. You go to Don with the 50 questions. When you did that?

Hadley: Summer, I think August.

Rice: The President has basically, by then, released the national security system to say, OK, I can't rely on the Pentagon alone.

Hadley: In his book and in George Casey's book, in this July, August—It is July when we go and meet with the Maliki Cabinet for the first time, and in the evening out on the veranda he is

talking to George Casey and he really hits him again on the troop issue and getting control of Baghdad. Casey gives him the line: "You've got to take the hand off the bicycle. You've got to transfer responsibility to the Iraqis." The President asked him a series of questions and George finally says, "I've got to give you a better answer on that, don't I, Mr. President?" And the President says, "Yes, you do, George." He never gets that better answer and that's why he looks for another way, because there wasn't a good answer.

Where George wanted to go, hand off the bicycle, transition—that's the right place to go, but you couldn't get there from where we were. That's the insight the President came up with. You couldn't get there, from here to there. You had to have a bridging strategy, and that's where the surge was.

Rice: I remember, the President said one time—"They kept saying, 'Take the hand off the bicycle.'" We were out at the ranch. You and I were staying there, and he said, "You know, I ride bicycles. You can take your hand off, but you don't want it to go into a ravine. That's what we're in; we're in a ravine." He was getting increasingly dissatisfied with the answers he was getting.

Hadley: He says to Don, "All right, I'll take my hand off the bicycle, but if it starts to fall I've got to grab it back because I can't afford to let Iraq fail." In this process, strategy is not working. We can't get from here to there, and "I can't let it fall. It's got to succeed." That is the thing that is Presidential leadership at its most fundamental. He basically says, "The United States cannot afford to fail in Iraq. I've got to find a way to succeed."

At one point he says to Condi and me, as we're developing the surge, "Do you think this can work?" I said, "Yes, Mr. President, I think it is going to be tough, but I think it can work." He said, "If you ever think it can't work, you've got to tell me, because I can't send young men and women to die, and face their parents for a strategy that I don't think can succeed."

Rice: I told him, "It depends." That's when we got into—When I finally said, "I now am comfortable with the surge," I remember saying to him—We were at the ranch in December. We were standing there and I said, "You know it's your last card, though, don't you? If you play this card and it doesn't work, it's over." He said, "Yes, I know that."

He really had come to a very different place from where he had started. It wasn't just in Iraq. Thinking about even something like Georgia and Ukraine for MAP—Early on, he would have had an instinct about it. Now he actually had an instinct plus an analysis of whether or not he could get there, and then "I probably won't get there, but I've got to get three-quarters of the way there," or, "I can't go to Sochi and talk to Vladimir Putin having failed at NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]." He was a much more—He just knew a lot.

Riley: Strategically he thinks a better approach.

Rice: He always had a strategic instinct; like, China has to be at the table, but as time went on he could fill in the tactics as well.

Hadley: He had a strategic instinct. Later on he had a strategy, and that's different.

I'm going to say one thing that corrects the President. What Condi said is right. At one point in [Bob] Woodward's book, there is a Woodward interview and Woodward says, "Some people have said that the surge was your last card. Do you think that's the case?" The President said, "No. You're President; you're never out of cards." Woodward said, "Yes, that's what I think." I bit my tongue because that's not what I think. He had—

Rice: I think he knew, but he wouldn't say that to Woodward.

Hadley: His answer to Condi was right. You have one last turn of the screw, one last time to announce a new strategy for success for Iraq. That's why I kept pressing our surge folks, because my view was we only had one more shot to get this right. You wouldn't have two; the country would not have stood for it.

Brown: Was there a recognition on his part afterward, as well as on your part, that it might not have worked if there wasn't the coincidence of the semi-Awakening—Petraeus weights that very heavily.

Rice/Hadley: It's not a coincidence.

Brown: OK, consciously exploited, if I understand it.

Hadley: Exactly right.

Rice: Look, the Sunni sheikhs—and I think it is important here—Steve was really the person who understood this probably better than any of us. There was all this stuff about winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqis. Well, it turns out you can't win their hearts and minds until you secure their bodies. They're not going to be with you, I don't care how much they love you and like you, if you leave that afternoon, and that evening the terrorists come in and kill their families.

So the awakening is that al-Qaeda turns out to be very bad guests. They're doing things like murdering the children of the sheikhs and bringing their severed heads if they don't cooperate. They're marrying the daughters of the sheikhs off to their fighters. They're really bad. But unless the United States is able to provide population security for the sheikhs to do what they do, there is not a chance that this is going to come to the fruition that it does. You might have had hit-and-run awakening trying to do something about al-Qaeda, but the deliverance of Anbar is a combination of the sheikhs' awakening and the kind of American military support that would allow them to succeed. They understood that fundamentally.

Brown: I guess what I'm asking is, at the time, however, that the President had to make a decision for the surge, was this opportunity in his head at that time?

Hadley: Absolutely. One of the key decisions he made—The cause that really got people concerned was that Baghdad was melting down in sectarian violence and the whole country was watching. The first thing you had to do was get control of Baghdad. But there was also the opportunity in Anbar. Basically the tribes were waiting to rise, but they needed a little bit more American support; we needed a few more troops. The issue for the President is—and it is

presented as options: Do you first clamp down Baghdad and then go do Anbar, or do you do them simultaneously even though it is going to stretch your forces?

Rice: Right.

Hadley: The President decides to do them together. I'm going to both take on my biggest problem and also try to exploit my biggest opportunity at the same time—a very bold, right decision. Your point, I think, is clearer if you ask the question this way: Could the surge have occurred earlier? Could it have succeeded earlier? I think it couldn't, because I think there were some prerequisites to the surge and I'd give you about six of them.

One is, we had gone through the TAL [Transitional Administrative Law]. We did have a constitution. And we did have a government elected pursuant to that constitution, which was a legitimate government in the eyes of the Iraqi people that had Sunni, Shi'a, and Kurds in it. So we had a governmental partner with legitimacy, very important.

Second, the army had relearned, in the two and a half years since 2003, how to fight an insurgency, so the doctrinal idea of the shift in strategy that was the surge and was critical to the surge and additional forces had been developed.

Rice: Just one point on that: Remember that the generals who really anchored the surge, people like Odierno and Petraeus and [Peter] Chiarelli, these guys had failed their first time in Iraq. These were the guys who had gone to Iraq—Ray, who worked for me at State, was well known for having been incredibly heavy-handed in his operations in the Sunni heartland. Dave had been in charge of training the police and the army, which was not—

Hadley: And he had Mosul, which he pacified, and then when he left—

Rice: It fell apart. So they had learned. What I admire so much about the military is that these guys come back and they take what has happened in Iraq and they actually think about it, revise the doctrine, and now they're ready to go back and do what they wouldn't have been able to do prior.

Hadley: Third, George Casey makes a key decision in 2004 that al-Qaeda is the enemy, that al-Qaeda is actually the accelerator of the violence by its effort to try to attack Shi'a, to provoke Shi'a, to retaliate against Sunni, to do sectarian violence—very shrewd insight. He goes from securing cities to taking on al-Qaeda. McChrystal then comes in with his integration of operations and intelligence and really makes great progress, taking out the intermediate layer of al-Qaeda leadership, the operational leaders. So you have that success.

Four, you've trained now over 300,000 Iraqi security forces. So you have a security partner.

Rice: And they're actually pretty good at this time.

Hadley: Five, you have a leader in Iraq who has some courage and who not only supports the surge and agrees to add forces to it and to let it go forward in a nonsectarian way and make commitments that they won't interfere with it, but six to eight months later in the spring of '08, actually has the courage to take on the people who were responsible for his being elected Prime

Minister in the first place, namely the Sadrists. He takes them on in Sadr City and he goes south and takes them from Basra.

Then sixth, you had the opportunity presented by Anbar. A group of people finally become subject to al-Qaeda rule and decide they don't want it.

All of those things together—the additional troops, the new strategy, a bold Presidential decision—all of that comes together, the stars align, and it works. It is why the surge in Afghanistan won't work like that because the analogous prerequisites are not in place.

Rice: Right.

Riley: Feel free to follow up any more on the Iraq question, but I wanted to come back—We've heard a lot about your cooperating and coordinating different things, but we haven't gotten any picture of any conflicts or clashes. Were there any occasions in the second term where State and NSC were not seeing things eye to eye?

Hadley/Rice: Us have clashes?

Rice: I think not.

Riley: Makes awfully boring history.

Rice: I know. Let's take North Korea. This is a place where I probably was pushing the envelope harder. There would be times when Steve—You can speak for yourself—might have thought that I had pushed him beyond or was pushing beyond where we needed to be. But I would then take that advice and throttle back.

Let me speak for a minute to the problem that the Secretary of State has that nobody else in the NSC has. It is the responsibility of the Secretary of State to actually make something happen, not to coordinate like the National Security Advisor, not to sit there and chirp about what diplomats ought to be doing from the Defense Department, which always feels it has a better way of doing it but doesn't actually have to get other countries to do what you want them to do. It is the Secretary of State who, if something is going to happen diplomatically, has to make it happen.

You don't make it happen by declaring to other countries that this is what we want to have happen, and then having it happen. It means sometimes you have to give a little bit here and take a little bit there. When you're giving a little bit here and taking a little bit there with the Brits, nobody cares. When you're giving a little bit here and taking a little bit there with the Liberians, nobody cares. But when you're giving a little bit here and taking a little bit there with the North Koreans, people get nervous.

The President doesn't like the implication that he is appeasing this dictator whom he once said was loathsome, to Bob Woodward. That's when the Secretary of State really has to be sure that she is on the same page with the President and that the pushing she's doing isn't going to open up a chasm with the President. But you have to keep pushing. North Korea was very much one of those cases.

Iran was another case like that. Steve will remember that I came to the President after my first trip to Europe and I said, "You know, we've gotten ourselves into a really weird situation." I'd gone to Europe expecting in February of 2005 that all the conversation would be about Iraq, but it was all about Iran. Somehow we were the problem, the United States of America. The Europeans saw themselves as moderating between us and the Iranians. I said, "We've got to get out of that position."

I'll never forget, we were sitting in the Oval—Steve, the Vice President, the President, and me—and I say, "You know, we have to start to do some things that demonstrate that we're going to have to do this diplomatically. You go see for yourself." He was going to Europe a few weeks later so he could then see what was going on here. But how does this work? We don't want to talk to the Iranians, right? But somehow you've got to make some moves forward to show that you're not just going to dig in your heels and expect everybody to come around you.

Let's see, we do this change in policy in May of 2006. In the winter and spring of 2006, I start talking about making a big move of promising to the Iranians that we'll come to the table if they'll—Initially the President doesn't like this idea at all. Eventually—I would rely on Steve to say, "Where is he today?" We finally get there.

Riley: Is Steve—Are you in any way an advocate in this?

Hadley: I'm slow on the Iran thing.

Rice: He's slow on Iran, not as slow on North Korea.

Hadley: If you have complete trust in a person and there's no personal agenda and this is all trying to do what's best for the President, it is a lot easier to have a conversation. Secondly, did we initially agree on everything?

Rice: No.

Hadley: On the contrary—on a lot of issues, we started in a different place. What I found with Condi, and I've actually never said to her, is I could—She's under a lot of pressure. She has to perform. One, she's got to understand you're trying to help her succeed. That's the first and most important thing.

Rice: And I never doubted that.

Hadley: The National Security Advisor has to convey to the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense that you're trying to help them succeed for the President and for the country. If you have that—Secondly, you can't hit them with too many bright ideas at once, because at some point it is a distraction; it's not helpful. I would find that if I would err to too many ideas, Condi initially would push back. Part of the reason she'd push back was that I'd just gotten her in an overload. But I found invariably that 24 to 48 hours later she would come back and say, "You know, I've been thinking about that. I'm not sure I agree with X, but what if we tried this?" That's how you do it.

Rice: I'm going to tell you one case where Steve was particularly helpful in this way, but one of the things that this means is that you don't let it drop down into the staffs, because the first thing that happens with the staffs is they get like this—They're protecting the principal. I can't tell you how many times I would hear, "Well, Mr. Hadley won't agree with that." I would say, "That doesn't sound like Steve. Let me just call him on the phone and see." "Well, actually, that's what So-and-So said Mr. Hadley said." You find that the staffs are like this, but if you are never letting any tension between you show, then it really helps the lower parts of the—So if we had any tensions, they were never going to be visible. And, as Steve would say, he would know. He knows me like a brother. He would know, *Back off and let her call back in 12 hours. She's got the Israelis on one side and the Palestinians on the other and the Saudis are out there and she's just trying to make this work. Back off. Don't add yet another problem.* I really appreciated that.

There is one of these cases where I'm up at the UN [United Nations], September 2005, and Chris Hill is negotiating a framework agreement with the North Koreans. There is one last question as to whether or not we will mention a light water reactor. Way in the future, after North Korea has become a Jeffersonian democracy, they can have a light water reactor. The thing is so caveated it is ridiculous. I call the Chinese Foreign Minister, wake him up at one o'clock in the morning. He is also in New York. He has just come in from China. The poor guy is groggy as all get out. I say, "I'm going to agree to this." But I'm outside my brief, actually. So I call Steve and I say, "OK, Steve, here's what we're going to do." He says, "I'll talk to the President in the morning and I'll let you know if it is OK." I say, "Steve, it's got to be OK because I've already done it." I don't know how you swung it, but by the next day it was OK.

Hadley: It needed to be done and I did it. I had a very difficult conversation with the Vice President first, but got to the President.

Rice: But I didn't do that to him. I think that is maybe one of three times that I did something and then said, "Steve, you've got to cover me." Why put him in that position? An analogous situation—Chris comes to me in Berlin and he's got this document that he and the North Koreans have worked out. I know that if this falls into the interagency process it's never going to get done. I'm in Berlin. I fax it to Steve and I say, "Here's what we propose to do. Can you talk it through with the President and let me know? I'm going to bed now. Let me know in five hours if it is OK." That was the preferable way to do it, and the way that we did—

Hadley: What I then did is I said, "OK, I'm going to talk to the President, but I'm going to have a Vice President's problem." So I first had a little meeting where I had my staff and John Hannah and the Vice President's staff. They were going to react negatively to it. We came up with three or four things that we could do that would make it more acceptable.

I went by the President and he was on board so I called Condi back and said, "We can do this, but there are four things that would be helpful. Can you do them?" She basically said, "Yes, I can do this one this way; I can do this one this way. I don't really think I need this one. What if we do it this way?" That's how you do it.

There was only one thing, the final decision on North Korea, which was, were we going to tank it, or were we going to take them off the sanctions list and not provoke a crisis in North Korea relations three months before a Presidential election?

Rice: And Chinese and South Korean relations.

Hadley: I knew where the Vice President was; I knew where Condi was; and the President really didn't let me hide. He basically said, "I want to know your view." Initially I was not where Condi was.

If you're working with people that you really admire, there is a part of you that says—You want to work with people that, when you disagree, one of the things that's in your mind is they may be right. Cheney told me this one time when I was with him. I worked with him in the Pentagon in '90, '91. I said to him, "What happens if you really feel you disagree with the person you're working for?" He said, "That's happened to me sometimes, but you know, I've always worked for people—and I would say worked *with* people—that if we disagreed I always thought that there was a better-than-even chance that they were right and I was wrong." That's where you want to be, so you will think seriously about it. At the end of the day, I came out that, on balance, Condi was right and the Vice President was wrong. That's what I said to the President, and the President said, "That's what I think, too." And off we went.

Brown: Can you talk a little bit about the Vice President's role on Korea?

Rice: Yes, but let me just fill in this story. But then, I also said to Steve, and I said to the President, "But if the North Koreans don't do this, after we've done this, after we've taken them off the terrorist list—" because the President was very uncomfortable with it.

Hadley: Very uncomfortable.

Rice: He actually asked me, "Isn't there something else we could do?" I went back to Chris Hill and I said, "Isn't there something else the North Koreans would accept?" Chris said, "A visit by you. They'd probably take that." So I go to the President—You were there.

Hadley: This was the dumbest idea he ever heard.

Rice: I said, "Mr. President, there is one thing. I could go to Pyongyang." He just looked at me. "Are you kidding me?"

Hadley: Madeleine Albright, you remember—

Rice: He said, "I'm not going to let you be Madeleine Albright." You know, sitting there in a stadium with people with flip cards and everything.

Hadley: Best thing he ever did for Condi Rice.

Rice: Exactly. I was willing to sacrifice. He says, "Take them off the list." But I knew how much he hated it.

Riley: Yes.

Rice: Then we went through a series of decisions where the North Koreans, in response, were to do some things and they got close, and they had told Chris they were going to do them, and then

something happened in Pyongyang. It is after Kim Jong-il has a stroke. The Chinese implied that Kim Jong-il had been so ill that he had not been part of the process. So somehow it got messed up. I did say to Steve and to the President, "OK, if they don't do this, if in the final analysis they don't do this, I back off, and we pull the plug." And we did.

Hadley: We had a series of understandings, some in writing, some orally, and they were supposed to be as part of the six-parties talks put together in a formal document that was going to be a verification protocol that would help us get a handle on the nuclear weapons program, and the deal was we would go with this now, based on this sort of patchy record. We'd take them off the terror list, but then there had to be a process in the six-party framework where we would get the kind of document that would be a verification protocol. And they welshed. At that point, we just shut it down.

Riley: Why did the President have such a visceral feeling about North Korea?

Rice: Because he was offended by Kim Jong-il in the 21st century. He starved his own people. It is the worst regime in the world, and he was offended by that. He was offended by the fact that a lot of people didn't care. I mean until you got Lee Myung-bak, the South Koreans didn't want to confront the North Koreans on human rights issues. I think he felt that the Clinton administration had been taken advantage of by them, that the Agreed Framework was a bad deal—and by the way, I agreed completely with this—that gave the North Koreans benefits up front and then they never did anything.

He had a phrase—He said, "You know, Kim Jong-il throws his food on the floor and then all the adults go and gather it up and they put it back on the table. When he throws his food on the floor this time, I'm not gathering up the food." It was a sense that we weren't getting anywhere with them because every time you gave, the North Koreans took advantage. So I think it was all those things.

Riley: Was his sense that, by disengaging, that was more likely to solve the problem?

Rice: No, he was prepared to—In 2002 we were about to send Jim Kelly with what we called "the bold approach," which was supposed to be something that looked like where we got to in the six-party talks. But shortly before he went, we found out that the intelligence agencies thought he was enriching uranium, that he had a second path to a nuclear program. Then you couldn't really offer—The President wasn't so ideological about things that he would say, "I can't do that for ideological reasons." It usually was the sense that he believed that if you dealt with tyrants from any position of weakness, they took advantage of you.

Hadley: There was another element within his administration that people like Bob Joseph felt very strongly.

Rice: And the Vice President.

Hadley: This was so abhorrent a regime, so abusive of human rights and its own people, that it is not the kind of regime that we should be dealing with, and the only real alternative was to change the regime.

Rice: Right.

Hadley: This was a regime you didn't negotiate with. This was a regime you changed. That should be our policy.

Rice: I think the President started there, but he was never so hard there that he wasn't prepared to try other things to see—Then he made a strategic shift, where he began to think that actually the way to end the regime was to expose it to the light of day.

Hadley: Correct.

Rice: Then the goal became, even if you had to do a peace treaty with them, that might ultimately deprive Kim Jong-il of his standing, his war footing, which would ultimately bring the regime down.

Riley: When did this conversion happen?

Rice: This was 2005 when we started really talking about this idea that if you—Don was very helpful here. Don had a comment when I presented this at a National Security Council meeting. He said, "Sometimes if you have a problem, you need to enlarge the problem." Maybe this is more about trying to change the conditions in which the North Korean regime is able to tell people that they're a paradise and South Korea is a prison camp. Is there some way to—And we had the Soviet experience: [Mikhail] Gorbachev is going to reform the thing and it actually ends up coming apart. Was that an alternative? We worked through this to the point that in 2005, 2006, the President is talking openly to Hu Jintao to tell him to tell Kim Jong-il that if he gets rid of his nuclear weapons, we'll have a peace treaty.

Hadley: The notion was, strip him of the nukes, which is his terror weapon; engage the regime; open it up; be willing to talk about a sort of regional security architecture, and the effect of that—

Rice: Kim Jong-il won't last.

Hadley: —will basically change the regime. That became really where he ended up. That was how he reconciled the folks who said, "We shouldn't be talking to this regime. We should be changing it." He said, "Well, partly by talking to it, I can find a way to change it." Because the Clinton administration thought they were going to change that regime, too.

Riley: Is there anything you wanted to be sure that we talked about that we haven't gotten to?

Rice: No, I think we're getting through them. You wanted to ask about the Vice President.

Brown: Yes, I wanted to ask about the Vice President's influence and role on North Korea. It sounds at times like he has almost got concurrent authority with you on that issue.

Hadley: I don't have authority; the President of the United States has authority. Secondly, the Vice President is more aware that he is Vice President than anybody else. He would be the first

to say the President gets to decide. But he had strong views and he wanted to make sure the President understood them.

The Vice President—If he were here and you asked him about the role he would play, I think he would say something like the following: His view was, he is the only person sitting at the National Security Council table who doesn't have a bureaucratic perspective or a bureaucratic interest, which is a starting point for everybody around the table. He would say, "I don't have a bureaucracy. I have only my job as advisor to you." He interpreted that to mean that he wanted to give the President of the United States the unalloyed national security case. If you were unaffected by diplomatic concerns, military concerns, the things that other Cabinet Secretaries—He would give the President the plain vanilla national security arguments. Temperamentally, that wasn't very comfortable for the Vice President, because that's where he is. His view is, what he can do for the President is to tell him, "If you were going to look at this from strictly a national security perspective, what would you do?" That's what I can do for him. Then he goes off and decides.

So it is not a concurrent thing, because he is the first to know that the President makes the decision, but he has strong views on this. He is distrustful of the regime. He thinks that diplomacy probably will not work because of the nature of the regime, and he is worried about the President politically if the President looks soft on the North Koreans. I think that is his perspective.

Rice: I remember once we were having a discussion about something and somebody said, "We need to be credible about the use of force." I said, "There are a lot of problems we have, but credibility about the use of force isn't one of them." This was like 2006 or something. People know we do that sort of thing.

Hadley: Been there, done that.

Rice: Been there, done that. The Bush administration doesn't have a credibility problem about toughness, so let's not worry about that piece of it. He just had strong views and I had strong views. I do think one difference in the dynamic between the first term and the second term was that I was more willing to express those views directly in front of the President and to argue with the Vice President in a civil, friendly, but pretty sharp way. There was less of that dynamic in the first term.

Hadley: The other thing is that the President by the second term was—How do I say this?—less deferential to all the learning and experience that were reflected in the views he got from Don, or Colin, or the Vice President, and more confident in his own judgment. Surprise, surprise. If you think about what he has been through by the time it is 2006, '07, '08, it is not surprising.

Riley: Let me ask this question as a way to sort of wrap this up: Who did the President like to deal with, among the foreign leaders that you witnessed? We've already said that Kim was an outlier case on the opposite end of the spectrum, but who was it that he could barely tolerate that he had to deal with on a regular basis?

Hadley: Well, we could start with the affirmative—people he liked.

Rice: He loved dealing with Tony Blair. He loved dealing with Angela Merkel. He was actually fine with almost all of—He actually liked, in a funny sort of way, dealing with [Ariel] Sharon. We all did. I really liked dealing with Sharon and I think the President did too. He liked dealing with people that he thought had principles, were tough, and were willing to take tough decisions. He really liked a lot of the African leaders. John Kufuor. In his own funny way he liked [Olusegun] Obasanjo. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, he loved dealing with her.

Hadley: The leader of Slovakia, who was a flat-tax guy. Wonderful fellow.

Riley: [Václav] Klaus?

Rice: No, no, this is—

Brown: He probably did not like Klaus that much.

Rice: He didn't mind Klaus. He liked the East Europeans a lot.

Hadley: He liked people who were willing to make tough decisions and to take stands. That's what he admired, because that's what he thought Presidents were supposed to do—and were willing to do big things.

Rice: [Vaira] Vīķe-Freiberga because—people who understood what freedom meant.

Hadley: Right.

Rice: But also some people you might not—[Luiz Inácio] Lula [da Silva]. He just had a very easy relationship with Lula. There were a lot of them. But mostly they had that characteristic of being people who took tough decisions, who understood freedom, who were standing against type. One of the best conversations I ever saw him have was with [Tabaré] Vasquez of Uruguay, which would not have been necessarily predictable.

Hadley: Given his background.

Rice: This left-wing ophthalmologist.

Riley: Is it the left-wing part or the eyeball part?

Rice: Both. But they immediately understood the social justice mission very clearly. It was like that.

Riley: Now the fun part: Who did he *not* like dealing with?

Rice: He said it pretty much in his book, Gerhard Schröder—didn't trust him. Whatever Schröder says now—I was in the Oval Office when Schröder said, "Do Iraq quick and I'm with you." He really, really bristled. He didn't dislike [Jacques] Chirac. They had a sort of easy way about their relationship, but he disliked Chirac's patronizing nature about the Middle East and about Africa. I remember once they were at a G8—I wasn't there, but he relates it that Chirac

started talking about how we couldn't tell the Africans to fight corruption because we had caused it.

The President said, "Wait a minute, my country wasn't colonial. Who's 'we'?" This sort of *noblesse oblige*, patronizing way that Chirac had—Chirac once at a dinner, very uncomfortably—Were you there? I can't remember if I was National Security Advisor or you were when Chirac—We were talking about Ukraine, and Chirac said—

Hadley: I was there.

Rice: Chirac said, "Well, after all, Ukraine is Russian." The whole room just kind of went silent.

Hadley: But you know, these two guys found common ground on Lebanon. They got the Syrians out of Lebanon.

Rice: That's why I say he didn't like some things about Chirac, but the idea that this wasn't a relationship that worked is just not right. They had a better working relationship—He actually did fine with Putin. There were some difficult relationships that he managed well and I think Putin was one of those.

Riley: The Asians?

Rice: I think he loved [indecipherable]. Everybody did. The Japanese kept changing Prime Ministers, so it was a little hard to develop relationships with one of them. He didn't get to know Lee Myung-bak very well because that comes late in the term. It's too bad because I think they would—

Hadley: But he instantly liked him. And I'll tell you one of the great triumphs of foreign policy is that U.S.–South Korean relations survived the then Korean President, and notwithstanding what an unusual man he was, we solved a lot of long-standing bilateral problems of U.S.–South Korean relationships. This is the guy before Lee Myung-bak.

Rice: And by the way, we actually did pretty well with the six-party talks with that Korean government, despite some differences about North Korea.

Hadley: I can't remember that guy's name.

Rice: Roh Moo-hyun. Now one of the more interesting ways to think about this is—Nobody has a relationship with Hu Jintao; you just don't. They had a perfectly workable relationship. We first went to the Great Hall of the People—When I went for the first time, the room was so big they had to talk on microphones. So it happened to the President, too, on his first visit there, and he said, "Couldn't we have a small discussion?" What the Chinese viewed as small was they had seven and we had seven. So it was kind of hard to have a—with the Chinese. But he had a perfectly workable relationship with him and I think kind of liked him. It's just that Hu Jintao wasn't a very personable, outgoing person.

Probably the most important work that he did was with the heads of these young democracies. Since it is going to be five years before this comes out, I can say this very bluntly: One of the

biggest mistakes the [Barack] Obama administration made was the notion that the President of the United States wasn't going to get on these videoconferences with Maliki and [Hamid] Karzai, head of state to head of state, and treat them like the heads of state that you hope they're going to become. Don't do everything through the staff and the Ambassador.

The President also had a good way with [Pervez] Musharraf and people like that, but with Karzai and with Maliki, it was practically every week for a while there. It wasn't that they tried to negotiate, but it was the President giving them confidence, from the President of the United States, that I'm going to deal with you head of state to head of state. It made all the difference. I watched it make a difference in how he viewed them as well.

Karzai is prickly and he's proud. If you publicly slam him, he's going to come after you and he's going to say things that make you really cringe. The President never got in that position with Karzai, and Karzai felt more comfortable then in his relationship with us. Maliki, when Maliki took off for Basra on the back of a tank, everybody at the National Security Council, including the extremely experienced Vice President Dick Cheney, all said, "What is he doing? This is going to be a disaster. This is going to fail." Everybody was wringing their hands. Ryan was ringing his hands; Petraeus was wringing his hands. It wasn't planned. The President said, "You know, he's showing some courage. This is going to work out." It was as a politician—Somehow he was able to relate to these people as a politician, and it made an enormous difference in how they operated.

Hadley: There are two things—One is something about his leadership: He was able to see a strategic opportunity out there even though it required him to take a position way outside the consensus of the national security establishment. He was prepared to do it and stake out his position. Most of the time he was right. Gradually the status quo consensus would move to where he was. You saw that: calling Sharon a "man of peace," because that was the way to make him a man of peace. His support for the Gaza disengagement, which nobody believed but he thought was important—

Rice: His calling out of [Yasser] Arafat, who was really the skunk at the picnic.

Hadley: Of Arafat, because he was a failed leader. He couldn't deliver for peace. His unwillingness to throw Musharraf under the bus because he didn't want to repeat the Shah of Iran and he thought Musharraf had a role in helping preside over a transition to a democratic Pakistan, which he did. He really had the courage to do those things and to take those positions, and he did on more than one occasion.

The second thing I have to make a point about is on the surge. If you look at all the difficult pieces we needed to put in place to make that surge decision, he actually did most of them. We needed to bring Maliki around so that Maliki would accept the U.S. troops, would add his own troops, and would agree to the five or six things we needed to do to make sure it would be nonsectarian. He negotiates that with Maliki over the cities and gets Maliki to make a public speech. The first time he doesn't get it quite right so the President goes back to him and makes him do it again and gets that.

Bringing his national security team around behind the surge, bringing his Joint Chiefs around the surge, meeting with them and bringing them on by promising them that he will increase the size of the Marine Corps and the Army. You know, if you think about all of those key elements that make the surge succeed, the President actually is doing them himself. Michael Gordon has a book coming out on Iraq and the surge. I think he is going to get that point, that there were eight key things that were needed and the President did all of them. That is of course the point that Woodward misses. When Woodward says the President "delegated" the surge, it's the wrong word. What the President did is he *tasked* the surge process. Presidents don't do their own strategy reviews; that's what staffs are for. He tasked it. He is on top of it and asks us about it virtually every day.

Then, when the heavy lifting comes to put the pieces of the surge together, he does it himself. That's, I hope, the story that Michael Gordon will tell, because that's the story that has not been told, and that is actually the secret of the success of the surge.

Brown: Is there anything during both terms that he did, such as going for one of these strategic objectives that you mentioned, that was a surprise to you, that he hadn't aired with either of you beforehand, and caught you off guard?

Hadley: Yes, the military commissions.

Rice: That caught us off guard and it shouldn't have. Actually, we'd been discussing the military commissions. He had signed an Executive order that I hadn't seen. It didn't make me very happy. I told him, "Mr. President, let me just put it this way: If this happens again, either [Alberto] Al Gonzales or I have to resign." He said it was his fault. I said, "No, actually it wasn't your fault." But that was his tendency to say.

The Sharon-as-a-man-of-peace thing kind of took me a little aback. The Israelis were beating the living daylights out of the Palestinians at that point. Sharon is sitting in the Oval and somebody says—I don't even remember what the question was, exactly. You might remember because I've just written about it, but he says, "I think the Prime Minister is a man of peace." I thought, *Oh, man, Ariel Sharon—We're going to be digging out of this one for quite a while.*

He actually pushed the envelope on Taiwan once. Sitting with the Vice Premier of China. I remember telling the President once that on the Middle East and on One China policy there is a mantra, and if you don't say it in exactly the right order with every comma in place, you change foreign policy. In this particular case, Chen Shui-bian was doing something bad, and the President said—"We will not support" is how he put it—"We will not support a unilateral declaration of independence. We will not support unilaterally independence for Taiwan." Of course the Chinese reinterpreted that to say, "We oppose." We would go back and forth with them. He said he "would not support," not, he "would oppose." It was a distinction without a difference. But it was important. He said that on the fly with the Chinese minister sitting there.

Hadley: I've got about three or four others that were surprises, at least to me. He also had this formulation that ended up the mantra, which was One China policy, three communiqués, perform our obligations, Taiwan Relations Act, and no unilateral change in the status quo by either side,

which is something he came up with, a very artful formulation. It became the touchstone of maintaining the balance under Chen Shui-bian's rule, which was difficult.

The one about "If you harbor terrorists, you'll be treated as a terrorist."

Rice: That was his line, but that came up in the Oval on the night of the speech. It was there. I actually asked him, "Are you sure you want to say this?" He said, "Do you think we shouldn't?" I said, "There's a policy in here, not just a statement." He basically said, "No, I have to say it tonight." We then reviewed the speech in the Situation Room, you'll remember. There was a thought that he ought to mention weapons of mass destruction and the fact that the terrorists might get them. He said, "No, the American people aren't ready for that. We can't do that to a shaken nation."

He was always—These phrases—

Hadley: The other one, "The killing of innocents is not justified by any cause."

Rice: That was a big shift.

Hadley: If you, like me, grew up in the '60s with—

Rice: Freedom fighters.

Hadley: Liberation movements, and all this rationale that you can use violence against violent regimes—He comes flat out there, and says violence against civilians is not justified by any cause. This is a huge change and he gets the whole world to adopt it. People say, "How do you know what a President thinks?" Read what they say. The President of the United States is talking all the time. Read it. Most of the time they tell you what they have in mind.

He did once—It was a little bit—With the press, he said, "Well, if China were to attack Taiwan, we'd come to the defense of Taiwan," thereby ripping off 20 years of calculated ambiguity. He came out and I said, "Mr. President—" And he said, "Did I do something here?" As it turned out it was very smart because we had the EP-3. He started out actually from the campaign, where he said, "I think we're strategic competitors, not strategic allies." Then he said, "We'll come to the defense of Taiwan." He took a tough line with the Chinese. He got their attention and then, as you do with the Chinese, and that kind of set up—

Rice: And we did this big arms sale, the package, the first arms sale, which was his idea. He wanted to lay a stake in the ground early.

Hadley: And to do a big one—

Rice: Do a big one and then not have to do it every year. A couple of others that are kind of interesting—When we were getting ready to do his first speech to the UN and he wanted to state something about the peace process and we used the careful language that never said the word "state" because at that time—People now forget, but no American President had said "Palestinian state." So he says, "Are the Palestinians going to have a state?" We said, "Yes,

when there is an agreement," and blah, blah, blah. He said, "Then I'm going to say that there will be a Palestinian state."

Then he says, "What's it going to be called?" We said, "Well, Palestine." He said, "Then I'm going to call it Palestine." I'm thinking the Israelis are going to go absolutely nuts. I call the Israelis and I say, "Here's what he is going to say." Danny Ayalon, who was working for Sharon at the time, says, "You can't say that. Say 'Old Palestine.'" I go in, "Can we say, 'Old Palestine?'" He said, "That sounds really stupid, 'Old Palestine.'" He had this tendency—And we said, "Palestinian state," Palestine and Israel living side by side. He did have this tendency to push through words.

Now occasionally he would say something that he knew was not good, like when he made the "dead or alive" statement. We were in the Roosevelt Room. I'll never forget it. We came back into the Oval and he said, "You didn't like that, did you?" I said, "What?" He said, "That 'dead or alive.'" I said, "Well, I thought it was a little white-hot for the President of the United States." Later on he said he knew—

Hadley: And Laura [Bush] didn't like it.

Rice: Laura didn't like it.

Hadley: The other one was "axis of evil." He knew it was going to be Iraq; he knew it was going to be North Korea; but I didn't know it was going to be Iran and it shows up with Iran. I went back to talk to him. I sort of said a little of this, a little of that, blah, blah, blah. He said, "It's Iran." "OK, Mr. President."

Rice: Although none of us really thought—because axis of evil isn't what—I mean, it was a phrase. I don't think any of us thought it was going to have the impact—When I briefed the State of the Union the night before—You know, the National Security Advisor goes down to the press room at around five o'clock and briefs the speech. The piece that I briefed was about his call for political reform in the Middle East because I thought that would be the story. I even went so far as to call the Saudis and others and say, "Look, this is coming, so beware." But axis of evil sounded like a nice catchphrase to talk about some really bad regimes that had some things in common. That it became a policy declaration was a surprise to all of us. We almost had Syria in it. We decided they were junior varsity.

Hadley: We both said we missed it. Condi said, "I thought the thing that might get people's attention was the word 'evil.'"

Rice: Right, yes.

Hadley: What got people was the word "axis," which suggested a formal alliance. Of course that's not what we were suggesting at all.

Riley: We've reached our point of time—We've overstayed our welcome, and then we've got you again this afternoon.

Hadley: I had a number of things I wanted to get in your tape.

Riley: Go ahead.

Hadley: I've gotten them all in.

Rice: We did North Korea. We've sort of done Middle East peace. The only thing we may want to add about Middle East peace is—You can talk to us both separately about this, but it is an important National Security Council–White House–State Department interaction. The problem with Middle East peace is that, for a variety of reasons, the White House is the address for the Israelis, not the State Department. So unless there is very close linkage between the White House and the State Department, the Secretary of State is out on a lily pad by herself, with the Israelis assuming they can go behind her back to the White House.

Riley: Right.

Rice: We were very cognizant about letting that happen. I think the Israelis—Part of it was that Steve and I went off and if they came we would meet with them together. We very often had our two staffs meet together to chart out policy. I never felt out on a limb on Middle East peace, but it was because it was conscious that we weren't going to let there be distance between the White House and the State Department. If you want to say anything about that, we can talk about that.

Hadley: One of the things that happened in the first term was that Colin took a trip to the Middle East, with a brief from the President. There are leaks back here, which Colin believes come from the Vice President's office, that basically suggest, wrongly, that Colin is off on his own rather than executing the President's instructions. He's very upset about it, rightly so. Condi tries, and in some sense mitigates, the effects, but it can't be done. He basically comes back and says, "I'm never going to do that again."

Our conclusion was it is not going to happen even the first time with Condi. So when the Israelis would come back, either through our staff, [Elliott] Abrams, or through the Vice President, and say about Condi, in her conversation with Sharon or [Ehud] Olmert, "We're confident she did not reflect the President's views," my first job was to say, "Let me be clear on this: There is never going to be any daylight between Condi and the President of the United States, and if you don't understand that, you're going to make a big mistake. She is speaking in the President's name and the President's voice. Make no mistake." I had to do that a lot because of the Israelis and how they operate. It was terribly important that she knew that would happen and that we didn't do to her, when she was over there, what had happened in the first term with Colin, which should never have happened.

Riley: I did have in my notes to ask you about—You had an unusual relationship with Elliott Abrams. Somewhere I read—it may have been in Glenn Kessler's book—that you had an agreement with him that he would travel with you when you went to the Middle East.

Rice: We always had the Special Assistant. I always wanted—

Hadley: There wasn't anything special about it.

Rice: There wasn't anything special about it, so the Special Assistant for Europe would travel with me. Judy Ansley would travel with me when I went to NATO. I wanted Elliott with me.

First of all, he's a smart guy. He knows these people really well. Secondly, I could make sure then, too, that there was no delinkage with the White House. I would sometimes say to Elliott, "Elliott, go call Steve and talk to him about what we're doing and come back and let me know." So it was not unusual.

Riley: I just didn't know. The way it was couched in what I read made it sound as though it was something out of the ordinary and I didn't know whether it consequently raised any problems.

Hadley: One of the things that Condi is very good at is taking people who are very strong-willed and have their own constituencies and who would be viewed by many people as—if you hire them, you're importing a problem. Condi was actually very good—and I learned this from her and tried to do it in the second term—at managing those people. So you take somebody like Bob Blackwill, or you take somebody like Elliott Abrams, and basically you meet with them early and you say, "This is how it is going to work. Are you going to be comfortable with it?"

One of the things with Bob was whether he was going to be willing to work essentially not just for Condi but for me as Deputy, because he'd known her for a long time, and had been her former boss. So you have a conversation and you say, "Look, this is how it's going to work. Do you have any problems with that?" You do that with your superstars so that they know the rules of the road. Once you've established those, then you let them go do their own thing because they're terrifically helpful.

Rice: And it is good to have those people who have strong views and are really smart. I learned—Part of this is because I was an academic and I was provost in the university. I would get these faculty appointments and it would say, "Well, actually the best person is Joe Smith, but Joe Smith is known to be a troublemaker and would not make a good colleague, so we are suggesting Bob Davis." I'd go back to the Department and I would say, "You know what? I would hope that the music department could have hired [Wolfgang Amadeus] Mozart, even though he would have been a real troublemaker and not a very good colleague."

Hadley: But they wouldn't have.

Rice: This notion that everybody has to be a smiley face in order to be useful, or everybody has to be on exactly the same page. Now, you have to have an understanding: Ultimately, I'm Secretary of State; you're not. Ultimately, he's the President; you're not. So we are going to do this in a way that if you ever find you can't ultimately agree—Finally, Bob Joseph—The North Korean policy went in a direction he just couldn't support. Bob and I remain friends to this day, but he just came to me and he said, "You know, I really don't want to do this anymore." I said, "I understand." But he had given tremendous value as somebody who could always be a little bit orthogonal to where the State Department was.

I told Steve—I'll never forget, when I got ready to make the Iran announcement in May of 2006, I sent over my proposed remarks that were going to announce new policy, and Steve said, "This is pretty tough." I said, "Oh, I had Bob Joseph draft it," because the last thing I wanted to do was sound soft. Not because I frankly cared about the domestic constituency so much, but because I didn't want the Iranians to think—We were not in a good place in Iraq. I didn't want the Iranians to think this was some kind of concession to them because we had trouble in Iraq. So I wanted

the language to be tough as nails. Bob drafted it. So people who are like that can be really helpful.

Hadley: One last thing I would say in terms of dos and don'ts of National Security Advisors: One of the rules I had in the staff was, I didn't want to see my name, and I didn't want to see the NSC in any of those stories that the *Washington Post* does about splits within the administration—State on one side, DoD on the other.

Rice: "And the NSC thinks—"

Hadley: Everybody agreed with that.

Rice: In fact, I think we had fewer problems of that kind, within the NSC, within the departments. I used to have a big staff meeting at State. We mentioned this to you. Nothing ever leaked out of it. If you set those expectations, then it doesn't happen. We had more trouble with leaks in the intelligence community than anyplace. But you rarely saw those, "The State Department thinks," "the Defense Department thinks" stories.

Hadley: But she had a couple. One person was disloyal to her and went outside and complained to Congress. She fired him. You only have to do it once or twice. You exhort, but then you enforce.

Rice: All right.

Riley: This has been a clinic. We're grateful to both of you. We look forward to this afternoon.

[BREAK]

Riley: We're ready. OK. The recorders are going. I don't want to dwell on this, but I do want to come back to the comment you made this morning, because we got something of an answer to it but I don't think the full answer, about your sense that you didn't feel that your work at the National Security Council was quite up to the standards that you met when you were at the State Department.

Rice: I just thought I was a better Secretary of State than National Security Advisor. I was a good National Security Advisor, but I was a better Secretary of State. The job suited me more.

Riley: And what about the job made you feel that maybe you didn't feel quite the match there that you did with State?

Rice: I loved being National Security Advisor and I loved working closely with the President and so forth, but I told Steve, you know, at some point you get tired of coordinating. I would rather be coordinated. I liked line authority. I liked being in charge of diplomacy. I liked running the State Department. I liked managing a big department. I liked the variety of it.

When you're National Security Advisor, it's like working foreign policy by remote control. What can I get Secretary X to do, and Secretary Y? When you're Secretary of State you have responsibility for doing that and you execute it. I liked doing the execution, not just sort of planning it.

Riley: Coordinating it.

Rice: Coordinating it. Yes.

Riley: And I guess a lot of care and feeding of other people?

Rice: Well, there is plenty of care and feeding of people when you are Secretary of State. Lots of it. But it's just different. George Shultz once told me, "You know, you're going to want to run your own show at some point." One is a staff role and one is the role of a principal and I really liked being able to go from the development of policy all the way through its execution and to actually do the diplomacy itself. I liked that.

Riley: But there are some people who are better staff people.

Rice: There are.

Riley: I mean that, for whatever their temperaments and character, they are staff folks more than managers.

Rice: That's right. It's not that I disliked the staff role, and I think that I did it well, but I really loved being Secretary of State and really executing. Part of it is that, for a variety of reasons having to do with the wars and terrorism and so forth, I ended up being a more visible presence, even as National Security Advisor, than you would want the National Security Advisor to be.

Brent Scowcroft was the most important person in Washington that nobody could recognize, and that's really good for a National Security Advisor. You can be the behind-the-scenes person. I think some of my strengths are in public speaking and doing television and in advocating and testifying before Congress, and those were assets that I didn't think I should or could fully use in the National Security role.

Brown: Did you consciously model yourself or your role as National Security Advisor on Scowcroft? And did you consciously reject the [Henry] Kissinger–[Zbigniew] Brzeziński-type of National Security Advisor? McGeorge Bundy probably was somewhat in between. Did you study these?

Rice: Oh, yes. I studied them well before this time. That was my business. I was a specialist in national security policy. Yes, I think you are very much a creature of your past experiences. I had been on Brent's National Security staff. I thought he was a terrific National Security Advisor. Sure, I tried to pattern more of an honest broker.

I certainly believed we needed to give strategic direction, which is why I took the national security strategy in 2002 out of the bureaucracy and basically created it in the NSC, so it wasn't

just a coordinating role. But I didn't—To a certain extent Henry would be the first to say he became something of an alternative power center. And Zbig, too.

Brown: Well, Presidents get the National Security Advisors they deserve, in a way. Or what they want. Don't they create an expectation as to what they want?

Rice: Well, yes and no. Strong personalities. The President I'm not sure comes in thinking, *I want a National Security Advisor that does x, y, and z.* He wants a National Security Advisor who is going to get the job done, and I don't think he worried about models. I do think it has to mesh with the President's personality and style.

Brown: The President's second inaugural address—very eloquent, passionate. It comes at a time when it looked like, from the outside, that the second Bush administration was not going to be that much of a neoconservative administration in foreign policy, yet the second inaugural was very much out of the neoconservative ethos. Did you have a reaction to it that way?

Rice: No. It was who the President was. I don't think it was having a neoconservative ethos. We talked earlier about this disdain for Kim Jong-il. He didn't think anybody ought to live in tyranny. That's basically what the second inaugural—When you boil it down to its essence, that's what it really is. Nobody sat around having a debate about whether he ought to say it. I remember when we talked about what he was going to use the inaugural to do, he said, "It has to be a clear statement about freedom." That's what he wanted to guide. We had come to that through starting to understand the sort of sequences—

September 11th happens. You're fighting on all fronts just to keep another attack from happening. You go into Afghanistan to take care of safe havens, but then as things begin to ease somewhat, you begin to look for deeper meaning in what happened. That deeper meaning is obviously the freedom gap in the Middle East. The response to the freedom gap is nobody should have to live in tyranny. That'll become the centerpiece of our foreign policy. So it's got that sequence.

I think he was more influenced by the Arab [Human] Development Report than almost anything else.

Riley: What was that?

Rice: This was a report for the UN that a group of Arab intellectuals did in 2002. It basically says that the Middle East has three gaps: It has a technology gap; it has an education gap; and it has a freedom gap. He was very taken with that notion of a freedom gap.

It already gets expressed in the way he thinks about the Palestinian state, as having to be democratic, first and foremost. Freedom, when you have this gap, what fills it is terrorism and extremism, because you don't allow normal politics in the square, so it becomes this kind of virulent thing called al-Qaeda out there, which is a kind of politics. It's really not nihilism. We tend to think of it as nihilism, but it really isn't. It's kind of a political response to the absence of decent politics. That's where that comes from, much more so than any kind of neocon—I mean, he would hear—Sam Lewis would come by once in a while, but I don't think it had that—The big effect on the President was looking at what had happened and understanding the relationship.

Brown: Was there increasing disaffection by those who, at least from the outside, seemed to be regarded as neoconservatives? Douglas Feith, possibly—

Rice: In the Defense Department, right.

Brown: John Bolton in the State Department, and so on. Were they increasingly disaffected?

Rice: Well, let's put it this way: if they were, they kept it to themselves.

Brown: Really.

Rice: Yes. Right. Not that I could tell. We talked about the fact that the Vice President did not like the policy on North Korea and he was pretty up-front about that. As to the broader issue of the Freedom Agenda, no, not really. Somehow people thought the President had established the policy and we were trying to execute it. Yes, there might have been minor issues about exactly how far to push the Egyptians, or what to do about the Uzbeks when Karimov threatens to throw us out if we don't stop talking about human rights—that kind of thing.

Brown: There was, during the time of the administration, a kind of critical reaction from the academic community of people, the so-called realists in the academic community. Now some of it could be dismissed as partisan, but some of it was—

Rice: No, I think it wasn't partisan; it was ideological. This was a real ideological difference. There were people who believed that—There was a misunderstanding, of course, of the concept of realism. Realism is not a synonym for realistic. Realism is a particular view of how the international system works.

Brown: With a capital R.

Rice: With a capital R. These are billiard balls bouncing off each other in a zero-sum game looking for power advantage—that's basically what Realists think of the international system. What's inside them doesn't matter. It's all about interest, and if you want to govern this state of nature that is the international system, then you have to find ways to bridge interest differences. So you can work as equally with the Soviet Union as you do with the British in its most extreme fashion. Those people then would be quite nervous about too much insistence on trying to change the internal character of states. It was an honest disagreement about how one dealt with the international system. The President was much more of the view that if you don't change the internal character of states, it's not stable in the long run.

The rub here is the Middle East, right? Because in the Middle East, for 60 years, as I said in that speech in Cairo, we had traded stability for democracy. We had gotten neither because you weren't going to try to change Saudi Arabia or Egypt. The second inaugural essentially challenges that concept and says, "No, you *have* to, or the international system will not be stable, because look at what has happened as a result of the freedom gap."

Riley: Dr. Rice, did the President come to his Presidency with that commitment and understanding, or is that a function of what happened on September 11th?

Rice: He came with an instinct toward what would emerge as the Freedom Agenda, which is why he just can't deal with the notion of Kim Jung-il. It's why he says, early on, "Wouldn't it be great if the birth of democracy in the Middle East"—this is in 2002—"was on the rocky shoals of the West Bank and in Iraq?" It's why, when we invade Iraq, it's not to bring democracy. That is not the reason for invading Iraq, but if we are going to overthrow Saddam Hussein, we have to have a view about what comes next, and it has to be democratic. It has to be support for democracy, or it wouldn't be in line with America's principles.

So he's got those ideas going back quite a long time, but it gets full expression by 2005. Well, actually it starts to get expression even in the national security strategy, but he came with that instinct. I think it emerges more as a response, as a more coherent, strategic view of how to deal with the world as a result of 9/11 and working through that.

Brown: You've said that the invasion of Iraq was not for reasons of democratization. It became that, after—

Rice: The way I think about it is: We didn't fight the Germans to bring a democratic Germany. We fought the Germans to defeat [Adolph] Hitler, who was a strategic threat. But the United States, unlike the Brits, almost immediately had a view that the most stable postwar Germany would be a democratic Germany. That was not [Winston] Churchill's view. Churchill's view was, divide it into as many little Germanys as you can, and that will keep it stable.

It was much the same discussion inside the—I was talking to David Kennedy, my historian friend, and he said, "Well, you know, it was [Franklin D.] Roosevelt and the Four Freedoms." Well, yes, but if Roosevelt had stood up and said, "The reason we are taking on Hitler is because of the Four Freedoms," people would have laughed him out of the room. And, in fact, if he had been taking on Hitler because of the Four Freedoms he wouldn't have waited until Pearl Harbor to do it. It was a strategic threat.

Saddam Hussein, we thought, was a monster to his own people; that was part of the story. He'd used weapons of mass destruction. He was acquiring them again. He had caused two wars. He was shooting at our airplanes. It was time to get rid of this threat. But we then had a discussion about what our obligations were to the Iraqi people once we had overthrown this dictator. There was not universal agreement. Don's view was it might have to be a strongman and we ought to be all right with that. The President didn't see how we could sacrifice American lives and then put a strongman in power. That seemed to him to be indefensible for the United States.

Brown: Of course, the push for regime change predated George W. Bush's Presidency.

Rice: Yes, it was Bill Clinton who signed the—

Brown: A lot of people who criticized it later forgot that it was rather strongly endorsed. The congressional resolution, also; Clinton signed off on it.

Rice: That's right.

Brown: I think it was Paul Wolfowitz who has been quoted as saying that even if we didn't have the WMD [weapons of mass destruction] issue, we still would have pushed for regime change.

Rice: Well, we were pushing for regime change from the very beginning, but not by military force. I remember the early discussions. Was there some way to maybe even make Kurdistan within Iraq a kind of safe haven where you could begin to challenge Saddam Hussein from Kurdistan? Because we had a problem. The sanctions were breaking down, as Oil-for-Food would later show. He was getting more aggressive in his attacks on the no-fly operation. On the tenth anniversary in 2001 of his invasion of Kuwait, he threatened Kuwait again. Things were not going well.

Nobody believed Iraq was going to be stable as long as Saddam Hussein was there. But that doesn't mean that you try to overthrow him by military force. It's the combination of his strategic threat and WMD that leads you to decide, well, we're going to have to do this. And, according to the intelligence estimates, the WMD problem is growing. It's not staying still; it's growing. In fact, I remember telling Bob Bennett, the Senator from Utah, "Look, it's not just WMD. The Russians have 25,000 times more WMD than Saddam Hussein. I'm not worried about the Russians." It was the combination of who he was, where he was, and the WMD.

Brown: I don't know whether you regard counterfactuals as helpful or not—they're sometimes not—but one could ask the question in a counterfactual way: If, indeed, we knew in the months before the invasion of Iraq was launched, what we found out afterward about WMD—we found out he didn't really have a live program—would we have invaded?

Rice: I don't know. Counterfactuals are only helpful to a point because you can't go back and put yourself in that context. You're looking at a whole picture. I always say, "What you know today can only affect what you do tomorrow, not what you did yesterday." The problem is it's a scarier picture than it turns out. In December of 2002, it's a scarier picture than it turns out to be in July of 2003, but I can't tell you one way or another because he was really such a threat and was acting up so much in the Middle East.

If we could have gotten rid of him in some other way, or, let's say he'd come clean, right? Let's say he comes out with stockpiles we thought were there. Do we invade Iraq? Probably not.

Brown: I wanted to go back a little bit to some things about Iraq. Shortly after—I don't know how early it was, but in one of your early testimonies before, I'm not sure whether it was Senate Armed Services or what—you came up with the "clear, hold, and build" concept, and evidently a lot of your colleagues were surprised by this. They felt that you hadn't aired it and it was more like a strategic concept than—

Rice: Yes, I thought it was just a good way to describe what I thought we were doing. I mean, that's what the Pentagon said they were doing. They would clear an area; they needed to be able to hold it, and then reconstruct. It was a phrase that, from my point of view, described what we were doing. And actually, Don didn't like the fact that I was talking about Pentagon business, and George Casey and I had a bit of a row about it, because he said he didn't want the State Department talking about military policy. I told him I wasn't the State Department; I was the Secretary of State and those were very different things. I was the President's advisor and I could say whatever I pleased, but I was sorry he was blindsided. I didn't think he'd been blindsided, because I thought, actually, that Zal [Zalmay Khalilzad] out in the region had talked to him about it. But somehow the communication didn't get there.

I really didn't think about it as a new strategic concept but rather a better way to describe what it was we were doing. We seemed to have been having trouble helping people understand what it was we were trying to do in Iraq. And the Pentagon was given to metrics that had ceased to make sense to anybody. You know, "We destroyed this many weapons caches this week."

OK. I remember somebody saying—It might have been John Snow, because it was somebody who wasn't there all the time, so it might have been Secretary of Treasury. He said, "The last time I was here you had destroyed X number. Now you've destroyed X + 1 number. Exactly how many more of these are there?" The metrics had ceased to make sense.

Brown: Right, but wasn't it also that part of those words had more meaning, evidently, to the military than might have been anticipated—part of the debate within the military as to what was the role of U.S. forces, and was building part of it?

Rice: Right. Except, of course, we had a multi-gazillion-dollar reconstruction program underway that the Congress had funded. So it wasn't any secret to anybody that we were building. And it wasn't any secret, either, that the military was having to do a fair amount of that because the security situations didn't allow, in some places, aid workers to get in. So the military was already in the process. This is where the Commander's Emergency CERP [Commander's Emergency Response Program] funds had come in. They were obviously building. So I never understood all of the hubbub, because that's what they were doing. I think the reason it caught people's attention was that it was maybe more cleverly phrased, or it was more instructive than the way we had been talking about it.

Riley: Let me try this on a slightly different track. We spent a fair amount of time this morning talking about the surge and how we got to that, and it was very instructive, which kind of takes us to the endpoint of Iraq in the administration, unless there is something beyond that we ought to talk about. But we don't have a very good picture, from your perspective, of what happens from the point that you become Secretary of State until you get up to the point at which the surge is the way that you intend to resolve the problem. I guess what I'm looking for is a narrative from you about—All right, you come into this office on the first day, and fairly soon thereafter you send Philip Zelikow abroad to gather intelligence for you, which is a little unusual, right?

Rice: Right.

Riley: How are you coming to educate yourself about this in a different way? How are you developing a Secretary of State's perspective on the Iraq problem, and what is your role in the next couple of years in helping the President to figure out his way in this very complicated issue area?

Rice: Well, the first thing is, we all continued to hope that the political progress was going to start to create better circumstances on the security front. I was initially mostly concerned about, out of the elections, getting the constitutional referendum done. So I was spending a lot of time with our people in Baghdad and talking to the Iraqi leadership a lot about the political piece of it.

Riley: And there is an already-set-out calendar, if you will.

Rice: There is already a calendar set out and I now consider it my responsibility to make that political calendar work.

Riley: Does the Defense Department agree with you that—?

Rice: Yes. I don't think there is any problem from their point of view on that. Because, it's really Zal who is point person in trying to push the Iraqis to include more Sunnis, and we're going round and round about what de-Ba'athification is actually going to mean. We're going round and round with [Tariq al-] Hashimi about whether or not he's going to bring Tawafuq [Iraqi Accord Front] in or leave Tawafuq out. It's really the details and the kind of internecine battles inside the Iraqi political leadership.

Riley: It's nation building.

Rice: It's nation building in the political sense. And it's every day. It's phone calls. These people are impossible because—You talk to Hashimi and he complains for half an hour about—I guess at the time it was [Ibrahim al-] Jaafari. Then you talk to Jaafari and he's completely unfocused because he wants to have a conversation about Abraham Lincoln and you're thinking, *What am I doing?* So a lot of that first year, 2005, I'm kind of point person with the Iraqis and with Zal to just try to push them to getting the politics done.

Riley: And you have a history with Zal?

Rice: I have a history with Zal. Zal was working on the transition in 2001 for the Defense Department, and Don called me and said, "I've got this great guy, but I really don't have a role for him." I brought Zal to the White House to work on the National Security Council, to do the Pakistan–South Asia strategy piece of trying to get a terrorism strategy in place prior to 9/11, because I felt that Dick Clarke understood how to deal with Predator but he had no concept of how to bring the Pakistanis on board. Zal was an Afghan. He knew South Asia and so I had brought him over for that. Then when he goes out to Iraq, I know him really well already. And we knew each other as academics.

Riley: Sure, OK.

Rice: So I'm doing that. At the same time, I guess when you go into a new job, you say, "Let me take a different look at this." Philip, who is your colleague and you know him as well as I do—Philip can be a bull in a china shop, right?

Riley: Yes.

Rice: But I also thought, *He'll go out there in a no-holds-barred way, and will come back and tell me what he really thinks is going on.* And I had the fortune of having Ray Odierno as my liaison. They actually went out together. I can't remember exactly, but I think there were three things I asked them to look at. I asked them to look at embassy operations and whether they were or were not connected to what we were doing militarily, and whether or not we had the right people out there, because there had been all this stuff about not enough civilians and so forth.

I asked them to look at and tell me what they could about the internal workings of the Iraqi leadership. How did it look from their point of view? Most importantly, did this thing look any better up close than it looked from afar? Because I was really starting to wonder about this assessment that the politics was the ultimate—We had all been thrilled by the purple-finger elections, but within days of the purple-finger revolution we still had insurgencies, so you start to wonder, *Are we going about this the right way?*

Riley: Does Philip's trip occasion any bureaucratic pushback from others? I mean the fact that you've got an envoy over there—Is Defense complaining? Are the intelligence communities complaining that there is a guy over here with a—?

Rice: Not that I remember. And Eliot Cohen used to go out from time to time in the same way. I don't think there was much.

Riley: What are you finding in these three areas?

Rice: Well, in terms of embassy operations, it was the problem I described. We had very good people out there, but maybe not people at the right stage of their career with the right training, either too junior or too senior, not the meat of the Foreign Service. We weren't working that well with the military. They were two ships sailing by each other.

Zal was outstanding at sitting and having tea with these guys and getting stuff done one-on-one with the Iraqi leaders, but embassy operations really wasn't Zal's strong point, and I think Zal would be the first to say that. So we started talking about how to restructure the State effort. The PRTs [Provincial Reconstruction Teams] come out of that, the enhanced PRTs. We'd had PRTs in Afghanistan, but they were different. They were more to extend the writ of the central government out into the provinces of Afghanistan. In Iraq, they were really to give the United States an integrated civil-military team.

So they come back, Ray and Philip. They get with the Director General of the Foreign Service, and they get with various people who—I can't now remember if David Satterfield had come back yet, but David Satterfield had spent some time in Iraq. They all get together and they start really figuring out how these PRTs are going to work. And I go out and open the first new PRT in November in Mosul. So in that period of time they are working a lot on state structure but also our structure in the field.

And I'm trying to get the President—I'm spending a lot of time with the President on what the civilian side looks like. One of the challenges was that he had an immediate, as most Presidents do, connection to his military, a kind of emotional tie that the Commander in Chief has with the military. I needed him to have a similar tie with his diplomats. So I started, not too long after that, having him get on these videoconferences with PRT leaders so he could really see what his civilians were doing out there, too.

Riley: Which was hard work.

Rice: Hard work.

Riley: What about your back-channel portrait of how life in country looks? Is what you're hearing from your envoys consistent with the official reporting that's coming through?

Rice: They are just parallel. The problem with the official reporting was that it just was not focused on—It didn't give you a picture of what was going on in country. What it gave you a picture of was—I remember one presentation that talked about improving security. Well, yes, if you were in a Humvee, or dressed in deep body armor. But if you were an Iraqi civilian, not so much.

So this concept of the metrics that the military was using didn't match up with what we were trying to do on the ground, as I said, with the weapons depots that kept multiplying. "We captured this many enemy today." Well, yes, what's the denominator? It was just not clear. Iraqi security forces kept growing in numbers, and they'd come in and say there were 300,000 and then suddenly there were 250. Wait a minute, what's going on here? A whole lot of them left. Well, why did they leave? Well, because they had to take their money home because they didn't have a banking system, and then they wouldn't come back.

The metrics were just awful. I wanted more of a feel. And the feel that Ray and Philip gave me was disturbing.

Riley: In 2006, the President writes that it's the worst year of his Presidency. What we're really trying to do is get a picture of what is happening in 2005.

Rice: Well, in 2005 there is still some hope—Yes, maybe the political system—because they are making political progress.

Riley: Right, you've got three elections?

Rice: Three elections. You've got three elections. You've got a constitutional referendum. They're sort of, kind of, starting to act like a government. The politics looks pretty good, but the security situation is just continuing to go down.

What happened, though—Toward the end of 2005 and early in 2006, we realize—Steve mentioned it today—As George Casey said, "You know, really the problem is that I've got an al-Qaeda accelerant." I think we had not really understood the relationship between the insurgency on the one hand and al-Qaeda on the other. There's also, the south, where Sadr is a problem. The Iranians get a lot more involved toward the end of 2005–06, and instead of these improvised explosive devices showing up, we are getting these enhanced ones that clearly are made in Tehran, with Tehran's capabilities. So it's not as if we are not seeing—It's that things really are getting worse. I'm calling 2006 in my book, "Can Anything Else Go Wrong?" It's a bad year, a really bad year.

Then in February, you have the bombing of the Ashura shrine, and for a short period of time we think we've dodged a bullet because the Iraqi leadership gets together and they go together, and it's looking pretty decent and then, boom, the civil conflict breaks out all over the place. [Abu Musab al-] Zarqawi, who had intended that to happen, even though [Ayman al-] Zawahiri had been kind of nervous about his doing this—There's actually an exchange of letters between Zawahiri and Zarqawi, where Zawahiri says, "This setting of Muslim against Muslim makes me

uncomfortable," and Zarqawi just goes ahead and does it. And he almost drives Iraq off a cliff as a result.

Riley: What can you tell us about the crucial leaders that you're dealing with in country, in Iraq, as 2005 moves into 2006? Are you developing a comfort level with their capabilities? Do you feel like they're in over their heads? Are you despairing that there is not going to be a true Founding Father in the bunch?

Rice: Well, [Jalal] Talabani ironically emerges as the unifying figure, and here you have a Kurd who is the most unifying figure in Iraq. It's a sort of irony. I came to think that he really did have tremendous political skills, and even though nothing was ever wrong from Jalal's point of view, everything was always great, you had a sense that this was somebody who had real political skills.

Jaafari was a disaster. Jack Straw and I went to Iraq in April of 2006 to tell him, you know, "You're done." He's been nominated to be Prime Minister, but he can't get enough votes in the Parliament, and it's this surreal conversation with him where he—We decided to tag-team it. I was going to just make the case and Jack was going to talk to him politician to politician. "Well, if I were in your position—" He keeps saying, "But my people want me. I can't disappoint my people." I'm thinking, *Nobody wants you to be Prime Minister.* I finally said to him, "Nobody wants you to be Prime Minister of Iraq."

The only reason he was there was because nobody hated him. Nobody liked him, but nobody hated him, either. I said, "The fact is, you're never going to be Prime Minister of Iraq." I remember thinking he looked like I had kicked his puppy. He was just crestfallen. The guy looked like and acted like a professor—I can say that since I am one—like a humanities professor. He would launch into these long discussions about America's Founding Fathers, of which he knew nothing. Right? He'd get them all confused. He was just not ever going to be a reasonable Prime Minister.

So when he finally gets shoved aside—back to that leadership issue—After we've seen Jaafari, I go to talk to Talabani and Hashimi and Adil Abdul-Mahdi, who worked for [Saeed al-] Hakim. They say to me, "Well, did you convince him to leave?" I thought, *What about you? I'm Secretary of State*. We finally get him to go.

Then I meet Maliki on the next trip. I remember thinking—He showed up in a really bad brown suit and was really unshaven and he couldn't speak any English like all these other guys and I thought, *OK, good. Seems like we really found*—He had a sense of his own responsibilities. I felt good about Maliki. It went up and down, but that was the first time I felt we had somebody who could actually lead Iraq.

Riley: And are you relying on—Are you getting intelligence reports on these folks as well? Is the intelligence community doing these sort of psychological profiles on—?

Rice: Yes, which I never found very helpful—You know, somebody sitting up in Langley, psychoanalyzing somebody in Baghdad? It never made much sense to me. Sometimes it would say something like he was Dawa. Dawa was a conspiratorial cell, and so he tends to be suspicious of outsiders. That's useful. All right. That's helpful. Once in a while you pick up

something. More than anything, I relied on the fact that Zal spent a lot of time with them and I would talk to Zal about them, and later on Ryan. I spent a lot of time with them.

Riley: Did you put a lot of stock in your own ability to read these people? I'm trying to figure out how this would go. You don't have the language skill.

Rice: No.

Riley: They were speaking with you in English?

Rice: Maliki speaks minimal English, but Talabani spoke in English. Talabani's English was perfect.

Riley: All of this is being done through translators?

Rice: Right. But I have been in international politics long enough that you can read somebody's expression; you can read their body language. I had a very trustworthy and great translator, and I would say, "Did he really get what I just said?" Or, "Did he really respond to it?" I would actually push the translators because I speak another language and I know what it was like to hear somebody translate Putin and I would think, *No, that's not exactly it. That's not the essence.* It may be the right words, but it's not the essence. I actually worked a lot, and I did the same thing with Gamal Helal when we would go to the Middle East. I'd say, "What did he really mean?" That's one way you can work through translators.

Riley: Would they ever volunteer that they felt that something was not coming through, or that there was something that was really hard to translate?

Rice: Yes, they would. Your translator should not just be a technical person. Your translator needs to be an advisor, because language matters.

Riley: Sure.

Rice: I never had anybody translate Putin from the Russian into the English after the first couple of times because it was distracting to me. I knew that Putin used the Russian language in a particularly crude, rough way. And translators who have worked for foreign ministries for a long time tend to smooth the edges.

Knowing that, I always took into other conversations—My French is good enough to understand what's going on in a conversation, but beyond the Slavic languages and French, I can't do that. I understood that I had to have a bogey for that. I had to have a way to get inside what was said through translation.

Riley: But beyond that you were relying heavily on Zal to give you his impressions of what was actually going on in the country with these individuals.

Rice: Yes. Right.

Riley: Something sort of came to me out of the blue while you were talking that I haven't asked you about, and that is [Ahmed] Chalabi. Maybe this was more of a first-term question than a second-term question, but let me just throw that out. What was your assessment of who this guy was and whether there was ever any potential there for this to be the Founding Father?

Rice: I was sort of in between State and the CIA's hatred of him and the Defense Department's embrace of him. I thought he was a tremendously talented politician, but with a real shady side.

Riley: When did you first encounter him?

Rice: I first met him well before the war. He was part of the Iraqi National Congress, the INC, and I think they came through at some point fairly early on.

Riley: Even before 9/11?

Rice: It probably was before 9/11, yes. I met him and I thought, *Hmm, interesting guy*. I didn't think much about it, but when—The challenge we had was that the President, more than anybody, was very focused on the fact that imposing Iraqi exiles from the outside might not go down well with people who had survived Saddam from the inside.

He was OK with having these people come in, but he didn't want a government made up of all exiles. But then it wasn't clear who else there would be. Sooner or later a few others, like [Mahmoud] al-Mashhadani appeared, who had been in jail at the time of the invasion. But it was really a dilemma, and Chalabi, as a part of a team, could be very good. A lot of his colleagues didn't like him very much and didn't trust him. It was pretty clear he wasn't going to be the Prime Minister. Allawi was a much more respected person among the exile leadership, just on personality grounds, I think. Chalabi was kind of high-handed, but I didn't think he was evil incarnate like the Agency did, and I didn't think he was the Second Coming like the Defense Department did. He was just a guy.

Riley: Did he ever play a role in your planning, in your going back and forth?

Rice: I met with him. Actually, I remember one very influential meeting with him. He came to Washington, a group of them came to Washington, and it was when the governing council was still in the structure. They were complaining about the fact that Jerry never let them do anything and it was their country. He said, "You know, it's as if nobody understands that we need to be sovereign again." I said to him, "What does that mean to you?" He started talking about it and I thought, *He's got a point*.

I went to talk to the President afterward and I said, "We're going to wear out our welcome pretty soon in Iraq because the Iraqis are tough people. They're gritty, they don't much like foreigners, and they want to run their country." I had just written about this not too long ago—I said this to the President and I was sort of surprised that the President, who I expected to say, "Well, when they can run it, they can run it," was very sympathetic. But it was Chalabi who turned the phrase in exactly the right way to make me think about that. He comes across almost as a caricature from one side or the other, but he is a quite three-dimensional person.

Brown: You're beginning to dwell on something that I'd like to put in maybe a philosophical basis, and that is that, willy-nilly, you found yourself—I'm saying "you" here, but it's the U.S. government finds itself—

Riley: "Y'all."

Rice: "Y'all." I understand that one.

Brown: —in an imperial role without imperial objectives, and you have to make choices. You have to, in a sense, determine who the good guys are and who the bad guys are. Who are those who are most subject to corruption? Who will be the winners and who are the losers? This is like an imperial role. Did that ever bother you?

Rice: Oh, yes. Absolutely. From the day we overthrew Saddam. I remember Tommy Franks sent in what was going to be his initial speech to the Iraqi nation, and Anna Perez had gotten it and I said, "This sounds like *I, Claudius.* We can't do this. We're not occupiers."

What was very interesting is that the Brits never had this problem. They said, "We are occupying the country legally, and more importantly, in reality. The Iraqis know that and we can't pretend otherwise." They were never worried or found words like "occupation" problematic. We were always very uncomfortable with that. After, I kind of wished we'd let Tommy issue the *I, Claudius* statement because I think they were actually looking for a stronger hand, and when things fell into chaos and we couldn't get poor old Jay Garner in from Kuwait, I was so glad when Jerry got there and actually did start acting as if he were occupying the country.

I got over my problem about the imperial role but, yes, it was really uncomfortable, and I was really glad when the Iraqis took sovereignty in June. That was just a great day because Americans don't do that. That's not what we do.

Brown: Earlier, the de-Ba'athification—Do you regard that as a fundamental mistake?

Rice: Yes.

Brown: How did it emerge that that became—?

Rice: We have gone around and about this. There are two issues: One is the de-Ba'athification and the other is the disbandment of the army. On the de-Ba'athification, it was supposed to be about 1 percent, maybe 2 percent at most, of the top part of the party, and then the functionaries we were going to leave in place. But Jerry, maybe because he was a little uncomfortable getting too deeply involved in this, turned this over to the Iraqis, where they then used it as their personal vendettas against a lot of people, most of whom were Sunni, and this is where Chalabi played a very unhelpful role. He was pretty ruthless in this regard. We had the right policy, but it went much deeper than anybody intended. I think that was just a malfunction in execution, not so much a malfunction in the statement of policy.

On the other hand, the disbandment of the army—In reality the army kind of faded into the woodwork, so maybe it wouldn't have mattered, but we didn't ever intend to do that. We were very aware that there were really only two pillars for the Sunni: the army and the Ba'ath Party.

We couldn't let it be the Ba'ath Party, so the army we thought we were going to be fine with. When Jerry mentioned at an NSC meeting, and I do mean mentioned, that he was issuing an order to disband the army, there was a kind of shock. But the weird thing is nobody really stopped him, and I learned later that he actually had the Pentagon's OK to do this, although Don says he didn't give the OK. Doug says he didn't give the OK, yet Larry Di Rita was working with the people in Baghdad on how the press would be handled. So there was a screwup someplace in there.

Riley: You said he mentioned it in a meeting?

Rice: Yes.

Riley: Was this a White House meeting?

Rice: It was the NSC, a White House meeting. When he said he was going to disband—We didn't think he meant the army. Yes, we were going to disband the leadership of the army. But what's weird is, it was just one of those moments, and nobody said, "Wait a minute, what does that mean?" When I saw the order the next day, I thought, *Oh, my goodness, what is this?* Then Colin calls and says, "What is this?" Well, Colin was at that meeting, too, but none of us connected what Jerry said to what actually came out. I can't explain it, but yes, that was a mistake.

Riley: Let's go ahead and track this through. We have you in 2005 and 2006, then things get really bad in 2006, and you've explained partly why. I guess I'm trying to get a sense from you about two of the tracks that you said you had Philip working on, not so much the interior part of the State Department, but more the question of the leadership in country and how it's developing—whether you're developing confidence in anybody in particular or you're losing confidence in anybody in particular, or whether there are options that you wanted to try that you didn't try, that in retrospect you should have? And then again, just the picture that you're getting of the deterioration of conditions in '06, and finally the moment where you reached the conclusion that something major has got to happen or this is going to spin out of control.

Rice: Well, the first thing I'd say goes back a little bit to your point about the imperial side. They're going through their political processes. They're selecting their leaders. I don't really feel that we should be getting in there and trying to say, "He'll work and he won't." In 2005, we're just trying to let that unfold. By 2006, we're being a little more aggressive. That's the Jaafari thing.

Riley: Because it's not coalescing?

Rice: It's not coalescing. And then, I'll explain, there is a later Maliki thing that's really pretty interesting too, which, now that I think about it, I didn't write about it, so I need to do that. Thank you.

Riley: We're finally helpful.

Rice: I think it happened in 2007, but I need to go back and find out. Anyway, we're trying to play with a light hand and then all of a sudden we get a little bit more directive, but you don't

want to be in a position where the United States is choosing their leaders. That doesn't make sense. Or it might have made sense, but you can't quite do it and say that Iraqi democracy is emerging.

Riley: Is everybody in the administration on the same page on this? Or are there people in important positions who really do want to play chess with these people?

Rice: No, I think everybody understands you can't. After the "Let's install Chalabi" little boomlet in 2003, nobody is trying to install a leader anymore.

Riley: So that discredits the idea.

Rice: That discredits the idea. And there is generally agreement that it's kind of a bad thing and if it really ever got out then, we would have undermined whoever emerges. So we don't do that. But we do try to help push them and shepherd them toward, "Couldn't you get that law finished by the time we get back next time?" What really are the problems? I sent out team after team to try to help on getting an oil law. I sent Reuben Jeffery [III] out there a couple of times to try to help them get an oil law. You're trying to help them with the politics, rather than do it for them.

Riley: It's parental.

Rice: It's almost parental. Sometimes it would just be so frustrating. I felt like I had kids. I said once that between the Lebanese, who were drinking Drano; the Palestinians, who were jumping up and down on the bed and were about to fall; the Iraqis, who were literally trying to set themselves on fire; and the Afghans, who were hanging out with drug lords—it was really a bad time to be a parent.

Riley: A very dysfunctional family. [*laughter*]

Rice: A very dysfunctional family. But I would step back and say to myself, *You know what? Governance is not natural. It's hard.* These folks—I actually used this example: It's like putting the Brahms D minor piano concerto in front of a first-year piano student and saying, "Play this." So you try to be more patient and to be more helpful than directive. That's how I was thinking about the leadership: Not who ought to emerge, but how could we help the ones that they were choosing get better?

As to when the situation looks out of control, there are a couple of times. One is all the way back in 2003, when the UN headquarters is bombed and [Sergio Vieira] de Mello is killed. That's when it dawned on me that this wasn't going well. Up until then—But that was the first.

In 2006, as I said, there seemed to be a short reprieve after the Ashura bombing, but by the summer, every morning the intelligence reports some other gravesite with severed Shia in it that some Sunnis had done, or some Sunnis that Shia had killed. Then I go in October and I have that miserable meeting with the leaders where the Sunnis bring the most disgustingly graphic pictures of massacres. I think they intended to shock me, but frankly, after 9/11 I had seen a lot of worse stuff, and you do get inured to it in some way. I looked at their pictures and I handed it back to them and I said, "You know, I am sorry this is happening to you, but here is what you've got to do." That's when I started talking about, "You'll all be hanging from streetlamps."

That's when I thought, *They're not going to get it. They're not going to be able to do this. Now what do we do? The United States of America has committed to this cause. We have lost thousands of lives, and these people don't have a clue.* That's probably what made me so sour on the surge initially. That was the worst moment, October of 2006.

Riley: You had mentioned something that you were going to write about.

Rice: Yes, in 2007—I'll have to get the date—there was suddenly an uprising against Maliki among the leadership. Bob Gates went out there—I think it's in the summer of 2007—and they've decided, Talabani and Hashimi and all of them, that they don't want him and they want us to get rid of him, the United States.

Riley: Get rid of him?

Rice: Get rid of him, Maliki.

Riley: Get rid of him, not—?

Rice: No, not physically. They just want us to tell him he can't be the Prime Minister of Iraq anymore. You think, *Wait a minute. This is a democratic country. You elected him, and it's now our job to tell him he can't stay in power?* And it might have been a little unfair, learning from the Jaafari situation, right? Because, once you intervene that way—Bob came back and we were sitting in the Oval Office, five of us, and Bob said, "I'm not sure that I closed that door as firmly as I should have."

I was going out about a week later. The President said, "You need to go out and talk to them." So I went out and I had a meeting with Maliki first, and I said, "Let me just tell you right up front, we're not looking to change your government. Let me tell you that. But you are a terrible Prime Minister. You are failing. You're just awful at what you do and we can't live with that, either." And he said, "I've been waiting to have this conversation for several weeks now." I said to Saeed [needs surname], "Did he understand what I said to him?" [*laughter*] You know, I had just said he was lousy at his job. And Saeed said, "Yes, I think he understood."

Then we came up with a little plan. Three things he was going to do. He really did have a conspiratorial side, so when he thought people were after him, which they were, he shut them out, so it got worse. He would call meetings of the National Security Council and he wouldn't go. This just made Hashimi and Talabani and all of them angrier at him and it was just spiraling downward. I finally said, "Here's what we're going to do. You're going to have a meeting. You're going to go with me right now and we're going to go over and meet with the others, Talabani and all of them." He said, "No, I can't do that." I said, "Yes, you can. Get in my car." So we went over and we met with Talabani and all of them. And the Iraqis are so funny, "Oh, my brother, oh my brother," and you're thinking, *Yeah, right*. [*laughter*]

So at the end of the come-together meeting, he left, and I sat down with Talabani and the others. Talabani said, "What did you tell him?" I said, "Let me tell you exactly what I told him." And I did. I said, "But now it's not all on him. None of you are actually executing your responsibilities, either." And so slowly but surely they got through it. But it's just an example of how involved we actually were in Iraqi politics.

Riley: You're having to coach them in self-government.

Rice: Constantly.

Riley: The surge begins to kick in in—

Rice: Summer of 2007.

Riley: Which has an effect on the ground, in terms of the violence?

Rice: Yes.

Riley: How concerned are you that this is a temporary condition, since there is an implied commitment that this is going to be for some span of time?

Rice: We were very concerned. We even said that it gives them a space. When the President finally decided on the surge, his thought was it would give them space to get the politics right. Because it goes back to this point, you know, that you can talk about winning hearts and minds; you can talk about the politics needing to get right; but if they are running for their lives, they're not going to get the politics right. This was supposed to be a breathing space.

Just another little vignette about it: We had these Neighbors Meetings. The first Neighbors Meeting was in Sharm el-Sheikh, and things were really bad. This was in, maybe April of 2006, and things were really bad. Everybody gets up there. It's all the Arabs and it's all the Europeans and the Iranians are there. Everybody gets up, "The poor Iraqis, the poor Iraqis, the poor Iraqis." But, of course, the Arabs won't do anything. They won't send an ambassador.

Slowly but surely, I get the Iraqis pulled in. I have this group called the GCC-plus two, which is the GCC countries, the Gulf Cooperation Council, plus Egypt and Jordan. Finally, in 2007, I actually get the Iraqis invited to be a member of it. So the Iraqis are sort of getting pulled into Arab diplomacy, but basically the Arabs are treating them pretty hands-off. [Hoshyar] Zebari said to them once, "I don't know what it is. You treat us like a virus. I don't know what you don't like. Is it the Shia part or the democracy part?"

We're trying to get the Arabs back together. We go to the Sharm meeting and it's "Poor Iraq, poor Iraq." The next one is in Istanbul, and that's dominated a bit by the Turkish-Iraq problem because there is a PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party] problem on the border, but it's still kind of "Poor Iraq, poor Iraq." We get to the last one, which is in Kuwait, and Maliki has taken Basra. The surge has—Violence is way down. The Iraqi budget is three times the budget of Jordan, Kuwait, and Oman combined, because of their oil wealth. They walk into this meeting and they're back and you can just feel it.

Before they go to the meeting, Ryan Crocker comes over and he says, "I think you'd better have a conversation with Maliki about what he plans to say." So I said, "Prime Minister, what are you going to say?" He said, "I'm going to say to all the countries here who have been helpful to us, thank you, we have turned the corner. To the Americans, thank you. To the Europeans, thank you. And then I'm going to look at my Arab brethren and I'm going to say, 'And to the rest of you, to hell with you.'" I said, "Maybe we could work on that a little bit." [*laughter*]

He did a nicer version of that, but I remember [C.] David Welch saying, "You know, what makes this room nervous is they've never liked the Iraqis, but they do respect them, and suddenly Iraq is taking its place again." For me, the culmination of this was that you started to see Iraq emerge not just domestically but back in the Arab world now as a multidimensional democracy, not as Saddam Hussein's—

Riley: Exactly.

Brown: We'd like to, but we won't ask you what you think of the current situation there, because that would be too diversionary.

Rice: Some other time.

Riley: In this regard, there were more than occasionally suggestions by people who presumably know the region, that the proper route to go would be partition. Was that ever seriously considered by you, or others in the administration?

Rice: Not by any Iraqi. This was stuff coming from Americans who thought partitioning would be a good idea. The only concept that was like that was when we were thinking about alternatives to the surge, before I was confident. We talked about the fact that maybe what you should be doing, instead of emphasizing so much the central government's responsibilities—You had these power brokers in the region—You had a set of Sunni power brokers; you had a set of Shia power brokers; and you had a set of Kurdish power brokers—and you really ought to put the responsibility on them to deal with their areas. Take some of the pressure off the Iraqi national army; take some of the pressure off of the—Let the Peshmerga secure Kurdistan and so forth. But that was the closest. We never thought about political partition.

Brown: There was no sympathy within the administration for the [Joseph] Biden-[Leslie] Gelb approach?

Rice: No.

Riley: In your dealings with the President, did you ever get the sense that he lost confidence? That this was going to crash and burn completely?

Rice: I'm sure that late at night sometimes he must have, but he never expressed it. He would say, "Can this work?" "Can we get this done?" People used to say, "What's Plan B?" And he would say, "Make Plan A work." I don't know. As close as we were, he never once said to me, "I don't think we can win this."

Riley: Part of his leadership style is being very upbeat and positive, right?

Rice: Yes, but there were things that he said, "We can't get this." When it was clear that Olmert was out of steam and we weren't going to get the Palestinian state, he just said, "We're not going to get it done." And I said, "No, we're not going to get it done."

It wasn't that he was unrealistic about things. I just think that the possibility—At a certain point, you have to say, "I can't fail at this." That's the way he was and he wouldn't, at some level, tolerate in himself the concept that he might fail. That's how I read it.

Riley: OK. Do you recall times when he was down?

Rice: Yes, he was down in 2006. The American casualties had a real effect on him. There was this blue sheet every morning that was a summary of the major press items, major intelligence items. I'd come in once in a while, even when I was National Security Advisor, and much more when I would stop by on my way to the State Department, or come in early in the morning, and he would have circled, you know, "21 American soldiers." That was hardest for him.

Riley: And he did have contact with the families. There were complaints during the course of the administration, because it was done very quietly, that there were no pictures at Dover and things of that nature.

Rice: Every family who—Every chance he got. He spent more time at Walter Reed and Bethesda than anybody will ever know.

Riley: Anything else on Iraq?

Rice: I think we've covered it.

Riley: We have covered that pretty thoroughly. There were other policy areas or geographical areas—Are you OK to keep going?

Rice: Oh, yes. I've got another 40 minutes.

Brown: Can we talk about India?

Riley: Absolutely. That will be fine.

Rice: Yes, let's do that. This was an area that we came in knowing that we wanted to change. The President gave a speech at the Reagan Library where he talked about these multiethnic democracies with which we should have natural strategic ties—Brazil, India, South Africa—and I think the one that we actually made the most progress with was India; although, Brazil was a pretty good relationship. South Africa was quirky for a lot of reasons.

He had known a lot of the Indian Diaspora, coming as he did out of the Austin tech area, and he thought India had a lot more potential. I had known a lot of the Indian Diaspora, coming out of this tech area. What could we do with India? It was pretty clear that we wanted to make that a big strategic relationship. In the first term, it was unspoken publicly, but spoken between Hadley and the President and me, that we knew we had to something about the civil-nuclear issue. We had to bring India in out of the cold.

In the first term we just had too much going on and we weren't going to try to do that, although we created something called the SSI [Small Scale Industry]. The SSI was some moderate small steps to improve technological cooperation with India, but most of it was so heavily sanctioned

through what had happened as a result of the Indian test in ’74, and then a series of other restrictions that were legal restrictions, so we couldn’t do much.

Comes 2005, and we actually had a pretty good relationship with [Atal Bihari] Vajpayee and that government. We made it through the horrors of December 2001, when it looked like India and Pakistan were going to war. We made it through June 2002, when it looked like India and Pakistan were going to war. And we emerged on the other side when [Manmohan] Singh came to power, ready to push this relationship forward. While the focal point became the India civ-nuke deal, we also had a CEO [chief executive officer]-to-CEO forum to try to improve business practices in India. We had a major effort with them on buying military equipment. You know, they used to buy it all from the Russians.

They had a significant back channel going with the Pakistanis about Kashmir. We helped them in that regard. So there is a lot going with India.

Brown: Was the relationship with Musharraf at this time getting sticky?

Rice: Anyway, I should have mentioned, we wanted to delink India and Pakistan. We did not want this to be the Indo-Pak relationship, which is how everybody referred to it. It was a good thing to do because Pakistan is this really troubled place that’s kind of a construct. India is a real country that doesn’t want to fight the Pakistanis anymore. They want to do Bangalore and they want to do Bollywood and they want to be on the Security Council. In Pakistan it’s terrorism all the time. So we delinked the relationships and that made it hard on the Pakistanis.

Brown: Yes, because they didn’t delink it.

Rice: They didn’t delink it and they thought we were way more favorable to the Indians than we were to them. It was just that there was a lot more that we could do with the Indians than we could do with the Pakistanis.

So the relationship with Musharraf—The President maintained a good relationship with Musharraf right up until the end of Musharraf’s Presidency. My relationship with Musharraf was rockier. Although it wasn’t bad, it was just that when, for instance, he had contemplated a state of emergency in the summer of 2007, I called him and talked him out of it. When he then did it a few months later, I basically thought he was done, and I don’t think the President and I fully agreed about that. The President thought Musharraf had longer legs than I thought he had. I wasn’t going to act outside of the President’s view of it. I would be the first to say Musharraf played a very important role after 9/11. He played a very important role in helping to create institutions that ultimately led to a democratic Pakistan, but he didn’t know when it was time to leave. That was the problem with Musharraf.

Brown: Were the Paks asking for a similar deal on civil-nuclear?

Rice: Yes.

Brown: What happened in your response to that?

Rice: We just told them it wasn’t going to work.

Brown: Why not? I mean, could you convince them?

Rice: Three words: [Abdul Qadeer] A. Q. Khan. All you had to say was, "Come on, you couldn't possibly think we're going to make an argument to the nuclear suppliers group that you are not a proliferation threat." And they knew that, so they backed off.

Riley: Did you have much resistance within the permanent bureaucracies to the opening to India?

Rice: Oh, you mean the Ayatollahs of proliferation? [*laughter*]

Riley: Yes. Can you tell us about that?

Rice: Well, there were essentially two State Departments on this.

Riley: Two State Departments? OK.

Rice: You had, on the one hand, the regional people who saw the promise of India, Richard Boucher's group, who understood that a stable South Asia, starting in India and going up through Pakistan, Afghanistan, and out into the 'Stans, made a lot of sense. Richard Boucher was a warrior on this, and also [R. Nicholas] Nick Burns, really pushing this whole area. Then, fortunately, Bob Joseph was [indecipherable], so he could keep them under control because Bob also favored this.

But you had a lot of people who had been in the arms control bureaucracy for whom India was anathema to everything they believed in. For them this was all about the NPT [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons]. How could you undermine the NPT by giving India something they didn't deserve? There were a lot of those people who had ties to people in Congress who had the same view.

But the President was strongly in favor of it, and we just took it out of the bureaucracy. We just negotiated everything at Nick Burns's level. I don't think it ever fell down into the bureaucracy to even do anything. When Nick left, John Rood did the negotiations. We just pulled it out and didn't involve them.

Riley: Were there pressure points within India that were difficult for you to navigate on this? Were they pushing for too much too soon?

Rice: Oh, yes. Singh had the Indian equivalent of our Ayatollahs. [*laughter*] Our people were saying, "You're going to undermine the NPT." Now it helped that right away Mohamed ElBaradei came out in favor of this deal. So if the keeper of the NPT liked this, it really kind of cut the legs out from under those people.

Riley: And he was in favor because it was basically bringing everything out into the light of day?

Rice: He was in favor because it was better to have half a loaf with India within the NPT regime—So you were going to get access for the first time for the IAEA [International Atomic

Energy Agency] to new Indian civil construction and so forth, so he was enormously helpful here. He said, basically, this won't undermine the NPT; it will strengthen the NPT regime.

He cut the legs out from under those people. The Russians wanted it because they wanted to sell technology. The French wanted it because they knew they were ahead in reactor technology. The Brits wanted it. The Chinese were a little unhappy about it, but not overwhelmingly so. So the international side was good.

Singh's equivalent of the "You're going to undermine the NPT," was "You're going to undermine Indian sovereignty." These people in New Delhi, who kind of wore the Indian nuclear program as a talisman—This was their—"How could you let them see—?" "We're going to end up undermining our military program, not just building a civilian one." The atomic energy people in India were awful. And for some reason, Singh felt beholden to them. We'd get close to a deal and then these atomic energy people would beat him up about it and he'd back off.

The other people who were a problem were the refugees from the Non-Aligned Movement in India. India had been the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. Well, that meant you couldn't possibly be close to the United States, right? These were the people who were actually pro-Russian or pro-Soviet. I call them refugees because, as Natwar [Singh], at the time the Indian Foreign Minister, said to me, "I said to them, 'The Cold War is over. Against whom are we nonaligned?'" Well, they were hanging on to this. So Singh had a domestic structure that paralyzed him.

Brown: Weren't also the Nationalists against this? The Communists on one side and the Nationalists on the other side?

Rice: Communists on one side. Nationalists on the other. And the military and the atomic energy people who didn't like it because of the sovereignty and penetration issues. He had a very difficult alignment of people, but we got it done.

Riley: Were there moments where you had to call on the President to intervene to help move this through?

Rice: Well, actually, I intervened several times, but there was one—The President and Singh were going to meet in July of 2005 in Washington. The night before, I thought we had a deal that they could sign. I thought we were getting close to a deal, but it wasn't coming together. Finally Nick Burns came and he said, "We're not going to get there." I had thought that because the Foreign Minister was so favorable to it, it must mean that they were going to get there. So I went home and I called the President and said, "We're not going to get there."

I went home and went to bed and I woke up at five o'clock in the morning and said, "I'm not letting this go down. I'm not." I called Nick and said, "Ask the Prime Minister if he'll see me." The Prime Minister said he wouldn't. I said, "Call him back and ask him if he'll see me." So he did. I said, "I'm only asking you to do one thing. Tell your people to get this done."

So we sat in the Oval Office, the President, Singh, the Foreign Minister, and me, while they negotiated in the Roosevelt Room. The President said, "We really—This is so historic," and so forth. And Singh said, "I know." And sure enough, we got it done.

Brown: Did we give them anything for it?

Rice: You know, sometimes with the Indians it was mostly language. It was finding a way to express something that didn't get interpreted in a way—so we worked around—It was issues like, at what rate would their reactors come into the regime?

Brown: The nuts and bolts.

Rice: Right. Exactly. That sort of thing. Once that piece of it was done, we got the deal with the Indians, then we had to go back to the international community. This was one of those cases where the Big Five—U.S., China, Russia, Great Britain, France—all agreed, but *man,* the Norwegians, the Swedes, the Austrians—"Oh, my goodness, the NPT is coming apart; it's coming apart!" We had to go through that, and that really was hard, but at the last moment, Jonas Støre, who was the Norwegian Foreign Minister, and was just a terrific Foreign Minister, said, "I think I've got a way to get a deal for the holdouts here." I said, "What is it?"

He needed some language, so I got that approved and gave it to him. They actually had to run down Ursula Plassnik, the Austrian Foreign Minister, at an EU [European Union] meeting. She was avoiding everybody. She wouldn't answer her phone. [*laughter*] They literally ran her down. The German—I had Frank-Walter Steinmeier trying to run her down and find her. He finally found her and she called her people at three o'clock in the morning and told them to do it.

Riley: Was there immediate fallout in Pakistan after this, or was it that the groundwork had been laid so that there's not much of a reaction?

Rice: The Pakistani reaction was more hurt than anger. They knew. And it really wasn't in their interests to make a big deal of it. That just made them look worse, so it sort of went away in Pakistan.

Brown: Interesting to me, you said that the Chinese were not agitated about this.

Rice: Initially they were because they just don't like the Indians. And I think the Pakistanis were stirring them up a little bit. But the Chinese don't like to be isolated, and when it was clear that the Russians and the French and everybody else were coming along, the Chinese really didn't think that they wanted to make this an issue. Once in a while they would say something like, "Can we do this for Pakistan, too?" And you'd say no.

Riley: Anything else on India or Pakistan?

Brown: No.

Riley: OK. I was going to move into another area—We've touched on this in bits and pieces, but I'd like to get something much more coherent—and that's the Middle East. The published reports—We may have even discussed this last time—indicate that when you were approached about becoming Secretary of State, one of the things that you had with the President was an agreement that there would be more of an initiative to find a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Rice: That's right. It was the only substantive issue we talked about.

Riley: And he agreed that he would—

Rice: He wanted to do it. We thought the conditions were now possible, ripe.

Riley: Why not walk us through what happens on that? To the extent there was progress in certain areas on that, let us know that. Then you eventually end up with a summit, which is not something that one might have expected out of this administration early on.

Rice: The first thing to remember is that when we got into power, the Intifada is in full—right? And those people who say you should have picked up the Camp David—I mean, Ariel Sharon was elected to defeat the Intifada, not to negotiate peace. So there is no chance.

By summer of 2003, after Iraq, the Intifada has been defeated. Mahmoud Abbas is the Prime Minister. Arafat is still there, but he is sort of fading. Salam Fayyad has come on. The President has met Salam Fayyad and likes him a lot. We think that what we are trying to do is we're going to start to try to build Palestinian institutions for decent—Salam Fayyad becomes Finance Minister. I actually work with the Israelis to start getting the tax revenues back to them. Dov Weissglass tells this story of my saying, "Just meet with him."

We go to Okaba and Sharm el-Sheikh and we get a pretty good statement where the Palestinian Authority says, "No violence will ever bring a state," and the Israelis recognize the two-state solution with Sharon, and then it all falls apart because Arafat gets jealous, and within a few months, Abbas resigns.

Fast-forward to 2005. In 2004, Sharon had sent Dov Weissglass to tell us he was going to disengage from Gaza. The President said, "That's great, but you've got to do it as a cooperative thing. You can't just up and leave." So the Bush letter to Sharon is to say that when the Israelis begin withdrawals from Gaza and from these four West Bank settlements, so that it's clear that it's Gaza *and* the West Bank, we're not assuming that they're going to go back to the '67 lines, because Sharon needs, at home, to placate the constituency of the settlers. He says, "I know a lot of settlers on that side are going away, but those people in Ma'ale Adumim need to know that they are going to be part of Israel." That's the letter that says, you know, reflecting population "realities on the ground," et cetera.

I come into office. My first goal is just to get the disengagement done in a way that's peaceful.

Riley: This is the disengagement—?

Rice: The withdrawal from Gaza. The Israelis withdraw. We spend a lot of time making sure that works and then I go out to Sharon's farm and he's telling me how difficult the Gaza withdrawal is going to be. Then he says, "Come back in the fall after this is over and we'll talk about the future."

It's pretty clear Sharon has decided that Israel can't govern Palestinians. He sends Olmert, his deputy, in the fall with a post-withdrawal-from-Gaza plan that begins to talk about the rest of the West Bank. We look at it. It's not a map or anything. It's just, "Here are some of the things we're

thinking about." He goes back, and Sharon has a stroke at the beginning of 2006—another one of the great things that happens in 2006. All of a sudden, things are thrown into turmoil.

Olmert starts talking almost immediately about wanting to meet Abbas, so we're talking about doing that. Hamas wins the elections, right? But we manage to get a Quartet position that says, with the Russians coming along, that a Palestinian government must recognize the right of Israel to exist. It must say that they will be nonviolent and accept the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] agreements. Hamas is now isolated internationally.

Riley: Can I stop you and ask whether that election was a surprise?

Rice: The outcome was a surprise, only because the Palestinians—The PA [Palestinian Authority] got more votes, but they split their lists. And Hamas didn't expect to win that election either. I remember [Elizabeth] Liz Cheney coming in just as I was getting ready to leave that day, saying, "You know, our people on the ground say Hamas is doing better than we thought." And the first headline that next morning, the *Washington Post* headline was, "Fatah Wins, Narrowly." At the last second it flipped to Hamas. Yes, it was a surprise.

Riley: Did it knock you off your stride at that point?

Rice: A little bit. But immediately you go in and you say, "OK, what do we do now?" My goal was right away to establish new ground rules that Hamas was not going to represent the Palestinians. I had several things in mind. First of all, we needed to reassure the Israelis so they didn't do something crazy. We needed to make sure that we could continue with the peace talks, which meant we had to have a separation of the Palestinians with whom you could do peace and the ones you couldn't. The United States couldn't do that unilaterally, so I needed the Quartet to do that.

I talked to Sergey Lavrov, who, even though they had relations with Hamas, understood that if the implication was the Israelis had to negotiate with Hamas, we were not going to have negotiations. That's why the Russians signed on to the Quartet conditions, as they are called, which are still out there. That allowed us then to continue to negotiate with Abbas and Olmert, while Hamas was isolated.

Brown: At this stage, how much was the President involved, or did you have essentially a go-ahead to deal with it?

Rice: The President almost always said, "Go ahead, you deal with it," but we talked constantly. I would update him every day on what was happening and what we were talking about. Once in a while, I would say, "Could you give Olmert a call?"

Riley: Right.

Rice: So we go through 2006, and Olmert and Abbas are talking, from time to time. We have launched this program to build the security forces that the Palestinians—We've started direct budgetary support into the Palestinian Authority, which was not easy to get on Capitol Hill, but people like Eric Cantor helped me a lot to deal with the people who were really pro-Israeli on the Hill and who would have probably resisted the idea of direct budgetary support to the PA. It

helps to be identified as a friend of Israel. You can't do this unless you're viewed as a friend of Israel. When you're viewed as a friend of Israel, you have wider swath to do a lot of things that you otherwise cannot do.

Riley: Was AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee] giving you trouble?

Rice: No. I would call Howard Kohr, or I would ask Abe Foxman to come in. He'd say, "You know, you need to meet with the Presidents. They're a little nervous." We'd meet. We'd talk it through. They knew President Bush wasn't going to do anything to harm Israel. We had a lot of room to maneuver because, going all the way back to "Israel has a right to defend itself" and "Sharon is a man of peace," they trusted us.

We are going through the spring, and then in the fall—The Lebanon War interrupts. I'll come back to the Lebanon War, but it interrupts. That breaks out in July and we're basically trying to put the pieces back together until September. I say to the President at that point, "Now we *really* need the Palestinian thing to work." I go to the region a couple of times, and I'm about to launch peace talks on the trilateral with Olmert and Abbas. Gaza has broken into all-out violence between the Hamas and the Fatah. From December through February, they're in all-out war. King Abdullah in Saudi Arabia, we later learn, sees this on television. He says, "How can we stand the Israelis doing this to the Palestinians?" Somebody says, "Sir, the Palestinians are doing this to themselves."

He gets on the phone. He brings Abbas and Khaled Mashal to Mecca and says, "Sign an agreement right here." He's the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. They have no choice. They make a unity deal. I'm on my way to Israel and Palestine in ten days to hold these peace talks, and all of a sudden there is a unity deal with Hamas. Olmert is furious. He says, "I can't meet him. I just can't. How can I meet him after he hugs Khaled Mashal? Cancel your trip. The American Secretary of State can't be in a position like this. I'm going to call the President and tell him to cancel your trip." I said, "Prime Minister, you know the President is not going to cancel my trip." I go, and I get them to meet with me, but it is the worst meeting in creation.

Riley: You've had several of those.

Rice: Yes, but this was really bad. There is no proper room to hold this meeting, so we are in this huge ballroom, but there is just this little table. Karen Hughes has gone and found some Palestinian flags and some American flags and some Israeli flags and we are sitting there at this little table squished together. We shake hands for the cameras, except it's really awkward because there are three of us and we can't quite get it right. And so they sit down and they look at each other and then they go at each other.

Olmert is saying, "How could you hug Khaled Mashal?" And Abbas is saying, "Well, I didn't want to have elections anyway." And Olmert says, "We didn't tell you to have elections." I said, "OK, *we* wanted to have elections, all right? It was us. It was the United States." In fact, they both had wanted to have the elections. And that seemed to calm them down. Oh, Abbas had started by saying, "I feel like I'm in a bus station," because it was a really big room. We calmed everybody down and I said, "Let's go to my suite and talk about the future." We went upstairs

and they started to talk a little bit, but Olmert kept saying, "I can't talk about core issues while there is a unity government. I can't talk about Jerusalem. I can't talk about that."

I took him out on the balcony. It overlooks the Old City, and I said, "You know, we need to think about the future of this place." Abbas says, "Look at those ugly apartments that you built down there," to Olmert. And he says, "Well, I've built them for Americans to live there, and French people." I'm thinking, *This is really*—At the end of it I said, "Can I say you'll meet again?" They said, "Well, yes." I didn't even risk having a press conference with the two of them. I sent them home and I met the press and said they would meet again.

Fortunately, several months later the unity government breaks up when Hamas launches the coup in the Gaza against the Fatah security forces and Hamas takes over the Gaza. Now it's a clear separation. Abbas declares an emergency government that is Fatah-only. He puts Salam Fayyad in charge and we're back on the path. It's out of that that Annapolis comes with three parts: Keep working on the forces; negotiate on the core issues; and then have an agreement, but don't implement it until the first part of the road map is done.

The piece that I really want to describe to you, though, actually gets very close to an agreement. I went to see Olmert shortly after Annapolis, after the first of the year. He had appointed [Tziporah Malkah] Tzipi Livni to negotiate with [Qurei Ahmed] Abu Ala. They were going to be the negotiators. And he said to me, "You know it's not going to get done that way, don't you?" And I said, "What do you mean, Prime Minister?" He said, "I want to sit down with Abbas. I want to do a framework agreement. I want him to appoint one person. I want to appoint one person. We're just going to write it. I know what his problems are. I think I can meet his problems."

I go to Abbas and Abbas says, "I want to do it myself." I go back to Olmert and I say, "You know, he speaks English but he doesn't speak it nearly as well as you do." He said, "Don't worry, I'm not going to take advantage of that." The two of them meet four or five times and Olmert offers, in the final analysis—I'll tell you in a minute, but what's happening is, Olmert's getting more desperate to get this agreement done. The indictment is on the table. He is about to be indicted for illegal money to his party and to his personal accounts. He really wants to get this done.

We go back and forth about what might get it done. He eventually offers somewhere between 94 and 96 percent of the West Bank, with swaps that he identifies on a map for Abbas, but he won't let Abbas take the map home because he is worried that it will leak. And he's got Tzipi and Abul Ala negotiating, and that track is going OK, too. We've agreed that it's all the territory occupied in '67. So the '67 line has been established, but Olmert is trying to push this ahead, so he says, "That's the land deal."

On security he says, "Is there some way you can help me bring the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]?" So Jim Jones begins to negotiate with the IDF on the security arrangements, including—So that the Israelis don't have to put troops inside the new Palestinian state, what if the Jordanians take that border, the Jordan Valley border? The security arrangements are pretty detailed.

Olmert tells me, "I'll take 5,000 Palestinian refugees." I said, "That's not enough." He said, "Give me a number." I said, "50,000." He said, "Too much." I said, "20,000?" He said, "Maybe.

Tell him *I* can't accept the term 'right of return' but he can call it that if he wants to call it that." That's the refugee point. And, you know, the Norwegians are working on a big fund for refugee relocation and so forth.

The final piece is, Olmert says, "Tell him here's what I'll do on Jerusalem: There will be a capital for the Palestinians in East Jerusalem. There will be a capital for us in West Jerusalem. We'll have our administrative capital in Tel Aviv; they will have theirs in Ramallah. The holy sites, we will put under the guardianship of a group of wise men from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United States, Palestine, and Israel. There will be a mayor of the city of Jerusalem who administers it as a unified city, who is Israeli, since the population is Israeli, but the deputy can be a Palestinian." I mean, that's the detail, and so we are going back and forth about this.

Abbas keeps saying, "I don't know what he's offering me." I'm saying, "Here is what he is offering you." Since Olmert won't give him the map, we draw a map and show him what it is. But Olmert is in trouble. Abbas doesn't think Olmert can deliver. Comes November, I finally say to Abbas, "Look, you're maybe never going to get an Israeli Prime Minister to tell you he'll divide Jerusalem. Take it. Come to the President of the United States, deposit it, and President Bush will pass it on to the next President of the United States. This is the moment." And I said to him, "Mr. Prime Minister, you turned down the deal in '48. You turned down the deal in '67. You turned down the deal in 2000. Every time you turn down a deal, your state gets smaller. You're never going to get another deal on Jerusalem." But he wouldn't do it.

In the final analysis, he may have—Arafat told the Clinton people, "If I take this I'm a dead man." It's possible he just thought he couldn't pull it off. It's possible Tzipi was telling him, "I'm going to be Prime Minister. Wait until I'm Prime Minister," because now they've called elections in Israel. But it was about as close as they've ever gotten, because it had the most important thing, a resolution for Jerusalem.

Riley: Was the President—You were keeping the President apprised of what you were doing?

Rice: Absolutely. The President knew exactly what the deal was. The President called Olmert, and Olmert said to the President, "I'll come. I'll stand with Abbas and I'll say, 'This is what Israel has offered.'" The President called Abbas, but Abbas wasn't ready to do it.

Riley: But there wasn't anything, from your perspective, that the President could have done that you weren't responsible for dealing with?

Rice: This was Abbas. No, the President was involved. He was talking to people. We even talked to the Saudis, to say, "The Custodian should say—"

Riley: Sure.

Rice: Olmert was radioactive. We'd run out of steam. I think they thought they might get a better deal. And I mean, look at where they are now.

Riley: The Palestinians are in a peculiar position in the Arab world, right? They want the problem resolved, but it's almost like they're second-class—

Rice: They are very much. I remember telling the Arabs once, "You tell how much you care about the Palestinians, but each and every one of you has expelled them from your country." And the problem for the Arabs—And we were working very hard. I was keeping [Hosni] Mubarak informed; I was keeping the Jordanians informed; I was keeping the Saudis informed. Everybody knew the details of this deal. It is really a pity that Abbas didn't deposit this.

Brown: What did it include with respect to the demilitarization of the Palestinian state?

Rice: They were fussing over whether it was going to be called "*de*militarized" or "*non*militarized." Whether or not the weapons that the Palestinians carried were going to be *pre*scribed or *pro*scribed. It was at that level that you could have fixed.

And the Israelis kept saying, "We have to control the air space." I said, "You know what? The air space of the whole region, including Jordan, can be crossed before I can get from one end of my office to the other end of my office. Why are you worried about the air space?" Jim Jones was working on those issues.

Brown: No Israeli government has gone that far.

Rice: When Olmert, that night at dinner, told me, "I have a solution for Jerusalem," I was stunned.

Riley: Did you allow yourself to get hopeful or excited?

Rice: I was pretty excited about that one. I just didn't know—I kind of wondered, maybe he'd be—To be blunt, I thought, *Maybe somebody will kill him*, the next day. Because if he had actually gone out there with a division of Jerusalem, can you imagine what [Eliyahu] Eli Yishai would have said in Shas? Or some crazy right-wing extremist? I thought he was on very dangerous territory, but I think he had decided he had nothing to lose.

Riley: We jumped over the Lebanon piece of this, which is sort of a separate story. Can we come back to that?

Rice: Let me just go through it really quickly—Lebanon. And we can, again—

Riley: We'll find a couple of hours at some point when you are in Washington.

Rice: The main thing about Lebanon is that—Of course, Hezbollah launches the attack, so it's this weird situation in which our allies, the new Western-oriented Lebanese government of Fouad Siniora, doesn't even know that Hezbollah is doing this, but when the Israelis respond, they respond against Lebanese territory, which of course is against the territory of the Western government. So it's this strange situation where our biggest worry is how long can Fouad Siniora stay in power with the Israelis pounding Hezbollah? You can't pound Hezbollah without pounding Lebanon. And yet, we didn't want Hezbollah to benefit from what they had done, so there was some point to having the Israelis destroy their position in the South, and create conditions in which the Lebanese army could flow into the South for the first time, and Hezbollah would be weakened.

So it's—Where was that crossover point at which you no longer had time to achieve what you needed to against Hezbollah without destroying the Lebanese government? I think the tipping point was Qana, where there was an Israeli attack, not an attack, a mistaken—They went after an apartment building and killed a lot of civilians. At that point, Siniora couldn't hold on any longer if the Israelis continued. From then on, it became a job of trying to negotiate a ceasefire.

But the ceasefire had to have those elements of the Lebanese army going back into the South, and an international peacekeeping force that would be stronger than the UNIFIL [United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon] that was there. Siniora wanted something about Shebaa Farms, which turned out just to be a mention, a withdrawal timetable for the Israeli forces, et cetera. That took ten days to almost two weeks to negotiate.

Riley: Right. But you came under heavy criticism at the time for an unwillingness to embrace an immediate ceasefire.

Rice: I did.

Riley: Why wouldn't you embrace an immediate ceasefire?

Rice: First of all, it wasn't possible, and words matter. Secondly, it would just have exposed the Israelis to international criticism, you know, that the world was calling for a ceasefire and you won't do it, when we all knew that nobody actually wanted them to cease fire, including the Arabs, who wanted Hezbollah to be hurt by what was happening. OK? This was one of those international hypocrisies: *Let's call for a ceasefire but not really mean it*.

I had to hold the line, and it was very hard because I had a lot of respect for Siniora and I had to stand there in Rome, where the French had, in a double-dealing way—We had gone to the conference in Rome, and Massimo D'Alema, the Italian, had said, "Don't worry, I think we can get out of here without the United States being isolated." Even though the guy was a Communist, he was really a good guy. So we're at the table and it's all going just fine and they're just about to pass the resolution, which calls for a ceasefire as soon as possible, and [Philippe] Douste-Blazy raises his hand and says, "No, it has to say 'immediate.'" I could have killed him. If I'd had a weapon, I would have pulled it out and blown him away. [*laughter*]

Riley: That's why you check your piece at the door.

Rice: Exactly. I was so furious. And this from the Foreign Minister of France, who—Chirac had just told the President at the G8 a couple of weeks ago, "I hope they destroy Hezbollah."

So I got isolated. I had to stand there and say no, and that was very hard, but it was the right thing to do.

Riley: All right. You wouldn't go to Syria, either, and you withstood a lot of criticism even from friendly voices—Jim Baker among them—about an unwillingness to go to Syria. Why wouldn't you go to Syria?

Rice: During the Lebanon War?

Riley: Yes.

Rice: Because, for the first time in its history of these wars, Lebanon actually negotiated its own ceasefire. I know the Syrians were dealing behind them, puppets behind—Actually, Kofi Annan was great because he could talk to the Syrians. And the Russians were great. They would talk to the Syrians and say, "Back off." But for the first time we did a ceasefire without Syria having a role in it and that was a really important symbolic victory for Lebanese sovereignty.

Riley: I see.

Rice: When Chris [Warren Christopher] negotiated the ceasefire, it was between Syria and Israel. This one was between Lebanon and Israel. And that says something to the Syrians: You don't own this country. You might have a lot of influence, but your forces are out and you don't own this country. That's why I wouldn't go to Syria. I wasn't going to give them the satisfaction.

Riley: You have been very generous again.

Rice: Well, it's also very helpful.

Riley: I'm glad it is.

Brown: Does this assist you a little bit in filling in the narrative?

Rice: Yes, it does, and I'm really glad I thought about that Maliki meeting.

Riley: Well, I'm delighted that we've been helpful, but this is just remarkably good for us. We'll let you get your book done, and then we'll think about a few more hours to polish this off.

Rice: It's a deal.

Riley: Are you going to be doing a tour?

Rice: I am. The books come out November first and I'll do a tour in November. But I'll also be in Washington in September.

Riley: OK, I don't know whether Charlottesville ranks as a destination to sell books, but the Miller Center, I'm sure, would love for you to come through.

Rice: That would be fun. I promised Philip [Zelikow] for years I was going to get there.

Riley: Well, if it works we'd love to see you.

Rice: All right. Great. Thank you very much.

[END INTERVIEW]