WILLIAM J. CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH MARCIA HALE

March 14, 2007
Washington, D.C.

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TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH MARCIA HALE

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Riley: This is the Marcia Hale interview as a part of the Clinton Presidential History Project, and again, thanks for letting us come talk with you. The first thing we typically do to begin is to restate the most fundamental ground rule, which is that we're conducting the interview under strict rules of confidentiality. We've talked about this off the tape. Nobody in the room, with one exception, that's you, can talk about anything we discuss here today, to get you to speak candidly not just to us but to people 20 or 30 years from now who might want to come back and understand this Presidency as it actually was lived by the people who were part of it.

Hale: He might want to come back and re-live it.

Riley: Well, he may have the opportunity, as I understand it, right? From what I've heard, the President was often jealous of the First Lady's ability to travel and to see real people when she got out in the world.

Hale: That's true. Maybe they'll shift roles.

Riley: Maybe so. In any event, thanks for this. Tell us a little bit to begin with about your political background before you came to know and work with Bill Clinton. What were you doing before '92 and '93?

Hale: Well, as I said before, I'm originally from South Carolina and I had worked for Dick Riley, who became Governor of South Carolina in 1978. That's when I first met Bill Clinton, because Bill Clinton ran for Governor of Arkansas in 1978 and Dick Riley and Bill Clinton became fast friends and shared a lot of things about governing southern states during that time period. So I actually met Clinton—He must have been Attorney General, because I think he went straight from Attorney General to Governor—during Dick Riley's 1978 gubernatorial race.

Instead of staying in South Carolina and working for Dick, I came to Washington to work for my member of Congress, Butler Derrick from the Third District in South Carolina. I intended to stay for about two years and then go home and either work in government or run for office, but I never left. In that process I worked on the Hill and I went back to work for Dick Riley. I ran his Washington office. I worked on a couple of Presidential campaigns. I worked at both the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. I was at the DCCC in 1992 and I was political director.

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The Clinton campaign asked me to join the campaign. I just couldn't do it financially at that point in time but tried to be very helpful to the campaign. Then shortly after the election I was asked to work on the transition and then go into the administration.

Morrisroe: Can you talk a little bit about your experience in the DCCC and from an outsider's perspective on the Clinton campaign in the areas in which you linked up?

Hale: I still can't believe you said I said in the *New York Times* that we were going to lose 20 seats, although I will say once again that I'm certain it was one of the cleared talking points. That also will tell you how much politics has changed. There's no way we would have been able to get away with saying we're going to lose 20-25 seats in this sort of atmosphere. You always try to low-ball it so that expectations are not out of whack. But campaigns have become so sophisticated now that there are many other people tracking the races. Back then we were tracking them and a few other organizations, but nobody else was really tracking them.

You had the House Republican and the House Democratic Committees tracking and they were the authorities, except for Charlie Cook and a couple of other people. Anyway, my job was political director, which was to first recruit candidates and then make sure the campaigns that we thought were capable of winning did everything they were supposed to do.

Once Governor Clinton became the nominee we worked very closely with the campaign to make sure, first and foremost, that we were helping and that the Presidential campaign was helping some targeted races and also that we didn't do anything that would cause concern—or if the Clinton campaign was going into the district of a challenger or an incumbent, there would be a lot of cross-communication. An awful lot of people who worked for Bill Clinton at the time came out of the DCCC or came out of the House. Rahm Emanuel and I had worked together at the DCCC and we were friends, and George Stephanopoulos, while he had not been at the DCCC, had worked very closely with the DCCC when he was on the House side of the Hill. James Carville and Paul Begala had been very involved. So this wasn't any kind of structured communication except through the scheduling operation, but it was a dynamic process.

Riley: Who was the head of the DCCC at the time?

Hale: In that cycle it was Vic Fazio. I had worked for Tony Coelho, Vic Fazio, and Beryl Anthony at the DCCC. When I was at the Senate Campaign Committee it was John Breaux, who I hope runs for Governor. It was a great place to be. I really would have loved to have been in the middle of the campaign, but it just didn't work out. As it turns out, it worked out fine as far as working in the administration was concerned.

Riley: And they would have wanted you to move to Little Rock to do this?

Hale: Oh yes, and I wouldn't have minded that. I went down there right after Al Gore was picked. They asked me to come down and help schedule him while they put together the staff, and I did it. I was down there for about two to three weeks, and I would have been perfectly happy to be in Little Rock, but at that point for me to leave the DCCC, I just didn't think was

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smart. I thought that was disloyal. While there were many capable people there, if you leave a hole with the political director, just three months out you've got a bit of a problem. I'm sure they would have done just fine without me, but that was my thought.

Prior to all that—Stan Greenberg, who was Clinton's pollster, and I are close friends. I actually used to moderate focus groups for him.

Riley: Is that right?

Hale: I did most of Clinton's pre-election focus groups, which was fascinating. It also helped that I had a bit of a southern accent. I did the original ones while he was still Governor. We went around Arkansas and did focus groups. The gist of it was, could he go ahead and run for President even though he had told the people in Arkansas that he wasn't going to?

Stan and I did these focus groups and Bruce [Lindsey] came to most of them. It was funny because after we finished, Bruce said, "Well, Governor, we've figured out how you can do this. You just send Marcia around the state and she'll talk to voters 12 at a time and it will be okay." They were genuinely very supportive. You know, focus groups are two hours long and you take participants through a lot. In all the ones we did—I think we did eight— it was, if he can run, he should run. It's okay.

Then we did a series of them. We went to New Hampshire, we went to—

Riley: I want to ask you about the Arkansas one. There's a listening tour or something to that effect. Was your work going on simultaneously?

Hale: It was probably just before that. I vaguely remember that, remember this was 15 years ago and I think this was probably done just before he went around the state and started talking to people.

Riley: So your sense is that these focus groups helped to craft the message that he would take out to people? That makes sense.

Hale: Yes, how he would discuss it.

Riley: I wonder if you were picking up problems at the time? You said you had determined how you could go about doing this, but were you also finding—here's a footfall that's problematic for you, or anything like that that you recall? Anything consistent?

Hale: No. My recollection now, fifteen years later, is that they were genuinely positive and that there wasn't any real opposition. It was more along the lines of taking people through a decision, as opposed to just standing up and announcing it one day. He learned some very valuable lessons when he got thrown out of office in 1980. That was a crushing blow to him. I was actually in South Carolina at the Governor's Mansion with Dick Riley when he took the phone call—when Dick Riley called Bill Clinton and connected with him and told him how sorry he was that he had lost that election and that he'd be back. Clinton was pretty down at the moment.

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Anyway, I did a lot of Clinton's focus groups—I can't say I did them all, but I did a majority of them.

Riley: That would have been in '92?

Hale: In '91, '92. I remember distinctly being in New York on some other business and getting a phone call from Stan and Stan asking me if I can catch a plane to New Hampshire and do a focus group. I think it was that night. If it wasn't that night it was the next day. We did a series of focus groups about Gennifer Flowers. They were probably the most open-ended of any focus groups I've been in.

By that I mean that if you do a focus group, you have a strong script you're supposed to follow. In this I had more freedom to let the conversations go where they were going. I had to get to the point, but it was one of the toughest ones I've ever done, not so much that talking to the voters was difficult, but that I had James and Paul and Mandy [Grunwald] and Bruce and Stan, Bob Boorstin and, God knows, and Stephanopoulos. I believe all of them were there, but there were about 12 people who were sitting behind the screen and second-guess every question I asked these people. I felt like an actress for the first time. Then every once in a while a note would come in from the door, "Ask them this."

Morrisroe: Was this after the story broke, but before the *Sixty Minutes*?

Hale: After the story broke. I don't remember, but I assume, it was before *Sixty Minutes*.

Morrisroe: You said it was open-ended. Were they just looking generally for the voters' thoughts, concerns, and issues, or were they—they were obviously at that point crafting the response of the President. Did you get a sense of what they were looking for?

Hale: In the most general terms, they were just basically trying to figure out what real people thought of this, as opposed to this incredible cyclone of press that was stirring everything up. They were trying to figure out, "Can we survive this, and if we survive it, how do we talk about it?"

Riley: What were you picking up?

Hale: It was eerie like when Monica Lewinsky happened, because people don't like people to get picked on, I mean, unnecessarily picked on. A lot of people thought the press was unfair. They weren't necessarily giving him any pats on the back, whether they believed him or didn't believe him, but they didn't think it was fair. The rest is history. I would bet it was before *Sixty Minutes* but I don't remember that. It couldn't be too hard to find out.

Riley: Just out of curiosity, routinely would they have videotaped these things?

Hale: Yes.

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Riley: So Stan may have them.

Hale: Have you talked to Stan?

Riley: We talked to Stan. He owes us more time, actually. We got him a couple of years ago for a day but there was a lot more material. He said he would do it. It's just been a problem—

Hale: He's writing a book, you know. There's a chapter on Clinton.

Riley: I'm not sure I knew that he was writing a book, but there are some people who find this extremely useful when they're writing a book because it helps massage the memory and get stuff out. In any event this is fascinating.

Hale: I have no doubt he would know exactly when those groups were.

Morrisroe: That was a pretty critical, tumultuous time in the campaign. What were your observations of the campaign operation?

Hale: Really good. They were a solid team who would yell and scream at each other if they needed to. I didn't see a lot of that, but I know you'd never have a situation with James where there wasn't some yelling and screaming. It was energy. *We're going to make this happen.* Every time something like that happened—and there were many things. Remember [Ross] Perot getting in and getting out ? The team held together, which is an absolute necessity. When you start having a lot of back-channeling, not that they were perfect, but back-channeling in a campaign—you just can't survive it.

There always was a little bit of a split between the James and Paul and Rahm crowd, and Betsey Wright. That wasn't so serious that it caused enormous disruption.

Riley: What was Bruce's role in this? Bruce said he'll talk to us after the President does, in typical fashion. So we're going to get him.

Hale: If you get him to talk, that will be—

Riley: He's a bit of a sphinx for those of us on the outside.

Hale: First of all, he's a great friend. He's the most loyal friend. I admire that. He keeps his own counsel and if you needed him to help you back something up and you made a good case to him, which I did often when I was scheduling, he was there for you. Lots of other people were more dramatic, higher profile. Bruce is not like that. He gets done what he needs to have done, but he does it in a sort of low-key way.

Riley: Did your focus group activity bridge over into the draft controversy? My recollection is that the Gennifer Flowers thing hits and then—

Hale: We did a lot of them. I can't remember—do you remember when the draft came up?

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Riley: I think the Gennifer Flowers thing hit first and it had sort of gotten tamped down a little bit and then my recollection is the draft, but I could be mistaken on that too.

Hale: I think you're right. I can remember sitting with Stan in Michigan. We did about eight focus groups in Michigan. Then we went to California. I don't have as vivid a memory of them, except for going to Michigan. We also did Seattle. Stan and I would travel around the country. Stan never gains a pound but has eaten in every good restaurant in the world. These focus groups are grueling. They're hard for him but also I'm on for four hours. It's from 6:00 until 10:00. So at ten o'clock you're totally wired and you want something to eat. Stan and I have seen lots of restaurants at midnight.

We carried it all the way through. I was the political director at the DCCC at the time, so I missed some of them, because there were just times I couldn't get away, but it carried all the way through.

Riley: When you're doing these, are you focused on issues related to that particular state and its primary, or—

Hale: Both. It was sort of half-and-half. It was always, if we're here in California, "What do you think about this?" Then it was also about a national message. I don't remember where we started doing the Perot ones, but we had to do a lot about Perot. You had to get the normal, okay, here we are in Washington State but, "What do you think about Ross Perot?"

Riley: Let me ask you—because I don't have much experience with this and I dare say a lot of people who read this wouldn't either—if you're getting prepared to do this, I mean, Stan calls you up and says, "Can you come do this?" Can you sort of walk us through? How do you prepare for it?

Hale: The political ones are easier because it's just in my DNA. He has staff who prepare a script and then Stan and I go over it and I make sure I really know what Stan is trying to get out of it. That's not hard. I've done it for a lot of other things too. I haven't done it in a long time .We would do issues. Stan has done all this issue work and that would be harder. I would get briefing papers. I'd read them on the airplane. If you're doing these things, you have to be able to talk to people and you don't want to be too full of facts. You want to know where you're going and you want to understand the subject, but you don't want to look like a know-it-all to these people. I think that comes across to people.

The very best person at doing these things is Peter Hart and he still does all his own focus groups. It's fascinating. He's a good friend of mine too. It's fascinating to watch him do a focus group. It was easy for me to do Clinton because I had more knowledge of Clinton than many of the people sitting behind the screen who were dissecting whether or not I was doing this right.

Riley: Did you go to the convention?

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Hale: I went to the convention and I participated. The Clinton campaign had a message group that met. By the time the convention came around, I really had to pay lots of attention to my real job and deal with DCCC candidates in New York. But the Perot thing popped up again. We did a bunch of focus groups right after the convention too.

Riley: Were you trying to figure out then how you could win those Perot voters? Because he had dropped out—

Hale: And then got back in.

Riley: Yes, he dropped out about the second or third day of the convention and didn't come back in until much later, September or October.

Hale: Mid-September, wasn't it?

Riley: Something like that.

Hale: It's amazing how you forget these things. And also, George [H. W.] Bush and how to deal with that. Stan would put a more sophisticated twist on this than I will now, but it was about how to be change without being so much change that you're Ross Perot.

Morrisroe: With the benefit of hindsight, could you just talk about the three or four people you mentioned before, who you dealt with the most in the Clinton campaign and had been working with a lot in the past—what was their role in the Clinton campaign? What did Carville bring to the campaign? And Stephanopoulos?

Hale: Carville brings an energy level that is fabulous for a campaign, and he's a great strategic thinker. You almost have to have somebody decode him for you, but he's a great strategic thinker. They all had such distinct personalities that it made them a great team. James is who he is. Paul has many qualities but he's also a great writer and he understands people. He was traveling with Clinton and he could help talk Clinton through things. It was really quite remarkable. I have great respect for Paul.

Rahm, who had worked with me at the DCCC in a previous cycle, was phenomenal at raising money and has more energy than anybody except for James perhaps. Maybe they're tied. Because Rahm was so good at raising money, there was always money when difficulties like the draft and Gennifer Flowers came along. Had Clinton run out of money at particular times, the campaign would not have succeeded. Rahm not only has the energy and the organization to be able to do that, but also he became close friends with the fundraisers and really inspired them to do more. And he'd criticize them if they didn't, but in a positive way, . The same thing happened in the last election.

George is, as you know, thoughtful, brilliant, steady. I think Clinton really relied on him through a lot of these sequences. It was really just a great team of very different personalities. Clinton feeds off all those different types of personalities. He likes that. So it worked, better than any campaign I've ever been involved in.

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[BREAK]

Riley: There may be some things we talked about at lunch that we'll want to come back to. I was going to ask you about the general election—actually, let's go back. I raised the issue of the convention. You went to the convention in '92. Anything in particular you were doing there? Any particular memories of that convention that are worth talking about?

Hale: One is Perot—what happened and whether that was going to be good or bad for Bill Clinton. Remember, at first it wasn't immediately apparent that that was going to be good for him eventually. But as far as the Clinton campaign was concerned, I was way more focused on the Congressional candidates than Clinton, because I had a job to do.

Riley: That was going to be my next question, that is, about the coordination with the Presidential campaign. Were there efforts made to try to coordinate things like travel and expenditures between vulnerable Congressional candidates, or is that too much—

Hale: There was an effort made for those candidates that were in districts where a visit by either Clinton or Gore or somebody well-recognized—there was an effort to try to do that. It got to be very difficult but we did that a lot. Or, if they were going to, say, Ohio, and we had a great race there, making sure that person was on the stage and was introduced and Clinton or Gore wrapped their arms around him/her. Remember, right after the convention was the bus tour, which I wish I could take credit for, but I can't. Everybody else takes credit for it.

Riley: Yes, we've heard.

Hale: I cannot take any credit for it whatsoever, although I was scheduling Gore temporarily. The convention was great, but that bus tour began and the country just started to pay attention. Everybody then wanted either Clinton or Gore or both of them together, so it became tough scheduling. The campaign had to do what they needed to do to win, but they were pretty gracious about it. The most coordination, though, was over message, not so much being strict about it, but making sure that the candidates were aware of what was said or what was about to be said. They were very good about that.

Riley: By the Presidential campaign?

Hale: By the Presidential campaign.

Riley: You'd get a communication from whom?

Hale: We'd get a communication from—I'm trying to remember if it was George or Dee Dee [Myers]. We'd have a communications meeting from time to time, or conference calls, or if they

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were about to announce something, they would let us know. It was actually pretty good. I don't remember any time when there was a dust up or a blow up over anything, which was pretty good. Remember, we were hungry to win by then, too, so everyone had just sort of fallen in line. The fact that Gore was there was very helpful in many ways, in that he had colleagues in the House and the Senate. He came to Washington a lot to do meetings on the Hill, which helped a lot.

Riley: We talked earlier about preparing people for a significant loss of seats in the House that year. I'm not one of these quantitative political scientists who can tell you what typically happens, but it's a little unusual, right, for an incoming President not to have some coattails?

Hale: Remember, this was late. I think you said in October. But the Perot factor and how that's going to play out was unknown. And George Bush was liked. I don't remember the polling right before the campaign. I think we all thought we were going to win, but I don't now remember what it was like. It was unclear what the effect was going to be on the Congressionals. I think we ended up picking up five or six seats that cycle. It may have been more than that. We would have tried to keep expectations in line but the fact that—if I actually did say we were going to lose 20 seats—

Riley: Well, the *Christian Science Monitor*, we'll blame it on them.

Hale: I believe them. We didn't know. We didn't really, at that point in time, I do remember worrying only about a handful of incumbents, which would be normal, because incumbents rarely lose. The feeling around the campaign—Remember, we hadn't won a Presidential in a long time, so none of us knew what it felt like. The feeling was all very positive, but I don't think we had much sense of what this three-person race was going to do to the Congressionals.

Riley: You were relying on internal polling?

Hale: Internal polling, their campaign's polling, all the normal things. Congressional races now have become even more sophisticated, but they're not *that* sophisticated. Particularly then, ten years before, you could have somebody sneak up on somebody and knock them off. It happens less now.

Riley: Were there any that you lost that were surprises?

[redacted]

Riley: You win. I guess you're in D.C. for the victory?

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Hale: I'm in D.C. I will tell you, that's the one thing that bothered me was being in D.C. and not being able to be in Little Rock. I had a job to do.

Riley: What were you doing during the transition period?

Hale: Because I had been down to Little Rock and I had been involved with the focus groups and all the work with Stan—a little-known fact is that after the convention in 1988, when I ran the convention for [Michael] Dukakis, I ended up doing his pre-election transition.

Riley: Really.

Hale: He left the convention 18 points up. As Gordon [D. Giffin], who is my partner here, and I like to say, we did our jobs. So I'm done with the Atlanta convention and was asked, "Would you like to do the transition?" That also tied in because I was from Washington, knew a lot of the Washington establishment, and the campaign was headquartered in Boston, so I could go back and forth. I did that.

Riley: Let me detour there for just a second, because this is a fascinating topic. We won't park on it for a long time, but what were you doing as the transition person? Are you identifying personnel?

Hale: No, not at that point. What you're doing is putting together a proposal for what the real transition will look like. For example, you're identifying somebody who could be the personnel director. The most fascinating thing was I went to see Clark Clifford. This was before he had his legal problems—not that I wouldn't have gone to see him anyway. He took me into his law firm. He had this unbelievable office. He went back to his filing cabinet and pulled out—I assume it was just a copy—of his transition paper for John Kennedy.

I got to go around and talk to people. I talked to the [Jimmy] Carter people: "What mistakes did you make? What did you do right?" I put that together. About six weeks after the convention we were down about 10-12 points after having been 18 points up after the convention. I was very popular in Washington for about six weeks. Everybody wanted to know me. Then after about six weeks, it was funny, I wasn't quite so popular.

But we put together a real plan. Had the election turned out differently—that's a way of saying I actually had some sense about what the Clinton transition should look like so I went to work in it. I was basically helping Vernon [Jordan] and Alexis [Herman] and Mark Gearan, trying to help run the transition. Then Dick Riley got named head of personnel for the transition so I helped him.

Riley: There was a similar pre-transition for Clinton?

Hale: There was. I think Mickey [Kantor] ran it. . I haven't thought about that in a while.

Riley: Mickey ends up getting—

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Hale: Yes, but then he's back.

Riley: Sort of set aside. The tape doesn't register hand motions very well.

Hale: He's right across the street, if you haven't talked to him.

Riley: We have talked to him; he's one of the first people we talked with, actually. Do you know why he ended up being sort of marginalized?

Hale: His personality rubbed with James and crowd. Remember, Clinton is now the nominee and there was a bit of infighting. I wasn't present so I don't know all the particulars.

Riley: I wondered, primarily because you'd had this experience with Dukakis, and I guess Mickey would have been your counterpart in the Clinton—

Hale: Yes.

Riley: I didn't know whether you had paid any particular attention to how that had unfolded.

Hale: I don't remember it well enough.

Riley: No problem. So you're helping out with—

Hale: When Adrien Fenty got elected mayor of D.C., I talked to his transition people and I said, "Here's your biggest problem. You can do a great transition and then all of a sudden the candidate, now the elected official, starts appointing people and the air comes out of your transition and you don't finish some of the important tasks that you're supposed to do, which are mostly policy tasks. Be careful about who you pick to run your transition." You ideally want some people who aren't going into the government. Or you don't want the top—Dick Riley gets picked to be Secretary of Education and they lose their personnel person because he's got to get ready to be confirmed. So the wind sort of comes out of that.

All of the White House staff got announced basically in one day, and you guys probably have the date. Most of us did, which was a great thing. We basically felt that was the end of the transition. We were getting ready to figure out what we were doing next and how to do it.

Riley: This was pretty late.

Hale: It was pretty late. That was the big problem. Clinton put so much attention on Cabinet, which is great, that's terrific, but White House staff didn't get as much attention early on as it should have. [redacted]

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Riley: That makes sense. It has been a bit of a puzzle from the outside. Clinton is a very smart man and he's surrounded with a lot of very smart people and you would think putting a White House staff together would—

Hale: It's kind of perplexing, don't you think?

Riley: I do, but you've helped explain why. If it is an intrinsically harder thing to do, then you take the path of least resistance.

Hale: And he's fundamentally a policy person. I mean, he's obviously very political, but fundamentally he knew he had some things he wanted to have done and he wanted a Cabinet that could do them and he wanted a cabinet that looked like America. [redacted]

Riley: Were you primarily focused on personnel during the transition period or were you doing policy stuff?

Hale: I was primarily focused on helping to make the transition work. Vernon and I have been friends for a long time and Vernon was the out-front person. I was helping him . Mark Gearan as well. It was more about making the place work. Rahm was at the inauguration, so I was doing a lot of coordination between the inauguration and the transition.

Riley: Did you go to some parties?

Hale: I did. It's like going to a convention. Until these last couple of conventions, I'd never been to a party at a convention in my whole life. During the inauguration I went to one big gala and that was it. We were already working 12 hours a day and I didn't even make it to the celebration on the Mall.

Riley: It was very nice. I did that.

Hale: I didn't make it. You did. Tell me all about it.

Riley: Diana Ross was coming down. I must have been about a half-mile away but she was wearing this electric blue or red gown that was just like it was laser cut into the stone of the Lincoln Memorial.

Hale: No, I didn't make it.

Riley: You talked about a variety of positions coming in. Did you have a preference for what you wanted to do in the administration?

Hale: I was talked to about two different positions. One was scheduler —I'm not quite sure why from the start I was certain it's what I wanted to do. Susan Thomases, who had been the

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campaign scheduler, and ruled with an iron hand and had a very good staff, was very clear that she was not going into the administration. She was going to go back to New York. Because she had recruited me to come down to work with Gore as his scheduler while they were trying to put Gore's staff together, she talked to me about becoming scheduler.

I have to tell you, most people wouldn't necessarily put scheduler up there as one of the top White House position—it's an incredibly important position and it can be a very powerful position. If I had it to do all over again and had a little hindsight, because I was close enough to the President-elect, I would do some things differently. Just realize the impact you can have. I don't know that I'd ever go back and be a scheduler but I'd love to be the senior advisor who oversees the schedule, because scheduling is gruesome. It is really gruesome. So, Susan had told me about that.

Howard Paster also talked to me about being the House Congressional Liaison because as Political Director of the DCCC I knew a lot of members and their districts. It didn't get down to a firm offer. I can't really tell you why, other than I would be as scheduler in charge of a department and would be an Assistant to the President as opposed to a Deputy Assistant to the President. I wanted to run something and I was happy to do the scheduling job.

Riley: You spend more time in the White House in this job than you would as a House Liaison.

Hale: Right, and it was a more senior position.

Riley: Exactly. Were you surprised at any of the appointments that came down the pipeline, either in the Cabinet or on the White House staff? Did you scratch your head a little bit and say—

Hale: I don't think I was surprised. The day before, or the day we were going to be announced, Harold could not become Deputy Chief of Staff, for whatever potential legal problem there was that was eventually resolved. That was a shock. It also was very painful to a lot of us because we all wanted Harold to be there, plus the fact that Harold is a great manager, whether it's out of management or fear. He was missed. That was painful, a little disruptive.

I don't think I was surprised. Mack [Thomas McLarty] in the beginning might have been better as a counselor to the President. There is something to be said for having worked in Washington and understanding Washington. And most of the White House staff had worked in the campaign and it took a long time for them to realize that the White House wasn't the campaign and they could not continue to operate as they did in the campaign. Life was different and we needed different management.

Riley: I want to ask you a question. One of the things that occasionally comes up is the fate of the existing Democratic establishment, to the extent that it exists. There's a Congressional group of Democrats, including the people who sort of cut their teeth on the Hill, but there was also still something of a Presidential party out there with people who were affiliated with Jimmy Carter. Was it your sense that the Carter people were disqualified from being considered for these senior

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positions, or was it just the case that, to the extent that they were around, they weren't really engaged with Clinton and his network?

Hale: I don't think anybody was disqualified. Particularly in the White House staff, almost everyone had actively participated in the campaign. I don't know of any of the Carter people—some were very helpful, but I don't know of anybody who was—Alexis was in the Carter White House. And wasn't Howard Paster in the Carter administration?

Riley: That's a really good question and I don't remember.

Hale: There were a couple of people.

Riley: The foreign policy people, there were a lot of them.

Hale: Yes, Madeleine [Albright].

Riley: Tony Lake.

Hale: Yes, so I didn't have that sense. It was more of being early Clinton supporters.

Riley: Of course. The name that sometimes comes up in this regard is somebody like Stuart Eizenstat, for example.

Hale: But Stu, didn't he end up being Ambassador to Germany for the first term?

Riley: Something like that. He may have been at Treasury.

Hale: He had several jobs, but I think he went to Europe for his first—

Riley: I think so. There was a sense that at least Eizenstat had that Carter White House experience, and if you're looking for somebody to piece things together—that's not my theory; I'm floating an idea that occasionally comes up, to see what you think.

Hale: I don't think so. Stu may not have had the strongest relationships with some of the people who were doing the picking.

Riley: Of course. As you say, if you've been through the trenches with somebody then it counts a great deal for something.

Morrisroe: Were there any other positions that were offered to you or that you sought or considered?

Hale: No. If I was, I don't know about it.

Morrisroe: There were none that you had your eye on?

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Hale: No. Susan Thomases had come to me early, even before the election, and said, "I want you to think about this if it happens." I don't remember if it was two days before or a week before. It intrigued me because, having scheduled before, you're in the middle of everything. That's both good and bad, but you're in the middle of everything.

When I went down to Little Rock to first talk to Susan about it, which was probably sometime in December, Howard was there. He was kind of joking but he unexpectedly said, "Don't you dare say yes to her until I can talk to you." It's like, *Wow, this is a dream. Maybe I could talk to both of them about this.*

Have you talked to Susan?

Riley: Yes we have, both of us.

Hale: You don't want to be cute. The worst thing I could have done with Susan Thomases would have been to be cute and play it out. She knew exactly. Howard had come to her. I wasn't about to try to play both ends of the string here and try to figure out what was the best deal. I just knew I was going to figure this out and be totally upfront about it, because that would have just killed me.

Riley: Susan had only this small piece of the transition, or was she also involved in other—

Hale: I don't know whether she had an official title, but she had a huge role in everything. She is obviously close to the President-elect but so close to Hillary [Clinton].

Morrisroe: Can you flesh out a little bit for us what that meeting was like and how she described the position, or anything you recall that you discussed?

Hale: She knew I knew what the position was, and she knew I knew Washington as well as anybody she could find, and that I had done scheduling before. I think what she was concerned about is whether I was creative enough. She asked me to think of some possibilities of what Clinton could do during the transition, or give her some scenarios of what would be a great scheduling event.

I remember this because—I can't remember when Clinton did Georgia Avenue. Anyway, that was Susan's idea. He walks Georgia Avenue—for a District resident that was a big deal. She was looking to see whether or not I could think of things like that.

It was not necessarily Washington-based. If he were going to San Francisco, what's a good event? Did I have enough good sense to call people and ask for advice and have creative judgment? Scheduling has a lot of different facets to it. It's very detail-oriented, but really good schedulers are political and also have a sense of how to further policy agendas—and they have a sense of the country. How do you do that, and what makes a very good visual? And being able to talk to people. It's not about who gets ten minutes in the Oval Office, although that's incredibly important. Truly, the most important commodity for a President is time. If you're in charge of

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that and everybody wants a piece of it you can make a lot of friends and you can make a lot of enemies.

Riley: Sure. On the other end were there any conditions that you set forth that you needed to have met in order to accept the position? Did you think *I know enough about this to know that I need to have access to certain people*, or was it pretty much open-ended?

Hale: I don't think I demanded anything, but we talked through—I said, "I'm not doing this unless I'm the same senior level that everybody else is." I had gone to meet with Bush's scheduler, and this was just before I got named. She was very nice to me, considering we had just beaten them. She had an office in the West Wing. She looked at me and said, "Keep this office here, it will help you and it will help with your communication with the President." I had that conversation with Susan and Susan said, "I think that's a mistake. I think you should be over in the OEOB [Old Executive Office Building] with your staff." I could understand that for a couple of reasons but I said, "I want to keep the office." To Susan's great credit, once I said it, she said okay. You know, if Susan was going to put her hand in, It was going to happen. She was opposed to that at first, that's the only thing.

She was right about her staff, which was incredibly loyal to Susan. Susan had a lot of clout. They were—Stephanie [Streett] and Anne Walley and a large staff. If you counted them all, there were 60 people who ended up doing scheduling and advance. During the campaign they were very loyal to her and they were like, "Who is this Marcia Hale?" They had met me because I was down there for Gore. It was all very friendly but they didn't know who I was. Susan's thought was, "Get over there and have your office and bond with these people. Be one of them." She was right about that. I had another office in the OEOB, which Bush's scheduler had also had, a great big huge office. After about two months I said, "This is ridiculous. You people should be using this office. It's great real estate." So we gave me a desk and others also used the office.

I did have some resentment among that staff at first. I think if I had spent more time at the OEOB—I will tell you, I came to have great respect for Stephanie Streett and Anne Walley. We had some rocky roads at first, but they're very talented.

Riley: They were your deputies at the time?

Hale: Yes, they were my two deputies.

Riley: Did you have control over the appointments within your office or did you just agree that you were going to basically inherit what Susan was putting together?

Hale: I had no problem with inheriting. These were people who knew him and knew how to schedule. There were a couple of people who had come from Washington so they understood D.C. The advance people were very good. I didn't really have any problem with that. Josh King, who had been doing advance, I added him as a deputy. He and I did a time analysis of Clinton's time. Have you ever seen that?

Riley: I've not seen it, but I've seen references to it.

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Hale: I've got a copy someplace. We were having all kinds of problems six weeks, three months in, about his time and how he spent it. He was unhappy. We didn't have enough structure inside the White House. People were complaining that they weren't getting enough time. I looked at Josh and said, "Why don't we figure this out?" Josh, to his great credit, did most of the work. Okay, he's doing *X* amount on foreign policy; he's doing this on domestic. We broke down the domestic. It is hard to argue with graphs and charts with that much detail attached. You know what? It shut people up. You give people real hard figures and it shuts people up for a while.

Clinton's biggest complaint, and I had great sympathy for this, was that he never had any time to think or read. He originally wanted two hours in the afternoon. He eventually went to four hours in the afternoon to talk to people, to read, to do whatever. He was getting nothing. Part of the reason he was getting nothing was because people had the ability to walk into his office and say, "Will you do this?" He would say yes. Then they'd come down and say, "He said to put it on the schedule."

I finally went to George when he changed the schedule once. I went to George and said, "You can't do this." He looked at me puzzled. The reasons I was telling him had never occurred to him. Number one, Clinton wouldn't get any time that day to do all the other things everybody wanted him to do. Two, we were going to have to cancel an event and that meant canceling people coming to the White House and flying to D.C. Most of them were probably already in D.C. the day before. Just trying to find them, and the disappointment level of people who were supposed to be coming to the White House and meeting the President. The rest of the crowd rarely thought about the repercussions of changing the schedule around. So I had that little tête-à-tête with George, which I have no idea if he remembers, but it was the last time George ever changed the schedule without checking with me.

Morrisroe: Can you walk through for us, for the first three months or so, how the schedule was formed and who was involved? I read in one of the briefing materials that you would have daily morning meetings with certain people to go over the schedule and fashion it.

Hale: I lived in meetings.

Morrisroe: Could you walk us through that?

Hale: You couldn't get any work done, because you lived in meetings. Susan Thomases did a very good thing of laying out the first couple of weeks, not in detail but in thematics and what he should do. That was done while we were all trying to figure out where our desks and offices were. I would start every morning meeting with the President and the Vice President. At first it was George, me, Gore, the President, and Mack. It was right after the National Security briefing. We had fifteen minutes to walk him through whatever his day was. Many times he was happy, many times he was unhappy about what was happening. But we didn't have any systems and we were in the process of trying to get systems in place.

Then I would go to about an hour-long meeting of the communications or political staff. "What are we going to do?" Then I would go to a scheduling meeting of all the people who worked for

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me and try to import some of that knowledge to them. In retrospect—I'm sure people think this way about their jobs—I should have just been a lot tougher. Not that I wasn't capable of being tough, but I should have been more black and white about things and just laid down the law.

Morrisroe: In terms of what would get on his schedule?

Hale: Of what would get on his schedule, and in meetings, and crafting what events were going to look like. But you have to remember, some of us were running really big staffs, too. So you had all that management, which was fine. I was happy to do it. But you're pulling together, in my case, many people who had worked together but who didn't have any place to live, and were new to Washington. Transitions are very important times. Any President should do a good mixture of people who are loyal and have been through the campaign and people who have lived in Washington.

We did a whole series of meetings all day long. We had weekly message meetings. There was never enough discipline or systems. I would say that was partly my fault, and partly because many of the people in the White House worked in the campaign and were used to direct access to Clinton—and he was used to having direct access to them and that caused havoc, not just in scheduling but across the board. Other departments had similar struggles.

Morrisroe: If I am in Congressional Liaison, and I'm meeting with Congressman *X* on the President's schedule, how does that request from a White House office—what channels does that go through? Does it go to you or does it go to the Chief of Staff to you?

Hale: At first there was no system. I'd look up from my desk—thankfully I was in the West Wing, so these guys could just walk downstairs. I'd look up and Howard Paster would be there saying, "I want Senator So-and-so to come see—" I would call over to the OEOB and say, "When can we do this? Is there time?" Then just a couple of weeks in, we instituted a system that basically said, "You've got to put it in writing and you've got to get it to us in time. You cannot go to the President individually and ask for something and then come down and say the President has decided.…" Podesta backed me up on that.

If somebody wanted something on the schedule, it had to be signed off on by an assistant to the President. That actually worked pretty well. What we weren't doing well enough was we were too hectic. You know, Clinton is always late for everything, so even if you built in time, you were running late. We had all those press stories about running late. Those were all accurate but that was because we were over-scheduling him. We were over-scheduling him because everybody wanted so much. There was all this pent-up demand—we hadn't had a Democratic President in twelve years. There were an awful lot of things that needed to be done to say, "Thank you," or, "Come talk to us."

Morrisroe: Were the determinations of, "Okay, this week we have the crime bill coming. We need to make room on the schedule for things related to the crime bill." Were those the types of decisions that you would make in the meetings with the President, Vice President, and Chief of Staff, or with the strategy—

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Hale: Strategy, and then we'd take it to him. He had a few things to say about this. He would quite often out of the blue say, "I want to do *X*." He usually made perfect sense and that worked. The biggest struggle we had was reinventing government, healthcare, and NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] and later welfare reform. I remember, sometime in the summer of '93, a big pow-wow about, "How are we going to sequence all this stuff?" I wasn't in that meeting, which was fine. But the end result of it was, "We're going to do all three."

I said, folks, we can't do three major initiatives—now, welfare reform ended up moving. But healthcare and reinventing government collided all along as did NAFTA. One thing I will say about Al Gore. I bet if you went back and looked at reinventing government, some of his ideas were as forward-thinking as global warming looks now. Our government does not fit what we need to get done. Our Cabinet agencies are outdated. I saw something in the paper the other day and I thought, I'm going to go back and look up in reinventing government and see if Gore dealt with it. A lot of our Cabinet agencies just don't fit government any more. We are running a 21st century country on a 19th century designed government.

Al Gore was right about a lot of what he was doing, and did he fight for time. He was one of the—he wanted to get done what he wanted to get done. Then of course you had all these huge healthcare meetings that collided with reinventing government. We should have sequenced those. That was a mistake not to do it. Those meetings, once we tried to do them both, ended up being quite stressful, because there just isn't enough time in the day.

Riley: What are you finding out about the President individually, the idiosyncrasies of this man who is President, that you're having to account for?

Hale: First of all, he has a heck of a temper, but he could yell at you and you're all upset, either angry or hurt. Then you walk back in five minutes later and he's totally forgotten about it. Totally. You find that hard to believe, I know, because people say that about him but…

He's horrible at getting to the office early in the morning. Terrible. He drinks very little coffee. So the rest of us who have three or four cups of coffee before getting to the White House are wired—we had to be there at 7:30, which means most of us were there at 7:00.

Riley: I guess you were living previously in a place in D.C. Where was that?

Hale: Northwest Washington. It's about ten o'clock before he wakes up really. If we had a crisis he'd be wide-awake, but given his normal day, it's about ten o'clock. As he goes through the day it gets progressively better.

He was informal to the point where you could be sitting there and all of a sudden your phone rings and it's him. Quite often I'd get a call saying, "Would you come see the President?" Or, "He wants to talk to you about something." The worst in the first eight or nine months was—we were all working pretty hard. I go home and if I don't have anything to do, I go to bed. I am an early-to-bed, early-to-rise kind of person. My phone would ring at eleven o'clock at night and I knew exactly who it was.

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Morrisroe: No caller ID necessary.

Hale: Back then I had an answering machine that after four rings would go to voice mail. I would let it ring three-and-three-quarters times before I picked up the phone, because I had to wake up enough to talk to him. I can't say this happened all the time, but it happened with some frequency. He wanted to talk about the next day, the next week, and the next month. He must have been thinking, *What is wrong with her?* He's chatting and watching television and I'm sound asleep—trying to wake up.

He was very easy to work for. Maybe it's because I had known him long enough, but he was actually very easy to work with. What I found hard to do, and this will sound strange, was to go from calling him "Governor," which I had called him for twelve years, to "Mr. President." It was very hard for me to make that transition. I can't tell you why, but it was hard.

Riley: Looks like the same person, right? What time did he go to bed at night, do you know?

Hale: Who knows? Easily 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00. He's the most unbelievable reader. He'd come down and tell me all the books he'd read and I'd say, "How do you do this?"

Riley: But he made up for it the next morning. It was difficult to get started. Was that a problem for scheduling?

Hale: No, it was a problem for poor Tony Lake, who had to be the first person to see him. We almost always started the day off late, so Tony's time got squeezed. Then the scheduling time got squeezed. We always had that problem.

Riley: You didn't adjust for that in the schedule?

Hale: We couldn't at first. I think they did, long after both I and others had been schedulers, but we couldn't at first. It was ridiculous to try to get him started at 8:30 or 9:00. The first appointment should have been 10:00. Then he would have gotten all his reading done gotten to the office around 9:00 AM and dealt with a few things and then started his morning meetings.

Riley: Do you pad the schedule at that point?

Hale: Yes, you pad it but you can only pad it so much.

Riley: And I guess he's got a copy and he knows it's padded.

Hale: Oh yes. He knew exactly what we were trying to pull This is a perfect example: I had some friends from South Carolina, actually, Dick Riley's law partner, Dwight Drake, who is an old friend of mine, and Dick Harpootlian, chairman of the Democratic Party in South Carolina. They came to D.C. This was after I was scheduler, so I was Intergovernmental at the time. I said, "Come on over and have lunch with me at the White House Mess."

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We had lunch at the White House Mess and I said, "The President is doing—" I think it was one of the Super Bowl events or a baseball event. It was in the Rose Garden. I said, "Come on, I can get you into this." I plopped the two of them, whom he knew really well and who had been some of his earliest supporters—I managed to get them on the second row. Clinton looks over and sees them. When the event is over, he motions to me and he motions to Dick and Dwight and says, "Come on in."

This is how his schedule gets all screwed up. He brings the two of them into the Oval Office, which of course is making their day, week, life, and he spends 15 or 20 minutes talking to them. They're both really smart political people and he asked them not just, "How's South Carolina?" but he gets information from them and listens to them. So his schedule is then 20 minutes off. I had absolutely no regret over it, because people had done it to me the whole time I was scheduler. But that's why. If it's because he's actually talking to people, it's very hard to be upset about it.

Riley: At what point does he become agitated, though, at the mismatch between the paper schedule and where he is. Maybe that's too vague a question because I guess—

Hale: No, he was aggravated. It didn't take long. That's when we started to fight for a two-hour time period, because even if the schedule got screwed up in the morning, you'd eat into a half-hour or an hour of his time. If he were eating into his time, he might be more cognizant of it. There were all kinds of things at the beginning that he probably now would be well adjusted to. But he hated that he couldn't get out of the White House and go to a restaurant for dinner. He *hated* it. There was very little we could do about that.

The saddest part was—but this did work—the day Vince Foster died, I was there and I was in fact one of the last people to see Vince. He left the White House. I was running upstairs; he was coming downstairs. We literally collided and he was on his way out the door. I don't know who else he talked to. He just grabbed me and said, "Marcia, slow down." We find out that night. I'm at home. Clinton is doing Larry King. I don't remember who called me. It might have been Maggie [Williams].

The next night, he—I don't know where Hillary was.

Riley: I think she was in Little Rock.

Hale: Anyway, a group of the people who were really close to Vince and the President wanted to get together for dinner and they came to me and said, "Can you help us get this done?" I said, "Where do you want to go?" I said, "Why don't you go to Nora's?" Have you ever been to Nora's here?

Riley: No.

Hale: It's a great restaurant.

Riley: Dupont Circle?

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Hale: Yes, and it has a private room but it also has a room that's not completely private, but it's separated. Clinton hated going to restaurants and being in a private room. He wanted to be where he could talk to people. I actually used to know the owners quite well. I called Nora [Pouillon] and said, "The President would like to come tonight. Can you arrange this? It's a very sad time. Could we make this work?"

They were so grateful. Bruce actually came to me and said, "Why don't you come with us?" I said no. I wish I had. I wish I had gone that night just because we were all sad, but I just didn't want to intrude. Everybody who went—it was Bruce, Nancy Hernreich, Marsha Scott and several others and the President—people who were really close to Vince. I thought, I don't want to intrude on these people who really knew him so well.

The point of telling you that is that it was such an extraordinary thing just to be able to get him someplace private to go to dinner. It's ridiculous. You feel like you're trapped.

Riley: And he did feel like he was trapped, didn't he?

Hale: He used to call it "the most expensive penal colony in America."

Morrisroe: "The crown jewel of the federal penal system."

Hale: Right.

Morrisroe: How often did the First Lady weigh in with you about any concerns over the President's schedule, or having enough time for him to relax or rest?

Hale: She did. Patti Solis [Doyle], who is now running her campaign, was her scheduler at the time. Patti and I would talk regularly and she would tell me things the First Lady was saying. She called me—I vividly remember this—one morning because she was aggravated. I had no idea what she was talking about. She called me and said, "Marcia, there's somebody downstairs waiting to jog with the President for the last 45 minutes and we had no idea he was there. Now the President has gone and this guy didn't get to run with the President."

Hale: I couldn't say, "Well, Hillary, nobody bothered to tell me either." That's sort of like the ultimate passing the buck. So I said, "I'll look into it right away. We'll get the guy rescheduled." She was legitimately upset. You can't argue with that. But no one had bothered—it had been put on late. He had requested it. Somebody had put it on, but not told Nancy or Andrew Friendly. I had no idea what was happening so I couldn't answer her question.

Riley: How far in advance would you schedule? Were you focused mostly on—

Hale: Day-to-day? No. Being a scheduler is much more about themes, policy, and politics than day-to-day. Thinking of it in terms of appointments is not accurate although there is an element of that. There was too much day-to-day just because we should have gotten a bigger head start. I remember distinctly the first round of commencement speeches. We started to deal with those in

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late February or March. I started getting requests. That was a big decision for him. You always do one of the Armed Services and then you do two or three others.

Riley: How did you know that? Did you inherit permanent White House people who had institutional knowledge?

Hale: Yes, we did. One of whom was Linda Tripp, who sat right outside my office.

Riley: The eyes rolled, for the benefit of the tape.

Hale: I don't know whether Tony or [Samuel] Sandy Berger talked with me but I know the NSC [National Security Council] came to me and said, "You know you do one of the service academies every year." That was clear. [redacted]

Riley: There were some who worked for the scheduling staff, or not?

Hale: Well, the archivist was a permanent person who was totally apolitical.

Riley: She worked for you?

Hale: She didn't work for me, but she was housed in my office. I don't know who she directly reported to. She had worked for Bush and she was working for us, but there were some support staff that stayed.

Riley: But most of the time, from your vantage point, those people were receptive and helpful?

Hale: Yes.

Riley: The rumors that came out about the ushers and all of this—did you detect any of that when you were there? Did you get the sense that there were some of those folks who were confronted with a culture clash they couldn't handle?

Hale: Yes, and I was kind of surprised by it at the time. Because I was scheduling, I was in and out of the East Wing all the time. I didn't get any of that. Now, I didn't get great warmth from a couple of people, but they were all busy too. The whole travel office fiasco could have been handled better. Part of it was that I was just so unbelievably busy. When I look back on that nine or ten months, it's pretty amazing how hard we all worked.

Riley: I actually got you off track, because I'd asked you a broader question about the lead time for the scheduling operation and you were telling me about the long-term events. I wonder if I could come back to that. Is there a different set of meetings in which you're having to deal with long-term planning?

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Hale: Yes.

Riley: And how often do those happen?

Hale: Included in that would be someone from National Security, Cabinet Affairs, Congressional, Intergovernmental, Communications, all of the offices in the White House. There were certain things like the first foreign trip that were locked down. You know a lot of definite events and then you work other events around it. The first foreign trip and the first events in the Congressional schedule—you tried to accommodate all that. Then, what you tried to lay in on top of that were policy initiatives, reinventing government, or healthcare. Then, you got to—the National Governors Association is here; the U.S. Conference of Mayors is here. And then you got to the daily appointments. But you couldn't do the daily appointments and then do this other stuff. Yes, on any given day, six to nine months out, we had a lot on the calendar.

Riley: And that started really early?

Hale: Oh, yes.

Riley: So it wasn't the case that you were coming in and for the first month you were just focused on a three-hour interval ahead. You're coming in and know enough about what you need to do to think—

Hale: Yes, and to Susan's great credit, she made us all sit down and think about a lot of that before we walked through the door. There was a lot of work done during the transition about some of the set things that were coming up. The Bush crowd had worked very well with the National Security Council about events and potential state visits. That really drove it although I think what got the most attention was what he was doing for 15 minutes on *X* day.

Morrisroe: One thing is a little off the topic we're discussing but came up in the readings and might interest those people who are looking at this office in the future. It was mentioned that during the early part of Clinton's tenure, there was a division made in scheduling between the social office and your office, that there was a more clearly defined separation, with the social office controlling everything on the South Lawn and your office controlling everything in the White House, the Rose Garden. Does that resonate with you at all?

Hale: No.

Morrisroe: I had never heard it before I read the article and I thought I'd bring it up to see if I was missing something.

Hale: If I am remembering this right, Ann Stock, who was the Social Secretary, wasn't going to have Presidential advance running an event inside the confines of the residence or on the South Lawn. That was her confine. The military aides or the Ushers' Office or whoever would run those events. That came out of some event very early where an advance person misbehaved. I don't remember what it was. Ann was right. I had no problem with that. If I didn't have to have responsibility for events inside the East Wing, I was perfectly happy with that. But I don't think

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that was new. I would schedule the events and her office would implement. The White House is a very special place and protocol and graciousness needed to prevail. She was just reasserting what had been tradition. I think she wanted the advance people out of the East Wing.

Riley: And the advance people were your responsibility also?

Hale: Yes.

Riley: Tell us about that. That's a completely different kind of operation.

Hale: Yes, totally different, but totally tied to scheduling. There were between twelve and twenty people who worked in scheduling, but there were probably another ten who worked in advance, and then probably another thirty to forty who were contract employees that you would use.

It was a big management responsibility. Most of them had worked with him during the campaign. The only thing you really had to make sure of was that proper—"etiquette" is not quite the right word, but that people were behaving in such a way that was fitting for the White House. Not that anybody misbehaved, but you wanted to make sure that people were not acting like campaign aides as opposed to White House employees. That didn't take much, but you just had to make sure. It was a management job.

The only concern there was when you're trying to have an hour-and-a-half meeting with your advance people, that's taking away—God knows what the rest of the West Wing is doing while you're over there. *What are they plotting over there to put on the President's schedule? I'm missing another meeting.*

Riley: Just to be clear, when you're saying they're "behaving properly," you mean that they're not being overly pushy?

Hale: Yes. Too aggressive. Advance people have a tendency during a campaign to push to get done what they want to get done. Well, it's a very different thing once you're working for the President of the United States. First of all, you shouldn't have to be obnoxious. If you're being obnoxious you're not doing your job.

Riley: What about security? How was the coordination between security and advance? Is that something you had to be concerned about?

Hale: Oh, yes. I was one of the contact people for the Secret Service.

Riley: Okay, tell us about it.

Hale: Dave Carpenter was the head of the detail when we first took over. You may remember him because he looks like Clinton. Wonderful, charming, smart, but he also had worked his detail during the campaign so he knew a lot of these people and a lot of people liked him. He

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came to me and said, "Okay, here are some of our guidelines." This is maybe even before the inauguration, but right around then. We always worked together well.

He did come to me about six weeks in. He came to my office. He had this look on his face. I said, "Uh-oh, we have a problem." He sat down and he said, "I have to talk to you. You guys are changing the schedule so much. You really have to be more careful about this." This was in the very beginning. It would be once again people changing the schedule. The Service, even if the President is just over in the OEOB there are lots of people involved in that that you don't see. For every agent you see there's probably ten more doing something else, backing up and whatever.

We changed a location and a city; that's what I think it was. He was worried that I would be upset, but what he gave me was ammunition to go to people and say, "Folks, we're not doing this anymore." I actually brought it up to the President and said Dave had been great but had come to me and we needed to be careful and I needed to be backed up on this. I told Mack that too.

Riley: So changes like that required—

Hale: Enormous changes on the part of the Secret Service. You could suggest that they're overly upset about that, but they have a huge responsibility. There are lots of times they would say, "We really don't want him to do this," particularly out on the road. We'd work with them to try to figure out the best way to do something.

Riley: Did the President chafe at the security when he was traveling?

Hale: He loved his security personnel, but yes he did. He just wanted to get out and shake hands, to walk down streets like a normal person. We were always having to tell him, "You can't do this but you can do that." I luckily didn't have to do that. His body person did.

Riley: Out of the group that you were dealing with, is it possible for you to say who were the people who were giving you the most trouble in terms of trying to maintain the integrity of the schedule? Were there serial offenders of people coming in at the last minute and wanting to do something?

Hale: Communications. George, not purposefully. He was just trying to get his job done. Rahm, Congressional Affairs.

Riley: Rahm's a good yeller, I hear. We haven't talked with him, and I don't know that we'll get to.

Hale: It wasn't so much that there were individuals, but it was a push and pull on different events that people wanted to have happen. There was turf fighting. If we'd had a stronger central control, which is why I would say Leon [Panetta] was unbelievably good and accessible. If Leon had been the Chief of Staff at that point, we probably wouldn't have had that much of a problem, he would not have tolerated free-lancing, not just because he's a great manager, but he totally understands Washington.

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Riley: You kept the jogging list, among other things? You mentioned this earlier.

Hale: I didn't, actually. Either Stephanie or Anne did. But yes, it included lots of different types of people. It might be somebody from Oklahoma whom he'd known all his life who was going to be in town who was a runner. It was a good way for him to see friends. It was also just regular people early on—there was somebody who was in the Armed Services who wanted to come meet him and somehow or other the request got to him. He said, "Absolutely." There was this big deal about him jogging through the streets. They really didn't want him to do that, so they built the track on the South Lawn. He hated it and he rarely used it. Yes, members of Congress wanted to jog, or a visiting Governor, mayor, or someone like that. He met a lot of people that way—and got to visit with old friends.

Morrisroe: One office that hasn't come up, and I don't know to what extent you have regular interaction with them, is Oval Office Operations, Nancy Hernreich's shop.

Hale: Oh, minute by minute. Nancy had known him obviously forever. One time after he yelled at all of us about something, she pulled me aside later that afternoon. She said, "Let me tell you a story." She told me the story about how she'd been scheduling him once and he'd asked her to do something. She'd done it and then he came back and yelled at her for doing it. More importantly, he yelled at her in front of other people. She went in afterwards and she yelled at him. She said, "He's never yelled at me since."

Morrisroe: A little disrespect goes a long way.

Hale: Yes. She wasn't suggesting that I yell at the President of the United States, but not necessarily to fall over, either. She's tough. She's smart. He would pay attention to her. When he was running late, Andrew Friendly or whoever was the aide at that time would make three or four attempts to end a meeting and then finally Nancy would come into the room and he'd pay attention and that would be the end of whatever was running too long.

Lots of time Nancy sat in on meetings, which was a benefit. I would never have worried about Nancy being in on anything, because it helped make things run better. Andrew Friendly and all the rest of them were just godsends. Andrew was the one I dealt with the most. They took a lot of grief.

Riley: He wasn't under your direction?

Hale: No, he worked for Nancy.

Morrisroe: I'd like to circle back to a small point, but it might be something that somebody who is going to be holding your position in the future would be interested to know about. You mentioned that the Bush scheduler made a point of telling you to keep the office in the basement of the West Wing. Having kept it, what was the real advantage of doing so, and would you recommend it to others?

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Hale: I had a very good relationship with almost everybody in the White House before we got there. I can stand up for myself, but out-of-sight, out-of-mind does matter. The fact that you're there and people can easily get to you if they've got a question, as opposed to, "Oh, well, we'll deal with this later," or something like that. You're accessible, you're right there. Plus, in fact, it does say you're in the West Wing, which gives you outside clout. It was just important.

I will be happy to tell you that I wanted to be there. She volunteered it to me, but I was happy that she did. But Susan did have a point about being over there with my staff. She was very nice. She did tell me—it was very interesting—that before we got there, women could not wear pants in the White House. There were very few senior level women in Bush one.

Morrisroe: By just trend or—

Hale: I assume trend. Let me tell you something, that changed very quickly. Can you imagine not being able to wear a pair of pants to work?

Riley: I'm going to ask you about that, because there are some press accounts that occur. I don't remember them being dated to the period when you were doing scheduling, but later. There was a sense that women weren't being listened to commensurate to their positions, that they were being cut out.

Hale: I didn't buy it. This is a long way to answer it, but I have a sister who is eight years older and a sister who is eight years younger. If you look at the change in what has happened for women in the time period between—my older sister is an architect who went to N.C. State, and out of some 400 people in her class, there were three women. My younger sister, who is a CEO of a company here, how different her life has been. You sort of take it in stride, you know?

Most of the people who had strong—I didn't know Mack ahead of time other than to say hello, but most of the men who were in the White House were people who were either close friends, or whom I had at least known for some time. One of my faults is that I'm not aggressive enough at times.

I don't think that the people inside the Clinton White House were—I don't think that was a problem. I think if women were saying that, it was because they were feeling that they hadn't been listened to enough. I'm very protective of younger women, so I don't want you to think I believe this doesn't matter and they're whiners. I realize this does exist and I have hit it many times in other places. But quite frankly, inside the Clinton White House was not one of them.

Carol Rasco had a lot of juice with the President. Whether she had a lot of juice with a lot of her male colleagues that she didn't know had less to do with her being a woman than the fact that she didn't have long-term relationships with these guys. I'm not saying Carol complained, I'm just saying she's an example different from me. She was Arkansas and I was Washington.

I will tell you, of all people, the Vice President is gender-blind. He had some of the strongest women working for him that I've ever worked with. So no, I didn't see it. There was an early effort for the women of the administration, senior level White House and women Cabinet

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officials, to get together for dinners. I didn't go to the first one and I regretted it afterwards. Then people got too busy and it just didn't happen. I think it's important to have some kind of solidarity, but it is also important not to let overstate the situation. That's a long answer to your question.

Riley: No, it's very helpful because we don't know, and you're never sure when you're reading a press account whether it's an accurate representation of a small slice or whether somebody has an ax to grind and that's what the result of it is, and it's an easy target. What was the hardest thing about that particular job for you?

Hale: The lack of a structure when we got there. It really was way too freewheeling. As much as we kept trying to put structure into it, and then as much as the President wanted some kind of organization, he was as big an offender as anybody.

Morrisroe: Did it take Panetta to come for that to change, or had it started changing before then?

Hale: It started changing. Remember, I was out of that slot by the time Leon was there. It was really tough and the outside world was picking up little things and then blowing them out of proportion, which you just live with. That's life. Lack of structure. Too much freelancing.

Riley: And the lack of structure also included access questions to the Oval Office, I take it.

Hale: Yes, too many people could walk in and walk out.

Riley: That complicated your life because—

Hale: Because they could get in and ask this question and he'd think it was a great idea. And quite often it probably was a great idea, but you just couldn't fit it all in.

Riley: You had channels to go through. How did the schedule get circulated? Were there daily schedules circulated to people?

Hale: Senior staff got one. They went out at night at ten o'clock or something like that, to the assistants to the President and to some other people. Then it was circulated at the 7:30 staff meeting in the morning. Then there was a public schedule that went through the Communications Office that got circulated after the 7:30 or 8:00 meeting.

Riley: The Diarist did not work for you?

Hale: No.

Riley: That was also Nancy's?

Hale: It was probably Nancy. It could have been under the Chief of Staff.

Morrisroe: I think it was Oval Office Operations.

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Riley: What are we missing out of scheduling? Is there a piece of this that we haven't gotten to? You must have some good stories about—

Morrisroe: A foreign trip maybe.

Hale: How about this?

Riley: Oh yes, the cartoons, I forgot. For the record, Marcia's office is decorated with some fabulous personalized political cartoons.

Hale: And, I think they're all Pulitzer Prize winners. Here's the story. As I told you briefly before, I used to live with somebody who was a columnist for the *Washington Post.* For many years, the *Post* under Meg Greenfield and Howard Simons had an annual cartoonist dinner. These were crazy affairs. Howard Simons was a great cartoonist fan. He was an aficionado of cartooning and a great person. While nobody ever said this, the purpose of the dinner was who's going to take Herblock's [Herbert Lawrence Block] place, because someday Herblock—Well, Herblock lived longer than some of these cartoonists.

Anyway, we'd go to the boardroom at the *Washington Post* and there would be eight to ten cartoonists and their spouses, and six or seven people from the *Post,* including Mrs. [Katherine] Graham and quite often Donnie Graham, and two or three prominent people and their guests. Then there would be the mystery guest. Dinner would be served and during the courses at dinner each cartoonist would have to get up and tell a story.

First of all, they're all brilliant. They're delightful, but they're crazy brilliant and they are the most entertaining people you've ever met. They would get up and tell a story of something funny or interesting that happened to them this year—it was hysterical. . Then the surprise guest would do something or tell a story. Several years it was Ted Koppel, who loves cartooning. John McCain. I sat next to Warren Buffett one night. I had no idea who Warren Buffett was.

Riley: Isn't he the guy with the parrot head?

Hale: He was very charming. I was quite taken with him. This was even before he did ABC/CAP Cities. This was the early '80s. Senator [Daniel] Moynihan loved to come to these dinners. Quite often you'd have one or two secret guests because they would want to come back. Then there was the tradition that when the dinner was over you would do something in Washington and the secret guest would take you there.

Haynes [Johnson] and I missed this when they did this, which I regret, but it's probably a good thing. Moynihan took them to the floor of the Senate. It's about 1:00 in the morning and you have 16 people walking around the floor of the Senate, pretending they're Senators.

Another time they went to the Lincoln Memorial. Then one night we all ended up at the Tabard Inn until about—John Glenn took everybody to the Tabard Inn. I don't think John Glenn is going to take us to the floor of the Senate. Anyway, 1993, this dinner is coming up. We've been in the

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White House literally six weeks maybe and I think, *I should invite the cartoonists to the White House*. I called Meg Greenfield, who quite frankly didn't seem too hot on the idea, but she said, "Fine, go ahead and do it. No, we won't come." I'd invited everybody who would be coming to the dinner to come.

So I invited them all over in the middle of an unbelievable snowstorm. Washington was gorgeous but it was unbelievable. They all trekked in. I took them to my office and took them to the East Wing and through the West Wing. That year, sadly, Tom Toles, who is now cartoonist for the *Post*, didn't come. We took them all through the White House. Chuck [Charles Martin] Jones came that year and Herblock was there.

Well, what they didn't know was that—after the tour, I took them in to the Oval Office and Clinton was there. Clinton then spent—this is classic—an hour with them. Mark Stamaty, who was the *Village Voice* cartoonist and was in the *Post* for a while, does this incredible Elvis [Presley] impersonation. He would end every dinner at the *Post* with his impersonation of Elvis. Mrs. Graham—she'd get a huge kick out of it. On the floor of the Senate, he did his Elvis impersonation.

We're sitting in the Oval Office: Clinton is near his desk and there are two big chairs where Clinton and Gore usually sit, and in those are Chuck Jones and Herblock. The other cartoonists are all around them. You know Clinton is a huge Elvis Presley fan. The other cartoonists egg Stamaty into doing his Elvis Presley impersonation. So in the Oval Office we have an impersonation, a *great* impersonation of Elvis Presley.

Then Clinton gets his valet and whispers in his ear. The valet disappears. I'm trying to be polite and leave. "No, no, Marcia, wait, wait." The valet comes back. Clinton has an Elvis Presley tie that he presented Mark Stamaty. We have pictures of it. A great day. I have often said that this was one of the best scheduling events I ever had. They got to see the President in an unofficial way. And if you remember, Jimmy Carter, particularly, got savaged by the editorial cartoonists. These guys are all big deals around the country.

Riley: Of course.

Hale: They all leave. It's now about four o'clock. I'm exhausted and I've got work to do. They leave. The snowstorm is raging and they canceled the *Post* dinner. They were delighted because they had all gone to Jeff McNelly's house in Virginia—he has since died of a heart attack. They stayed there and all had a great time.

Senator Moynihan was supposed to be the guest that night for about the third time. He loved coming. He was great company. He'd tell great stories. He says, "Okay, you can't go to dinner, but let's all have brunch at my house tomorrow." He had one of those beautiful apartments in the new building on Pennsylvania Avenue that overlooks the Capitol. So we all go there to brunch.

They're all thanking me and telling me how great it is and Chuck Jones comes up to me and says—I had told him that my favorite cartoon in the entire world, which my sister and I share, is Pepe Le Pew. He says, "I want to give you a thank-you." He looks at Moynihan and says, "Got

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any cardboard?" Moynihan says, "Sure, come on." We go back in the apartment and in Moynihan's bedroom he pulls cardboard out of one of his shirts. Chuck Jones sits down and does a cartoon for me, thanking me for the day. Then I ever-so-boldly ask him for one for my sister. I was so touched.

The sweetest part about it all is—Moynihan, Chuck Jones, and I were back in the bedroom. Nobody knew this was going on. I didn't tell them when I came back—didn't mention Pepe Le Pew. And for the next two or three weeks I got these cartoons independently. They all sent me a cartoon as a thank-you. They're sweet. If you read them—

Riley: They're just gorgeous and right on.

Hale: They're terrific. This one is—Clinton's giving the cartoonists a tour of the Oval Office and of the infamous little back office with a bathroom.

Riley: Not infamous then.

Hale: Yes, not infamous then. He takes Jim Borgman into the bathroom in his private study, and hanging over the toilet is a Jim Borgman cartoon. Borgman is like, "Oh, my God!" He sent this to me as a thank-you.

Riley: The cartoonist's spot says, "The cartoonist's work in the traditional place of honor in the Oval Office, which is right above the toilet."

Hale: Very cute.

Riley: I have a very precocious eight-year-old who loves cartoons and who has been a huge fan of Chuck Jones' work. He learned to read Roman numerals by looking at the dates on the cartoons when they're copyrighted. So he'll be deeply impressed.

Hale: Anyway, that was my best scheduling event. There were several, but that was the best.

Riley: And your worst? Any real nightmares you care to recount?

Hale: I had nothing to do with the haircut, but I got some of the blame for it.

Riley: How was that?

Hale: Because it happened on a trip. I literally didn't know anything about it. Christophe comes on the airplane—I still think some of this is fable about planes being stopped because he was on the tarmac. I hear about it the next morning at the senior staff meeting, but because I didn't know about it I got some of the—remember, this is before texting and email.

Riley: No events that went really bad? There are constant stories of TelePrompTer problems.

Hale: That was a nightmare.

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Riley: But were there advance snafus that found their way back to you?

Hale: There was one. The hardest, toughest people to negotiate with was the Vatican. There was no negotiating with the Vatican. You were either going to do it their way or you weren't going to do it. When Clinton first went to Denver in 1993, the lead advance person, who will remain nameless, cursed in front of one of the Monsignors leading the Pope's advance. That was the end of him. That got back to the White House and that was the end of him. He was a talented person, but you don't do that.

Riley: You don't remember how vile—

Hale: It was bad.

Riley: I'm giving you a chance.

Hale: It was bad.

Riley: Foreign trips?

Hale: We did Vancouver. The President introduced me to [Boris] Yeltsin. Yeltsin came over to Vancouver and we had something similar to a State dinner but much, much, smaller. Some of us were invited to that. He walked up—Clinton is wonderful at this. He's introducing us to Yeltsin. He looks at Yeltsin and he points to me and says, "Here's Marcia. She tells me where to go." Yeltsin is looking at me like, *What?* Then Clinton explained to him, "She's my scheduler."

There was one other example. It wasn't so much snafus or anything. We were always running late and we always had too much on the schedule.

Riley: Did you get to the point where you had to yell at the President about his being late?

Hale: I wouldn't say I yelled at him. We had several discussions about, "I'm happy to cut these things back, but you and others can't be saying 'yes' to things, because it just screws up your schedule terribly."

Riley: I would assume that the Chief of Staff ultimately is the one who gets this stuff under control. Is it under control before Panetta comes in?

Hale: Yes. It's way better. Leon made it better and Erskine [Bowles] made it better. It improved all the way through. I would bet that the only problems Clinton was having towards the end just had to do with them spending too much time doing some things.

Riley: Is that a job that you would have stayed in for longer than you did?

Hale: Yes. I had every intention of staying and I think it would have progressively gotten better. But then Regina Montoya went back to Texas, and because Mark Gearan and I were the only two

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people in the White House at that time who had serious gubernatorial experience, they asked me to take over that job, which I was happy to do. In some ways it's a better job; in other ways it's not, because you don't have the access to the President. What you have to remember is that I was then moving into a job dealing with the constituency that Clinton most cared about. So I didn't have too much trouble getting my crowd on the schedule, having been the scheduler.

Riley: Did you get any sense that they were unhappy with the work that you were doing in scheduling?

Hale: There was unhappiness, but I don't think it had as much to do with me or anyone in particular. It was an impossible situation until everyone began to realize they were in the government, not the campaign. And yes, there's probably much second-guessing. But there are a lot of things in life to worry about and that's not one of them.

Riley: I didn't know—

Hale: No, that's fair. That's fair.

Riley: Is there anything else about the scheduling piece?

Morrisroe: The only thing that maybe comes to mind is, were there any special challenges in scheduling foreign trips for Clinton?

Hale: The only challenges were just that we didn't have enough time to do the types of things he also would like. He got to do a lot more as the Presidency went on. We were on such a tight schedule. The NSC got into that and did the actual, what we would call "sherpa," for the foreign trips. Our advance people would go, but the NSC had the lead on it. They would define what the events would be and then we would go do the events. I went to Vancouver, then I went to Japan and Korea. I went on that one to see what it looked like on the ground. It's always complicated but there wasn't anything there that wasn't—it was just logistical complications; it wasn't policy complications or a foreign government asking us to do something we didn't want to do.

Riley: Did the President like to travel?

Hale: Yes. He loved to do that, particularly if he was going someplace he'd never been. He was well-traveled before. I don't think he'd ever been to Korea when we went. I didn't really want to go to Korea. Not that I didn't want to go to Korea, but I thought I should leave and go back to the White House. I decided to stay. I loved South Korea. We went to the DMZ [Demilitarized Zone] and I found that fascinating. I think to a lot of Americans, at least myself, Korea is something we just don't have in our psyches, and the DMZ is like a throwback to the 1940s/50s. It was interesting. We sat there with binoculars and looked across and could see the North Koreans. That was interesting. It's always helpful to experience these things personally.

Riley: The President's body clock, how do you adjust for that when you're traveling?

Hale: Well, since he doesn't sleep anyway.…

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Riley: I thought that might be the answer.

Hale: The same thing. Whatever their morning was, it was always a little slow and you tried not to put the most important meetings in the morning and you just got used to that. If it had to happen, it happened and you told him about it ahead of time. He's like most normal people. If you tell him ahead of time that there's a reason for something instead of his seeing something and thinking that you're all idiots, he would be fine. And if he wasn't fine, you'd figure out some way to make a change.

Riley: Was he able to sleep on airplanes? Would he sleep on Air Force One?

Hale: Have you ever been on Air Force One?

Riley: No, I haven't.

Hale: It's easier to sleep there than in your bedroom.

Riley: Is it nice?

Hale: It was very nice. When we first were there I think the Bush White House had only had it for about a year. These are two beautiful airplanes. If you were getting two new Air Force Ones now they'd be even better, but this is a nice airplane. When we flew to Japan and then on to Korea, it was easy. The food is good, and the bathrooms are nice. Anybody who complains about flying—He has a bed and a shower, so he could get up and take a shower. That was the only shower on board.

Riley: So you can start your adjustment in transit in a way that you can't if you're flying commercial.

Hale: Yes.

Riley: Why don't we take a break for two to three minutes. We're clear to go to 6:00 if that's okay.

[BREAK]

Riley: Intergovernmental. Who comes to talk to you about this?

Hale: Roy Neel.

Riley: No kidding?

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Hale: He was then Deputy Chief of staff. He came to me. There was a huge uproar by the Governors and the mayors about Regina, which was unfair, because she had never worked with these organizations, the Big Seven—and remember she didn't have any systems to work through either. The individual Governors and mayors are a unique crowd and having experience with them was helpful to me. She'd never done any of that. So Regina was going to go back to Texas and they needed to fill the slot.

Riley: Not to be too pointed about this, but she was married to someone who was being appointed to a judgeship, is that correct?

Hale: I think that happened so that they could go back.

Riley: That was the purpose of the question.

Hale: I'm not positive about that but I think that was the case.

Riley: It was a convenient time.

Hale: Yes, it made perfect sense. So I took over and there were a lot of unhappy campers, particularly the mayors. The head of the mayors' organization has been there forever and he's quite a large personality. He has a tendency to stir the pot. Well, he had stirred the pot. I got along fine with him but you had to have a combination of getting along with him and being tough enough to get along with him and knowing where your boundaries were.

Riley: Clinton had always gotten along well with this fellow?

Hale: Clinton knew him. He's been in the job for 25 to 30 years. Mark Gearan would have been an easy fit, too, but Mark was Deputy Chief of Staff, as well, so he wasn't going to take this on.

They announced it—while I was still scheduler, I started getting calls from mayors and Governors. I'm still in my scheduling office in the West Wing and Governor [George Victor] Voinovich called me. I literally had not made any transition. He was very interesting. He started to ask me about some very particular Ohio problem. He said, "You really don't know what I'm talking about, do you?" I said, "Governor, I haven't really—" He said, "You haven't made the switch yet. Move your office and call me back."

He meant when I got into my new job I should call. I did. He was terrific. Then of course he became Senator Voinovich. What was one of the more appealing—there were lots of appealing things about this job. All these people in the White House think they have incredibly tough jobs, and they do. But I realized how much better off all my colleagues had been for the first nine or ten months than I had, because the pressure of not having to worry about Bill Clinton every second was unbelievable once I shifted to another job. It was like night and day. Some of us, you just internalize it. If you're being conscientious or even if you're a worrier, you're making it tougher.

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So I switched. But what was nice about it was, once you get to that level, you can also be very bipartisan at times. I actually do think you get elected to these jobs and you become a senior level staff person to get something done. Having worked for a moderate Democratic Governor who cares about policy, I was very open to trying to use the Governors and mayors to be able to further what we were trying to get done policy-wise. I am not a policy wonk but I care about it. I don't get into the details of policy, but I do have the larger big picture of it. So I immediately got a baptism by fire, because they made the switch just before the National Governors Association meeting in Oklahoma. I fly to Oklahoma for my first NGA meeting as the White House person, having been on the job for like a day and a half.

Riley: Had you been to an NGA meeting before?

Hale: Yes I had—many times. Like I said, all that was not new territory. I knew people. I had a couple of Governors there that I knew well. And they were very good to me. But you're still walking in, and people are thinking you're going to talk about administration policy when what you had been worried about previously was, when are we going to Japan?

I got there and I did fine, Clinton came to the meeting. It got announced. David Broder wrote a very nice column about NGA and how they'd been smart to make me the liaison. That helped a lot. That also helped with the Republican Governors.

I came to love working with the Governors. I loved working with mayors, mayors of big cities. First of all, they have to get something done every day and they usually have larger-than-life personalities. They're real executives. Governors are, too, but Governors have huge staffs. I loved it because it was a very nice cross-section of politics and policy and being in the White House. I also had a constituency, such that if I was smart and let Clinton know that they were in town, or that they needed something, I could get his attention on it, or I could walk them down into the Oval Office and they could say hello.

Riley: Did you have conversations with the President, as you were taking the position, about "What I want is…"?

Hale: About what I wanted? No.

Riley: Not about what you want, but about what he wants from you?

Hale: Yes, I did have that. It had been brewing for a while that the Governors and the mayors were unhappy. Even if I had had no interest in this, we were well-aware—I think it had hit the *Post* and the *Times*.

Morrisroe: Can you flesh out at all for us what, specifically, was not working in the relationship?

Hale: I think they just felt like they were not getting enough attention. There were a couple of situations where they had tried to bring policy issues to the White House and they hadn't been dealt with. I don't really know. I just remember there being a lot of discord.

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Morrisroe: So, inattention from the White House towards their concerns?

Hale: It was the whole shop, not just Regina. I came in to a situation that was kind of screwed up.

Morrisroe: Did you keep any of the existing staff?

Hale: This is interesting. The deputy left at the same time Regina did. The person who got hired, sight unseen by me—Clinton actually wanted this to happen—was Keith Mason, who is a partner in this law firm. He and I have stayed very good friends and he was one of the people who recruited me to come to this firm. I knew of him because he was fairly well known in Georgia and very close to Paul and to James. I thought if Paul and James thought he was really good, that was fine with me. Keith got hired—they let me hire him, but he would have been hired if I hadn't wanted him hired. We'll be very clear about that. He shows up about two days after the National Governors Association meeting. He's from Georgia and he's got to find a house to live in, and he's recently married.

Riley: Had he ever been in Washington?

Hale: To live here? No. He had been Zell Miller's chief of staff in Georgia. I'm trying to remember my dates, but he was chief of staff in Georgia. Keith and I bonded quickly. That could have been a mess but we liked each other. Keith took a huge chunk of the responsibility for the Governors, and the Governors were happy about that because he was somebody who understood Governors and knew them. I put a lot of emphasis on the mayors. They were the biggest problem and we tried to work closely with them and we succeeded at that.

You had to deal with them individually and deal with the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. I got to be and am still very close friends with a lot of the big city mayors, and Governors. And several of the Republicans, too, I got to be good friends with, because at that level you really can. [Rudy] Giuliani—he helped on the crime bill. I have stayed friends with his two closest political advisors. They came here to the firm to visit me when they were in Washington. But it was a really nice mixture of policy and politics.

Riley: What are the big issues that you're confronting?

Hale: The crime bill was the first, and the mayors were absolutely in favor of what Clinton was doing on it, Democrats and Republicans. We did a lot with big city mayors on the crime bill. They did care about welfare reform. The Governors cared more, because welfare goes through their budgets. There were lots of things. You can help a mayor in many ways, and some of it is just perception, but important perception. If a mayor was in town and really had an issue, he could come—this is where it was a great job—a mayor or Governor could come and talk to the Assistant to the President in the West Wing. The Bush people have moved this job out of the West Wing.

Riley: So you kept your office?

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Hale: I went up two floors and shared a suite with Congressional Relations. I got an even nicer office. This is one reason why I respected Leon so much, not just because he was a great Chief of Staff, but I could say, "I'm talking to Governor So-and-so. We'll do all the details, but will you either come to my office and say hello, or can I bring the Governor down?" It was good politics, but also it helped me push policy, because once Leon felt it was worth his time to do, which he almost always did, it helped me.

There are a couple of examples of things you could do for people. It was highlighting their issue and trying to work out some of their issues specifically. On the big policy issues, like welfare reform, we brought Democratic and Republican Governors to the White House. The Republicans were *very* skeptical. They probably left skeptical but not *very* skeptical, and that meeting really helped because Clinton talked detailed policy with them.

By that time there were a couple of Governors who hadn't served with him, who had been elected once he had been elected President. You bring those people together and let him talk to people on a policy level, and you could solve a lot of problems. He was more than willing to spend time on that.

Riley: I would guess that you must have felt a fairly high level of scrutiny from the Oval Office about what you're doing, because the President has got an awful lot of friends in the networks that you're working in, right?

Hale: There was one—and then I want to talk about ACIR [Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations]. That's one place where the scrutiny was a problem. But people like Governor [Ned] McWherter in Tennessee had a huge healthcare problem in TennCare. Governor McWherter is a classic, wonderful southern gentleman who cares deeply about policy. Bill Clinton loves him. If McWherter were in town I could let Clinton know and they'd go to the residence and McWherter would have a whiskey—I'm sure Clinton had a Diet Coke—and smoke cigars out on the Truman balcony. I could do that with people. It was a release for the President. He enjoyed doing that.

On policy matters for somebody like McWherter—Carol Rasco was an expert on what McWherter's policy problem was—I could make sure McWherter got the right attention in the agencies and that people understood that if it was possible they should try to help Governor McWherter. That kind of info would get fed back to the President. For the first couple of years, anyway, I think it was all pretty positive. Jerry Abramson in Louisville, I remember helping him. He's now mayor again of Louisville. But yes, that could have been a problem if I were more insecure.

Riley: But it is a hard thing. Anytime you're working and you step into a preexisting set of relationships, it can be a little bit complicated, I would think.

Hale: It can be, but if you sit around and worry about that—and there were lots of—you can't make everybody happy, but I already knew many of the Governors and Mayors so had my own relationships. The Congressional Relations folks had it way worse than I did. Any member of

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Congress can pick up the phone and complain, and they did. And Governors and mayors would complain.

But at least for the first two or three years there wasn't—I did my external job much better than I did my internal job in Intergovernmental. I loved dealing with these people and I did a lot that I never talked about around the White House—not telling people what we were actually doing for people, or what a big problem there was in some places. I just was doing my job.

Riley: When you say you're better at your external job than your internal job, explain what you mean by that.

Hale: Sadly, you have to do certain things to raise your profile, to make sure everybody else knows what you are doing, and I'm not very good at that. But, you know what? That's okay. Some people are really good at telling people how good they are.

Riley: You want to drop a name or two?

Hale: I will tell you that because of my previous personal life, I have relationships, or I did particularly at that time, with many in the national press, because they were the people I socialized with. I didn't use that to my own benefit at all well. I was too worried going in that I would look like a leaker. Everybody had relationships, but mine were a little bit different because mine were initially not professional-based. They became professionally based, but I never—I didn't leak. And secondly, I didn't work the press. Many of my colleagues spent more time working the press. I didn't really take advantage, and I didn't help enough, informing the press either of policy, or that they had something wrong. I could have been a resource—and I should have been.

If I had it to do over again, I would do that. Also, it was a pretty frustrating thing, and I would tell Clinton this myself—He hated leakers. He'd come in and he'd see something in the paper and he'd be furious about it. He'd be furious about it but at the same time, he and other people—if you were quoted in the press all the time or if you were presumed to be influencing the press, it gave you clout and you got paid more attention to inside the White House. I think this White House is very different, the [George W.] Bush White House.

Much like my *Washington Post* cartoons here, there were lots of things I could have done. If I'd had any money, I should have been entertaining, but I didn't. It really can be used to great benefit and I should have used it to great benefit and I didn't.

Riley: It shows up in the briefing materials. You're not an easy person to research, and it makes it a bit of a challenge for a graduate student to go through and figure out what it is you were doing.

Hale: Haynes and I got named "power couple" in *Newsweek* magazine. I didn't use any of that. In Washington that's probably a mistake.

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Riley: I've got two questions. Because you had become a real resident of Washington by the time the administration came in, can you talk a little bit about the difficulties that the Clintons had in being accepted by the permanent Washington establishment? There's at least a perception that Washington really didn't embrace this President and First Lady in the White House.

Hale: I think there were mistakes made on both sides. I'll tell you one vignette that we may have to hold for publication.

Riley: Sure.

Hale: I was still scheduling Clinton, so it was the spring of '93. What you're getting at happened even earlier. But in the spring of '93 he was going out to play golf with Vernon. I said, "Why don't you invite Ben Bradlee to come with you?" I had socialized a lot with Ben and Sally [Quinn Bradlee]. I don't pretend to be their best friends, but I saw them a lot. He said, "Uh, I don't know. Sally has been really rough on Hillary." I said," I didn't ask you to play golf with Sally; I asked you to play golf with Ben." He said, "I don't know about that." I don't know why, but I thought Ben Bradlee and Bill Clinton would like each other. Ben and Sally, as a couple in '93, were a very big part of the Washington establishment. I really wanted to try to make that happen, but it never did.

Part of it was it was hard for them—they couldn't get out, and in the beginning they were so busy inviting the people from around the country to do things in the White House, that perhaps a lot of the old-line establishment didn't get invited. It was more about getting the people from around the country in, than it was about—

Riley: Was it merely an opportunity lost, or did it create bad blood among the permanent Washington establishment?

Hale: It may have created bad blood, but I don't think it was that. It was a lost opportunity in some ways. There were some people who really hadn't been for him. I'll never forget, the first month we were in the White House, I was scheduling, and Senator [Ernest] Hollings, whom I'd worked for, called me.

Riley: Now there's an accent.

Hale: There's an accent, and I love him. He called me and said, "Peatsy [Rita Louise Liddy Hollings] and I are having a dinner party on Saturday night. Do you think the President and Hillary would like to come?" I said, "I don't know, I'll ask." I was actually more worried that it would look like I was trying to help Senator Hollings than the fact that Senator Hollings had picked up the phone—that I was trying to favor somebody who is a friend of mine. But I thought, well, Senator Hollings has now asked the President of the United States to dinner. I can hardly *not* tell him.

I walked up and I asked Howard Paster first and I said, "Hollings has asked this." Howard was all for it. He said, "Does he have anything to do Saturday night?" I said, "No, because nobody picks up the phone and calls the President of the United States on short notice and says, 'Come

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over for a small casual dinner,' which he would love." They didn't have a social event. So I go talk to him and say—

Riley: You talked to him, or them?

Hale: To him. The [Joseph] Bidens were going to be there, Janet Reno was going to be there, and one other couple, I don't remember who it was. I said, "Look, I'm not trying to—" He said, "We'd love to." The Hollings have a beautiful house in Charleston, but the Hollings' house here in Washington is modest. I think Peatsy did all the cooking. And they had a very nice dinner out. There were some people like Fritz Hollings who reached out, and Bill Clinton gladly came. So there may have been a few missed opportunities on the other side, too.

Now, it would have been very hard—That was not a fancy pre-planned Washington Georgetown party. That was a nice casual dinner party.

Riley: Were there people who could have helped the President, to whom he was close?

Hale: Oh yes, Vernon did. They went to Vernon's house and Vernon was very helpful and there were other people, Molly Raiser. They would go there.

Riley: Is that point overstated?

Hale: I think it is a little bit. I went to a dinner party in the Hamptons at Ben and Sally's house. This would be the summer of '95, I think. It was Ben's birthday. It was very nice. I was there because I was happening to visit a mutual friend of theirs who has a house in the Hamptons. It was full of New Yorkers. I have to tell you, the New York crowd at that time was way more "we have not been included" than the Washington crowd.

Riley: This actually prompted a question that we probably should have asked earlier. Did the President take a vacation during the time that you were doing scheduling?

Hale: Yes. He left in August. I think it was their first Martha's Vineyard trip. The funny thing was, his birthday is August 19th and it was just before his birthday. Somebody from Arkansas sent a truckload of watermelons. So we were having a birthday party for him before he left for vacation on the South lawn. He had gotten all these books and was very excited about it. I was standing there talking to him and somebody came up to me and said, "Marcia, ask him if we can use the pool while he's gone."

"*What?*" It's August. We're all working. I'd seen the pool twice or something. So I walked up to him and said, "Mr. President, while you're gone can we use the pool?" He looked at me and said, "It's fine with me but you'd better ask somebody." I said, "I thought I just did."

Morrisroe: Would pool attendants be higher authority on the question?

[redacted]

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Riley: Exactly.

Hale: It was very cute. He kind of laughed.

Riley: Okay, you said the "inside" and the "outside" job. We talked about the inside job. But the outside job, by that you mean your relations with—

Hale: There are two points. One is, I was good at solving problems—if you guys were Governor Rendell or a prominent mayor, I could sit here and solve your problem. We'd have it all worked out. We'd talk on the phone ten more times, or whatever. What I didn't do enough of was go to Philadelphia and be the face of the administration. That is such a wonderful job to have but you know, you're so busy.

What I did was work really hard one-on-one, and with the Big Seven, trying to keep them involved. That had been the biggest problem prior to my being there. So I did that. If I had it to do over again, I'd get out in the country and do some more. It's good for the administration for you to do it, and if you've got good staff you can go do those things.

Riley: You had one deputy?

Hale: I had one deputy who did Governors. I had a deputy who did the state legislatures. I had another deputy who did everybody else and then we had two or three staff assistants. There were about six or seven of us.

Riley: I know that in Congressional Relations there is what they call an internal deputy who is there to look after the shop and attend the meetings and so forth while people are off on the Hill. Did you have somebody who had that?

Hale: I should have. Keith, and John Emerson when he was there, did a lot of that but we would have been better off to have been structured to do that. They would have been happier. I think they were both happy but they would have both been happier because it would have given them more juice internally, which I would have been happy to do.

Riley: This is a question that relates to both jobs. One of the things that had happened during the campaign is that the President had pledged to cut White House staff by 25 percent.

Hale: Dumbest thing we ever did.

Riley: Dumbest thing he ever did. How did that affect you in both places?

Hale: I don't know that it affected me directly in scheduling, except that we couldn't grow. When we started to have problems and I recognized tasks that could be done, there was just no way I was going to get another staffer. Either I was going to do it, or somebody already on my staff was going to do it.

Riley: Did you use volunteers?

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Hale: These were the kinds of things I couldn't give to somebody who wasn't—same thing in Intergovernmental. Other people, like Cabinet Affairs and others, for them to be kept to this arbitrary number—head-counting can get pretty complicated in the federal government because you can slice and dice people. It was just dumb. And man-hours wasted. Clinton was dead set on keeping this promise. I think it finally disappeared about '98 or '99. But he was keeping this campaign promise and it was a dumb campaign promise. I'll bet you anything—He wouldn't say "dumb," but he would not put it on his list of smart things.

Morrisroe: When you ran the Intergovernmental Affairs shop, did you make extensive use of the IGA officers and departments in agencies?

Hale: I did. Once again, you can do more. I had a monthly or every-six-week's meeting of all the Intergovernmental directors. There were some really good ones, most of whom had been in the campaign so they knew people inside the White House and were comfortable. If we could have gotten that moving a little better, that might have been good. In some cases, the Intergovernmental slots in agencies are used for political hires. That can be great and that can be terrible.

Morrisroe: Did you run into any problems with any of the Big Seven as institutions, or individual members going through the agencies to get to the White House?

Hale: Not really, because the Big Seven all want to deal directly with the White House.

Morrisroe: If they can get you on the phone, why bother—

Hale: They wouldn't mind having somebody—like HHS, places like that, where people were really good who were doing Intergovernmental. They were smart and they did their homework and let people know what they were doing or what they were bringing to the White House.

Morrisroe: Did the President's prior service as a Governor at all elevate the NGA and the NGA meetings to a higher level in the policy arena?

Hale: Yes.

Morrisroe: How did that show itself?

Hale: First of all, he loved doing it. The first one I had to do was in '94. I had to do the seating arrangements for the dinner and I had been at the NGA meeting at the Marriott all day long. I then went to the White House Social Office. I had brought my dress in to change in my office. It was a miserable cold day. That's all you remember about NGA meetings; it's always miserable.

Morrisroe: It's always January, isn't it?

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Hale: January or February. They just had it. I'm there and somehow he knows I'm there. He called down to the Social Office and he said, "I've been watching this on C-SPAN." He's watching the committee meetings of NGA on C-SPAN. Does that tell you what he cares about?

The clout we had also was that everybody on the staff knew he cared about it. I could get Governors in to see him privately. He would do the DGA events; he would do the Roundtable at the White House. They did the dinner. They liked the dinner. The Clintons loved having all the Governors over. They were great partners. I don't know of any occasion where a Democratic Governor, even if they had a beef, didn't try to bring it to us first. Maybe the Republican Governors are the same for Bush. I'm not sure it's quite the same anymore.

Morrisroe: What specific issues do you recall being particularly important to advance through the NGA?

Hale: Healthcare, welfare, education. The crime bill came to the mayors, but also they cared about welfare reform. It was a big deal for NGA. It had been a huge deal for Clinton when he was in NGA. He still cares about that organization.

Morrisroe: Who were the Governors that were particularly helpful to the administration over a number of issues? And who were problematic?

Hale: Howard Dean was a complete team player on healthcare, and being a doctor he gave us a lot of credibility on it. He didn't always agree, but if we brought him in and talked to him—and I didn't do the policy. Carol or Ira Magaziner would talk that level of detail. He was totally a team player. Even if he wasn't completely in agreement he would not show it when he walked out the door.

A lot of the Governors cared about welfare reform—Evan Bayh, Tom Carper, Gaston Caperton [III] from West Virginia. They also really wanted Clinton to succeed. They knew they almost always could get him without going through me, but they almost always told me they were going to call him if they called him in the residence. Or they would call me the next day and say, "You know, he called me last night. I just want you to know this." Governor McWherter was the one that he talked to most often.

He would talk to Dick Riley and Bruce Babbitt and make sure that they came to the Governors' meetings. Anybody he served with he wanted to have there, too. There were a couple, like Governor [Michael O.] Leavitt—and I noticed that you guys had this in the briefing book—my memory is very foggy on this, but I really liked Governor Leavitt, Secretary Leavitt now. We had a really good working relationship. He was the head of the NGA one year while I was there. We were about to announce the National Monument in Utah.

Morrisroe: Grand Staircase-Escalante?

Hale: He was opposed to a provision of it, a big provision of it. We had not done anything with him to my—I thought it had gone through Interior, probably EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], and then it went through Katie McGinty's office [CEQ, Council on Environmental

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Quality] in the White House. [redacted]

Riley: Sure.

Hale: Clinton was in New York. I went down to see Leon and said, "Leon, we have a problem." Leon completely agreed with me. I think Leon knew all about the policy, but I think Leon thought Utah had been advised of this. He was empathetic to letting the Governor—Leavitt wanted to talk to Clinton. I called Leavitt back. I said, "We will have him call you, but he's at a series of events in New York.

I had to call Clinton and tell him. To his great credit, at about midnight New York time—so it wasn't too bad for Leavitt—he called Leavitt and talked to him for 30 or 40 minutes. We went ahead with policy, but at least we had connected. It was too little, too late, but it wasn't as if Leavitt had called the White House and somebody had said, "Sorry, but we're going ahead." There were Congressional hearings on this too.

Morrisroe: Looking back on it, how did that happen? Was it just that there was a miscommunication? The sense in the press is that the Utah people were deliberately kept in the dark and that on one occasion a member of Congress from that district had inquired whether it was happening and was told no.

[redacted]

Riley: It must have been, because Howard was long gone.

Hale: I was trying to remember whether Pat was gone by then.

Riley: I don't think so because I think he was—

Hale: They may have purposely kept me out of it because they may have decided that I would tell the Governor. That very well could have happened.

By the time of the Congressional testimony I was living in London so I didn't know anything about it. I don't remember how I found out, but I saw his testimony at some point.

Morrisroe: And what was the nature of the testimony?

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[redacted]

Riley: This was the event where they made the announcement from northern Arizona?

Hale: Yes.

Riley: Had that been long planned or that was a last minute departure?

Hale: It probably had been planned. You can't just pop the President of the United States down in 24 hours. Maybe the event was four or five days later and we announced it. But it was not done right. Now, maybe the Vice President really wanted this to happen. I don't know all the ins and outs, but we should have done a better job.

Riley: Did you find in Intergovernmental Relations that the Vice President was a good ally there?

Hale: Yes, absolutely. What was a great thing about him—towards the end when I was getting ready to leave, I would send him e-mails, which I would never do now, just for legal reasons, and almost immediately, if he was in the office, I'd get an e-mail back from him. You could communicate with Al Gore through e-mail back then. I remember saying, "So-and-so from Tennessee is here. Can I bring him down to see you?" His scheduler probably wanted to kill me.

Riley: Let me just follow up on that very quickly because it was something that I was reflecting on just a little bit. Was it the case that you were careful about your written communications because of the investigative environment that was prevalent at the time?

Hale: I am a very cautious person. I never had to hire a lawyer while I was in the White House. That's not just because I was out of the loop. I was out of the loop on some things, I would admit, and I'm happy to have been left out of the loop on some things. But on some other things, I was more careful than others.

I'm not a very good note-taker anyway. I'm not trained as a legal person. I can sit in my office here and watch my colleagues take notes and they're really good at it. I have a tendency to jot down a word or a phrase. But I was careful. There's an infamous—have you seen Mark Gearan?

Riley: Yes, sure.

Hale: We all sat in a meeting in the White House Mess—there's a room there—I can't remember what it was about but Harold was there, and Mark Gearan was there. Mark's notes got subpoenaed. Mark, who is a lawyer, had taken great notes. He had even taken down the words that Harold had said that were four-letter and very off-color. They were in his notes. The minute Mark's notes got subpoenaed was the last time I ever took any serious notes.

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Riley: It's a common story and so it was one that I wanted to go ahead and get you on the record about, because it's an indication of the importance of what we're doing to try to get after-the-fact records of this.

Hale: I'm not a good note-taker anyway. It's been a fault of mine.

Riley: It may have saved you some lawyers' fees, as you suggest.

Morrisroe: I was just going back to the national monument issue. That was an incident when the information didn't come to you in time. You talked a bit about how the Governors come to you with issues. How does news get to you generally that somewhere in the White House Operations or Domestic Policy shop, or in the agencies, that there's something going on with the cities or the mayors, or a particular state?

Hale: Two ways. The senior staff meeting is really very important in that regard. You talk about it. And quite often I would learn of something in healthcare, welfare policy, or something that's going to happen, or they would ask me to come help on something in that kind of framework. Also, one of the great things about the White House, and I hope the White House staff never grows so large that you can't fit the senior people in the West Wing, is that you are so close to each other and there are so few other people there. You don't have a floor of Intergovernmental and then a floor of Congressional. There's a lot of interaction, particularly if you like each other, and some of it is very informal. But the real way to do it, and Leon ran a great senior staff meeting, is that information comes out and then you can follow up on it.

Morrisroe: The Congressional Liaison shop and your shop—was being in the same suite of offices deliberate, given the nature of your slight overlap in some of your issues?

Hale: It was deliberate, but I have to laugh. I always felt Congressional got so much more play because our White House crowd was so Washington oriented. Leon was great. I had no problem with Clinton or with Gore in trying to get them to pay attention to my constituency, but the rest of the guys— "Oh please, Marcia. Why are you doing this?" Everybody just thinks that these Governors and mayors now are the greatest. I said, "I tried to tell you people this a long time ago."

So yes, but I don't think they'd have to be. And I have no idea what the Bush crowd is doing. I think Cabinet Affairs should have a bigger role than even we gave it in many cases.

Riley: Who was setting up Cabinet Affairs?

Hale: Christine Varney was there first and then Kitty Higgins.

Riley: Let's suppose a mayor or Governor brings an issue to you that's going to require contact out of the departments. Is your first stop Cabinet Affairs?

Hale: If you were doing your politics smart, you would. Then you would say, "Well, I may call—" Henry Cisneros used to call me directly all the time and I would try to let Cabinet Affairs

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know that, just because it's the right thing to do. Or I would call Henry. Every once in a while I would try to get through to Donna Shalala, or call her chief of staff, who was excellent. You knew if you talked to him you'd talked to Donna.

Riley: Who was her chief of staff?

Hale: Kevin Thurm.

Riley: Was he there the whole time, or not? I'm just asking because we're having a hard time getting her pinned down for very much time at all and I figured if he was there the whole time then maybe he's a good proxy.

[redacted]

Riley: No.

[redacted]

Riley: There you go.

[redacted]

Riley: In any event, I interrupted you once again.

Hale: I was just going to say, I had a lot of personal contact with Kevin. Madeleine Albright and I are close friends. We don't see each other as much as we used to, but in her book she credits a couple of us with having first given her the idea that she could be Secretary of State. When she was at the UN [United Nations], I went up to New York several weekends.

There were a lot of the Cabinet—I knew Bruce Babbitt, and I obviously knew Dick Riley. I knew a lot of these people, so if I needed something out of Education, I called. But I tried to respect the process. If you call the Cabinet Secretary directly and it falls between the cracks, and then you need backup help and then you go tell Cabinet Affairs that you need help after you've already gone around them? Not very smart. If you want help, go by the process.

Riley: Did you have difficulties policing contacts with your people? In other words, were there other people in the White House who were freelancing in their communications with the Governors or with the mayors?

Hale: No. A lot of Governors called Carol Rasco, but that makes perfect sense. She's the policy person and she had a really good relationship with a lot of them because of her days with him as Governor.

Somebody early on would call George, because George was a name they knew, or they had met him through the campaign. But usually they got funneled straight to me. It's the same thing—I

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had a lot of members of Congress whom I had worked with and I tried to be careful to make sure not to solve their problem but to tell them I'd get somebody to look at it.

Riley: Right, and you would also notify Howard or whomever on that?

Hale: I would not move with a member of Congress without telling whoever was the Congressional person.

Riley: Did the Congressional Affairs people ever have occasion to want to pester a mayor or Governor?

Hale: No. But outreach to the mayors and Governors on behalf of our policy initiatives was an important step. On all of the major issues IGA was a part of the outreach and we asked them to work with their delegations.

Riley: So you had a bunch of folks nobody really cared about.

Hale: And I loved them.

Riley: Other than the President and the First Lady.

Hale: And the Vice President, and Leon. What other people do I need? There'd be occasions many times when—like McWherter. If they needed help with the Tennessee delegation, McWherter had pull with his Democratic, and Republican members. If you clued McWherter into something, he'd have a bunch of conversations. Congressional used it that way.

Morrisroe: We talked about the special relationships Clinton had with some of the Governors, which was really helpful. What about the mayors?

Hale: He loved them. He particularly loved going to Philadelphia with Rendell because he'd be able to get out and walk up and down the streets.

Riley: Philly cheesesteak.

Hale: Mayor [Richard M.] Daley, he loved. Mayor Daley was incredibly helpful. I'll never forget the first time we met with Giuliani though. It was in late '93, because I had just switched jobs. I'd only been there a month or so. Giuliani had said something negative about Clinton. Maybe it was the beginning of the crime bill that we were trying to get his help on. Yes, that was it. Clinton was going to be in New York. We were in Queens, actually, and we needed to get them together.

We got them together, literally, in a hotel room they had taken the beds out of, and it was a small hotel room, and it had four chairs in it. I don't know why this happened. It was probably to save time. Giuliani comes in, sits down. It's the President, Giuliani, me, and Peter Powers, who was his chief of staff and childhood friend. It was really tense. They talk. They actually get along. Clinton cuts right through the ice that is clearly forming in the room. I hadn't been in a meeting

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like that with Clinton before. Before that meeting was over with, they were getting along they got along on policy. It was about police officers and the crime bill. They agreed to work together on the crime bill.

As Giuliani is leaving, Clinton turns to Giuliani and says, "Next time we'll get a little better room." Giuliani says, "I don't know who is more embarrassed, you or me. I could have found us a better room for the President of the United States." It was really quite something. So yes, he was wary of Giuliani, but really liked working with him on the Crime Bill.

He liked going to the Mayors Conference. The Big Seven always wanted him in person. Their summer meetings are always out in the country someplace. I had no problem getting him to do it. Lots of time he went, but sometimes they'd take a satellite feed and he'd go over to the OEOB and address it by satellite, which was not perfect but was good. He would always do that. He liked doing it. There wasn't any problem. I mean, he'd grumble, going over there, "Why am I doing this…." Then he'd get in the elevator afterwards. "That was great, wasn't it?"

Riley: Did you have any piece of NAFTA?

Hale: Yes, I did. That passed in November, didn't it?

Riley: October or November 1993, I can't remember.

Hale: We all went out and celebrated that night. We went to the Palm for dinner. Besides healthcare and reinventing government, we were trying to do NAFTA. I had been involved in scheduling. The Governors were really important in NAFTA. We did a lot of events towards the end that included Governors.

Riley: Clinton signed it in December.

Hale: It passed in November sometime. That is one place where it really worked. You have to give Rahm credit for that. Rahm was really a big piece of that success. That was where we all sort of pulled together and got a lot done.

Riley: Was it problematic for the President's Democratic constituencies?

Hale: Yes.

Riley: On the Hill it was certainly the case that he was getting a lot of push back.

Hale: Governors wanted it, but the piece I was getting was the pro—scheduling the events. Then the Governors were very supportive. The Republican Governors were very supportive.

Riley: So that was the big piece towards the end of '93. You mentioned the crime bill a couple of times. Do you want to track that through? Is there anything in particular about the crime bill that—

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Hale: No. I think that's what really consolidated the mayors in being so supportive of Bill Clinton, both the Ds and the Rs. Victor Ashe of Knoxville was head of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, I think, when the crime bill passed. He's now an Ambassador. As a Republican mayor, it was very helpful to have his help. We had a lot of mayors to the White House. Whenever we did a crime event out in the country we really tried to use them. They really felt like they were a part of the process, not just being set up for an event here and there. Even when Clinton wasn't involved, we had a lot of mayors working on it for us—conference calls and that type of activity. That really worked.

Riley: There was some evidence in the briefing materials that healthcare had an Intergovernmental component also.

Hale: Yes. John Hart, who was hired in my office to do healthcare, did all the policy and he did a lot of meetings for that—internal and external. Where I came in on healthcare was if we convened a group of Governors, but John did the policy work. I found that to be pretty difficult. What you may not know is that Haynes, whom I was no longer living with but we were still very close friends, and David Broder were writing a book on healthcare called, *The System: The American Way of Politics at the Breaking Point*. Clinton was giving them interviews during the process. The whole healthcare group—like Donna, and other people, and the Republicans were doing long interviews.

So I didn't get involved, not that I shouldn't have. I didn't know what Haynes was hearing. I had no idea. I just figured—first of all, it was John Hart's job and let him go do it. I felt a little uncomfortable. Once again, it was probably a situation of, instead of shying away from it, I should have taken more advantage of it.

Riley: Did it have the effect of dominating the year from '93 to '94?

Hale: Yes. It was healthcare all the time except when reinventing government got to sneak through. It was not very pleasant.

Riley: What were your perceptions about Mrs. Clinton's role in that? Were you surprised that the President would put the First Lady in charge?

Hale: I wasn't surprised. In retrospect, and she might say this too, it probably wasn't the wisest thing to do. She should have been an advocate for it and had somebody else—I don't know if she'd say that, but she might. I really wasn't surprised and I was taken aback at how controversial it became. I think it also didn't allow for enough—I don't know if "compromise" is the right word, but enough flexibility. We probably would have been way better off if maybe a Leon-type person had been put in charge of it.

Riley: There was a kind of aura that developed around this—that the process was sort of closed up.

Hale: The healthcare process?

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Riley: Yes, the healthcare process was sort of closed up. Were you getting complaints to that effect from your constituencies, that they wanted to be involved, that they wanted to know, and they felt like this stuff was being held too close to the vest?

Hale: My crowd didn't, because the Governors who cared, like Dean, were involved a good bit. It's not that the mayors didn't care, but it wasn't their policy issue to decide. The people we would hear from were state legislators who really care about healthcare, who all want to be Governor someday. It was hard. We would have groups of meetings of legislators and try to tell them information, but, you know, as you're negotiating with Congress it's also very hard to tell everybody everything. It was a problem.

Riley: So you didn't have a big piece of that?

Hale: No, I did not. I had it from up here, not in the middle of it. I didn't go to the hundreds of healthcare meetings. John Hart went to all of those.

Riley: Were you getting feedback from him on how it was going?

Hale: Yes.

Riley: Did he feel like the process was working as it should, or were you getting complaints from him that this was—

Hale: A little of both. Remember, he had been in the campaign. He was like number 20 hired at the campaign, so he had standing inside. He could hold his own with the crowds. Give him a certain amount of independence and let him go. Yes, he would tell me things, but I wasn't steeped enough to be able to say, "John, don't do that." Or, "Go do this, go do that." He's an adult.

Riley: Are you picking up anything from chatter out of the Congressional Affairs office about this, just by proximity?

Hale: Oh, yes.

Riley: You're rolling your eyes a little bit.

Hale: This is a problem, folks. Some of it was just nuanced mistakes or presentation, and some of it was real policy disagreement. Sometimes the policy disagreement was the big thing, and sometimes it was a slight, not having somebody in a meeting who thought they should be. But it was really Congressionally focused, except when the Democratic or Republican Governors got into it for certain pieces of it.

Riley: I want to ask you about that. There is a decision evidently very early on among the Republicans that they're not going to play ball with this administration on the Hill. You see Bob Dole and people on that 1993 budget package and no Republican votes in either House for this, which is almost historically unprecedented for a major piece of legislation. Then you get into the

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next year with Bill Kristol and his memo that, "Our job has to be to torpedo this health reform." Are the Republicans in your constituency as openly opposed to the Clinton agenda as the Republicans on Capitol Hill seem to be?

Hale: No, not as. There were some factions of the Republican Governors that were. Remember, there are so few Republican mayors. The Republican Governors were skeptical and cynical, but a lot of them had served with Clinton and a lot of them had worked on the NGA welfare reform task force. If anything, they maybe were a little envious that he was President and they weren't. But they knew him, so there's that familiarity that helped a lot.

On healthcare they were very involved, but on welfare reform they were really involved. They were skeptical. I worked pretty closely with Tommy Thompson, and while he was skeptical, he was willing to work on trying to get something done. He wasn't really interested in making any Democrat look good, but Thompson cared about policy. John Engler was much tougher to deal with, and much more partisan. Voinovich, when he was Governor, was great to work with and if he disagreed with you, he flat-out told you. There wasn't any finding out later.

Clinton reached out to them on a lot of occasions to try to get them to be supportive of it. It wasn't anywhere near like what Pat and Howard's crowd had to put up with. My constituency is much smaller and much less ideological than the different factions in the House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats.

Riley: Were there any Democratic Governors who, because of some history with Clinton, were impossible for you to deal with?

Hale: No. Many of them—Lawton Chiles was so supportive. Zell Miller was supportive back then. I'm trying to think if I there was any time when a Governor went bonkers on us. I can't think of anything right now.

Riley: I remember, I had worked for a Lieutenant Governor in Alabama at the time when Clinton was sort of a rising star, and among that generation of political figures, there was always a little bit of envy across state borders about who was doing what. The question was prompted more by that experience and wondering whether there were some Governors where Clinton would just roll his eyes and say, "That's a lost cause. I had a run-in with him at some Governors meeting twenty years ago."

Hale: No, and there was nobody he thought he couldn't talk to and convince of something. I'll tell you one little aside. You remember when there was this series of black church burnings? That must have been the summer of '95, right around that time. We decided to have a White House meeting. We had it in the Cabinet room. We invited the Governors of all the affected states, almost all southern Governors, and there were a couple of other people. But the meeting was small enough to fit in the Cabinet room.

We go in to brief Clinton ahead of time, and I once again get to do the seating. I put Carroll Campbell, who was the Governor of South Carolina and whom I had never been very fond of, right next to him. He looked at me and said, "Why are you putting Carroll Campbell next to

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me?" Well, Carroll Campbell was the most outspoken—I can't say really negative, but mostly negative, of all the Governors. I looked at him, and I said, "If you put Campbell next to you and you talk to him and you bring him into the conversation, he won't go out on the White House Lawn afterwards and criticize you."

Clinton grumped through the whole rest of the briefing. Then he sits down and Carroll Campbell is sitting to his right. You would have thought Carroll Campbell was his best friend. God rest his soul, Carroll Campbell is no longer with us so I can tell the story. Clinton really did pay attention to him; he didn't just go through the motions. Carroll Campbell talked about what was going on in South Carolina, and Clinton really paid attention to him. Quite frankly, Carroll Campbell went out, and while he was not glowing by any means, he basically said it was a very substantive meeting.

So there's a lot of what Bill Clinton could do, if you could convince him to go talk to this person. Everybody talks about how good he is at this, but until you actually watch it happen—it's pretty amazing.

Riley: Were these National Governors meetings and so forth helpful to you, other than just as venues for the President to go and press the flesh? Were there policy outcomes from the meetings that had benefits to you?

Hale: Yes. On welfare reform, the two different ones that took place that would have covered welfare reform were very helpful in advancing the situation. Remember, we had a dynamic where we had Governors from both sides who wanted to get this done. They can come to Washington and just by the press and their personal meetings have an effect on the Hill. A very effective way to work the Hill is to have not just a Governor, but a couple of Governors go to the Hill.

For example, education. You get Bill Clinton and Dick Riley in a room talking to Governors about education and you can move things. Some of those meetings were really helpful. Now, were they a huge amount of work? The rest of the White House would sort of roll their eyes, "Oh my God, we've got three more days. We've got the Governors in town for three days. We won't see him for three days." You could have told them all to go take a vacation. Not only did we have these big policy issues, but that was the opportunity for every Governor to put something either on our plate or his plate.

Riley: That then becomes another part of your job, because you are then the manifestation of this meeting inside the White House. What are the kinds of things that are coming to you, and how do you—

Hale: But it helped. Like at the NGA dinner, when you have them all there, and you have most of the Cabinet, not all of the Cabinet, but most of the Cabinet there. If somebody had a transportation problem, you could take that Governor, walk him over to Federico Peña and say, "Here's the situation. We don't have to talk about this tonight, but we'll follow up tomorrow." Just that personal touch helps a lot in these situations, instead of them getting a call, or in their

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staff meeting, one of *their* staffers saying one of *my* staffers called them. To put them together will just help move issues.

Morrisroe: Can we jump to the ACIR? That spans your entire tenure. Why don't you tell us that story from beginning to end if you're willing?

Hale: This may be something I want to be careful about. There may be a lot of things I don't know, so you may pick up other things from other people that you interview. There's not a lot I don't know, but there may be some things. As you probably know, ACIR had been slated to be killed in several appropriations bills before I ever got there, and it was a Republican member of Congress who wanted it done away with. I don't remember who it was.

When we first started doing this, we actually had a conversation about, "Let's either make this work or not." We actually had this conversation with the President. I don't remember who else was there. It came around the time when we had to appoint administration people to the board. We said, "Either let's make this work or not." There are really good people appointed to the ACIR board from the administration. Governor [William] Winter is appointed, Ed Rendell is on it. It's a real cross-section.

Part of the problem is, Congress—It's not much money, relatively speaking. It used to be a huge organization. There used to be 50 or 60 people who worked for ACIR. By the time I was there, I think there were about 8 or 10.

Morrisroe: Where were they housed? Where is that located? Is it off in the OEOB?

Hale: No. They're not anywhere in the White House complex. They're in the Hall of the States building or somewhere like that.

Riley: "They" being the staff? The Commission is everywhere until they assemble.

Hale: We make a run at trying to rejuvenate this organization. What you have to understand is that ACIR was born at a time when there was no Big Seven. There wasn't a really strong Washington presence for anybody, so ACIR was really a very different vehicle when it started out. The Big Seven, as I recall, had not come to the aid of ACIR either. They didn't really care if it died. This was not a priority for them.

Morrisroe: Because they were competitors—

Hale: They didn't need it.

Morrisroe: Or just irrelevant?

Hale: They would have liked them to continue if they had money to do studies and policy papers. This is my interpretation. They were not interested in ACIR being a part of the Big Seven, or of that type of organization.

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Riley: I want to stop and just ask you a question out of my own ignorance. What would have been the biggest contribution that ACIR had made through its history? Is it just a forum?

Hale: Early on it was a forum for all types of Intergovernmental people to get together. They did a lot of coordination between Congress and mayors. Then they did policy papers. I don't remember what they are now. Early on, 40 years ago, they did policy work that was very helpful, because there was nobody else.

Riley: So that becomes the format for things like model legislation and so forth?

Hale: Yes. If you go back and look at what they've actually done, there are a couple of really interesting studies, but it's too long ago for me to quite remember it.

So, forces in Congress are trying to kill this. The House is happy to kill it. The Senate saves it two or three years in a row. We appoint these new members and we try to rejuvenate it. Part of it was that I'm really busy. Our OMB [Office of Management and Budget] doesn't care.

At some point I did have this conversation again with the President and explained to him, "The Big Seven doesn't really care. They might say they care, but trust me, they don't really care. If you said we had to have this, they would be there. Our crowd" —we had Carol Browner and Dick Riley— "are just looking for direction. Everybody thinks this could be a great organization but I don't know that you want to make this something that you fight about."

He had appointed his close friend, Bill Winter, to be the commission chair, who had taken this job very seriously.

In the scheme of things—he's dealing with healthcare and welfare reform and crime bill and I'm talking about the ACIR? The biggest problem was, Congress wants to kill it. We had a decision to make. Do we fight for this, get more funding? It was not a dynamic organization.

Riley: I would guess you were able to get a reading from Clinton, having been a Governor, whether it is overall a net plus or overall a net minus, or just—

Hale: It wasn't a big factor when he was Governor. It was good but not determinative in anything.

Riley: So he doesn't have strong personal opinions and he's busy.

Hale: Given his druthers, he would prefer that it work and that it be a great organization, but he had bigger things to worry about.

My big regret, and I can't honestly tell you exactly how this all happened—this was many years ago, is I had a conversation with Governor Winter about it and he didn't want to let it go. This is the one place where I really got hurt with my relationship with Governor Winter. I think he thought it was just me. It wasn't like I was out to get ACIR, but that I wasn't paying enough attention. He was really very upset about it and really wanted to save it.

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But it was a really unfortunate situation. If you look back on it, we either did what we did, and it was the right thing to do, or we should have replaced the whole staff and gone full bore for it. But trying to fight for something that even the Big Seven wasn't going to stand up for, it was unfortunate.

Morrisroe: Where was the push for just eliminating it all together?

Hale: In the Congress.

Morrisroe: I guess my question is, why did they care so much about it?

Hale: I don't know. I can't imagine. I remember re-reading this a while ago. I'm thinking, *Why did this Republican member of Congress want to get rid of it so badly?* He was on Government Operations and I think he just saw it as duplicative, but I can't swear to you about that. He would do it every year.

Morrisroe: He was able to convince the rest of Congress that—I'm just surprised that it rose to this level of salience where it was—

Hale: I totally agree.

Morrisroe: They weren't doing anything particularly useful but nevertheless it's surprising that it became a quasi-lightening rod.

Hale: I believe some Democratic Senator did care about it and a Republican Senator did care, so they would save it every year, but at reduced funding. This Republican member of Congress would just, every time, try to kill it. If the NGA and the Conference of Mayors had come to me and said, "We have got to save this," we would have saved it or we would have gone down fighting.

Morrisroe: There's not a lot of extra political capital to spread around at that point.

Hale: And I've always regretted that I never went back to Governor Winter and said, you know, this was the whole deal here. He may have a very different interpretation about this. I never did talk to him about it; I should have. I remember one of our last meetings we had in the Longworth Building, which was unusual. We usually did it in the OEOB. We had demanded that all our members show up. Carol was there; Dick Riley was there; Ed Rendell was there. This was a tough meeting because the ACIR staff just did it in slow motion. All the administration-appointed people were looking for direction, and Bill Winter and I weren't exactly aligned. We weren't publicly apart, but it was very uncomfortable. That would be a regret, but it was like, "We can either fight for this or we can fight for the crime bill. Now which one are we going to fight for?"

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Riley: Sounds like academic politics—it's nasty because the stakes are so low. Certainly not for the staff people; it's their livelihood at issue, so I'm sure its excruciating trying to figure out how you're going to deal with this.

Hale: They lasted for a while, but when I took my personal readings at the NGA and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, I thought, *I'm going to go out there and I'm going to tell the President we have to fight for this in this budget fight?*

[BREAK]

Riley: We've sort of been going back and forth thematically and I want to go back through the chronology a little bit. There were some difficult times starting—well, there were difficult times all throughout, but in '94 the scandal-making machine had cranked up. I'm just wondering if you could tell us a little bit about what the atmosphere in the White House is like as this stuff comes out?

Hale: It was bad. We were all pretty resilient about it. But it was hard. Both he and the Vice President, who had no scandal—I can't think of any scandal ever attached to him—were very aggressive about going forward on policy and our agenda. That kept everybody moving.

When we lost, the night of the '94 elections, and Congress switched—I'll tell you, we were all quite worried about losing the House *or* the Senate, but losing both Houses, we were in a bit of a state of shock that night inside the White House. And we lost a lot of Governors. That was about as bad as it got. Not only did we have these investigations going on—you could say fairly or unfairly—but there was a real election crisis that had happened. To Clinton's great credit, he dug deep and got busy getting some things done and tried to work with the Congress, who had no desire to work with him.

You brought up something a while ago about the Republicans really not wanting to work with him. I think, and I think others would tell you this, one of the biggest mistakes we made in the transition period was we had a Democratic leadership meeting with the President-elect—it may have been the first week of the transition period. That was the first Congressional meeting. They all went to Arkansas?

Riley: Yes.

Hale: That was a mistake. We should have had a bipartisan meeting and then done a Democratic meeting. But remember, our crowd had been out of the Presidency for so long that our House and Senate leadership really wanted to have that meeting. We shouldn't have done it. We should have done bipartisan first.

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Riley: Did the scandal management become a topic of discussion at the senior staff meetings in the morning?

Hale: Yes. I can't say the actual events did, but it would be, "Okay, we're going to have this meeting here," or, "Harold is doing this," or "So-and-so is doing this." There would be separate meetings. You would get enough so that you knew what was going on, but if you weren't directly involved in the preparation of testimony or anything like that, you really didn't go—Maybe that's one reason why I was happy doing my Governors and mayors. There was no scandal involved in any of that.

Riley: Were you getting questions or feedback from the Governors on this? Were they probing to find out whether there was something—?

Hale: There were always comments but the Republicans never brought it up and the Democrats only brought it up in context of an aside, or a "hang in there" kind of comment. People who were really close to him—that's why when McWherter wanted to see him I always tried to make sure he got in to see him. And people like Rendell, Caperton, Hunt or someone like that, so that they could actually talk to each other.

Riley: It was good for his morale. They helped buck him up. They weren't a piece of the equation in Washington that he was having to deal with.

Hale: Right.

Riley: Were you a party to the discussion about renewing the Independent Counsel Statute?

Hale: No. I was around for it and I remember thinking, *This is a mistake*. And I thought once the decision was made, *Well, okay, have an independent counsel and if someone's guilty they'll find it; if you're not guilty*.... But that's not really the case once these investigations get going. I was on the periphery of all those but I wasn't very involved, and I'm also not a lawyer.

Riley: Right, but if it comes up during the senior staff meeting—I don't know whether there was ever an occasion where some of these issues would have been aired more generally.

Hale: They would have been aired. I can't remember now if it was specifically. But they absolutely would have been aired and it would have been, "There's going to be a decision today and here's what the decision is." Or, "There's going to be a decision next week and we'll let you know when we know what the decision is." All those things would have been run through, but they would not have been discussed at length.

Riley: Okay. Did the foreign policy component ever work its way into your network?

Hale: In scheduling, it did a lot. In Intergovernmental, I don't think there was ever anything other than Ireland, which was great.

Riley: You said you went to Ireland.

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Hale: That was the most phenomenal trip we took.

Riley: Let's answer this question then.

Hale: I helped put the trip together.

Riley: This was when you were in Intergovernmental?

Hale: Yes. I helped put the trip together, but we also took a delegation of elected officials and prominent Irish-Americans. We all met as to who those people should be. I also requested that—it was decided that we should take people from the arts as well, and I said, "Why don't we take Pat Conroy?" Have you ever read *The Water is Wide*, or *The Great Santini*? I can't say that he was a close friend, but he was from South Carolina and I had known him a zillion years ago. They said, "That's a great idea.

So I got to call Pat out of the blue after about 10 or 15 years. He actually knew that I was at the White House so it wasn't like, "Who are you?" I said, "Would you like to go?" He said, "Are you *kidding?*" So we took Pat Conroy.

Riley: How did this get on your plate to begin with?

Hale: It got on my plate because I got to invite Mayor Daley—there were a couple of Governors and mayors that we took. I'm trying to remember now who else we took. We took a delegation of about 20 people. We took a separate plane and it was full. But when they started talking about people from the arts or writers, I offered Pat Conroy and they said, "Sure." So I got to call Pat. He said, "Absolutely." He was just ecstatic. I don't know if you know him. He's as crazy as the cartoonists. He's great fun and obviously an immense talent.

Anyway, we invited Mayor Daley, Mayor [Thomas] Murphy from Pittsburgh, William Kennedy, the writer from Albany—

Riley: There's got to be somebody from Boston.

Hale: We had any number of members of Congress. Who else did we take? It was a spectacular trip. Great group of people. We were not on Clinton's airplane; we had our separate delegation plane. Terry McAuliffe—it's in Terry's book, which is up there—

Riley: I haven't read that. Is it good?

Hale: There's a great story about Pat Conroy over there that I'll tell you. I have never seen anything like the crowds in Ireland for Bill Clinton. I had gone previously with Ron Brown on a trade mission to Ireland and we were thinking about doing a Clinton trip even at that time so it was sort of a precursor. We went to Northern Ireland and we went to the South. We were only there for three nights and four days, but it was the most phenomenal trip I've ever taken. It was as much about the country and the company and how much the government wanted us there.

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We get to Belfast, and this is right around Christmas-time so all of Ireland is decorated for Christmas. We get to the Belfast town square—the City Hall with a big Christmas tree and there are thousands of people in this square, I mean, *enthusiastic*.

A bunch of Northern Irish kids in a choir were singing. McAuliffe and I and Mayor Daley and Pat Conroy are standing there, and we turn, and Pat had teared up. It was so moving. I said to him, "Pat, can you write this?" He said, "I can and I will." He hasn't, to my knowledge. I don't think he's ever written about it, but you just wait; in some Pat Conroy book ten years from now, our trip to Ireland will show up and you will then know where it came from.

It was really spectacular and I was so happy to have gone on that. It was really quite inspirational. The Irish politicians were terrific.

Riley: And Clinton's relationship with the Irish people is—

Hale: Loves it. I think there were probably many more things he wanted to get done. He would have loved to have seen a more satisfying peace process in Ireland. If you think about it, that is just a stubborn peace problem. But this is not something that should have gone on this long.

Riley: Exactly. Did you make any other foreign trips?

Hale: Vancouver, Tokyo, Ireland. I don't think so. I did two trips to Ireland.

Riley: You said you went with Ron Brown and then back. Were you still in the White House when Ron Brown—

Hale: Yes. It was a trade mission that Ron was doing, and a couple of Governors went with him so I went with him. We did both Northern Ireland and the South.

Riley: Were you still in the White House when Ron Brown died?

Hale: Yes, that was a sad day. That was very sad. The odd thing was—I don't think this would happen now, but I always have the TV on—no sound, but I always have it on. CNN came on and said that they believed it was Ron Brown's plane that had crashed. I was stunned. I assumed I was the only one in the place who didn't know it and I was like, *How could I not know this?*

I went out in the hallway and literally ran into Alexis, who was very close to Ron, really close. I said, "Alexis, how did this happen?" She looked at me and she said, "What are you talking about?" She didn't know. CNN had gotten it shortly after it happened and at that point the President was just being told, too. He got told only shortly before it went on the air. Alexis and I went straight down to the Oval Office and Alexis stayed because she was so close to Ron.

The whole place was in complete shock. That was bad enough, because Ron was a big, dynamic personality, but all those people on the airplane with him—an awful lot of them were really

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young, bright kids that had gone to the Commerce Department with him. We had our fair share of trauma.

Riley: You got to know Clinton well. They had a lot of personal trauma on top of this, losing family members, and so forth. What are the personal reserves that this man relies on in order to get through this almost beyond comprehension level of—not the stuff that people focus on, the troubles that he had a part in bringing on himself, but the—

Hale: But the troubles that came that he didn't bring on.

Riley: Exactly.

Hale: It's interesting. I wish I could answer that but it's all about his basic personality, his make-up of being completely optimistic, of really having a huge amount of energy and getting a lot of energy out of day-to-day life. Religion plays a much larger role in his life than you would imagine. You heard about it after Lewinsky , but it's a big deal. When I was first scheduling him, I made sure that his minister from Little Rock got to see him about every couple of weeks. He had an appointment with him.

Riley: Got to *see* him every two weeks? He would fly up?

Hale: Yes, he would come up. It didn't always happen that way. There were scheduled visits, but also, any time it made sense, or if he went home.

His mother was a huge influence, obviously. She was larger than life and I really liked her. He grieved more when she died than I think at any other time. He's made up of optimism. I'm sure he had some very bad times that I never saw, but he didn't bring it to the office very often.

Another person died the first year I was still scheduling him and I wish I could remember his name, a very prominent lawyer here in town, who was, I think, in either college or law school with Clinton, but they had stayed very close. I can't believe I can't remember his name. Anyway, it was the day—when was Somalia?

Riley: September or October of '93.

Hale: This was April so it was probably the Waco incident, which was so dreadful. His friend died and his memorial service was that afternoon. For some reason, Clinton didn't think it was possible for him to go to the funeral. I was in the Oval Office with him, just me, and he said, "This is killing me. He was my friend. I should be there with his family." He was really down that day. That's the only time I ever saw him really down. He was down about Vince, but it wasn't just me and him together at that time.

Riley: But he was down, not just because he's got this awful situation to deal with—

Hale: He was down because of his friend. The confluence of the two of them and his not being able to go to his friend's memorial service was really bothering him. Dan [Lassiter].

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Riley: I should know this and it doesn't sound at all familiar for some reason. When we were having lunch you made a comment that I thought was interesting. You said Clinton never got nervous.

Hale: I don't think he ever did. I was always amazed from the very beginning that you could put him in the most unbelievable situations and he would never—he would show a lot of emotions, but it was not an emotion of being nervous or—certainly never dreading any situation at all. He always just went right at it with enthusiasm. I always found it remarkable.

It's two things: One is his basic nature and his confidence that he knew enough to ask all the right questions. He wasn't afraid of being embarrassed about his lack of knowledge on something, because there was very little that he didn't have some basis in. He could ask anybody anything. There was never anybody he didn't think he could either charm or learn something from. He loved being in a room with different personalities—maybe back to my story about Carroll Campbell. There were very few people I ever heard him say he didn't like. He could always bring out the best in people. I think he knew that. He was never nervous. One of these days I'm going to ask him about that. I just have never had the opportunity.

Riley: And you've seen him when he's about to go on stage to speak—

Hale: Oh yes, and the TelePrompTer problem we should go back to. He was doing his first State of the Union and he was calmer than all the rest of us. We would go up there together in the motorcade. Standing in front of a crowd that was as big as that—He might tell you now that he was nervous, but he never showed it. He was never as nervous as any of the rest of us would be.

When the TelePrompTer failed, the night he was giving his healthcare speech, was amazing. You know, the Republicans wanted nothing to do with him that night, but the Democrats were great. This had to be spring of '94?

Riley: September or October of '93.

Hale: Yes, September or October of '93. He gets in the Chamber and there's all this clapping. The Vice President is behind him. He gets started and he turns around and he whispers something to Gore. I'm luckily watching, or unluckily watching, all of this happen. I'm really paying attention. Gore goes like this, and Stephanopoulos is right down here, and he keeps waving. George later says, "If he thinks I'm walking up there to talk to him while the President is giving his speech, he's crazy." So George doesn't go. Gore motions to him again. Finally, George goes up there and leans in—"It's the wrong speech in the TelePrompTer." They have his last State of the Union running. He is giving a speech with no TelePrompTer. I assume he had a written version in front of him, but he wasn't looking at it.

Morrisroe: He didn't have his glasses.

Hale: That's right.

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Morrisroe: He didn't like the bulge in his pocket.

Hale: So I assume you've heard this from David Dreyer or somebody like that? Steve Ricchetti and I were standing next to each other and we were in the back. I said, "Steve, there's something wrong. He's not quite right." That's when we saw George go up and come back down. Then, David Dreyer, who was in charge of it, luckily had an extra copy, a disc, with him.

It wasn't our fault. The House had loaded the disc in and it had both speeches in there and they had put the State of the Union up and hadn't checked it. Clinton just keeps—and this goes on. I'm sure somebody's got it written down. It seemed like an hour-and-a-half but it was probably about four or five or six minutes. He gave a great speech. People in the hall didn't know what was going on.

Then he hit his stride and I thought, *Hmmm, something has happened here.* It was a very interesting thing. Then of course he regaled us all afterwards.

Riley: Did anybody get their head bitten off about that one?

Hale: I don't think so, because I don't think it was our fault, because you don't control the House of Representatives. David Dreyer has never gotten enough credit for being calm under pressure—he did save the day.

Riley: But it's not always somebody's fault when he gets upset, right? If it's a bad news story, it's not because you put it there.

Hale: That was pretty tough.

Riley: What can you tell us—I'm just sort of tracking through the chronology again—about the environment immediately after the '94 midterms? You made reference to this before.

Hale: It was pretty tough. Because I was doing the Governors and mayors, I didn't have to deal with it quite as directly, but the advent of watching Gingrich being gleeful was pretty hard. I remember people just sort of saying, "Okay, we've got to deal with it."

What had been transpiring up to that was a really ugly, nasty, anti-Clinton mood that had just burst in this election. Going home to South Carolina was very difficult. The dislike of Clinton and Hillary was palpable. We knew there'd be a lot more investigations because of the change of control and everybody needed to be aware of that.

Morrisroe: Did the new cohort of Republican Governors present you any challenges? Were they more difficult to deal with, or were they the same types of relationships that existed with other Governors?

Hale: When welfare reform passed—was that '95?

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Riley: No, welfare reform would have been—the version the President signed would have been the spring of '96.

Hale: I remember it being a little tougher. Governor Engler, as I said before, was very tough to deal with. They had a lot more confidence. We had a welfare reform meeting that Gingrich and House and Senate members came to with Democratic and Republican Governors. It was tougher, but all-in-all, while I had a tougher road, my road wasn't anywhere near as difficult as the Congressional office.

Morrisroe: When the Congressional shutdown came about, did that present any special challenges for you in having to speak with Governors in states where parks and things that the federal government was doing for the states were being shut down?

Hale: No, we did a lot of that through all the departments and agencies and they were told to get the word out that this really was happening. Press reports might dispute this, but quite frankly, I think we were pretty fixated on it in Washington, and I think most of the rest of the country realized that. My recollection of this is that the Governors and mayors thought, okay, this will pass. It's not like we're going to be shut down for three weeks or something. They'll figure this out. How long was it, actually? Forty-eight hours or something?

Riley: There were two shutdowns. There was a brief one and then there was one that was several days before it got opened up. You didn't have any piece of the internal debate?

Hale: No.

Riley: Did the question about the budget get beyond the confines of the Beltway, so that you were asking your client group to weigh in to get things done?

Hale: No. I assume there were a lot of questions and I probably talked to Ray Scheppach at the National Governors Association and his counterparts and said, "This is what's going on." All the drama was in the House and the Senate, mostly the House. They were causing the drama elsewhere.

Riley: Let me ask you more generally—you've got a group of Republicans coming in who are obviously going to make it difficult for you in the investigations area. They're there to make life difficult. But on the policy end of things, is the environment that much more difficult for you, or is it the case that, with the new Republicans, they're coming in and their impulses with respect to the proper distribution of power between Washington and the states and the localities is closer to President Clinton's vision than perhaps some of the old-line liberal Democrats were?

Hale: That's true. It wasn't as if we felt that my constituency was going to get help out of it; they just weren't going to get hurt by it. Our really loyal Democratic mayors were upset and nervous for appropriations reasons, and Governors, probably some of them. It wasn't as big a calamity as it probably could have been.

Riley: You'd been doing work on unfunded mandates before the election.

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Hale: That was such a big deal, particularly to the mayors. Governors cared, but to the mayors— It was, once again, an eye-roller among some of my colleagues inside the White House, but once you listened to the—

Riley: Why is that?

Hale: Because they didn't want to hear about it.

Riley: It's in the states. It's out in the hinterlands.

Hale: They're Congress-centric. Almost all White Houses' are Congress centric. Congress is here and they pass the laws and the rest of the country is supposed to follow. Everybody in the place had worked in Congress. Very few of them, except for Bill Clinton, Carol Rasco, me, and Mark Gearan had ever worked for a Governor.

Morrisroe: How did the Executive Order, which formed the first few months of your tenure during Intergovernmental Relations, how did that—

Hale: It made me look like a hero. Bill Clinton was well on the way to that by the time I switched jobs —but it was another thing that helped solidify him with mayors in particular, Democratic and Republican. Victor Ashe hated unfunded mandates. These mayors could tell you stories about things.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Morrisroe: Did you get any pushback from anywhere else in the White House on that Executive Order?

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Hale: If I did, I don't remember it. Nobody would be dumb enough, first of all, because Bill Clinton agreed with it. Secondly, I don't think there was ever any pushback. They just didn't have any enthusiasm for it.

Riley: Were there other issues after the '94 election that became front and center, other than the budget—that's the thing that you would see—were there other issue areas that become problematic for you? Conversely, are there issue areas that we ought to identify where having Republicans actually did help you to advance some of the things you'd been working on?

Hale: Welfare reform, the crime bill, and there were a bunch of the little initiatives—school uniforms and things like that—that the Republicans actually liked. I can't remember them all now.

Riley: V-chips.

Hale: Yes. Remember the "heroin chic" thing, where Clinton actually took on, just in one announcement, the glamorizing of drugs by using models who looked like they were drugged? I don't remember quite how it played out. I don't think any Republican Governor or mayor would go back and say, "That mattered to me." But if you reminded them of it, it helped keep them from criticizing him in many ways.

Riley: Did you ever have occasion to talk with Dick Morris when he—?

Hale: Yes. The interesting thing was, in that series of focus groups that I did in Arkansas with Stan early on, Dick was there.

Riley: No kidding.

Hale: I knew who he was but didn't really know him. And he was there when we did the briefing for Clinton—

Riley: Which briefing?

Hale: The briefing for Clinton when he was still Governor on what the focus groups—

Riley: Okay.

Hale: By then, I wasn't really involved in the political stuff, which I quite frankly regretted, and having been political director of the DCCC, I was upset about. But I wasn't. That group would gather and I wasn't really close to Dick. I love watching him on TV now. I saw him the other night on Fox and I thought, *This guy has got some anger-management problems he needs to deal with.*

Riley: Yes he does, doesn't he?

Hale: This is beyond politics. This is deep-seated.

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Riley: Personal.

Hale: Yes.

Riley: So you were not involved in the Wednesday night residence meetings?

Hale: To my dismay.

Riley: Did you ever express to anybody that you—

Hale: This is a mistake I made. When Mack started them that summer, before I switched jobs, I said to Mack, "I want to be included," and he said, "Let me think about that." I should have made the case, "I have been the Political Director and Field Director of the DCCC and a senior consultant to the DSCC. I have dealt with the Congress more than most of those people in that room and I know more of them." Mack didn't think the scheduler needed to be there—which is a throwback to what scheduling use to be. Then, when they started with Leon, I should have gone to Leon. By that time I wasn't included. Mack had started them. I should have gone to Leon and said I should be there, because I think Leon probably would have included me—if I had asked. I made a mistake not going to him and saying I wanted to be there.

Morrisroe: One area of your portfolio that is alluded to a little in the briefing materials, and I don't know if it's a permanent fixture of the office or it just happened to come up, is the Intergovernmental aspects of dealing with either the District of Columbia or the territories, Puerto Rico—

Riley: You're rolling your eyes again. You're looking real tired all of a sudden.

Hale:. First of all, I loved dealing with the District of Columbia and we'll deal with that one first. I wanted to do that. It was just very hard to deal with when Marion Barry was mayor. I would like to be more involved now, and I helped Adrian Fenty in his campaign. I really think this is a spectacular city and it should get more support from the White House and from the Congress. I was happy to do that.

On the territories, other than Puerto Rico, we were very conscious of the Governor of Guam. We made sure that we were respectful and that they felt like they had just as much import.

Puerto Rico is a problem. Not that it, in and of itself, is a problem, but they really should get the ability to resolve their status. They have been fighting for so long that some of them have forgotten what they're fighting over. They just don't like each other, the two different sides of the equation there. They should either decide they're going to be an independent commonwealth or a state. It's not as simple as that, and I know that, but they shouldn't go on in this process of winning elections just to win their side of the argument and not solve the problem.

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Having said that, it took a lot of time. It should have been spread out elsewhere. I'm not sure the Intergovernmental office was the right place to put it but I actually don't know where else it made sense. Puerto Rico really wanted a direct contact in the White House.

Riley: It just came to you by tradition? That just happened to be the place where—

Hale: Yes, it had traditionally been there.

Morrisroe: Harold Ickes had a piece of it, too, didn't he?

Hale: Harold Ickes did before he came to the White House.

There were a lot of economic issues. Bob Rubin was dealing with it. Howard Paster was dealing with it. Carol Rasco was dealing with it. When I say "it," I mean all the issues around Puerto Rico. It was decided that it needed to be housed in someone's office, not that Rubin's shop wouldn't deal with it, but that there would be a central location for contact. Quite frankly, it made the most sense to put it in my office at that time. It happened right after I took over the job. The issue really comes down in the Congress more than it does in an Intergovernmental aspect. His shop should have dealt with it and we should have been an appendage to that.

Morrisroe: On either of those issues, Puerto Rico or the District, did either of them capture the President's interest or attention?

Hale: They both did. He would have liked to have done more on the District as well. It was just a matter of—you can only get so much done. I think if I could have fashioned a program for the White House to be a better citizen of the District in some way, he would have been happy to do it. We just didn't—there was too much on the plate.

Riley: That may have been a casualty of the changeover in '94, too. The Republicans weren't going to do anything.

Hale: Yes, they weren't going to do anything. It's just not on their radar screen. On Puerto Rico, he really liked the Governor. The Governor was a doctor, a medical doctor, and he was really good. He was a statehood proponent. We tried to walk that line. They had a plebiscite in '94, '95 in Puerto Rico. But the odd thing about Puerto Rico is they never live with their plebiscite. They voted for commonwealth in that plebiscite, so you would think, okay, they're going to be a commonwealth. The very next thing you do is have another plebiscite to vote this again.

Morrisroe: For someone unfamiliar with the politics of this issue, what kind of stuff were you actually doing? Was it supervising from the White House?

Hale: Negotiating. If the Governor of Puerto Rico came in, I had to see the Congressman—from the opposite party. If Clinton spent time with the Governor of Puerto Rico, I had to either have the Congressman or the leading party advocate for the Commonwealth see him. Commonwealthers are the traditional Democrats; the statehood people are traditional Republicans. But this Governor was basically caucusing with the Democrats, so it was all really

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confused. It should be resolved. God forbid you should try to resolve it, because then somebody loses.

Riley: Did you have any particular relationship with the relevant committees on Capitol Hill who dealt with federalism issues? I guess that would have been Governmental Affairs?

Hale: I didn't, other than if a Governor was going to testify, they would probably call me ahead of time or let me know that it was happening. I didn't deal directly with the committees. Howard and Pat would not have liked that. They might have liked it, but they would not have seen it as my turf.

Riley: I want to dial back. Again, I'm just sort of thinking through the timeline at various points. I would guess that you must have had some piece of Oklahoma City.

Hale: I'm glad you brought that up. That's the most satisfying thing I did in the White House of all my time there.

Riley: Can you walk us through?

Hale: I was in the White House doing something and had my TV on, and they started reporting what was happening. Didn't it happen around eleven o'clock? It's all tied to April 19th. It was 10:00—

Riley: There was a time zone difference and it happened right after their day would have started so it would have been around—

Hale: There's a significance as to why they blew it up at that time. But anyway, we didn't know what it was.

My best friend from childhood happened to be in town that day with her three little boys, in Washington. I took them to lunch at the White House Mess. At the time that I went to lunch, no one knew—for all they knew, it was a gas explosion. The only reason I tell you that aside is, by the time lunch was over, it was clear there was a big problem.

This is well written, but Clinton really was at his lowest point a month or so before that. His immediate response was, "We have got to do everything that we can possibly do here." Obviously there's the FBI and the intelligence part of it that had to be done, but he quickly went to Oklahoma City. Long story short, there was an Oklahoma City Commission, and I was named the White House representative of it.

I got particularly close to the mayor and one of the city council members and tried to help them as much—in retrospect, I wish I had done more. That's one case where I wish I had gone to Oklahoma City. James Lee Witt and I worked very closely on a lot—that's another thing I should talk about. Anytime there was a disaster, James Lee always took the lead because that was his job, but I tried to be very helpful in dealing with the elected officials. So James Lee and I had been doing a lot on that.

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The day I left the White House, the mayor and a the President of the city council of Oklahoma City came to my office at the White House and brought me a small piece of the Murrah Building as a thank-you, not that having a piece of the Murrah Building is a pleasant thought. It's a real piece of the Murrah Building. I don't have it here; I have it at home. It's really quite remarkable for me.

That's the best the government does. First of all, Clinton did an amazing job of helping people just get through it, but people like James Lee really put a lot of people's lives back together. Being able to help tangentially in that process is why you ought to be in government. For the mayor and the city council member to come to Washington to thank me—it was a big deal. They just came to my office to see me and say good-bye. It was really nice but it was also just so painful.

Clinton went back about a month afterwards and I went with him on that trip. You could see in people's faces what a big difference just being there makes, which is why it drove me nuts when Katrina happened and no one in the White House realized that being there as soon as it happens is what people really need.

You have to be careful. We did the earthquake in California in '94 or '95, and you can't get in the way of people doing valuable services for people. But in the case of Oklahoma City, nothing else was happening. It's not like there was flooding and it's not like you had to worry about an aftershock or something. Just being there. Clinton stayed there for hours and shook hands and met everybody.

Riley: You were in the room. Were you in the line with him working?

Hale: Yes. He has a very close friend who happens to be a close friend of mine who lives in Oklahoma City. She took me and introduced me to people like the city council members. She took me around and helped me meet all those people while he was doing that. There were thousands of people there in a big auditorium. This was several weeks afterwards.

That's when you understand the power of the office, and empathy, and having somebody who is as close to Clinton as James Lee was, and being as competent as James Lee. Nobody has ever done for FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] what he did. I would bet you there are no major disputes about how Oklahoma City was handled, or the big earthquake in California, or any of those things. For FEMA to have fallen as far as they've fallen is just sad.

Riley: You mentioned a commission that you were on for Oklahoma City. Who put that together and what was the purpose?

Hale: I don't remember if the Governor put it together or the city put it together. The original intent was, "How do we recoup from this?" It didn't have anything to do with the law enforcement side. "What do we do with the building, and what does the memorial look like?" I was on that. I didn't go personally to any of the meetings, but was on calls. I probably should

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have. I think we got some appropriations for them and gave them some funding so they could have meetings and carry on and help do the memorial.

Riley: What is it in particular about Witt—you mentioned professionalism, but I wonder if you could be more specific—that somebody who is looking at this from the outside would want to see in a disaster relief director? What did he bring to the table?

Hale: First of all, he knew what he was doing. He'd done this for years in Arkansas on a smaller scale. He had a really good network around the country of people to draw experience from. There was no getting between Bill Clinton and James Lee Witt, because they were just that close. Clinton was really smart to bring James Lee here. Obviously he knew that he was capable of doing it.

James Lee is a leader, too, and in a very low-key kind of way. He had a lot of people very loyal to him. He built it within his organization. He also knows what to tell them to do. Then, he's tireless in getting things done. Anytime there was something terrible, a hurricane or anything, he was on the ground. They were prepared ahead of time. Management matters. It really does matter, and having good capable people.

Morrisroe: Do you have any special recollections about either your role in some of these other disaster situations, or observations you made of the President in these circumstances?

Hale: He was absolutely adamant about going to these places because he thinks it is helpful, not a hindrance. He was also respectful. When we went to the earthquake, I think we waited two days to make sure we weren't going to get in the way. My role was to make sure that we had talked to all the elected officials, top to bottom, to make sure that they were getting what they needed.

It sounds easy, but lots of times people don't know where to plug in. They don't know who is the right person to call, or if they're talking to the right person. It's just as simple as my being able to connect somebody to the right person in James Lee's shop or in some cases HHS. It would all funnel through James Lee's operation, but if it ended up being a health issue it would be sent to HHS. That's just a matter of getting the right people together in the White House, quickly, and making sure people know who is doing what. It's not brain surgery.

We all had our very specific areas. Cabinet Affairs knew what they were supposed to do; I knew what I was supposed to do. Congressional always had somebody—Tim Keating, who now runs Honeywell's office here, was their point person on many of these events. Everybody knew exactly what they were supposed to do. There was no confusion.

Morrisroe: When Clinton would go to a disaster situation, what was he interested in doing when he went there?

Hale: He wanted to talk to real people. There was a horrible flood in North Dakota in '97. We went there—we landed, and we had a meeting with all the elected officials. I went to most of these because you'd invite the city council, the county council, the state legislators. We had to

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have very good a lists of elected officials and contacts numbers, just in case we needed to reach them. Young Bill Daley worked for me. I hired Hamilton Jordan's nephew and I hired young Bill Daley. Young Bill Daley left the Oval and Clinton looked at me and said, "That was smart. Whose idea was that?"

So, young Bill Daley worked in my office. He was the person in my office who would get on the phone after these things and call the state legislators. It was his job to know who to call or find out who to call.

And [Lawton] Jordan the same thing. Lawton could call around—the South mostly—and people would say, "Well, Jordan's not a very common name. Are you related to—?" and it gave him an immediate connection. They were both excellent.

Anyway, we were in North Dakota. There had been a horrible flood and it was a really dreary, dreary day. These people were shell-shocked. We had the elected officials' meeting and then we took a tour in helicopters. Many of the elected officials had not been able to see the damage from a helicopter. They only knew how bad it was from TV. We took about a forty-minute helicopter tour and then came and did a town hall. Clinton wanted to physically see the problem. He internalized it once he could physically see it and then he had ideas about how to help. He also wanted to touch the leadership of the city and state. He didn't want to leave without seeing people.

For the earthquake we did a big town hall meeting about six weeks after the earthquake. We got a fair amount of, not complaints, but that things weren't moving fast enough during the town hall. Let me tell you, that plane ride home was not a lot of fun.

Riley: Had he had experiences in working with the federal government on disasters in Arkansas that left him particularly sensitive?

Hale: Had he?

Riley: I don't remember—

Hale: James Lee probably had to deal with floods and tornados. I bet there were a lot of tornados. It's all on a much grander scale, but it's the same type of operation. That is one thing that I think Clinton is very proud of, how well that worked.

Riley: And it works into a fundamental strength of his as an individual, which is his empathy, his ability to feel your pain. It's sort of a cliché, but it's true.

Hale: It's true, it's really true. He has a characteristic that he learned very early in life, which is, if he is talking to you, he is looking right at you. It does two things: one is that people really feel like he's talking to them, as opposed to most politicians who are looking over their shoulders. Quite frankly, if you're moving through a crowd and you really look at somebody and really talk to them for even 20 or 30 seconds, your conversation can likely be shorter and more meaningful.

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I remember being someplace with him before he got elected President. I was standing, literally, right next to him and I put my hand on his elbow to say hello, and he did not move from that person he was talking to. I had seen it before but it's the first time—and I also learned a lesson, which is, *Don't interrupt*. He didn't move until he was finished talking with that person right there one-on-one. It's a big deal to anybody, but if you're a citizen who has just lost their home, to be able to tell your story to the President is a big deal.

Riley: When he's leaving a place like Oklahoma City or something—this goes back to a question I'd asked earlier about his own personal reserves—does he internalize that and does it linger that the pain that he's exposed to, or is he able to compartmentalize that and move away from it?

Hale: What he would traditionally do is he'd have about two ideas or twenty ideas, but he'd have ideas he would want to talk about afterwards, whether it was to help people or to fix something. Like after the earthquake we had a staff meeting and we went around—and it wasn't him leaving it to somebody else. I'm sure James Lee had stayed on the ground. But I remember being on Air Force One and having a big staff meeting and, "We're going to do this; we're going do that."

Riley: So the way he works through it is dealing with the problem?

Hale: Doing something.

Riley: We're getting short on time, believe it or not. I'm wondering, leading up into '96, because you've had a lot of political experience, even though you're not in the Wednesday or Thursday night meetings, are you involved in thinking about and planning for the reelection bid in '96?

Hale: Yes, I was. I was the contact person for the Democratic Governors. I was involved with those meetings. Obviously their states are terribly important to us. There were a lot of people who were doing Congressional affairs who weren't day-to-day in the campaign. I was very involved in the convention early on and the planning of the convention.

Riley: One of the things that becomes a piece of this is the decision very early on to raise a lot of money to cover early advertising. Were you involved in either the decision to do this or the execution of those plans?

Hale: Yes, it had always just been very clear. Once again, it's back to what I said about Rahm, that we hit bumps in the road but we didn't fail in '91 and '92 because there were resources. I think that was a lesson learned.

Riley: Is that right?

Hale: It was my office, also, on an official visit, that if he were coming into their state or their city, they're supposed to get a call before the press knows about it. You don't always make that, but we were pretty good about that.

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It was also our responsibility to make sure the campaign made the call that there was a big political event coming up. If you did that, you were way ahead of the game with the elected officials, because they didn't hear about it from somebody else. Then they would all have their requests: "I want to be in the holding room." "I want to introduce him." "I want to do this." "I want to do that."

Riley: Do you remember any famous battles on this front?

Hale: I know there were—

Riley: Ever dropped the ball on getting an announcement in and have somebody chew your head off?

Hale: I am certain that happened, but I don't remember any of them off the top of my head. There was always a tussle about who was going to get to introduce him. You should be so lucky that people fight over introducing you. I don't remember anything like that.

Riley: You said you worked on the convention.

Hale: I ran the Atlanta convention for Dukakis and then I ended up doing the Los Angeles convention for Gore. .

Riley: I saw this on the wall up here.

Hale: I wasn't that involved in Chicago, but I was always talking to the mayor—and these things are always—the cities all want them. They promise the moon and then they get it and then there's not quite as much money as you want. And when you're dealing with Mayor Daley you're dealing with a formidable force.

Riley: Even if you do have his nephew employed.

Hale: Yes, even with Billy working with me.

Then I came back and did Gore's convention for him, which was fun.

Riley: Were there any surprises for you with the '96 campaign, how it unfolded, or the results of it?

Hale: I was reading—I think it was in my briefing that you provided; it may have been someplace else—but I was surprised by how far ahead Robert Dole was in '95 in the national polls. Quite frankly I had forgotten that.

Riley: Was there a lot of attention or effort given to trying to get a 50 percent mark on the President's vote?

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Hale: Yes, there was, but I don't remember enough about it. All they really cared about though was winning.

Riley: What about the coordination with the other campaigns in this Presidential election year? Did a piece of that come to you? Was there an effort to try to get him scheduled when he's doing campaign trips into places where he might be able to do some good—in '96? Was there ever any thought that either the Senate or the House would be seriously in play and available to the Democrats?

Hale: The only kind of thing I had to worry about was if he was going into a Democratic state to make sure that the Democratic Governor and mayors were well taken care of. That would cause a horrible problem if we didn't make that happen. They complained to me and then I would have to call the campaign.

Riley: So you were the conduit.

Hale: Yes, but then young Bill Daley went to the campaign. He left my office and went to the campaign, so we had a very good person who knew what they were doing over there.

Riley: Consulted everywhere. You stayed just a little while into the second term.

Hale: Yes, and I was reading in there that it said that I was going to the FCC [Federal Communications Commission. I will tell you a funny story about that. Have you ever heard of 1-800-Flowers?

Riley: Yes.

Hale: Jim [McCann] started 1-800-Flowers. We took him on the Ireland trip. He was very active in Irish politics in New York. Wonderful guy, we got to be great friends. He came to visit me shortly after the election in '96. We were talking and he said, "What are you going to do? Are you going to stay or are you going to go?" I said, "I don't know. The normal term for a White House person is 18 months. I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't know what they want me to do. I just don't know." He tossed out a couple of things, and said, "Why don't you do *this*? Why don't you do *this*? I think you ought to be an FCC commissioner."

We laughed. I had no intentions of going to the FCC. I would be qualified now, I've done a lot of telecommunications work. I was not qualified then, nor had I ever thought about it. He sent me a short hand-written note, thanking me for seeing him, and puts on there, "You'll be a great FCC commissioner." My assistant opens it—they opened all my mail—puts it in my outbox and just leaves it there. Well, the world walks by my outbox. You have to walk past my outbox on her desk to get to the Congressional Relations office.

So one of these people I work with, and I think I know who it was, calls the *Washington Post* and says, "Marcia Hale is going to be an FCC commissioner." I read that in the paper—I never did call Jim and tell him, "Look what you did." But I thought, *This is classic*.

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Riley: I'm glad you told us this. Again, you will find that this will be the first stop for anybody doing a history of the FCC in the Clinton administration. Seriously, they would see that in the *Washington Post* and there would be all of this research devoted to figuring out, "Where did this come from, who was the patron, why didn't it work, and what does it say about American politics that Marcia Hale didn't get that appointment after it was floated in the *Washington Post*?" Now we know.

Hale: And she had no desire for it. I'd love to be an FCC commissioner now. But you see that's also how the place leaked like a sieve. In your briefing it said—I had totally forgotten this—that when Leon took over they were going to downgrade the IGA title. I had no memory of that until I re-read that, which also tells you something: first, that it has been a long time, and second, that you decide what's important and you remember it.

To my knowledge, that was never serious. You can see the Bush White House has done it. I think it would have been a mistake. I remember having a conversation with Leon about it. I'd be curious what his memory is, but what I remember about it is that it's not going to happen while somebody is in the job.

This is why I think the Bush White House has made a mistake and we would have made a mistake on it. Having whoever it is in the West Wing, and having it be an equivalent title to other departments, however important you think they are or aren't—this President happened to think mayors and Governors were important—allows for a smoother-running White House, because I could see these people and deal with them substantively and bring in the right policy people right there. Location matters. They didn't have to see the President or didn't have to see the Vice President or didn't have to see the Chief of Staff.

If you're over in the OEOB, they feel like they haven't really visited the White House. Even for these Governors who have been around for a long time, being in the White House or going to the White House mess—if they were coming in I'd take them to lunch—it's a big deal and it should be a big deal. Or my being able to take them to Leon's office and have him say hello as opposed to not seeing him. It's a mistake politically, but it's also a mistake for governing if you want to be smart about it. We'll see what they do in the next Democratic administration. There is no Assistant to the President in the Bush White House. They are all in the OEOB.

Riley: Is that right? Well, you have been a really good sport—You must have a couple of favorite stories about your time there that we haven't gotten to.

Hale: I'll tell you two, but let me be serious first. It sounds corny, but it is such a privilege to be in that place and work there and to work for somebody—you might want to strangle him on occasion, or he might have wanted to strangle any one of us—but to walk into that place every single day is a privilege. There were a lot of really tough times, but it was always great. Very few people get this opportunity. It was well worth the agony.

Riley: Are there any favorite stories that we haven't gotten?

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[redacted]

Riley: No, we won't *X* it but we'll put a hold on it for a good while.

Hale: Okay. So he comes back from that dinner and he calls me and says, "Come on up here." This is Monday morning. Dinner was Saturday night. I said, "How was dinner?" He says, "Great, it was wonderful. You've got a lot of fans there." I'm thinking it's Senator Hollings, because I've known him forever. I'm not going to tell you who it was, but he says, "Well, I've got to tell you something. So-and-so was there, and his brother has just gotten separated." To make a very long story short, here's this very prominent person in Washington and the President of the United

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States is setting the two of us up on a blind date over a dinner party, with the Attorney General present. It was hard to imagine.

What are you supposed to say? You cannot say no, nor can this poor guy, okay? So he says, "Will you do it?" I went, "Uh.…" I've never been on a blind date in my life and the President of the United States is setting up a blind date for me. So I said sure. A day later this guy calls me and says he's coming to Washington. Would I like to get together? I'm feeling so sorry for this guy, because he's going, "How do I turn the President of the United States down?" Long story short, we have dinner. It's nice, but there's no chemistry. But it was nice and we had a good time.

I get to the office the next day. "Marcia, the President would like to see you." He wants to know how the date was. I said all those things I just said, but I was actually too shy about it. I should have been much more appreciative and gotten more of a kick out of it.

Riley: Did he do this with the others?

Hale: I have no idea. But he did care about people's personal lives so he probably did. They had—particularly Hillary's staff—their weddings, or wedding receptions, or bridal showers in the White House. They were very good about that.

Riley: I can honestly say that's a story I haven't heard before.

Hale: It's pretty funny, don't you think?

Riley: It's funny and it's an interesting light on an individual and that's exactly what we're trying to do, to get as many different lights as we can.

Hale: "We were talking about you.…" It's just the two of us in the Oval Office and I'm thinking, *What did I do to deserve this? I'm working 14 hours a day*.

Morrisroe: At least the Attorney General didn't follow up with you on how it went.

Hale: No, but she was always very nice to me after that.

Riley: She was in good standing during your time?

Hale: Oh, yes. It was an experience. It would be impossible to replicate it, because I knew him for so long before.

Riley: Would you go back in?

Hale: If I could afford it, yes, but I don't know what I would do. I really like government and if I could afford to do it I would do it.

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Riley: It's interesting. We have a great job because we get to sit around and listen to people tell their stories about a life that we'll never experience. I feel like I've got a front row seat to an awful lot of history, some of it of great dimensions and some of it very personal dimensions. One of the surprises is the number of people who will just outright say, "Absolutely not." They would never go back. They loved what they were doing, but—

Hale: Really?

Riley: I would say it's probably more among the Republicans. There are tales that we've heard—again, more with the Republicans—where somebody would get a call. They'd be on vacation with the wife and come back in and say, "Well, it was him and he's invited me to be Secretary of *X*." And the spouse breaks down in tears right there because they know what it means, partly financial sacrifice, but I think the personal sacrifice—

[redacted]

Riley: It's the opportunity cost of giving up whatever they'll have to give up for the three, four, or five years.

In any event, we're very grateful for this. Thank you.

Hale: If you think of anything else, I'll be happy to answer. And if I think of anything really good, I'll let you know.

Riley: The other thing is, when you get this transcript, if there's something that you just want to hammer out on a typewriter in ten minutes and append, that's perfectly acceptable and we'd be happy to get it that way. I know that you're busy and I know you're now in the business of making money to compensate for all of the public service that you've done.

Thank you. This has been very interesting and illuminating.

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