GEORGE W. BUSH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN BRIDGELAND

May 3–4, 2012
Charlottesville, Virginia

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Riley: This is the John Bridgeland interview as a part of the George W. Bush Presidential Oral History Project. We're grateful for your coming to Charlottesville, which is familiar stomping grounds for you because you were a law student here and have been back to the Miller Center on a couple of occasions. We're happy to see you because you were on the invitation list for the domestic policy-making symposium that we did several years ago. Unfortunately, you had a conflict.

Bridgeland: I was in Africa.

Riley: Anyway it's good to have you here with us. One of the things we need to do is a quick voice identification. I need each of you to report into the recorder who you are and just a few words about yourself so that the transcriptionist can pick it up.

Perry: I'm Barbara Perry, and I'm a senior fellow here at the Miller Center in the Presidential Oral History Program.

Bragaw: I'm Steve Bragaw, I'm a professor of American politics and public policy at Sweet Briar College.

Walcott: I'm Chuck Walcott, I used to be a professor of political science at Virginia Tech but I am retired as of last fall.

Riley: Very recently. And as a veteran of these episodes we're happy to have Chuck back with us.

We always like to start with a little bit of autobiography, so tell us a little bit about your background. You're from Cincinnati.

Bridgeland: Right.

Riley: Was politics a part of your upbringing or is this something that came to you later in life?

Bridgeland: I think service clearly was. My parents always had a role serving in the community. My dad was mayor of the town, practiced law in a day when law was very much a part of the people who built this country and you could practice in a way that was broad and rich. I grew up

in that spirit. I went to Harvard College and majored in government. Actually, I was going to major in history and literature, but I had this professor, James Q. Wilson, whom I adored. We got along well together. He became my thesis advisor so I majored in government.

Then I took a year off as a Rotary Fellow.

Riley: What did you write on?

Bridgeland: I wrote on Senator Robert A. Taft's role in the Senate and then the passage of the Taft-[Fred A., Jr.] Hartley Act, in part because his family literally lived down the road when I was growing up. He died shortly before my birth. Then my father worked at the Taft law firm. We had access to papers that weren't publicly available at the time and some individuals who had been involved in writing the act. As a young boy I had gone into the Senate building. John Kennedy had commissioned a review and then a vote of the five most outstanding Senators in U.S. history. Senator Robert A. Taft, who was a contemporary—because usually you need a little of a sweep of history before someone gets named—was among them. I wanted to learn more about him.

Riley: Was there anybody else at Harvard you worked with?

Bridgeland: Sure, Sidney Verba. I recently testified before the National Academy of Sciences on this data that we put in place after 9/11, and Sidney Verba was on the panel. I was thinking, *This is intimidating*. Then Morris Fiorina, a lot of these people, I had read their books when I was a college student. Stanley Hoffmann, Sam Huntington. Dick Neustadt, Presidential power. I didn't take his class, a graduate class at the time, but I kept sneaking over to the Kennedy School to see his programs. Graham Allison had a wonderful program there too.

Then I went on to law school. Came here to the University of Virginia, three glorious years.

Perry: How did you choose UVA?

Bridgeland: I had a lot of friends at Harvard who were older who had gone on to UVA. Even though I'm a Republican and served in a Republican administration, I grew up admiring the Kennedys and I saw that two of the Kennedys had gone to UVA, so it had lots of attractions. Plus the softball, the good weather. Combine the rigor and good reputation with a little bit of fun.

My second year I knew I wanted to use law to go into some kind of public service. You get all dressed up in your second year and all these people come to interview you on campus. A man named Jonathan Clarke from the New York law firm Davis Polk & Wardwell interviewed me and he said, "You remind me of me. I was a young lawyer who was on the [Earl] Warren Commission, investigating the assassination of John Kennedy. If you come to Davis, Polk you'll be able to go in and out of public service." I thought, *Wow, this sounds great*. So I go off to Davis Polk in New York and find myself working on M&A [mergers and acquisitions] deals and public offerings and banking regulations. I had one case pro bono where I represented a man from Ghana I got political asylum for, which was the thing I remember most about my law practice.

I didn't see the opportunity to move from Wall Street into life in Washington, even through the Washington office. It was more about [Philip A.] Hart-[Hugh D.] Scott-[Peter W.] Rodino filings. My opportunities were more in investment banks or commercial banks than public service.

Perry: You said your father was mayor of Cincinnati?

Bridgeland: He was mayor of Indian Hill, just our town. He wasn't very political; he was very service minded.

Perry: Did you ever think of running for office?

Bridgeland: I did. I assumed growing up that I would definitely run for public office. Then when I looked at the people I really admired, and I looked at the platforms from which I could do the most good the most efficiently and do things that resonated more with me and saw it up close, I decided really quickly that there were other ways I could be more effective.

Bragaw: One thing I was really struck by reading the last chapter of your book, on character formation, what was your early life like in terms of experiences in public service, scouting, church things? Was that just a given for you? It seems to be such a consistent theme over the course of your life.

Bridgeland: Right.

Bragaw: It had to have started pretty early.

Bridgeland: It did. My father was very public spirited and would take me as a very young man downtown into areas where you would see how other young children were living. I remember having this feeling at the time, I didn't use this kind of language at the time, but thinking that the ZIP code into which you're born as a young person so strongly determined your opportunities in life. My dad grew up in poverty. The son of basically a single mom. Educated in the local schools. Went to Akron University, then Harvard Law School opens up the world to him. That was always our lens.

We lived frugally, but we lived in a very nice area of Cincinnati. His law practice was growing and he was doing well. But he always took me to things and involved me in things. When I was in high school I was very active. I ran for vice president of student government as a junior and then president as a senior. I did a lot of community service and work on a whole range of issues, the Model UN [United Nations]. So it was embedded, definitely was an ethic in the family, actually an ethic in the neighborhood I was growing up in.

I not only went to church but taught Sunday School. This minister of ours had a wonderful appetite for bringing in people, like Henri Nouwen from Yale [University] and other speakers from around the country. So church wasn't just going to church and standing up and sitting down, it was this active, intellectual, spiritual—Not every week, I don't want to overdo it here. But there were moments that would capture you. I remember they let the young people do a Sunday service, so we organized a whole service, gave the sermon. It was really pretty interesting.

Perry: You mentioned working with Morris Fiorina at Harvard.

Bridgeland: Sidney Verba actually, but we had read Fiorina's book on the legislative branch in Congress.

Perry: Did you take a class with him?

Bridgeland: I took classes with Sidney Verba, James Q. Wilson, John DiIulio was there as a teaching fellow, but I didn't know him at the time. A lot of big name professors. But then also the unknown graduate students who were teaching fellows. I'll never forget this one teaching fellow we had, John Gibbons, in Eliot House, who dissected the Declaration of Independence for us in a way that was so inspiring. I use it to this day in talks.

Riley: Do we know what happened to him?

Bridgeland: That is another story, a longer story.

Perry: So then you're at UVA Law School and you're still thinking about this public service orientation, but when you get to Davis Polk, from what I've read in your book, you're indicating that this is just not the life you want to lead even though it would be viewed by many in and out of the law as glamorous. You're traveling the world—

Bridgeland: I go to Davis Polk for the summer associates program where they do all sorts of things. It's very exciting in terms of the dinners and the events, but my first project was working with Guy Struve. I came into his office, which had typewriters, and he was typing in Cyrillic. "Wow, Mr. Struve, what's going on?" "You will do research on whether Raoul Wallenberg—" He had a suit against the Soviet Union for the wrongful death of Raoul Wallenberg, who was the diplomat after World War II who saved tens of thousands of Jews by issuing them passports. So I was working on this wrongful death suit against the Soviet Union. He was typing away in Cyrillic. I was doing my research in English. It was very exciting.

Then I worked on a litigation matter with Jimmy Benkard and Henry King, and I wrote this memo that had gone well. It became a little bit of a seminal piece in the firm in this one narrow area. Anyone who would have worked on it would have done the same thing, you just find the research and write it up. But when I came back it wasn't just that the summer gloss was gone, I felt like on the one hand I was working with some of the finest minds in the country, the best legal minds in the world and I loved that. But I remember I wrote a letter to Ted Sorensen who was at Paul, Weiss, and I couldn't figure out how he went from serving Kennedy into a Wall Street law firm for so long.

I wrote him a letter saying, "I find myself reading books on the [Abraham] Lincoln-[Stephen] Douglas debates instead of *Anatomy of a Merger* and *Securities Law Reporter*. What would you recommend?" I didn't know him; I'd always admired him. Within a week this beautiful letter comes. I'll never forget, it ends something like, "I hope that your desire to do public service will continue to burn brightly and be fulfilled in due time." I almost felt like he was writing the inaugural address, the torch was passing.

Then I started talking to a lot of people, including a few people in the firm. I almost became an assistant U.S. attorney in Cincinnati or Dayton, Ohio. I was offered those jobs. But then the firm said, "Would you be interested in spending three years in the Paris office?"

Riley: You raised your eyebrow just a little bit there.

Bridgeland: I'd wanted to do that since Brussels. I lived abroad as a student and had no resources. I traveled and it was a good experience. I thought, *Wouldn't it be interesting to actually come back here and live and experience the culture as a professional?* So I did, loved it. Three years.

Riley: Your French was?

Bridgeland: Terrible. When I landed, I went right into a meeting where I had to represent a French client on U.S. banking, regulation K. I discover he doesn't speak any English so I had to speak French. At the end of the meeting under my suit I was pouring with sweat. The French client a few weeks later when my French was better, because it was survival, literally, said, "Mr. Bridgeland, I just want to tell you that I have come to think that you are a very good lawyer, but I had no idea the first couple of days because your French was so terrible."

Perry: So was it Ted Sorensen who said to work in Congress?

Bridgeland: Yes, there is this beautiful letter he wrote to me and gives me I think five recommendations. He said, "You should not regret the fact that you're building a professional base from which you can launch and do public service later, but if you want to make an early change you can." And then he said, "Go work in Congress or local office, run for something yourself, go work on a Presidential campaign." He outlined the different options, then he said, "Come talk to me. Or you can work in one of these international law firms in New York that have opportunities." I think he probably didn't practice all that much law but did a lot of bringing in business and working on interesting transactions and some of the political dimensions of them.

Riley: Let me ask you about your own partisan disposition at this point. I'm guessing you inherit some strain of Republicanism, but you said you always liked the Kennedys.

Bridgeland: My father voted for Kennedy, my mother voted for [Richard] Nixon, and they're still married to this day.

Riley: Somebody is forgiving.

Bridgeland: This gets a little trite probably, but growing up I listened again and again to these old records of Kennedy's inaugural and Martin Luther King's various speeches. I went to the Aspen Institute, which was hugely formative.

When I was 17, tennis was my big thing. I played on the national tennis circuit every summer and was away most of my summers at all these tennis tournaments. I'm up playing at the Ohio Valley Invitational and I'm seeded first, so I have a big incentive to stay there and win it. My father calls me from Aspen, Colorado, and says, "Son, I'm out here at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, it's an incredible experience. You need to drop your tennis and come."

So I did. I withdrew from the tournament, which was unusual, and went out to the Aspen Institute.

Riley: This was a summer?

Bridgeland: I was 17. Mortimer Adler and all these people were conducting seminars. I was just auditing in the back but listening to these great men and women talk about the issues of the day. We went through and read "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." It went from Plato and Aristotle all the way to *Small Is Beautiful* at that time back in the '70s. I went back as an 18 year old and then wrote my college essay on the experience. I wasn't a great reader as a young person, I loved sports, I loved service. I was sort of out and about, one of those boys who probably can't sit in a chair. But as I was going into high school I started to read more, and then Aspen kind of turned the light on for me.

Francis Plimpton was there, who had been an ambassador to the United Nations. All these great men and women in these public positions. I taught the Secretary of the Treasury tennis. Through that experience he told me a little bit about his experience in life. It was unusual for a public high school kid from Cincinnati to have an experience like that.

Bragaw: Was that Jim Miller?

Bridgeland: I think it was Secretary [Werner Michael] Blumenthal.

Riley: But in terms of your own party disposition?

Bridgeland: Right out of college I ended up working for a Congressman, Bob McEwen, a very conservative Republican. After I left, I took what I thought was going to be a sabbatical from my law practice to serve as chief of staff for Rob Portman, who was a Republican. Then because of my strong belief in citizens and individuals and their capacity and ability to address issues and because I believe in an active government but more limited government, I'm a Republican. I believe in "big citizenship" more than big government.

Riley: So you thought your way into your party affiliation.

Bridgeland: I did, because my parents were like this. At the time the Kennedys were so—Ethel Kennedy and I are co-chairs of the Earth Conservation Corps in D.C., and Tim Shriver is one of my best friends. Not because of their names or who they are but because of what they do and the values they have. It gives you a little sense of the spirit of excitement back then. Ronald Reagan and George [H. W.] Bush 41 and Nixon actually did a lot of extraordinary things. So philosophically I'm definitely a Republican.

Riley: You mentioned that you had worked for a very conservative member. This was as an intern?

Bridgeland: I start off as a volunteer. I see a letter from a woman in Adams County, Ohio, asking for help with respect to Social Security benefits and it's dated February 10 or something, back early in the year. Here it is late May or early June. I took the letter in to the chief of staff and said, "I'm sorry, Chuck [Greener], somebody must have misplaced this letter. This poor

woman in the middle of rural Ohio needs help and the office doesn't seem to be responding, or they misplaced it."

He said, "Oh, no, Bridge, it's about eight to ten weeks' response." So I just quietly took on that little project. I worked almost 20 hours a day and every weekend for about four and a half weeks. I asked Chuck if I could write responses. I got the mail backlog down to basically zero and went in to them and said, "Why don't we institute a 48-hour response?" Like this woman gets a response, maybe the caseworker has to refer it to the Social Security Administration—Chuck said, "Wow." The Congressman was then—All of a sudden he'd go back in the district and it's, "Bob, I heard from you. I just *wrote* to you and I heard from you." It's a simple thing, it's not any mind-blowing or dramatic thing, but I was just so offended by it.

So within about a month I was a legislative assistant. I worked hard and six months later became his legislative director. I was actually a little uncomfortable. I was really young. A lot of people in the office were in their 30s and 40s even.

Riley: But the timeline on this—

Bridgeland: It was right after Belgium. I had a fellowship abroad and then I came back. I applied to a bunch of law schools.

Riley: So this is before you went to law school.

Bridgeland: The Belgian mail system was bad and I missed a bunch of deadlines, and then the law school I thought I was going to get into I didn't. I don't think I had any law school to go to. This wasn't a purposeful plan. So I ended up working on the Hill, volunteering.

Riley: In any way did you feel uncomfortable—apart from the—?

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: More ideologically.

Bridgeland: So when I was legislative director, I'd brief him on every bill that came up for a vote on the floor. Sometimes I would have to call him because he was down on the floor or in a committee meeting, but I usually walked out with him and did the briefing. That was really fun. A couple of times he'd call me back and say, "What? Wait a minute. The Republican leadership just told me—" So sometimes I'd change his mind, but a lot of the time he would vote with the party. That was a bit of an early signal to me that sometimes, less driven by facts and the merits of arguments, people were voting because the party told them to vote that way. I know that is sort of obvious, but a lot of compromises.

Riley: But you didn't consider yourself what later would be called a movement conservative or a—How would you characterize yourself?

Bridgeland: A moderate Republican. I can tell you some stories later if you're interested about some things Rob and I did together.

Riley: Sure.

Bridgeland: Reaching out to a Democratic chairman who was investigating Republicans because we wanted to work and get our bill done. Some kind of a pragmatic Republican, philosophically Republican but very pragmatic, driven by the facts.

Riley: One of the things we're always interested in finding in these interviews across administrations is the sociology of the people who come together in an administration. You have these outside perceptions about what the Bush 41 network looks like or what the Reagan network looks like or what the [William] Clinton network looks like. It's useful to get the real story about who these human beings are who are attracted to the Presidents whom they ultimately serve.

Bridgeland: When I was in the White House someone said, "This is so interesting. Your office is next to Karl Rove's, but you have a photo of Martin Luther King Jr. up on your wall." And I was working on an initiative with Martin Luther King III. I'll never forget, we had a meeting in Larry Lindsey's office. We were looking at how you could take Martin Luther King Boulevards across the United States and use those as a means for economic revitalization, IDAs [Individual Development Accounts] in banking and stronger schools and safer neighborhoods.

He walks by my office and sees his dad's picture on the wall and says, "I've never seen that in any administration." Then we in fact discovered there was not an African American on the wall in the White House.

Riley: Maybe not. We got you to Paris then.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: After your early struggles with the language you were there for three years.

Bridgeland: Supposed to be there for two and they asked me to stay a third year, which was wonderful. We had a new baby in New York right when we left, loved the quality of life. I was working representing a company that was buying a diatomite mine, and other assets, this transaction that took me to Iceland and Spain and Italy and Germany.

Riley: What are the years for this?

Bridgeland: It was 1990 to 1993. I was 30 to 33 years old.

Riley: So what kind of work are you doing?

Bridgeland: It was better in Paris. The French don't view themselves as "I'm the vice president of the First National Bank and then you can get to know me," like we do in America. "What do you do?" That sort of defines who you are. For the French, that's the fifth story down. The first thing they want to know is your philosophical and intellectual makeup. Then your cultural reach and interests, art, and whether you have a place in the south of France or not.

Riley: So you had to cultivate all these things.

Bridgeland: It was very warm. People have the stereotype that the French are so cold. My French teacher, who was 92, saw the Americans coming into Paris when Paris was about to be burned. The book *Is Paris Burning?* tells that dramatic story. She tells the story of a U.S. soldier who was walking—They were all celebrating in the streets of Paris. They catch each other's eye and he says to her, "Madam, you're a beautiful Frenchwoman, I'd like to come in and make love to you." They do. How about that for French-U.S. relations?

Riley: Whatever is required for the country.

Perry: C'est la vie.

Bridgeland: C'est la vie. Paris is wonderful.

Riley: Are you rethinking career trajectories at that point?

Bridgeland: I am. I write letters to U.S. Attorneys' offices all over the country asking. I also applied for a White House fellowship.

Riley: Did you ever think about staying there?

Bridgeland: Yes, Herb Lobl, who was the senior partner there, he and Dori [Dorothy Lobl] had gone over 30 years earlier, said, "You and Maureen remind me of me and Dori. I can see you staying here for a long time. The one caution I'd give you is if you really want to raise French kids, because my kids are now back in U.S. universities and they're having a very tough time." I thought that was interesting.

We thought about it. Who knows what could have happened, but the pull of public service was too strong. I was literally writing letters to get out, in a way—less to get out, more to get into what I wanted to do.

Riley: So what is your bridge back then?

Bridgeland: I go back to New York; we're looking for apartments. I'm in disbelief.

Riley: You're still with the firm?

Bridgeland: Still with the firm. I request to work in securities, which is at least a little better. You can learn about companies and public offerings. It's an interesting world. They said, "You can eventually, but we need you on these M&A deals." I go back to the 41 straight days in a row, billing 16 hours a day, leaving at two o'clock in the morning, back at seven, working on things that aren't resonating with me in terms of the work. Many of the mergers and acquisitions were in the interests of the businesses and the economy and the market, and that was all fine. I didn't feel like it was my highest and best use.

Riley: But the compensation must have been very good.

Bridgeland: For a young man, yes, it was good compensation but that has never been the huge driver for me. So I call my friend Chuck Greener, who was chief of staff for Bob McEwen, and

say, “Whether it is running for something or whatever, I need to get back to what I was built to do.” He said, “[Willis] Bill Gradison is retiring, there is going to be a special election. Rob Portman and a bunch of people are positioning for it.” Rob Portman calls me—

Riley: Did you know him before?

Bridgeland: Yes, he dated my sister Becky [Rebekah Bridgeland] a little bit.

Riley: See, this is something you’d never find out in the bios.

Bridgeland: Dating is probably too strong a word but we knew each other’s families, and we had stayed in some touch over the years but not all that close. He is four or five years older.

He is running for this special election. Interestingly, in a primary against Bob McEwen, for whom I had worked. So if he won the primary, he would win the election because this area is one of the most Republican in the country. The congressional district includes Hamilton County and goes out to Clermont, Brown, out to Adams County. Rob and I start talking and he says, “If I win the primary, I’m going to win this special election. Would you ever be interested in coming to ‘do this with me’?” is the way he phrased it. There are lines, and there’s a Member of Congress, and there is staff. I’d learned that, I’d done it before. But he said, “You can do town hall meetings, give speeches, be a surrogate, you can go on radio.” It was almost like “Let’s do this thing together.”

I thought, *Wow*. So I go back to Cincinnati, we travel together in the district, get to know each other more.

Riley: You’re on leave from the firm at this time?

Bridgeland: Good question. No, I’m still at the firm. Going back on weekends, on vacation.

Riley: OK.

Bridgeland: He offers me the job. So I went to the firm and said, “I’ve had this opportunity”—It’s so interesting. Some of the partners closed their doors and said, “I’ve been here for 30 years, I *wish* I had done something like that.” It was reinforcing. They felt like law had changed and many of them were not happy in the practice. There were others who said, “Don’t go unless you’re Assistant Attorney General of the United States.” Some big public position. Others were like, “For a 33-year-old person this is fantastic, go.”

I ended up being chief of staff and special counsel to the most junior member of the freshman class, because it was a special election in the lower House of the Congress in the minority party. So going in was not a position of prestige. But we worked very hard. We had Stephen Covey—Remember him? *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*?

Riley: Sure.

Bridgeland: I called him and said, "I really want to manage and run an office well." [cell phone rings] I apologize. Let me turn this off. President Bush would have been very unhappy if that had happened. This was a serious infraction.

Walcott: So would many college professors.

Bridgeland: He called people out on this. Fortunately not me, I always had it off.

So we had Stephen Covey come in. They said, "We've never been called by a Congressional office. We'll come and do basically the seven habits for highly effective Congressional offices. We'll do a management-staffer retreat." It was fascinating, we had a great experience. That was part of building a team and learning some business management practices that were very useful in terms of roles and responsibilities, how people thought and interacted, team building, how we could be most efficient in getting the work done and then think creatively beyond just what the typical Congressional office did.

Riley: Your wife was happy with this move?

Bridgeland: Very. New York is tough with a child and schools.

Perry: Where is she from?

Bridgeland: Pittsburgh.

Perry: Another river town.

Bridgeland: So at the age of four we were working to get Caily [Bridgeland] into preschools, it was incredibly hard, incredibly expensive. We had to get people to help us apply, make phone calls. It was exhausting. So my wife was thrilled to move to the South, people were friendly, drive through a national park every day. I thought I'd stay a year. I always think of it as a sabbatical. I never really envisioned going back to the law firm.

Riley: So you were on leave, you didn't quit.

Bridgeland: Officially you can't have—Ethically you can't have ties to any outside interests when you're in these public positions. The firm was ready to take me back after a period of time.

Perry: So it was officially a one-year sabbatical from the firm.

Bridgeland: Yes, an informal understanding that I could come back, but not formal.

Perry: At the end of the year did you contact them or did they contact you?

Bridgeland: Officially it couldn't be. You can't have interests and ties, but just like this—Betsy Anderson had gone on to be a White House Fellow, same thing. When she talked to the firm, she said, "I'm going to go do this. If I have an interest, can I come back and talk to you?" You say all the appropriate things, and there was the same relationship with me and Davis Polk.

Perry: But at some point did you have to say, "I won't be back"?

Bridgeland: There wasn't any formal agreement, but I did cycle back. These were my friends. I talked to them and said, "I really like this job. I don't think I'm coming back to practice law anytime soon." It was more that kind of conversation.

Riley: So Portman came in what year?

Bridgeland: In 1993, in a special election.

Another event that I recount in this book: My daughter and wife were in the World Trade Center on the first floor when the first bomb went off. I'm not a superstitious person, but there were little signals; that was one, maybe it was time to go, because we almost lost them.

Riley: You didn't have anybody injured, if I remember correctly.

Bridgeland: The bomb didn't go off properly, thank goodness. They were on the first floor; it was my daughter's first memory. It is emblazoned.

Perry: You said your wife thought it was sniper fire.

Bridgeland: Yes, because the glass was shattering. They were on the first floor; their friend Karen Van de Castle was coming down to the first floor to meet them for lunch. I got a call from Maureen's friend, who called me to say everything was OK. I didn't know the bomb had gone off yet, but I knew they were going to the World Trade Center that day and if I had found out that had gone off before I knew they were safe it would have been—

Riley: Exactly. So that was Portman in '93. Then '94 is an interesting year to be—

Bridgeland: Yes, we go from total irrelevance, if Rob does a floor statement it's a big day in the office. We were doing a lot of speeches back home and getting refreshed on the issues and going to a lot of meetings and working to get him—

Walcott: Out of the proverbial attic office.

Bridgeland: You said it, fifth floor Cannon [Cannon House Office Building], furthest office away. I feel like I'm working out of a semicloset. It's dark and unpleasant, and if the air conditioning works occasionally you feel good.

Walcott: Was there a sense of the change, that was one of the pivot points, the Republican Party changes. Being there on the Hill, were you guys able to sense that?

Bridgeland: You know what I sensed? I never forget sensing entrenchment and arrogance. I had experiences in meeting with staff where I'd leave the meeting and I'd say, "That was interesting." I'm a Davis Polk lawyer, a decently educated person, I know I'm in the minority party, but from time to time we weren't treated that well. There was this sense—I think it had been 40 years of power?

Riley: Yes.

Bridgeland: This wasn't universal, there were plenty of great people we met with on both sides, good spirited, but I remember a couple of the committees, staff that we met with, it felt arrogant. Then when the revolution—and you see it, Newt [Gingrich] and the party, they're organizing, they're mobilizing, they're creating this vision for America, I forget—

Perry: Contract with America.

Bridgeland: No, I know Contract with America would emerge but before that Newt has this group, I used to remember all the names, I apologize. Joe Gaylord was one of them. But he would have this group and they were working on this new, renewing American civilization kind of vision. Eventually the Contract emerges as a plan. We informed the Contract in that we noticed in letters we were getting, a lot of discussions back home, that crippling federal mandates were being passed to state and local governments. Sometimes emergency responders and other vital services were having to be looked at and even cut because of some of the federal mandates that forced compliance without appropriate resources. We saw an opportunity—John Glenn and Dirk Kempthorne had partnered in the Senate on a bill. Because of the procedures in the Senate it worked, but in the House the procedure didn't work. So there was no way to have a bicameral check on unfunded mandates. For both houses to pass it, it probably needed some force in the House in terms of checking these mandates.

I went over to the Congressional Research Service and talked to these amazing people who aren't used as much as they ought to be. This woman starts telling me about Thomas Brackett Reed, gives me the whole history of parliamentary procedure. I find myself over in the parliamentarian's office where the parliamentarian says, "Wow, we don't see that many staffers talking about procedures." I just kept thinking, *There has to be a way*.

It was not easy, but we eventually came up with a new parliamentary procedure that enabled the House to have a point of order that would give it a separate vote, would force the committees to consider whether or not they were imposing an unfunded federal mandate, then would give every Member of Congress on the floor of the House a separate vote on the unfunded mandate and its cost, and then be accountable to their constituents including the state and local governments. They were powerful.

The group came to me. They said, "The Big Seven is here to meet with you." I thought, *Really? France, Britain, Russia? What are we talking about?* They said, "No, the National Governors' Association, the National Council of State Legislatures." It was funny, they had a very healthy, and appropriately so, view of themselves. But they organized and we worked together. Because of the rules change on the House floor, it went from a closed rule to an open rule because Newt had promised in the reform of the Contract that we're not going to have the old, entrenched Democrat procedures of closed rule, shove it down your throat, pass it, done with it. We're going to have open debate on the floor. Sounds like a wonderful democratic idea until Rob and I are on the floor of the House for three and a half weeks on the Unfunded Mandates bill.

He is up there doing the debate and I'm right there in the chair feeding him responses to questions. All these amendments get offered, and we have to respond on the spot. That's a long time, right? Usually you're on the floor a couple of days, which was exhausting, but three weeks? That was the first bill that got passed out of the Contract. It was S1. In the process I got

to know John Glenn and his staff very well. They were a sophisticated, beautifully run staff. Then Dirk Kempthorne, Senator from Idaho, and his staff. It was a great experience. That's where we went to Henry Waxman, whose staff was investigating Republicans for all sorts of things.

Rob Portman and I showed up in Henry Waxman's office to see Congressman Waxman and his top aide, Phil Barnett, and their mouths fell open a little bit. That was a good experience because you could see that even in the most hostile circumstances there was room for bipartisan cooperation if people had a spirit of openness and willingness to look at facts and cooperate. We ended up getting the bill done. I don't think we could have gotten it done—We got the momentum under Waxman and then Bill Clinger, I think it was, became the chairman when the Republicans took control. Waxman—The ranking member can cause all sorts of havoc. He in particular was very adept at cross-examination and being very tough and could scuttle things. He asked a lot of good questions, but he was helpful.

Riley: Did Portman consider himself a Gingrich acolyte?

Bridgeland: No, we both felt the same way. Newt was brilliant in his own way. He'd have 15 ideas and one or two of them would be great things that could actually happen, a new way of looking at things. I even noticed it on the Presidential debates. I had my kids watch the various town halls and I had them vote. Every one of them picked Newt Gingrich. I said, "Why?" "He's got a vision for America" number one. Number two, "He seems to know so much about all the issues." Then number three, "He's talking about community colleges, careers in technical education, and he gives you a specific example in the middle of nowhere where there is this breakthrough program." That was Newt.

There was a spirit he created, "We're going to have a clear Contract, accountability to the American people. You may not agree with everything, but you know what you're voting for, you know what you're getting." The people he surrounded himself with, Jack Howard, Peter Davidson who was in [Richard] Armey's office, a wildly capable guy. It was fun.

Walcott: How long did that spirit last?

Bridgeland: Good question, it really didn't. The open rule initially got a lot of the hostility and tension out in a way. You could see the hostility of the debate almost dissipate, at least in the context of the bills we worked on. Some of that was very healthy, and I think Newt was right to have an open, transparent process. The Contract marched along. I think there were quite a few things that actually got done. You probably know off the top of your heads.

Riley: The House did almost all of it.

Bridgeland: Yes, the House did almost all of it, and then of course things got gummed up in the Senate and it was more complicated to get things done in the Senate, a little countermajoritarian. We did get unfunded mandates. I know there were other things that got done.

Newt was out doing press conferences every day. We knew some people in the White House Legislative Affairs Office we worked with. They were very good, very nice. We did a Rose Garden ceremony for the Unfunded Mandates Act and they sent us pictures. My first picture,

shaking Bill Clinton's hand with Rob Portman there. It was a nice moment, completion of a legislative accomplishment. You could almost see the fear of a loss—My view of the Presidency is we really have an agenda-setting Presidency in the country. We have extraordinarily high expectations that the President, because of the single voice and the bully pulpit and the State of the Union and all these platforms he or she has, can execute their agenda, and they can't. The windows of opportunity are limited and rare.

When the whole game shifts to the Speaker of the House setting the agenda and actually being out with the press every day, and we would be in and around it, we'd see it created this vibrancy and vitality in the House of Representatives you might not have seen for years, right?

Riley: At least 40.

Bridgeland: And it scared the White House to death, I think it really did. I felt that in the Legislative Affairs shop. It was like a loss of Presidential power. But it didn't last. They were vulnerable—There are vulnerabilities to being out in the press every day talking about issues. Eventually it caught up.

Riley: So you're with Portman through—?

Bridgeland: I thought I was going to stay a couple of years, and then we ended up writing nine bills that got signed into law, which felt—In hindsight some of the laws were really good and have had an impact, others haven't. But at the time you feel like that is one of the indications of your success. So we did the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, and then I had this idea that drug abuse was spiking. I got to know Joe Califano as a friend. He was Lyndon Johnson's—the first person, I think, who had a Domestic Policy Council job. He basically created it. He was running a center at Columbia [University] on substance abuse.

There were articles in a local newspaper about high levels of drug abuse in young kids, who were literally dying, and parents, families that get engaged early on and schools. I had this idea, working with a guy named Jim Copple from the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America to create a Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati and use the Congressional office in a new way, a new model of governance we called it.

We go back to Cincinnati and I say, "Rob, let's use your power, the power of the office, not just to legislate but to convene and bring people together." So we brought together the two editors of the two papers, which brings a lot of other people too, business leaders, the substance abuse community, educators, faith-based leaders, parent movement. Altogether, it was a powerhouse. It was like if you wanted to get something done in Cincinnati, these were the people you'd have in a room. Rob and I were both saying, "Wow, build it and they will come." The power of the Congressional office to do things locally.

So we built this coalition. It became a nonprofit and Rob was the chair. We got it all cleared with the ethics council, which was not easy initially because it was a new approach. Then it was going well, people were really getting motivated. This ties into the eventual Bush story, how I first met Governor Bush. We created a template and got I think 75 members of Congress to do the same thing. I went to see David Broder, the *Washington Post* columnist, and he gave a speech to chiefs of staff. He talked about members of Congress and the many things they could do, the power of

constituent service. I wrote to him, "I loved your speech today, I thought you'd be interested, we're taking a new view of the role of a Congressman, and we think we have a new model of governance."

He called me right away. He's such a wonderful man. He called me and here I am this 33-year-old kid, "God, David Broder's on the phone." I was terrified. "If I say anything, it will be in the *Washington Post*." Back then I had not interacted with the press very much because Rob and I didn't have a lot to say for the national picture. Unfunded mandates we did a little bit, but we were pretty small time.

He comes into Cincinnati, sees it at the Republican National Convention. We go show it to Newt and Newt goes crazy, this part of our new American civilization. He convenes the members of Congress and says, "Do what Portman is doing. Pick your own issue. This is what Republicans are about. We're not just legislating bigger government blah, blah, blah, spending money, we're showing leadership at the local level." It gets featured at the Republican National Convention, and Broder writes a front-page story in the *Washington Post*: something like "Portman Jump-Starting New Model of Governance." Then talks all about the community. The day before he runs it I see him in the hall. He stops me. He's kind of formal, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist. He says, "John, you'll be very pleased with tomorrow's paper." That's all he said.

Of course I got up at 6 o'clock in the morning. We didn't have the Internet in those days. I pull the paper and then I call Rob and wake him up. I said, "Rob, I think you're going to be really happy." He reads it. He was speaking that day on the floor of the convention as a freshman—It was exciting.

Then we went on to do the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act. Cincinnati was a hotbed of both abolitionism and pro-slavery sentiment. I forget what they called it. You had both the abolitionists and the slave owners right there on the river. But it was also a huge area, the Underground Railroad, a lot of sites in our congressional district, the Parker House and others. These areas were fast dwindling in terms of getting rundown, people weren't even aware of them. We created as a unit of the National Park Service an affiliate program, the Underground Railroad, and partnered with Congressman Louis Stokes from Cleveland, an African American, hugely respected, head of the Congressional Black Caucus. Rob's name is on the bill first and it worries me.

Then Newt makes a comment about bringing it up on the floor. "You know, it's their Railroad," I said. "Let's have it be the Stokes-Portman bill." It moves forward for a combination of reasons as the Portman-Stokes bill. People like the bill, but they don't like the positioning. Louis Stokes even just at the last second votes for it. Everybody is waiting for Lou Stokes to vote and they're all voting no. It gets defeated on the House floor. This is a hard lesson learned.

Then we go back. I go over to meet with Stokes's people and I said, "It's the Stokes-Portman bill. If you don't even want us on it, that's fine, it's the Stokes bill. We want to get this done. Good for the country, good for the cause, good for our district, good for your district, brings parties together." Sure enough it gets done, universally I think. Just like the Drug-Free Communities Act. Out of the coalition we write a bill called the Drug-Free Communities Act, which provides grants out of the Office of National Drug Control Policy to community antidrug

coalitions all around the country. There are now more than a thousand of them. In the literature it is viewed as a real success story in prevention and treatment. So we got the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act done, but it was a lot rockier.

The Speaker's office calls me and says, "Congratulations on the Drug-Free Communities Act" just as it was finishing being voted. It was 434 to 1. I said, "Who is the one?" They said, "This guy you never heard of, his name is Ron Paul." So interesting. Every time we did a bill even when it was universally supported, Ron Paul was always there—I won't go through it all but we ended up doing—One of my favorite bills that we designed and wrote was the Tropical Forest Conservation Act.

Riley: Is there a large tropical forest presence in Ohio?

Bridgeland: Isn't it odd that we do that? We have a strong conservation interest, national parks, worry about the environment. Bush 41 had done the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, which was a North and South America alliance and had done interesting things including debt for nature work. We do this bill called the Tropical Forest Conservation Act. I say "we" because we felt like we were having an impact.

Riley: You said the motive for it was conservation?

Bridgeland: Twofold, the clean air in Cincinnati is a public good. The Bush 41 administration had done extraordinary things on the environment including acid rain. There was almost a sentiment that the march from Rachel Carson onward should continue. We went to John Kasich, who was chairman of the Budget Committee. He was like, "What? You're suggesting what?" I said, "This is actually good. It is a debt for nature swap. It reduces the pressure on Latin American countries that have tropical forests to cut their trees. There is no farming after a year or so because the soil is very thin. It is a public good to the United States. We're putting pressure on them to basically stop doing something that is bad for the world and for very low cost to government we can save millions of hectares of tropical forest." So he got behind it, we passed it, worked with [Richard] Lugar and [Joseph] Biden in the Senate. That was signed into law in 1998. Then I think a month later I left. That was my final—I wanted to go out with something.

Riley: When did you start looking out?

Bridgeland: Rob wanted me to stay forever. I remember waking up one morning, I'd had a dream where I didn't have a face. This is honest, right? You told me to be honest. But when you are a Congressional staffer and you're working—So I would work on things and sometimes I'd write all this stuff, get it all together. He's a busy guy, he'd give the speech, he'd do the thing. It was the Portman bill. It was like you almost didn't exist.

Riley: Right.

Bridgeland: As I became older I had my own professional interests and ambitions. Just being brutally honest I felt like I wanted to find my own voice and my own face, which I seemed to have lost in a dream one night. So I went to him with six months' notice. I said, "I need to move on and do my own thing." He was initially not all that happy but over time it worked out fine.

Riley: So what were you thinking about doing next?

Bridgeland: I didn't want to practice law. I agonized over it. You can't always find something in the world that is what you want to be doing. I talked to Procter & Gamble. They wanted me to be their corporate social responsibility person, but that didn't seem to fit. I had some foundations that wanted me to look at working for them. A lot of law firms said I could have flexibility to do politics or whatever. I even looked at running possibly, but when I saw it up close, the fund-raising, all the public events all the time. I love people and I love speaking—Even the laws, it is so rare that you pass anything. Then if you do pass something, a lot of times it doesn't have a big effect.

I started to see a lot of people in public life who were doing so much good. One of my favorite examples is Sargent Shriver. He never held public office, but when you look at the numbers of people around the world that man touched, you can make an argument that through his multiple platforms—And I wasn't a devotee of some of those programs, but Peace Corps, VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America], Job Corps, Head Start, Legal Services Corporation, Special Olympics with Eunice [Shriver] were extraordinary. I just got back from Zambia, 300 Peace Corps volunteers working on malaria control now, in partnership with Malaria No More. You see the influence every day. I don't see that influence of a Member of Congress on many issues, if you know what I mean.

Riley: Sure.

Bridgeland: I ended up starting my own enterprise called Civic Solutions with Fred Nelson, who had been Steve Chabot's chief of staff and a lawyer and eventually became a judge. We started to work on a lot of projects for nonprofits and foundations.

Bragaw: You'd been on the Hill for five years, been involved in other things, working closely with the White House. Had your views on the Presidency really changed in terms of how you saw, what the President—particularly in the context of President Clinton—did that help inform this sense of how your calling was changing or what you were being led to?

Bridgeland: I was impressed with the Presidency. It was a glimpse into a platform that seemed more powerful and efficient and interesting than—

Riley: Certainly than a junior Member of Congress.

Bridgeland: Fifth floor attic of the Cannon Building. Clinton, who is this extraordinary man of appetites, and appetite for policy is one of them. I'll never forget on the Drug-Free Communities Act he comes into the Roosevelt Room to sign it. I'm right there in the front row and Rob is up there, the whole field is there. He comes in, we get to shake hands with him, [Albert, Jr.] Gore is right there because Gore is very much right there in everything, all the public appearances. I almost got the feeling he was sort of the co-President. He was being positioned increasingly as the successor.

Clinton comes in and says, "That's one of the best bills I've ever read." I'm like, *Wow, the President actually read the bill?* It was a very direct, clear, we worked very hard with House legislative counsel to draft something. The people on the committee said it too, which made you

feel like maybe you were doing something valuable. We had talked a little bit about it and then he signed it into law. That was a little glimpse into the Presidency.

Then the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, Rose Garden ceremony—not so much with the President; he came to a drug-free convention function we had had a role in—He was about an hour and a half late. There is also a difference—Not to be critical of President Clinton, Presidents are busy, but President Bush, when we kept David McCullough waiting once, it was like 9:31 and our appointment was at 9:30. I forget who he yelled at but he said, "We're keeping David McCullough waiting? Get him in here." He was very respectful of other people's time, which is something I highly valued and learned from.

But my view of the Presidency was more informed by the staff with whom we worked at that point and that was Legislative Affairs mostly. Bruce Reed and a few others who I thought were very young, very smart, very effective.

Perry: So it's 1998. Are you beginning to look toward 2000?

Bridgeland: No.

Perry: As to whom you would support?

Bridgeland: Not at all.

Perry: Not even thinking about it?

Bridgeland: A lot of people I worked with who were chiefs of staff were political creatures. They basically ran campaigns. They worried night and day about their member's vote on things. I was mindful of politics, got increasingly mindful of it as I went on, but much more a policy kind of person.

Riley: And you're saying that's unusual.

Bridgeland: A little unusual for the chiefs of staff. Usually your legislative director is your policy guy or gal, and your chief of staff can sometimes be almost exclusively—almost to the point where you felt like the line between the campaign and the Congressional office sometimes got heavily blurred. Some members eventually would run into trouble about that.

Riley: Did Rob have a political guy?

Bridgeland: Joe Hagin, who is his best friend from growing up, just a dear friend and was always thinking politically about Rob and is to this day, in the context of talk over the Vice Presidency and the like. But I initially called the ethics council office every single day my first month probably. People would bring a balloon or candy into the office and there was a gift ban. Then we put a stricter gift ban in our office. Maybe that sounds a little Boy Scout–ish. Actually, there was an article in the newspaper saying, "Somebody tried to bring a balloon into Portman's office and it was banned. No friendship here, no celebrations here." But it was good. Within that first month I got a really good sense of the House ethics rules.

Walcott: When you were working with Portman, were you involved in fund-raising, campaign activities at all?

Bridgeland: None, not at all. I would go to the—Like President Bush 41 came in, Rob had a tradition of doing one event a year and making it a barn burner, big one, raise a lot of money, get a lot of people, the whole network. President Bush 41 comes in, and it is the first time he spoke since he had gotten defeated by Clinton. It made a lot of national news and it was at the Portman fund-raiser, so I obviously got involved in working with the Bush 41 staff and Rob's remarks, but not fund-raising.

Rob would sometimes kid me about it. "Where's my chief of staff?" But we were doing so much on the policy side that was accruing so much not to just the perception but hopefully the reality that we would get stuff done. Then the constituent service stuff, the 48-hour rule and that was all going well.

Riley: So you leave and you're doing your own thing. You have a brief account of your first experience with George W. Bush in here.

Bridgeland: I get a call from the campaign that he is going to be doing this "Duty of Hope" speech on July 22, 1999, in Indianapolis, which will announce his compassionate conservatism, armies of compassion.

Riley: Were you paying attention to Bush?

Bridgeland: Yes, I had been paying attention. Didn't know him personally, but knew of John DiIulio's work. Then John partnered with Jim Wilson to write the *American Government* book. I knew Jim and was in contact with him over the years. I was asked, "Could you put together a follow-on event in Cincinnati in the early afternoon of the 'Duty of Hope' speech?"

I get into that to understand the inside view of what that is all about. We had done Community Anti-Drug Coalition work in Cincinnati, and there is this place that was formerly a row of houses where crack was sold on the corner and kids were growing up in a drug-infested neighborhood that has now been turned into a community center called Hope. It was a faith-based effort. I said, "That's perfect."

So he flies into the airport. There are all these Republican operatives in the airport and then there is me. The guy comes in off the plane. Bush is still outside and says, "Is John Bridgeland here, he needs to—?" I look around, *Oh, God, all these people are going to hate me now*. I get into the car with him that is waiting on the tarmac. I'm in the car for a little briefing.

Riley: You'd never met him before?

Bridgeland: Never met him before. I'd met his father and I'd played tennis with his brother Marvin [Bush], but never met him. He came into the car and he is chewing on a cigar. He's friendly, but he is clearly uninterested in what I'm having to say. I kept going, kept briefing. Then I said, "Part of the coalition is faith-based institutions that are working across faiths to help combat drug abuse and the transformative power of—" He stops me and starts asking question after question. That's when he starts cross-examining me and really is interested.

He wants to know the role of government. I told him the Weed and Seed Program out of the Department of Justice has provided funds for this program. We wrote this bill called the Drug-Free Communities Act that is going to be providing grants to community coalitions all across the country, and faith-based institutions are mentioned in the legislation. John knew the constitutional stuff much better.

I said, "Obviously you can't fund sectarian worship or proselytizing. Social service delivery has to remain separate from the religious services. There are issues around Federalism, around religious hiring," blah, blah, blah. He says, "You know what you're doing." But he was interested that it was a faith-based setting.

Riley: Right.

Bridgeland: So we pull up, go into this faith-based setting. I walk in and go, "Oh, my God." Literally it is 120 degrees in there. There are fans going, but there is no air conditioning. I'm moderating this event with members from the coalition. One young woman has lost members of her family to drug abuse. Compelling stories. So we have this moderated conversation.

I think the Governor says, "Earlier today I talked about a duty of hope, and I'll first look to faith-based institutions and community-based institutions closest to the needs of people and government. It can't just stand by. It has to be active but limited and effective. Thanks, everyone." I think it was Brian Montgomery, the advance person, who at the end of the session—It has gone well. I introduced it, we had a good discussion, the Governor does a nice job, the people all do a nice job. Then Brian is going—We're all pouring with sweat. As we ended it I said, "That's it. My career is *over*." This man who is running for President literally has patches of wet under his arm and it is 120 degrees. I can tell that he liked it. The reverend says a prayer and we leave.

I shake his hand, I thank the members of the coalition I know, and then I beeline for my car because I know that's it. I'm getting out of there, saying, "OK, Brian, sorry about the heat." He says, "That's OK." I go to my car and I hear the Governor shout, "Bridgeland, ride with me."

Riley: Uh-oh.

Bridgeland: I say, "OK, Governor." I ride in his car to downtown Cincinnati where they're doing a fund-raiser, because they did the combination—It's the campaign, the events, and the fund-raiser. I call my dad and he meets me there. On the way down, the Governor says, "That was a fantastic event. This is a key part of my campaign. I want to put you in touch with my staff. Would you ever be interested in coming to Austin?"

I'm sort of stumbling around. I have a family, three kids. Then I watched him speak at the fund-raising event. A few weeks later, I get a call. There's back-and-forth. I talk to Rob Portman, too, who is involved in the campaign. He knew Josh Bolten well and Josh was encouraging. He said, "As you're staffing up, you really ought to talk to Bridge." Then by January, February they really are starting to staff up.

Riley: This is 2000?

Bridgeland: Yes, this is 2000. Josh told me when he got there he was literally putting the phone together; somebody was building a desk. It was that kind of piecemeal initially. So I fly down to Austin, meet with Josh. He doesn't give me any instructions; he just has me go meet with the policy staff and talk with each policy staff person. Then he takes me in to meet Karl Rove and Karen Hughes and Joe Allbaugh, this massive guy with a crewcut. I wasn't even clear what Joe's role was exactly, they didn't describe it very well initially, sort of like campaign manager but Karl seemed to be the political guy.

Josh and I had dinner that night and talked at length. He took me to the airport the next day. When I went down there I didn't expect to be moving to Austin at the age of 39 to work on a Presidential campaign. As I reflected on it, each person was brilliant at what they did. Karl was a genius at what he did. Karen Hughes was incredibly effective. Joe Allbaugh, I would learn later, was a tough-minded manager. Josh Bolten was one of the people I respected most. I had known Josh from Congressional days.

Riley: When in Congressional days?

Bridgeland: Rob knew Josh. Josh had worked on the Hill in the Senate and then had been at the U.S. Trade Representative's office. Rob was renting Josh's apartment when Josh was at Goldman Sachs in London. So we'd get to see Josh. Rob always talked about him glowingly. I got to know Josh a little bit. That's how I got connected to the campaign. I was in touch with them since about February 2000 and working on things and then officially drove down and moved in, I think it was tax day.

Riley: In the course of the day you spent down there meeting with various people, were you hearing from them what their plans or strategies were both politically and in policy issues, or were they just grilling you on these things?

Bridgeland: It was very back and forth. They were sharing stuff with me and I then was sharing ideas with them. Then Steve Goldsmith, who had been the mayor of Indianapolis and done the Front Porch Alliance, was an interesting figure at the time who had gotten a lot of public attention for a mayor nationally, was the outside policy advisor bringing all these people together. James Q. Wilson and all these different people in areas of policy. Steve called me and said, "So, Bridgeland, I hear you're going to be the deputy to Josh Bolten. This is great." We start talking. We really hit it off. A lot of creative ideas about who to bring in to work on different issues.

When I came down to the campaign, I noticed that the Texas insiders were really where it was well oiled. They were very close to the Governor, good relationship, comfortable. Those on the outside, including the extraordinarily capable Josh Bolten, were still finding their way. I was in that position certainly.

Then Joe Hagin, who was Rob Portman's best friend and a good friend of mine, grew up on the same street, gets brought down at the same time I do to basically run operations, which he had done for Bush 41 really well.

Riley: The body guy, right?

Bridgeland: He's the guy who runs all the advance and operations from Secret Service to the guy who carries the football.

Riley: Under 41?

Bridgeland: Under 41 he had been an operations guy. He wasn't Secret Service or—

Riley: I meant personal aide.

Bridgeland: Yes, personal aide. He didn't have the position he had with Bush 43. He was his personal aide, that's exactly right.

Riley: Can you tell us what you were hearing from them the first trip down there? Is it your perception that the faith-based piece of it is really the main magnet between you and the bunch, or is there something else going on?

Bridgeland: It's so interesting. It would be said later that there is a good reason why Governor Bush is forging ahead in this race, he is fast becoming the candidate of fresh ideas. This gets written later by David Gergen as a result of all this policy we were putting out.

Riley: You're reading that off *Renewing America*.

Bridgeland: This is a book we produced. What was exciting to me was the opportunity to come into a campaign that was formed, that had great people working on it, that had some policies—This guy Mike Gerson, whom I called Rumpelstiltskin, would take policy straw and turn it into gold. The language this guy would use and the way he would frame things was extraordinary. He was like Ted Sorensen. Ted Sorensen could take an idea and express it in two words, an inversion—"Ask not."

I learned then, I came in with this drug policy, 15 pages. Mike goes, "Oh, no, four pages at most." He taught me the power of brevity. So there was an opportunity with this talented staff and a great leader in Josh and a great team to develop a lot of creative, fresh ideas. I'll never forget, I go into Karl Rove's office with Josh and Josh says, "Among the many things Bridge has worked on and that you'll love working with him on, he's going to make us greener." Karl goes, "Ah, Teddy Roosevelt." I think it might have been in response to this, Karl created Teddy Roosevelt awards to anybody on the campaign who had a breakthrough. There were these Teddy Roosevelt scarves he would pass out.

I know Karl has been vilified in a lot of corners, but he was very kind to me. He brought me out to his farmhouse, I met his wife, had barbecue. Josh and Karl and I would plot the policy campaign strategy. Where is the President going to be? What is he going to announce? What is he going to feature? How do we tie it into an event that will symbolize to the American people the power of the idea we're trying to express? Obviously there will be lots of policies underneath it.

We ended up working on these fact sheets, we called them. We begin with, "How is the President going to talk about it? There's got to be language." Mike would take our policy and craft that, frame it. We knew at the end of the day you'd have a speech and an opportunity to

reach millions of Americans, and you'd have to capture it or it would be lost. Then we'd give the background, "What is the problem we're trying to address?" We'd have executive summaries.

Then we would articulate with data and research, real policies. We kept cranking these things out one after another, sometimes in areas where people would be like, "You're talking about national parks on the Presidential campaign?" We'd say, "Yes, it's August 25, which is the anniversary of the National Park System."

We'd find a hook. We were announcing policies that—"You're talking about Individual Development Accounts on the campaign?" We kept cranking this stuff out. There was a spirit of enthusiasm around it. The whole policy staff was energized by it because it wasn't a sleepy, let's just do the political thing, but let's do our homework and do sound policies and make sure they reflect the philosophy. The Governor was very active. We briefed him on all the policies in advance. He had lots of questions.

Then [David] Gergen writes in June 2000, "This campaign is breaking through because it is fast becoming the power of fresh ideas." You're in a bubble, you can't always see how things are going. That kind of spirit, it wasn't only Gergen, others were starting to say it. It was uplifting.

Riley: Was there anybody else in the Republican candidate firmament at the time that you felt any kind of attraction to?

Bridgeland: Yes, Dan Coats had been very good in these areas. Chuck Hagel was a very interesting figure, almost a liminal figure, someone who could see things coming on the horizon and be a bridge builder to get things done. [John] McCain in certain areas. Of course he was in the primary and that was tense. Had a good staff and some good ideas, big proponent of national service and veterans and strong on foreign policy. Of course Condi [Condoleezza] Rice was on our campaign and leading the foreign policy team. Lugar in foreign policy. There was a lot of outreach.

Riley: That's outreach, that's not—

Bridgeland: Governor Marc Racicot from Montana gets brought in. Don Evans is the chairman of the campaign but Marc comes down, he's there all the time, very calm, he's on TV a lot and he's articulating the seminal ideas of the campaign in beautiful language and in a trusting way.

To get back to your question, the theme of domestic policy, it was no surprise that he began with "Duty of Hope" because he said, "My philosophy of governance is that the American dream is a fundamental American idea, grounded in our Constitution, Declaration, if people don't—We know there is going to be inequality in America, but if there is not social and economic mobility, then we're not the society we could become. We don't need another War on Poverty or big government program that is bureaucratic where people don't know your name, don't live in your neighborhood. We'll first look to community and faith-based organizations and provide them support to offer hope to the addicted and social services."

When you looked at the data from volunteering to the social services—Later Sargent Shriver said to me, "Bridge, we had a faith-based initiative. We kept seeing in our government social service delivery—" in the War on Poverty that they were ramping up. He said, "If we didn't work in

some way with faith-based institutions, we couldn't reach most of the people we were trying to reach. It's at the end of the road. But we didn't put a spotlight on it like you did, nor did we have a Faith-Based Office. That was bold and also risky." But the fundamental theme was a belief in citizens and belief in the neighborhood and community-based institutions that could most directly touch the lives of people.

The President also has a strong faith. It would be interesting when I saw him speak at different events, the text would disappear, the crowd would come in. I literally mean they were already there, but there would be this interaction. When the President started talking about the compassion agenda, he was both electrified and electrifying, his best self.

Riley: I want to dig into that, but I owe you a break.

[BREAK]

Riley: Back to the campaign. You had a question, Steve.

Bragaw: At this point in the campaign, was there a moment that really sticks out in your memory as "I really want to work for this guy," that literally has that thing he has mentioned a lot in writing different things about the Fourth of July in Philadelphia, going over—the rib, the clip thing. One of those moments.

Bridgeland: I wasn't there, but I've heard it again—John is one of my best friends in life, he is now like the brother I never had, and I've heard him tell that story a lot.

I connected with him some in 1999, not a lot. I was told later that he had seen people on his father's staff who left and then became disloyal. There is that. You see that in every administration. I heard that was one line. The other is that it takes time. You work with people, especially in those public positions. It takes time to build up trust. Even though I could tell he liked me and he respected me, for months I felt like I was not on the inside.

Riley: Sure. Because the inside was, by your own discussion, the Texans.

Bridgeland: Yes, the Texans. Mike Gerson he would see at events and he would hug. They had a very symbiotic, Mike wrote the words, also the faith. Mike wasn't from Texas; I think Mike was unusual in that way.

It was interesting to brief him because you'd get 35 to 40 seconds, sometimes a little bit more, and then *bam*, he'd come at you with a question. It was always the most relevant, important question. I think he was the first MBA [master of business administration degree] President. His whole approach to governance I would summarize as, "What are we trying to achieve, what's the evidence it will work, who is going to run and manage this effort, and then how are we going to be accountable for results?"

I know that sounds simplistic, but as you get into government not all these programs have that. Sometimes there is not a clear mission, or it's murky. There is not always clarity in terms of who is managing and running it, and most of these programs aren't evaluated. James Q. Wilson told me before he died, "The best thing you could do in this area for the national community and volunteer efforts, do evaluations of Habitat for Humanity, Teach for America, Boys and Girls Clubs, and report results and show the public the value to the public." He said there's not nearly enough of that work done in this area.

When Jim Wilson read my book, which he liked a lot, he said, "There's a paucity of evidence in terms of—" What's the impact on national service in our public schools? That's growing, there are efforts underway. The Governor focused in on that like a laser and sometimes would knock you off your—The first time I briefed him it was on transportation issues across the border, U.S. to Mexico.

Riley: This is—

Bridgeland: This is in Texas as deputy policy director. On day two Josh said, "You're briefing on this." He put me into the fire, "Good luck." It wasn't my area of expertise. To this day I'm so thankful I answered the questions correctly because I didn't fully know the landscape. It had only been 24 hours; I was tired from the trip. The next day it was Individual Development Accounts and the next day—It was like a boxer. He would go in there and he'd hit you. Initially you'd be a little stunned, you'd recover, and then if you didn't answer the question well he'd give you a few more minutes but then—I'll never forget. I won't mention the name. Somebody else was briefing him and he got hit and the answer wasn't good. I could tell it wasn't good. The Governor said, "So-and-So, you're losing altitude in your balloon fast. Better wrap it up."

Walcott: Texans can talk.

Bridgeland: I always felt I didn't want to lose altitude in my balloon fast. I spent a lot of time in advance thinking about, *What are the top questions he is going to ask me?* You could get there, but I wanted to have really crisp good answers, and that takes thought. That was wonderful training for the Oval Office briefings, where you have 20 minutes at most. Usually we'd have a 40-minute session, two back-to-back sessions on a couple of issues. You've got to hit the issue. There is an art of Presidential briefing that you learn. You cannot waste the man's time.

Walcott: The virtues you mentioned are managerial virtues.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Walcott: If I were hiring a CEO [chief executive officer] I'd want that guy. Did you see more in him than that?

Bridgeland: I did. I saw an underlying—Ronald Reagan called the spirit of volunteer service like a deep and mighty river flowing through the history of our nation. Not to get melodramatic here, but I saw in the Governor this underlying sense of public service purpose, faith, compassion that basically forced him to run for office.

He had grown up in a family where he had seen a father—World War II, UN ambassador, Member of Congress—not in this order—CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] Director, Vice President, President. A family committed to the ethic of service. You really saw that in him.

He is a good man, quick witted, liked humor. It's stressful, right? You're running for President, there's a lot on the line. All of us really enjoyed humor and a little playfulness even in the most difficult times, which served us really well in various settings. So I saw, in addition to a really good manager of issues and people, somebody who was driven by a belief and core values. He was absolutely clear on what he believed and who he was. I've seen other people in public life who have had various—They're transforming themselves again and again. Bush wasn't. He knew who he was and what he would be in terms of leadership. That has a lot of blessings and some limitations.

I'll never forget, he came into the White House on day three and convened all his senior staff. They had the ethics counsel there and the lawyers, and he said, "I'm from Crawford, Texas, and I carry my values with me and I'm going to eventually go back to Crawford, Texas, my home state. I want to go back with as high a level of integrity as I've come into the office with. No matter what you do here, that's the single most important thing to me, that we uphold the integrity of the Office of the Presidency. Don't cross lines, don't do it fast or wrong, check with the ethics lawyer again and again if you need to."

There was a culture of I want to be there on time. Let's have the cell phones off. Let's treat people with respect. He would get impatient on issues. I had briefed [Jimmy] Carter, Bush 41, Clinton, and Bush 43 at different times, little snippets here and there, some of them more in depth. President Clinton, the more policy you could give him, the better, and then he would generate 15 other areas of inquiry. There's something exciting about that, but it would sometimes be all over the place.

President Bush would come at you like a laser. Here are the cardinal questions I need to know for me to make a judgment and I'm assuming—I'm relying on you to have done all the other stuff the President doesn't need to worry about. I hire people I trust; you go do it. He would always ask at the end of the interview, "So who is running it?" I'd say, "Deputy Secretary—" "No, Bridge, who's running it?"

"Oh, John Abernathy," I'd have to give a name. He wanted that kind of line accountability.

Riley: When you were doing these original sets of briefings, you said the second day you were there you had a transportation issue to brief him on.

Bridgeland: Trucking issue across the border from the U.S. to Mexico.

Riley: Why are you briefing him on that that day? Is there a prescribed regimen of issues that Josh has set forth that over the next month he is going to get?

Bridgeland: Yes, he is going off to Dayton, Ohio, and he is going to do an event that is part of the compassionate agenda on Individual Development Accounts, low-income Americans who can get matched savings through banks. It's a little bit about how do low-income Americans enter an opportunity society and become part of the ladder of mobility. There has to be some

financial literacy and then wealth building. So that event is already scheduled on the calendar for a couple of days down the road. So I'm briefing him on that issue in connection with the launch of a follow-on to the compassion suite of issues in connection with that event.

Within a week or two weeks I'm working with Karl and Josh on setting that agenda. We look at the calendar and say, "What are the major policy initiatives of the campaign? How does that fit with the principles and philosophy we're trying to articulate, and then when and where and how and why do we break through?"

Riley: OK, so what were the major policy issues?

Bridgeland: Education was top domestically.

Riley: Margaret [Spellings] is already on board?

Bridgeland: Yes, Margaret LaMontagne at the time, she is not on the campaign staff, she is still in the Governor's office. She and this guy Vance McMahan, who is the policy director, Margaret is the education advisor.

Riley: Policy director for the Governor?

Bridgeland: Yes, for the Governor. Then this brilliant guy, Sandy [Barnett A.] Kress, who went on to play a critical role on No Child Left Behind and the policy development around education with Margaret. There is, of course, Clay Johnson, who is chief of staff. Gubernatorial campaign staff are still doing—Don Willett, who is doing faith-based. They're cooperating with the campaign, but you don't see them that much. So education, faith-based, the armies of compassion. When you look at it, faith-based initiatives is one of them, but it goes on and on with initiatives.

Riley: Again you're referring to the campaign volume.

Bridgeland: Yes, I think we did three or four of these. I just brought one so you could see it. So on education we had No Child Left Behind, a teachers' initiative, reading—I won't go through it all—math, and science. We had a compassion agenda that goes on for pages. Strengthening Social Security and Medicare. Economy, environment, and entrepreneurship, we married those three, reforming government and national strength were the themes that came up.

Riley: So then you're setting up a kind of briefing agenda for the Governor to bring him up to speed on these issues? The question is partly driven by this. It is fairly well known that there was a group that became known externally as the Vulcans who were convening in Texas periodically to school a Presidential candidate on foreign policy.

Bridgeland: Absolutely.

Riley: Was there a comparable effort on the domestic policy side?

Bridgeland: There was. Every Sunday Condi had an educational call with the President about a country around the world. It was like a seminar with Condi, and this guy Joel Shin, who was on

our policy team and was the national security guy, virtually lived under his desk night and day. He was brilliant. There is one of these campaign stories, he'd eat Vienna sausages out of a can and give the reports at 5:00 A.M., just a remarkable guy. There was Condi and Steve Hadley.

On the domestic side we had a twofold process. We had internal briefings all the time on a range of domestic issues and some, like in health care, were very deep-dive educational, almost like seminars. Others that were driven by—Does the President have to know everything about Individual Development Accounts? Probably not, but enough to be smart on the issue, to be comfortable that he has made judgments that this fits within his philosophy of governance. Then Steve Goldsmith had organized teams of people who weren't on the campaign but were on the outside that we could draw on. I knew him well already, but I called James Q. Wilson on crime. We'd call John DiIulio on faith-based. We'd call Bill Reilly on environment.

All these different people across America who were so talented and had so many good ideas. Occasionally they would come in and have a seminar. James Q. Wilson came down to Texas and spent time with the Governor. One day I come walking in and Henry Kissinger is there. There was a lot of high-level advising from people across many administrations.

Riley: Were you in the meetings he had with Wilson? Can you tell us anything about how that went?

Bridgeland: Yes. You saw yourself as a staffer and then you saw these people who were revered. He had such respect for these people who were being brought in and with whom he would talk. He would listen. The invitation was clear that these people were brought in to give their advice. He had a lot of respect for them and let them talk. Less like he would in our briefings where he would be—

Riley: The boxer.

Bridgeland: You don't box James Q. Wilson.

Riley: Not unless you've got a really good punch.

Bridgeland: Later in the White House we had Bob Putnam, who wrote *Bowling Alone*. You'd see them light up, you really would. When he announced Colin Powell to be Secretary of State, he lit up. It was as if here are people on the American landscape with so much to contribute to the country and be part of this effort. It was always uplifting. It was like hitting the refresh button on the campaign to bring people into Austin and see them interact with the Governor.

I wasn't in all those meetings, but I was in quite a few.

Riley: To what extent are the meetings purposed at educating a Presidential candidate as opposed to idea generation and finding proposals to help pitch to whomever?

Bridgeland: In my view, from the Governor's perspective it was educating and informing. For the staff it was like this is a gold mine of ideas. We were thinking more tactically about how we can translate those ideas and turn them into policy. I don't want to speak for the Governor at the time, but for him I think it was more education, reinforcement, assembling, maybe even testing

the mettle of some of these people in terms of "What about a Cabinet appointment for them?" People would come in, or he would see in the context of the Governor—After 9/11, "Where's [Thomas] Ridge?" Seen in the context of an effective Governor, an effective executive, and he wanted Tom Ridge.

I called James Q. Wilson to get him appointed to a council. He said, "John, I'm so glad you called me and not the President because I couldn't say no to the President." He ended up serving on the Bioethics Committee. He did it willingly with Leon Kass and all these people. It was funny.

Riley: Did you ever sense that the Governor was out of his depth on a particular issue?

Bridgeland: When I first saw him in Cincinnati at the fund-raiser, I worried a little bit. I didn't think he was as articulate as I would expect a President to be. My father and I talked about it. That was the day I'd been with him and I liked him so much. Yet he tripped over a couple of words, it just didn't seem to flow. I thought, *I don't know*. Then when I went down and met with the team and got to know him, I realized that he was extraordinarily capable and smart and sometimes he just—we joked, we'd say, "Don't 'misunderestimate' him."

Sometimes he would trip over a word or say something inarticulate, but, boy, you're with him one-on-one and you studied an issue for a long time—I'll give you an example on climate change when I was in the White House. I'm asked to co-lead the Cabinet-level review of climate change with Gary Edson, who is the Deputy National Security Advisor and Economic Advisor, he has this unusual dual-hatted role. I'm Director of the Domestic Policy Council, and the head of the Council on Environmental Quality has not been appointed yet. Condi Rice is the chair, but she is kind of busy, so Gary and I are co-leading the Cabinet-level review. It is literally meeting with the Cabinet, the *entire Cabinet*.

Riley: One-on-one?

Bridgeland: No, as a Cabinet. Unusual, right? That's like a Cabinet meeting. We've got Colin Powell, Paul O'Neill, Christie Whitman, Don Evans, Elaine Chao, Gale Norton—everybody coming together, and Gary and I are—"Welcome to the Cabinet." The President is not there, it's not a Cabinet meeting. We were charged to do this and did it week after week. I can tell you all about it if you're interested.

Riley: We are but I don't know—

Bridgeland: It is not a well-known part of the history, which has been politicized and things have happened.

Riley: I'll have to make a note because in fact I flagged it earlier.

Bridgeland: I'm in the Oval Office during one of the briefings on climate change. I've studied this issue for months and I've talked to the best experts around the world and particularly the national energy labs, Pacific Northwest National Lab and Jae [James A.] Edmonds and many others around the country we've brought in. We brought in the dean of MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] who had done a lot of work on climate change and had a very strong

interesting view. We brought another guy from MIT who was a climate skeptic. We had James Hanson and all these different people who were scientists and climatologists to policy makers who were all over the map.

I go into one particular briefing—There are a number of them. The President says, "Bridge, how do we know that the buildup of concentrations of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by human beings is directly responsible for the warming of the planet?" What struck me about that was, whoa, first he knew to ask about concentrations, which was significant, and then he went right to the core of the issue.

I said, "Mr. President, we've written the National Academy of Sciences and Ralph Cicerone with a series of key questions because we want the latest and best science. But the isotopic ratio between naturally occurring carbon and man-made carbon has changed over the last 400,000 years as measured by the Vostok ice cores, which is one of the longer longitudinal studies that shows the relationship between man's impact in the buildup and concentrations and naturally occurring carbon, which is 90+ percent of carbon in the cycle."

He'd always sit in his chair like this and look at you. Then he went, "Ah, keep talking." Like "you've got it." So I went on and talked about the feedbacks and what oceans absorb, we don't know completely, what do trees absorb and all the different considerations and the latest science that we had learned. But he was interested in knowing what is the relationship between man's activity and the warming of the climate, the warming of the earth. That's the question, right?

Riley: Sure.

Bridgeland: On the campaign he had announced that he would not only reduce NOx [oxides of nitrogen] and mercury but he would reduce carbon emissions, which outflanked Al Gore on the issue. We had talked to a lot of industry leaders who wanted regulatory certainty. They're being regulated in lots of markets. For them to make capital investments they have to know the rules. They had an appetite for clarity. We were advocating, in a nutshell—and this was consistent with what the dean of MIT told us—that the science can't tell us everything. It is highly complicated.

If you read the response from the National Academy of Sciences, and Ralph Cicerone talks about it to this day, he mentioned it to me. He said, "I'm so pleased that a White House would actually write us a letter and ask us for a review." Some people looked at it and said, "Oh, it means they don't know what they're doing. Don't you know that the climate is warming, duh?" Then others would say, "Oh, my God, why would you do that? What if they come back and say there is a relationship and we've got to do something? It puts you in a politically untenable box."

Gary and I, with the support of the White House and the Cabinet, said, "We're going to get the facts. We're going to do it honestly." So we did. Do you want me to keep talking about this?

Riley: We don't have to be wedded overly to the chronology but rather than doing a deep dive in that, let's stay with the campaign stuff. Chuck, do you have a follow-up on the campaign stuff?

Walcott: Actually, it goes to both. As you talk about the Governor, then the President's reactions to the briefings you were giving, did you get an insight on his decision process?

Bridgeland: Yes.

Walcott: How did he make decisions, what was his inner life on that sort of thing?

Bridgeland: That's a really good question. When you came in for briefings he'd hear enough, and then he would ask the most highly relevant question and want the answer to it. A lot of times there would be a lot more depth of discussion. You could see the wheels turning in terms of—I've talked about his philosophy of governance—I'll give you one example.

One time I was briefing him on an issue and he said, "Bridge, are we writing government checks here? Is this about a lot more federal spending? Because if that's what it's all about, I'm just not interested in that." He had this philosophy that was much more moderate than Reagan, for example, that government would and should play a role, and it should be limited but extremely active and effective and accountable where it played that role. Education was a good example. We're going to spend billions of dollars on public education in the country. The federal government has a relatively small role, but it also has certain levers and a significant taxpayer investment where if those levers are going to be pulled, let's do that effectively with rigor and accountability and some kind of result and then enough information to know if we could get a result.

I think part of the inner voice was, was this going to resonate with people? Were these government programs or the government funding going to get to the places that could really affect lives in ways that were sustainable? Then on environmental issues he was always interested in the relationship between protecting the environment in a sustainable way, doing it in a way that is also consistent with economic growth and economic sustainability and also in the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. Even in climate change, technology will eventually catch up to help us. Those were some of the considerations he'd have on the domestic side, very mindful of that philosophy.

Walcott: Did you get any sense as a policy briefer of the way he factored in political concerns?

Bridgeland: Absolutely. Part of the power of the Faith-Based Initiative was that we were reaching out to millions of Americans who traditionally might not have given Republicans a look. He was very deliberate in wanting a diverse Cabinet and a diverse staff and a diverse workforce. He was always mindful of that and not just for political reasons. He thought that was the right thing to do.

In the Oval Office briefings or the briefings with the Governor, Karl and Karen were there. Eventually the Legislative Affairs team in the White House was there. It would be ineffective if you briefed without—You could have a great program you'd launch, but if you can't get it done with the Congress for some reason—That was part of the problem with climate change, a Senate vote of 95 to 0 against the Kyoto Protocol, that was the landscape we were handed. The Senate voted 95 to 0 against it. A lot of people forget that.

All those considerations are relevant to the policy-making process because it is part of the machinery of government. Does that answer your question?

Walcott: It gets there, yes.

Bridgeland: Push me if there is more. Are you suggesting did politics overdo it?

Walcott: At some point did Bush the oilman kick in or Bush's friends, the oilmen, kick in when talking about climate change, for example?

Bridgeland: Yes, he knew a lot about energy policy. Our briefings on energy were fun to watch and participate in. There were areas where he had a lot of experience. He was a businessman too. But he announced on the campaign the reduction in carbon dioxide, which was a big deal. I had a lot of policies in the area of conservation that showed that conservation and economic interests went hand-in-hand. Were there influences on the outside that I didn't see directly? Sure, probably. I wasn't part of those outside discussions.

Riley: You talk a lot about the briefings. His preference was to get oral briefings or—?

Bridgeland: We did both. Josh and I would write these or the staff would prepare something and we'd meld it into a briefing appropriate for the Governor. Then we would send it to the Governor. He would read it. Sometimes he would be in the car coming back into Austin from Crawford, let's say. He'd call us on the phone. I remember quite a few briefings. Carol Thompson was—"Bridge, it's the Governor." Your heart would kind of drop. "Really, OK." And boom, you're on call. Josh got a gazillion of them. So he would have read it and zing, zing, zing, ask lots of questions.

But he was a people person, he liked the interplay with the staff. I usually left the Governor's Mansion feeling like we had gotten what we needed, he had gotten what he needed, and we knew what we were doing. It was rare that he said, "This is disorganized. Go back and give me another round." So we did a lot of hard work in advance.

Bragaw: Was there any sense while you were doing a lot at this stage of things on the campaign of the tension within the idea of compassionate conservatism, what that was going to translate into? To me one of the fascinating things about the Bush Presidency, setting aside the what if of domestic policy and foreign policy, is how are we going to—We're not the Reagan team; we're reacting to the Clinton administration.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Bragaw: There is also this sense of the person, the first President since John Quincy Adams who is reacting to "I have to carve my own legacy separate from my father's legacy." How did that play itself out in the briefings? You guys are developing the materials and trying to think through these different ideas?

Bridgeland: It's interesting, like we had the New Freedom Initiative. There are 54 million Americans with disabilities, or at least there were at the time. His father had signed the ADA, the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was a big deal back then. That was a landmark set of actions for government to take. You can't go anywhere now without seeing the impact of it for the good.

I remember getting some counsel in a—Not so much to refer to his dad; he was his own man and like you said was trying to carve out—just as I'm sure John Quincy Adams struggled with what

was his own picture and his own legacy. Once I was going to mention his dad in a briefing on the New Freedom Initiative. I didn't, I just gave the date. The Americans with Disabilities Act blah, blah, blah. I was mindful of it. I think others were mindful of it too.

When you look at the sweep of what had been done from Johnson onward, and Clinton and welfare reform, I think compassionate conservatism was an appropriate and natural evolution of all that we had learned up until that time. It was bold and risky and clearly going to be controversial to put an Office of Faith-Based [and Community Initiatives] in the White House because of this visceral reaction to religion and government working in partnership even though, as Sarge Shriver had mentioned, without the faith-based institutions you cut off half of social service delivery in the country. If you're going to be a pragmatist about helping the poor and the needy, you have to enlist them. The question is, how do you do that in a way that is fully consistent with the Constitution?

Riley: Do you recall any major sources of friction or conflict within the course of the campaign? Were there any domestic issues that got Karl and Karen on one side and the policy people on the other?

Bridgeland: It's interesting, the guy right next to me was Dan Bartlett. I was in this little closet office and he was in the little closet office next to me. It was very prestigious to have a door you could close even though it was literally like being in a closet. Dan was part of the communications team with Karen, but he was defending the Bush record.

Riley: This is Texas?

Bridgeland: Yes, this is Texas. So the President's record as a veteran under attack. "Dan, summon the record." Every day there was some kind of—We had the opposition research team and they had the opposition research team and they went at it, gloves off. That was a source of daily tension and friction in the campaign.

We began with the campaign briefing early in the morning, review of all the news, trends, then that piece of the campaign would explode and Dan was in action. I heard him every day. He was wildly effective and knowledgeable about the Governor's background and record. On the bigger issues Karen would sometimes get enlisted to go out publicly and defend the Governor.

In terms of internal policy making, sometimes around the environmental issues there was a little pull and tug between different people. Sometimes there was a little tension around the environmental issues. That's reflected in history—How far do you go? How fast? By when?

Walcott: Was that typically policy people versus politics people or was that internal policy people?

Bridgeland: We had an energy guy and an environment gal. Deirdre [Delisi] was on environment and Hunter [Hunt] on energy, and they'd go at it. There would be a little pull and tug about how far and how fast. Then it would bubble up to me. We'd have that and start shaping it and we'd go to Josh. Then in the context of the briefing, if it was a particularly sensitive issue for whatever reason, we'd go to others. In the briefing everybody would get their airing. It was a very democratic process. Everybody got a chance to talk and express their views.

If Karl had a particular—His job is to get the Governor elected, so he is going to think about the political implications of all these policies. And he'd better, it's his job. So he would have his views on particular issues.

Riley: Did the Governor like to see that litigated in front of him, or did he prefer that you guys get your act together?

Bridgeland: Andy Card always said, "You don't see the President when you want to see the President, you see the President only when you absolutely need to see him."

Riley: That's the President.

Bridgeland: That's the President, and that principle was not as clearly articulated but pretty clear on the campaign. He's running for President, so it's a little less formal. I think there is a lot more discussion in the sense of you got to see the Governor initially more than when he was President. Because there are so many people then across government who have these issues. He liked it. Again and again on issues I would see different points of view offered to him. He would often look to his key policy advisors in the area and say, "So what do you think?" Then your job is to synthesize and summarize and help come to judgment. Most of the time he would agree, which I guess is why you're a policy advisor and why you're not on the outside.

Walcott: What one reads about him is in this kind of environment where he is consulting different advisors and thinking through an issue, at some point he would make a decision and then he didn't want to hear any more about it. Is that correct? That pretty much did it and he wasn't going to revisit—He wasn't going to, what they call in the Obama White House, "relitigate" it.

Bridgeland: He had these core values, this governing philosophy. He had an approach to policy making. I didn't see a ton of relitigation. There would be issues on education policy, there would be issues that kept emerging around adequate yearly progress and what that meant. There were different issues that would have new dimensions that we hadn't fully briefed on because they hadn't emerged from the Congress or from stakeholders, and we'd have to go back. Is it relitigating? I don't know. It is another layer that emerged. We clearly would do that for his judgment. When he made up his mind he was pretty firm.

There was a confidence in that and a clarity in it. The downside would be if, could you call it inflexibility or a lack of listening to other points of view? I think he was pretty open and listened at the outset. What it forced us to do was get our act in order. "I don't have time to go through this 15 times or even three times, let's get it right the first time." We didn't always have the luxury of time, but we'd call the Cabinet Secretaries, the Deputy Secretaries, we'd get the top staff people, the top civilians who had been working on these issues, sometimes for decades. You reach out to the best people in the country.

I tried to do a lot of that. I think you get into this policy bubble in the White House where it gets insular. There is this spirit of, "We're going to announce that in the State of the Union, so we can't let a lot of people know about it." Here you are trying to craft something that is really innovative, creative, reflects a lot of viewpoints, but you're in the cone of silence. That's a trapping that I think is changing now. It seems like under the Obama administration there is so

much open government and transparency with technology—some of the tools we didn't have. I admire that part.

Riley: Did your family move with you to Texas?

Bridgeland: No, they were in school. I was told I could fly home every other weekend.

Riley: Did it work?

Bridgeland: I flew home once. The day before Thanksgiving. Do you believe that? My son sat on my lap the entire day, and the next day I woke up and my thigh was sore and I couldn't figure it out. I realized my son was in my lap the whole day. Then on November 7, we're bowling, our policy team. There is nothing more we could do.

Walcott: You're not bowling alone?

Bridgeland: We're not bowling alone; we were bowling together. I said, "That's it. Tonight we'll know one way or another and tomorrow I get in my little green Honda and drive back." I was so excited. I couldn't wait to have hopefully victory but an answer and see the fruits of our labor one way or another and then head back home and see my family. I'm literally up on the hill and out in the pouring rain—By the way, I'll tell you an interesting story.

Florida gets called for Gore. I'm in Karl Rove's office. I go in to see Karl and we're a little downcast and he's on two different computers. He says, "It's not right, Bush is ahead 383 votes." I go, "What?!" He's got people on the phone, all these guys. It turns out he wins by 380 something. Weeks later, I think back to that. Karl can tell you historically in any election the counties and the states. He just has a different kind of wiring. I'll never forget that.

Then I walk up to the Hill and instead of Governor Bush, Chairman Don Evans comes out to talk to us. The next day or two days later I'm on a plane heading to Tallahassee, Florida, to manage a team of lawyers under the leadership of former Secretary of State Jim Baker and Bob Zoellick, who was supposed to go on a vacation to Italy and gets called in to be the top guy on the Florida recount with Baker. I'm working with Ben Ginsberg and managing a team of lawyers, like Ted Olson and these extraordinary figures in the legal world.

Riley: How did you get that job?

Bridgeland: Who knows? I was a lawyer. We all were deployed to do different things. I thought I was going home. Josh stayed back in headquarters. It ended up being one of the shortest periods in history to have a transition, which is not an easy thing.

Riley: What are you doing in Tallahassee?

Bridgeland: Ben Ginsberg, who is a campaign election lawyer, is the top manager of the team of lawyers.

Riley: Do you have marching orders before you leave?

Bridgeland: There are disputes, you know all this stuff. I'd read the Florida election statute and tried to learn about the recount process and what triggers it and what the rules were, and then of course you come into Florida and see all these people who know it intimately. We were kind of finding our way. I'd never done a recount in my life. I'd never actually been in an election headquarters on election night looking at the voting system. I'd been there to celebrate victories, but this is a whole different animal. You're learning on the job. I go down there and Josh's instruction to me was "Be useful and help."

I go down there. We're meeting with the team, Bob Zoellick and Secretary Baker and others, and Ben needs help. There are all these lawyers doing everything from Seminole County to teams going out from both campaigns and parties, monitoring, overseeing the county votes. Looking at that process—That's what I did for the next 36 days or something.

Riley: Any highlights or lowlights?

Bridgeland: One highlight was when Ted [Rafael] Cruz and I got the news about what the Court did, 7 to 2 on the big questions. I know [William] Rehnquist was probably trying to get it unanimous, but 7 to 2 wasn't bad on the big question. We went into Secretary Baker's office and briefed Secretary Baker. Then Baker called Governor Bush and said, "Well, Mr. President-elect—" That was a big moment.

Another one was when Secretary Baker was going to go on TV, and he had this wildly capable person he had worked with forever, Margaret Tutwiler, who counseled him and was his communications person, dealt with the press. I was in a briefing with them. We were talking about how to articulate something. I remember suggesting something, almost like one, two, three and said it in a way, and he goes, "Bridge, I really like that." You have to appreciate these little moments. There aren't always that many.

I was really impressed with Baker's analysis of a case that had been brought to his attention and how he used it. He's a lawyer—

Riley: You don't remember the case, do you?

Bridgeland: It was a case in Illinois about punch ballots, I think the Hartke case [(Richard L.) *Roudebush v.* (R. Vance) *Hartke*]. The Court's view on determination as to whether it was a vote. He used that case and the details of that case so effectively. I also remember David Boies, the Cravath [Cravath, Swaine & Moore] lawyer who was brought in to argue in Florida courts against Florida litigators. This guy was brilliant. He'd quote pages from different cases. He would just overwhelm you with that stuff.

Then the Florida lawyer who had done his homework and had his facts just went boom, boom, boom. I saw the power of really good preparation married with knowing your local jurisdiction up against these fancy New York lawyers. I saw that epitomized throughout the process. Then when Michael Carvin was arguing before the Florida Supreme Court, which was a big deal, I was sitting with Ted Olson in the audience. It was interesting to sit next to the person who would then argue the case before the Supreme Court and hear his perspectives on the arguments.

Riley: Do you remember any pieces?

Bridgeland: It was masterful how Ted was—I walked in with him and I remember his demeanor and his incisive analysis of issues. After the argument the things that he talked about that he would have done, some of which were different. How he was such a perfect selection for the case before the Supreme Court against [Laurence] Tribe, who had written that book on constitutional law.

The deliverable out of that I got from Ted Olson and *Bush v. Gore*—You know how when you're a lawyer you get these bound books of cases or deals. On my shelf at home are the litigation papers from that.

Riley: Can you tell us anything about the relationship between the Florida operation and Texas? Who was riding herd on the communication?

Bridgeland: A guy named Ken Mehlman, who would become chairman of the Republican National Committee. He was part of the political shop in the White House and sort of led the on-the-ground team in Florida. They would meet every morning. They'd mobilize people out to the various counties and election headquarters and look at the vote counting. Ben Ginsberg was the legal eagle on managing the team of lawyers. They were doing a wide range of things. I think in Seminole County the issue was overseas ballots. It's been 12 years.

Riley: Yes, the Democrats challenged.

Bridgeland: There were a lot of different legal questions. Bob Zoellick, who is brilliant, was the real mastermind and orchestrator of the Florida recount, and then Secretary Baker who was just masterful and so thoughtful about making sure we maximized flexibility in terms of appeals.

Riley: Was that a losable proposition for Governor Bush? Given the fact that his brother was—?

Bridgeland: James Q. Wilson called me early on. He said, "I understand the sweep of history and looking at this, yes, it will be close." I was worried that constitutional government would be under threat if Vice President Gore on December 13 would somehow say, "I don't accept the Court's political decision." James Q. Wilson said early on, "This will be over and someone will concede, and the American people will swiftly accept it and you'll have a new President and constitutional government will continue." That little echo of his voice soothed me.

Literally every day we were up and down. Something would happen. We'd think, *This is going to go on another month*. Then the next day we'd think it's going to be over really soon. Then the next day it was going to go on for another month. And it did. It went on and on. We didn't know from day to day how long it would go on.

You always worry—You're trying to have an election and pull the country together around someone and then you have this. One of the most significant and untold stories relates to the Miller Center at the University of Virginia. In the aftermath of a divisive Florida recount and eventually a concession, but it was nip and tuck, wasn't it? Then in an environment where people were looking through magnifying glasses to see the hanging chads and what was a vote, the Miller Center for Public Affairs comes forward with the [Jimmy] Carter-[Gerald] Ford Commission on Election Reform with Phil Zelikow, who was head of the Miller Center at the time.

I'm in charge of federal election reform in the White House, which I know can turn into "Oh, my God, we're going to relitigate Florida in the U.S. Congress." We have people on the floor of the House every single day talking about Florida again and almost delegitimizing the Presidency or the President. So we're reaching out to forge policy, and Phil and I talk. They've done their homework. They have these principles. We invite Carter and Ford. Ford is too ill so Carter and Bob Michel, who represents Ford, come to the White House. We do an Oval Office briefing, Phil and I are in. I got to meet Carter in the Oval Office, which was fun.

Then we all go out to the Rose Garden and Bush sends up principles to the Congress for federal election reform based on this bipartisan commission, two former Presidents, the country has embraced, consistent with other principles out there. It is everything from control in state and local elections to standard procedures on what constitutes a vote. They even have creative ideas like Election Day should be a national holiday to boost voter participation. Clarity around military votes and overseas ballots and provisional voting, felons.

We send these principles up to the Hill and within a short period of time there is no rancorous debate or relitigation of the Florida recount and legislation gets passed, and all of a sudden the issue is behind us for a time. Now, since so much authority is at the state and local levels, obviously there continued to be problems. I think there are other commissions that emerge and that battle continues in terms of the sufficiency of elections. But that was really interesting and historically an important role that this institution played.

Bragaw: Obviously the recount shortened the period you had to staff up the government, but did it change the tone or mentality? How did it change the people in the campaign who were going to be working in the administration?

Bridgeland: It tired us. Imagine running a marathon, and you're about to cross the finish line. You're going to get water and a hot meal, a pat on the back from your family, and then you're told, "You've got to run another marathon and this one is completely uphill in 90-degree heat." That's what it felt like. It was horrible. Plus you weren't announcing policy or doing things that were trying to bring the country together, articulate a vision. You were fighting over whether votes in Palm Beach County or Seminole or these different areas were valid and then it is all through the courts.

What it did was give us the shortest transition maybe in history. Josh asked me and Gary Edson to co-lead the policy transition. We had the job across government—not national security, not Defense or State Department, but across domestic policy, which is just about everything else—of coordinating the development of our policy priorities, Cabinet appointments, preparation of these briefing books and then thinking about the appointments and all these important positions across government. We were working to get information and input from the existing departments and agencies, coordinating with Bruce Reed and the Domestic Policy staff in the Clinton administration.

Then of course, the incoming in a transition, so we were coordinating all that. Somehow it was publicly released that I was doing labor. Gary and I were overseeing the whole policy transition. I think at the time there was someone who was going to do labor and there was a gap so we had to quickly—I started getting all this additional incoming around the labor issues. We were

meeting on education and health care and interior and all the departments. We were meeting with outside stakeholders and others who were approaching the transition.

Then there was an Executive order, a regulatory review. Every administration does it when in the first few days in office they're taking executive action. A good example is the Mexico City policy started by Reagan.

Riley: Always a first.

Bridgeland: USAID [United States Agency for International Development] cannot—There is a prohibition under Reagan for USAID to give funds to nongovernmental organizations that use their other funds to provide abortion services or counseling around abortion. Clinton comes in and reverses that I think within the first—then Bush comes in and reverses Clinton, and Obama comes in and reverses Bush. There's some of that. With the lawyers and the White House counsel's office, there is a whole regulatory and Executive order review that was also very extensive. Probably things I'm forgetting.

Riley: Was there advance transition planning even before Election Day?

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Particularly during the Florida recount period, or were you starting from a standing—

Bridgeland: The Vice President and his team and Gary Edson and the President's team get space in Tysons Corner, Virginia.

Riley: This is after Election Day?

Bridgeland: Yes. We have to start the process. Literally Josh and I are on the phone with Gary and we say, "Gary, how is it going down there?" We're kidding, "Back there near Washington D.C." And "Gary, it sounds like you're in a tunnel."

Gary says, "Josh and Bridge, I'm screwing the nut in the desk." We said, "You're what?" He said, "I'm literally putting the desk together, guys." It sounds funny but there was certainly that element. On the campaign I understand—I wasn't there Day One, but Josh and Dan Bartlett apparently were like—there was a phone on one desk and it would ring. "Bush for President." The transition started out—There are rules. Eventually when you're President-elect you get transition space, but in this odd period of history when you're not officially the President-elect but you have to start doing something, there began the machinery of the transition. Gary went back to start that. But it was hard to make a lot of progress because we didn't have the team.

Josh was in Texas still advising the Governor and making that machinery go. There were press inquiries and that's where Karen was. Karl was back and forth. I told you about the recount team. So when the recount is over I go to the transition. Josh asks Gary and me to co-lead the policy transition. Then we bring in Brian Waidmann who had been Dirk Kempthorne's chief of staff. He was very adept, did it in the 41 administration, helps with the Cabinet appointments. Then we had to brief them up on all the policies, prepare them for their Senate confirmation so that they

fully—and some of them had been involved in the campaign but had to fully understand the priorities.

Walcott: What was the emotional toll?

Bridgeland: On the recount, it was very high. I remember starting the transition—I felt like when I crossed the finish line in the election, *If he wins, at least I get home, to my family. I can take*—We were going to take a week off. That would have been heaven. We never got it. We went into the transition tired right after an emotionally draining recount. Then we go right from the transition—I'll never forget the day before the inaugural we're briefing the President-elect in Blair House on some executive action. He said, "It's so odd. All of a sudden I've become this person who has no wallet, no keys, no money." He tells the story of how he doesn't have his life anymore. Everything has been taken from him. It's an institution now. That was an interesting personal peek into the office.

Walcott: Part of the cost of the truncated transition must have been the ability of the Bush people and the Clinton people to work through the usual set of briefings and advice. Was that the case?

Bridgeland: The perception is certainly among campaigns that it is partisan and hostile, but the level of cooperation between administrations in the transitions is extraordinary. Bruce Reed could not have been more helpful to us in domestic policy. Josh talked about John Podesta when Josh became Chief of Staff. Of course Andy Card was an old pro, he had been Secretary of Transportation in the Bush 41 administration. At every level there was cooperation.

There was some scuttlebutt about some missing keys on computers. Some of that stuff was silliness in the press that they tried to grab onto, but that didn't at all reflect how cooperative the transfer of government, how much respect people have for it. I was just in the first term, but I was invited in a lot on the Obama administration and talked to Melody Barnes and her team quite a bit. There was that same spirit. Melody is out and now we're working together on issues. I know at some levels it is very partisan and very hostile, but the machinery of government actually continues quite smoothly.

Riley: You haven't told us when you were approached about a position in the White House.

Bridgeland: Right after the campaign Josh invites me out to his house again, where it all began, where I had dinner—

Riley: This is in Texas.

Bridgeland: This is in Texas. He calls me and says, "You've done an amazing job on the campaign, so what do you think? What should be the priorities?" We go through the priorities. We're mindful of the Texas—So the initial discussions are education is going to be the number one priority. The President has a fantastic relationship with Margaret, and she should lead the effort on education. But given the role I played on the campaign, my Washington experience, and my breadth of experience, I would be probably well suited to run domestic policy. It was an interesting issue we had to grapple with.

Usually you have the Assistant to the President of the United States who runs domestic policy and is the Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. So then later, when the Florida recount is over and we know that it is actually going to happen and there is a new role on the policy transition. The marriage of me and Margaret was very good. I love Margaret, have great respect for her and her ability, particularly on education policy, together with this guy Sandy Kress who is fantastic. She was appointed to be Assistant to the President of the United States for Domestic Policy, and I was named Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council.

Practically I was reporting to Josh as Deputy Chief of Staff and would ask for time to get policy briefings in the Oval Office but also coordinating beautifully with Margaret. We didn't spend much time on lines of authority in terms of those relationships, although I would say and I've said this to people who ask me about the White House, America is supposedly a classless system, but the White House is the most hierarchical, class-minded place on the planet. If you're an Assistant to the President you can eat in certain areas and if you're not you can't. You're in certain meetings, if you're not you're not.

I was in senior staff a lot, which is a little unusual for a deputy, but Margaret was in senior staff a lot. Then there was a Deputies Committee that Josh convened with Steve Hadley and Gary Edson and me. We did a sweep of where is the President going to be when, what policies are going to be announced. I was on that. I had this kind of dual-hatted role. Gary did too. We created a new position of Deputy National Security Advisor and Economic Advisor that Gary held. There needed to be a spot that had previously not really been created for that position, and Gary filled that brilliantly.

Riley: The division of labor substantively between you and Margaret was—?

Bridgeland: We counted them up. I was in charge of over a hundred issues. I had everything from—The way I'm built—almost like a lot of wires going through. I had everything from the Faith-Based Initiative to national parks to New Freedom and disabilities to labor issues to climate change, all these issues that would then emerge. Margaret was focused on education. Initially in the transition, we had these meetings again and again, taking the No Child Left Behind policy and turning it into a bill.

It was typical that we'd announce principles in the White House, and we'd send them up to the Hill and then give the Congress room to be part of it. We brought in John Boehner's staff, and one key role that I played was going to meet not just with Boehner but with George Miller. It was a really sensitive meeting. Sandy Kress and I did it together because Miller could have been very hostile and not necessarily wanting to work with a Republican. He was very interested in disaggregated data and really cared about how education was affecting children by race and gender and income. That brought him around.

Margaret and Sandy did an absolutely phenomenal job, although we all felt like these bills were not going to move forward, not any of them, by August. Then 9/11 hits. As horrible as that was, it gave us another period of bipartisan cooperation. To this day I think No Child Left Behind got passed in part because that spirit continued a little bit afterward. Then we were always coordinating with Larry Lindsey on economic policy. One thing that surprised me was how

much we coordinated with Condi's shop on issues. I didn't expect that. Some of that eventually led to the creation of the Homeland Security Advisor.

Riley: But the work with Condi's shop precedes 9/11?

Bridgeland: Yes, it does precede 9/11.

Riley: How about organization? There are the two of you but you're building a shop, you're bringing in other people.

Bridgeland: Yes, so Margaret is the Assistant to the President. I'm the Deputy Assistant and Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, and we have to build a staff. We look at the domestic priorities, and those were clear. Then we create Special Assistants to the President who are aligned with those priorities and have the issues and the big areas that relate to the departments. No surprise. Then we have underneath them associate directors. So we build up our team.

We draw people from Capitol Hill who are really talented. We draw people from think tanks, a lot of whom have Capitol Hill experience. We have a process where everybody is coming to you, submitting résumés. It was the President's priorities that naturally drove the building of the staff. Margaret and I would have to agree on who we'd bring in. The good news is we got along so well and worked so well together that we always had pretty much the same conclusion about candidates. That's not always the case when you work with people.

Gary Edson and I were—He was like bad cop; I was good cop. He would come in and he'd punish the bureaucracy, tear everybody apart, which was a healthy process. Then I was a little more the diplomat and had to make sure people weren't going to run away and not work with us again. We had a very different working relationship. Josh was this calm, organizing, clear voice with great judgment who would know how to use people for different purposes.

Walcott: The practice of appointing special assistants to cover particular policy areas has been controversial lately.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Walcott: Especially if they're known as czars.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Walcott: How did it work out in the Bush time?

Bridgeland: The Office of National Drug Control Policy gets created by Congress and then there are various drug czars, [William] Bennett, they're big figures with a lot of visibility. The Council of Environmental Quality gets created and that person is very powerful. They're an Assistant to the President, but effectively they're reporting through the Domestic Policy Council. The same thing with John DiIulio. He initially outranks me in terms of Assistant to the President. Ask him, but I think he would tell you that he viewed me as his policy boss in that I would have

to coordinate, to get the policy time and then make sure we got to the President to do the briefing.

These czars are interesting. One of the dangers is that it atomizes and divides up policy in ways that may not be as accountable. In talking to people in this [Obama] administration, there was some worry that there were becoming so many of them. Then what was left for the domestic policy people to do? In our administration we inherited certain positions. There were questions as to what should be in the Cabinet. There was a question as to whether the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy should be in the Cabinet or not. We actually fought hard to keep them in. He stayed in.

Then there was the Faith-Based Office that was created. The faith-based czar, for want of a better word, was an Assistant to the President. Over time there were needs like homeland security and others. I generally oppose the creation of a labor czar or slicing and dicing up domestic policy in ways that—There is enough of it. There is a Council of Economic Advisors, which was another group we worked with significantly and heavily on issues. Then there is OMB [Office of Management and Budget] and all the specialists.

Riley: We promised we would keep to a schedule. Let me ask you one other question. That is about Cabinet officers. You suggested earlier that part of your transition responsibilities was in working on that question. Can you tell us about that process? Were there close calls? Were there controversies related to matching personnel and portfolios or anything like that?

Bridgeland: Sure. Andy Card and other people on the campaign would suggest people who were new or seen in the context of other administrations or other work. There were great statesmen and -women who had served in the Congress or were Governors. The President had a real liking for Governors. I think he liked people who could execute and had run things, had run states and could run departments. That was consistent with his MBA philosophy.

So Governor Whitman comes in to be the head of EPA [Environmental Protection Agency]. His good friend Don Evans, who ran a successful business, comes in to be Secretary of Commerce. John Ashcroft, who had been a Governor and Senator, came in to be Attorney General. There was a bit of an unfolding pattern, not universal. I think Elaine Chao stayed on the longest. I think she began as Secretary of Labor and ended up as Secretary of Labor. She had been head of Peace Corps and head of United Way and had some interesting experience, an interesting life story.

There was a candidate for Secretary of Labor, Linda Chavez-Thompson. Some of her views were controversial. She got fairly far in the vetting process as I remember, and that did not work out. But otherwise I think we had a pretty good record in terms of getting people through the process and confirmed. Of course Colin Powell was one of the—They were all exciting. Rod Paige for Secretary of Education was an interesting choice, coming from the Texas experiment in the public schools there.

I think it very much reflected the Governor's and then President's view of the world, as it should.

Riley: We are very well positioned for tomorrow, got through the preliminaries. We're going to want to talk a fair amount about the first year before 9/11 as a predicate for what follows.

It is a bit liberating for us doing the interview knowing that we have committed in advance to have a follow-up at some point, so we can be fairly methodical about these things.

Bridgeland: This is such a wonderful process in terms of being able to share pieces of experience and history.

You asked me about staffing. I mentioned Sandy Kress. Sandy had a special arrangement where he wasn't in the White House working full time but he was, as I remember, a Special Assistant to the President.

Riley: A detailee?

Bridgeland: Maybe that's how we structured it, but he was on the Hill so much. I was just thinking if there was anything that was a little different in our staffing. That was one, Sandy had an interesting role.

May 4, 2012

Riley: This is day two of the John Bridgeland interview. At the beginning of the second day I always like to ask if something occurred to you last night or this morning that made you say, "Oh, I wish I had dealt with that in what we talked about before."

Bridgeland: Something did last night and now I can't remember.

Perry: It will come back to you.

Bridgeland: It wasn't that significant.

Riley: No problem. You and Margaret had what from the outside was somewhat of a difficult organizational arrangement to untangle. Even when we were putting together our domestic policy-making symposium we would look at the titles, and it was hard, "Who is the chief out of the bunch?" Were there ever any complications or conflicts between the two of you over portfolios? The other important thing would be access to the President. Or did this relationship work fine and if so, what caused it to work fine, notwithstanding the fact that you've got a very tightly interwoven portfolio that for the Chuck Walcotts of the world might look like it couldn't possibly work because there is too much divided among too many people.

Bridgeland: I think ideally it is better to have an Assistant to the President who is Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, but I also think that rigidity doesn't necessarily reflect the people. I think the leadership from the people is really important and the relationships with the President and also tapping the respective abilities and experiences of the individuals. In this case, driven more by the latter, there was this structure created. Maybe it is remarkable, but I cannot think of a single instance in which it created a conflict or a problem between Margaret and me.

She was so focused on education and I think so completely happy that I was also helping on education but basically ran all the other issues. It wasn't just the President's priorities; these were things that—In every administration you get all sorts of issues bubbling up and coming at you that are completely unexpected. I think she was probably particularly happy about that. In terms of building the team, working well together, going to the various meetings where we needed to be represented, there is so much to do that having one person try to be in everything is a difficult task.

I think largely it worked very well and I honestly can't think of a time when we had a—There was a time she came to me early on and said, "Maybe you should be the Assistant to the President and I'll be the Special Assistant on Education."

Riley: I'm trying to remember—She moved her family with her to Washington or not? Was she back and forth to Texas?

Bridgeland: She had two girls and she moved to Washington, to Alexandria. Eventually she remarried, became Margaret Spellings.

Riley: Right.

Bridgeland: The other thing you have to understand, Josh Bolten was the Deputy—There is this process where you have a Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy. So Josh, except not so much on the national security side, Condi had carved out her own turf and space. But with respect to the economic policy shop, domestic policy shop, what would later emerge as the homeland security shop, and the national service shop, Josh was at the center of all coordination to the President.

He had created this structure—There was a calendar in his office that looked at the President's priorities. What's the intersection between those priorities and where the Congress is? He would chart out strategically with what he called the Deputies Committee, which I was in. The march of those priorities through the process. That is where we got a lot of clarity and were able to coordinate across the policy councils to bring some cohesion to it to serve the President well. I think that worked. If that process hadn't existed, it would have been chaotic.

I've heard that when that position is not strong, there are problems in the White House.

Walcott: From the outside, was anybody ever confused as to whom to go to?

Bridgeland: Yes. I think *Slate* magazine said, "Who is the head of the—?" There was a flavor of that initially in some of the press. I don't think so, so much. The incoming on education came to Margaret and to Sandy Kress for the most part. I got some of it, but they did the most.

Riley: Everything else—

Bridgeland: Yes, would come to me. Eventually when we hired up our teams, people are smart enough to know they want to go talk to Diana Schacht, the justice person. Or they want to talk to other people on our team who had line authority on respective issues. We of course strongly encouraged that because we couldn't—When I look back on my old schedules I wonder how I went from morning, noon, night, not just every 15, 30-minute, hour schedules.

Perry: You kept those in written form, appointments and scheduling?

Bridgeland: Yes, I had an assistant, Britt Grant, who is superb. She printed out a schedule for me every day. It was on one of these little White House cards that I'd carry in my pocket so I could go from meeting to meeting. And every single day I had a briefing book. I called it my Sisyphus. My dad taught me the message of Sisyphus is not just that he's pushing this rock up the hill every day and it rolls back down on him, but that he actually felt what it was like to have the pressure of pushing that rock up. Focus on the moment. So I always had my Sisyphus with me.

Perry: You mentioned that you had issues just bubbling up, things you couldn't anticipate. Can you give examples of that?

Bridgeland: Sure, the amount of lead in the water. The EPA seemed to be a lot of rule-making and decisions to be made on a lot of issues that just kept coming up from the system. There were issues around the roadless rule, in our national forests. There were questions around energy policy, there were things in the Corporation for National and Community Service or education that would emerge that needed decisions in terms of particular rules.

Perry: Who would bring those issues to you?

Bridgeland: A couple of ways. One, we had a director or head of Cabinet Affairs. That person would meet with the Cabinet, deputies and chiefs of staff actually. They would talk about the President's priorities and then also would learn all the things that were gurgling up in the departments and agencies. Through that process we'd be alerted or notified about certain things where there might be a tension between two departments, or there might be a conflict within a department that would merit our involvement, or in some cases decisions that the President ought to make. But our charge from Andy Card was "Resolve everything you possibly can. Only use the President's time for those things that are either directly related to his priorities or there is a conflict and it can't get resolved or it merits Presidential attention." But it is also fair to say that it wasn't infrequent that I'd get a call from Tommy Thompson or John Ashcroft.

John Ashcroft set up a process with me to have lunch every couple of weeks. What is so interesting is that these Cabinet positions, which are significant, sometimes they feel out of the mix. I'll never forget going over to the U.S. Trade Representative's office and talking to the head of USTR [United States Trade Representative]. I'm rarely over there and she was just across the street in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. There was this sense sometimes of a lot of action in the West Wing and sure, there are the Cabinet meetings—Margaret and I made a really deliberate effort, we would even do it individually, to meet with every single Cabinet Secretary. We made a point to go over to their offices and discuss again the President's priorities, but mostly listen to them and their perspectives and what their plans were for carrying forward on key issues. That built, beyond the initial transition process, really strong relationships.

So Elaine Chao felt comfortable calling us anytime and asking for input or a meeting. The other thing was the Deputy Secretaries really run the places. Boy, if you want action, the deputies, we discovered, were superb at getting things done. The Cabinet Secretaries, when I took this next position, got assigned to run the Freedom Corps and oversee faith-based and then oversee other issues in the domestic portfolio. It was a much more public job. It wasn't so much an insider's job.

Every Monday I would be on a plane sitting in a middle seat in the back. I'd see Tommy Thompson and Richard Carmona, the Surgeon General, and Tom Ridge—We were all on the circuit. So the Cabinet is out there, it's out and about. The deputies tend to run the machinery of the departments. That was probably too much to answer your question.

Bragaw: I'm wanting to recapture the sense of the first seven months. There was this moment where—There had been this recount, but the administration comes in, there is a majority in the House, there is a majority in the Senate. This is the first time since [Herbert] Hoover. Was there a real sense of "We've got to get a lot of things done now," there is this policy window?

Bridgeland: Yes, there was. In fact, as I remember it, we had a phasing for the President's priorities, we knew because the transition was so short and also the controversial nature of the recount, but then he is inaugurated and becomes President. There is always a honeymoon period. We felt a sense of urgency to get as much done as we possibly could within the first seven or nine months, certainly the first year.

So we developed a process led out of Josh's office and also informed by Karen and Karl and Nick Calio in the Legislative Affairs office. It was integrated, a phasing where we were announcing action and plans almost every week as I remember it, certainly every couple of weeks. It began with education, then there was the Faith-Based Initiative. Then we had the New Freedom Initiative. Of course there were things happening in national security and economic policy. Larry announced the tax reform plans. There was a big sense of urgency.

We saw at the end of this—and then the Senate, remember? [James] Jeffords in May—So by the summer we had a more complex lineup in the institution that can gum up the works. It was becoming increasingly difficult even by summer.

Riley: Do you remember the reactions inside the White House when Jeffords decides—?

Bridgeland: I was in the Oval Office, and the Vice President came in and it was troubling.

Riley: Can you tell us?

Bridgeland: I just remember he came in and said, "Jeffords has gone rogue," something to that effect. There was a clear sense of frustration.

Walcott: Was that a great surprise or were you more or less waiting for it?

Bridgeland: It was a surprise to me; it may not have been a surprise to Nick Calio. We worked a lot with Legislative Affairs, but it was driving our priorities together and meeting with House and Senate leadership that Nick would convene here or we would go there. This wonderful guy, David Hobbs, who was in the House and eventually became Director of Legislative Affairs after Nick left—That was certainly a bit of a surprise to me.

Riley: You earlier talked about when you first went down to Texas that there was clearly a kind of division between the Texans and the outsiders coming in, the comfort level with the President. Did that remain the case once you come into the White House? Is there an inner circle of Texans that has more privileged access and a higher comfort level with the President? If so, does it break down over time? Did the Texans have—You're a guy who'd spent, relatively speaking, a lot of time in Washington.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Were you looked to a lot for your Washington experience? Did the Texans act mystified by the ways of this new culture that they're moving into?

Bridgeland: I saw much more of a—Part of it was just being new on the campaign. I came into the campaign and I didn't have a personal relationship with the Governor other than that experience I had in Cincinnati. Joe Hagin had worked closely with his father, so I think he had a little more of that kind of connection to the family. It was more just lack of time and exposure. Over the course of the campaign you build up trust and they rely on you for things, and you're hopefully producing good work.

The transition, which was so intense, really melded the team even more. It had to; it was a circumstance. By the time we were in the White House, we were all a very cohesive team. Very early on I think it was Karl who organized the senior staff to go to Gettysburg and have Gabor Boritt, the Civil War historian, give us a tour and literally—This is classic Karl—We reenacted [George] Pickett's Charge. Hopefully that wasn't emblematic of what was to come.

Bragaw: You guys were the rebels.

Bridgeland: We saw a lot at Gettysburg, we had this wonderful bonding experience very early on in the administration. There had been some of that on the campaign, some barbecues and events. I think it became a very tightly knit and cohesive group.

Two things on your last question. There was a spirit from Texas of—The Governor had been pretty effective in reaching out to the Democratic leadership in the Texas legislature, and the Texas record was not insignificant. He had a lot of progress of a bipartisan nature on a lot of fronts. I think that spirit was brought into the mix strongly that this is something that we could—In fact, even in some of the speeches, in the language he talked a lot about it, this new culture of bipartisanship. Probably every administration comes in with those hopes, but that was strongly felt. They kept harking back to the Texas experience on that.

In terms of the people like Josh and me and very much Nick Calio, there was a lot of interaction. I remember again and again conversations about "How would this best move or work?" or "What are the things we should be worried about?"

Riley: Conversations with whom?

Bridgeland: From Clay Johnson interestingly, Presidential Personnel. Looking at who do you bring in, who would be really effective in these various posts, to the people like Margaret and Karen.

Walcott: Every President in recent memory comes in hoping to overcome the bitter partisanship that is Washington. None of them succeed. From the inside how did that look to you? Did you see the effort at bipartisanship eroding? What were the signs of that?

Bridgeland: It's so true, isn't it? We made a big effort. On education we were meeting with [Edward M.] Kennedy and Miller as much as we were Boehner and Judd Gregg and really listening—Nick Calio and a lot of us had had experience on the Hill, and then Margaret and others had tons of experience in the Texas legislature working on a bipartisan basis. And you want to get the President's initiatives done, so that's another strong incentive to be very bipartisan.

There was a meeting convened in Texas around education policy where Democrats and Republicans were invited alike, and it was a very good meeting, good spirited. I think it helped usher forward efforts. On the faith-based, there was unbelievable outreach to faith-based networks that I don't think had been reached so much by government that were finding out what they were doing, how they were helping the poor and the needy and then connections back to members of Congress on both sides. We were up on the Hill all the time, both asked and invited and through our Legislative Affairs shop leading in terms of going up to brief on a whole host of

issues. I got called up to brief on the National Monuments and the Antiquities Act and the President's position on it.

At the last minute I would be called up, "The caucus or this group wants to hear about the President's position on—" That was another opportunity, very much on a bipartisan basis. As I mentioned, by the time the Senate had flipped and we were going into the summer, you can see the—And certainly, had we not had 9/11, as we move into another Congressional election cycle, it becomes—They want to talk about the divisions and clarify the choices in the voters' minds. As you know better probably than anybody, that's part of the process we live through.

Walcott: You sensed some of that was coming from the White House? Yes, members of Congress think that way, so does Karl Rove.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Walcott: Was the White House's outlook toward bipartisanship changing at the top or, on the other hand, was it mainly the Democrats in Congress deciding "Better draw some lines here"?

Bridgeland: I think it's too hard to generalize. You have to look at it issue by issue. Over time there is a cumulative effect of the issue-by-issue experience that in turn leads to an overarching view of the White House and an overarching view of the Congress. There was an evolution to it.

The spirit around the education bill was very bipartisan from the beginning, and it remained bipartisan and then it became less bipartisan. After 9/11, frankly—There was even some internal discussion, we wondered if we could get—I think it was S1, right? I wondered if we could get No Child Left Behind done leading into August. Then there was a renewed sense of the collective good after 9/11 that was pervasive. Tom Daschle hugged, and vice versa, the President on the floor of the House on national TV. It was an extraordinary thing. You don't see that very much. It gave us another little window of opportunity. There was a laser-like focus on education to get that done, and of course the tax reform also got done. Those were the two earliest, largest priorities and got done obviously with some bipartisan support.

Perry: Can you talk about that summer of '01 leading up to 9/11? I think the view from the outside is that things are kind of sleepy and that stem cell research becomes a priority of the President and he makes his speech about that from Texas, if I remember correctly. There was signage that indicated White House logos and symbolism but in Texas. Is it somewhat frustrating to you that the media are focusing almost solely on that? Presenting it as if this is the only thing that is going on?

Bridgeland: I said to Cokie Roberts, "Cokie, we got all this stuff done and it's really good. It's important policy, it's going to have an impact on millions of people." She quipped, "Bridge, it's not much of a headline, 'Country does the right thing.'" I said, "OK, I get it, Cokie." She was part of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation that we would later create. I think there was some of that, she was right. There were things that were getting done both by executive action and legislatively that were bipartisan and constructive and useful and part of the agenda.

You get a one-day story. It would be below the fold and five pages in. I used to wake up in the morning and open the blinds and look out at the newspaper. My wife would say, "I know what you're going to say," and I'd go, "Uh-oh, there it is." In part because you would often read about something in the newspaper that was emerging somewhere in government that was becoming a problem because sometimes the system wasn't teasing it up quickly enough. So, yes, there was some frustration. Then there were some people in the media who would tweak issues, you could tell, to get reactions. There was always that.

Walcott: Were you ever over in the press office or working with the communications people and berating them about these sorts of things?

Bridgeland: No, berating the press people? The media?

Walcott: Your communications people. They should be getting this stuff above the fold on page one and they're not.

Bridgeland: No. I always felt—especially in the first year—that if we were announcing a major initiative and the President was involved, it got pretty good coverage. Freedom Corps was on the front page of every newspaper in the United States or almost. A lot of our initiatives got a lot of coverage.

Other things did too. I'll never forget a wake-up experience I had. There was revision of the House faith-based bill that in my and our counsel's view was unconstitutional. We were in the middle of these discussions and had been working hard. A *New York Times* reporter had called me and asked about the faith-based bill and I said, "We're making good progress. Confident a bill will pass the House. We need to bring the House bill back in line with the Constitution." So that made front-page news. Followed by a call from the Speaker's office. Honesty is a wonderful thing but you also—

Walcott: Did you develop relationships with any particular people in the press?

Bridgeland: I did. Andy Card had said to us, "If you're going to speak to the press, speak on the record. Use your name. Be honest, be open." I liked that approach, I thought that was right. Even to this day you'll see, "An anonymous administration aide says that—" and then there is some leak. You wonder how that is advancing that cause or the good of the country. Sometimes the press would meet me in my office and just want to talk or interview. The first thing you'd alert the communications shops so they were aware of it, or it often came through the communications or press shop.

Ari Fleischer would say, "Nina Easton wants to interview you, and I think you should do it." They'd give you advice. I'd ask, "What's it about?" They'd also usually tell you. Then there were a lot of people who would call and say, "Whenever you want to be on my show to talk about domestic policy generally, you're invited." We would do things like that. Then I had to stand up and brief the White House press in that almost surreal—You would come through and take your family and others and picture them at the podium with that White House logo in the back. All of a sudden one day I was up there. It was a little surreal. That was the initial briefing around the Faith-Based Initiative that I did with Steve Goldsmith and Reverend [Mark] Scott.

I think it is really important to have good relationships with the media, and those things need to be cultivated. Being fearful of—I'll give you an example. One day I open the *Washington Post* and there is a story "Bring Out the Greens" or something like that. Bob Novak had talked about Gary Edson, me, and Josh Bolten being too green on climate change. I had never met Bob Novak. So the first thing I did was pick up the phone and call Bob Novak. I said, "Mr. Novak, I read your story. If you're going to write about me, I think we ought to know each other, let's have lunch." Two days later we had lunch at the Army and Navy Club. He couldn't have been nicer and he was so appreciative that somebody had actually, instead of continuing this sort of artificially distant, almost hostile relationship—I don't mean hostile toward me so much, but he was writing basically that we were too green for—Afterward we had a good relationship.

Riley: All kinds of jokes come to mind about that but—[*laughter*]

Bridgeland: I'm sure they do.

Riley: With Novak in particular.

You indicate here that you kept a journal.

Bridgeland: I did when I could. It was hard because I'd get home—I was in at 6:30-ish. Andy liked to start early. We had senior staff very early. He was in at 4:45. One of our special assistants, Stephen Garrison, who I worked closely with on the domestic policy team, was my designated person beyond Britt Grant who would help me move things. He would come in and read all the newspapers and brief Andy Card at 4:45 every morning. Then I would come in. He would share the leading news with me. We had senior staff and then I would get home at midnight. So it was hard to keep a journal, but I did have one. I would write notes about what I was working on or things that were happening, a little bit of a record of some things that were moving.

Riley: There was no admonition against doing something like that out of the counsel's office?

Bridgeland: Sure, we had admonitions like there were restrictions with respect to taking documents, Presidential records. This was something I kept in the office, and it wasn't very extensive. It was just noting some of the things in terms of progress we were making and moving things.

Walcott: Is your journal ever going to be available to scholars?

Bridgeland: Honestly, I think people would look at it and be disappointed in terms of how much is in it.

Riley: You'd be surprised.

Walcott: As you describe it, it would be of considerable value. Think about the Bush Library, seriously.

Riley: There is a reason I pose the question. Because in successive administrations—

Bridgeland: This is all really the 9/11 and beyond. There was so much that was campaign recount and first year that is more to your point.

Perry: Just for the record, when you're pointing and saying *this* you're referring to your book.

Bridgeland: This book, *Heart of the Nation*.

Perry: But the combination of your journal, with your schedule that you kept, almost like an annotated schedule, I would think might be very helpful.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Because there is a paucity of these kinds of records.

Bridgeland: That's interesting.

Riley: It is interesting to me, Chuck, that we're picking up from these interviews that there is a culture of more extensive record-keeping in this administration than what we've been getting up through Clinton, probably related to the independent counsel statute going away. Through Clinton there were briefings from the counsel's office basically telling people not to keep written records.

Walcott: Yes, you might be subpoenaed.

Bridgeland: Right.

Riley: I flagged this, I've got it that you make reference to "I would note in my journal" and that is a rather surprising finding, that a journal would have been kept here. I'm not surprised that my colleagues would find it interesting because we're in an environment where there is a paucity of evidence.

Bridgeland: Right.

Riley: Moving along. You obviously got to know the President reasonably well in Texas during the campaign.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Did you detect any changes in him from candidate to President and as he is getting more experienced in the White House?

Bridgeland: I mentioned at one of the early meetings he had the senior staff around the ethics issues. The sense of the integrity of the office. I hadn't seen it so much on the campaign, because in part we weren't—I was often over at the Governor's Mansion for a briefing, just our staff and the Governor, or Josh or I would brief him as he was driving in the car, or we'd be at an event with him. I also got the sense of how much he respected the time of people who were coming into the Oval Office or the Roosevelt Room or even the EEOB [Eisenhower Executive Office

Building] for briefings. He created this culture of no interruptions. Poor Gordon Johndroe got taken to task when his cell phone went off one day.

Always be on time for people and respectful of people's time even though we hold these offices and people would understand that you were running late. He didn't want that culture.

I'll tell you a funny story. The first time I'm in the Presidential limousine with him, it was pretty early on. We were going to an event. He's riding here and I'm riding facing, going backward in terms of driving, I'm looking right at him. I'm in the car and there's the seal. I'm thinking, *Wow*. I don't know what came over me but I said, "So, Mr. President, how do you like your job?"

In those days thousands of people were lining the streets and he put his hand up to the window and the whole place exploded, and he looked back at me and said, "I like it." So there was a seriousness, but I also found him warm and wonderfully open to humor. That's a lifeline in those jobs. I'll never forget briefing on another issue and he named an environmental group. The President said, "Nature Conservation Association" or something like that. We said, "It's The Nature Conservancy." Then Josh Bolten quipped, "But, Mr. President, we'll ask them to change their name."

There was a lot of that kind of spirit. I saw some of that on the campaign but those elements really came to the fore when he was President.

Walcott: What was your nickname?

Bridgeland: What?

Bragaw: One of the things you hear is that he always gave people nicknames.

Bridgeland: Bridge. We've all had nicknames going through life, but he really formalized that more. Once he started saying it, everybody called me that.

Perry: You talk about his concern with other people's time and respecting time, but you're also very clear in your book, and others have mentioned too, that he was very concerned about his own time in terms of briefing.

Bridgeland: Yes, very much so.

Perry: You had to get to the point and move on and preserve his time. Did you ever have a sense of frustration about that, that there was more you wanted to say or more details?

Bridgeland: I actually ended up liking it because in some of the briefings where we weren't as crisp it really forced you to do your job well. It's almost like the law school rigor I learned here at the University of Virginia, which is define the issue, marshal the relevant facts, give your recommendation and judgment, and then what are the public policy implications of that judgment. Boom, boom, boom.

We would produce memos that would go through the senior staffing process. That would be coordinated, and every person in the senior staffing process would have an opportunity to review

that memo and comment on it. You'd get comments back. You'd need to respond to all those comments, reflect those, and then it could go to the President for the briefing. That also preserved—Instead of having a lot of debate that actually could be resolved by staff, you had the more focused debate that the President needed to hear in front of him.

There were plenty of times when we had a very lengthy discussion about an issue that was complex and then occasionally would come back for more discussion of it. Climate change was one of those.

Perry: Tell us about that.

Riley: Now is a good time to do that just because yesterday you said that there was a longer—

Bridgeland: The President had announced on the campaign an initiative that would regulate carbon dioxide emissions, which was a controversial issue in the country and the world. I think it was in February or sometime early on in the administration, the President charges a Cabinet-level review of climate change. We're also hearing from the Congress for the President to clarify his position on reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and the Kyoto Protocol, in light of the fact that the Senate had voted 95 to 0 against the Kyoto Protocol, which is a pretty universal condemnation of it, notwithstanding the work that had been done by the U.S. around Kyoto.

Condi Rice is named the chair. We don't have a chair of the Council on Environmental Quality yet. Gary Edson and I are tasked with organizing and running it.

Riley: It's interesting to me that Condi was chosen to chair this.

Bridgeland: It could be, but it is an international treaty.

Riley: OK.

Bridgeland: Issues like this would emerge, and I would say, "It's interesting to me that I'm spending so much time with Condi" and then I'd say, "OK, I get it, this is also an issue that has international implications." This is a good example. We got the effort organized, started to do an exhaustive amount of research, and then organized the Cabinet to meet very frequently, every couple of weeks. As I mentioned, this was most of the Cabinet.

Riley: Actual working sessions?

Bridgeland: Yes, in working sessions, which is extraordinary.

Riley: Is that normal?

Bridgeland: No.

Riley: Chuck, do you recall?

Walcott: Since [Dwight] Eisenhower I can't think of any.

Bridgeland: It was unique in my experience. We created the authority and then we did it on Freedom Corps. We had this initial Cabinet and the deputies' level meetings and coordination across the departments. On climate change, our first meeting is at the Department of Commerce. Don Evans convenes it, Gary and I run it. We did that because NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] and the climate research—We wanted to begin with "What does the research tell us?"

These climatologists and researchers from within the Department of Commerce. It's sort of odd that it is there; probably should be at the Department of Interior. That's a quirk of history that you probably know.

Riley: Nice aquarium there too.

Bridgeland: Right, great aquarium. Very timely. Hence it began. Then we would go to the Departments of Interior and Agriculture and EPA and all the different departments to have it hosted. As it started to move toward the creation of fact sheets and the policy and what we were going to do, we brought it into the Roosevelt Room of the White House.

We built a team internally that consisted of Jae Edmonds, one of the nation's premier climate experts, from the Pacific Northwest National Energy Lab. Then a team of people who were adept on these issues, connected also to the Council of Economic Advisors with Glenn Hubbard. Then Gary and I took the bold step—shouldn't be bold but it was—of writing Ralph Cicerone, the head of the National Academy of Sciences, and asked for a panel to review and pass upon a core set of questions around climate change because we wanted clear answers, the latest consensus.

The dean of MIT said it so beautifully. He said that ultimately this policy question is one of insurance. The science is not going to be able tell you completely the outcomes and what is going to transpire. So from a policy perspective you basically have to buy a series of insurance policies to mitigate the potential risks. That's what we were working toward and advocating.

Riley: I'm presuming that the President was not involved directly in these meetings.

Bridgeland: No. We were to work through it and then as we needed to at seminal moments we would go in and brief the President. These would be with Condi, Gary, me, and the team to brief the President on climate change.

Riley: Can you say anything about the dynamic within the Cabinet groups? Were there any people who were especially active? Were there any evident conflicts between individuals or—?

Bridgeland: The Vice President participated, or his staff.

Riley: On what grounds?

Bridgeland: One, they could participate in any policy, they were part of the architecture of the White House and always are, always will be. But there was also this energy working group that was directly relevant to the climate piece. We looked at climate, energy, and the economy, and they had to be looked at in an integrated fashion. They were part of the group.

Walcott: Were they taking a position at variance with anybody else?

Bridgeland: I can just tell you we had a majority of the Cabinet lined up to honor the President's commitment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We had industry lined up too, who wanted regulatory certainty, many of them wanting clarity with respect to a regime so they could make sensible long-term capital investments. We had the environmental community extremely excited. "My goodness, in the Bush administration we have movement on climate change?" There is all this attention on climate change. You don't see it today, haven't seen it since. So the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, William Reilly had been an EPA administrator, continued to work on this suite of issues. We reached out to a lot of people.

The Bush 41 administration, Boyden Gray and others, had been extremely progressive on issues related to acid rain. We were extremely in the mode of outreach and building toward something. Then all of a sudden this piece appears in the *Washington Post*. That was the first time that someone within the administration had leaked to a reporter to undermine a policy process. That's in part why I called Bob Novak. Then I learned that we didn't have friends in the Vice President's office.

A member of the Vice President's office came up to my office the very day it appeared in the paper and said, "It wasn't me."

Riley: Did that derail the process?

Bridgeland: The policy process continued. The President announced in June, he was extremely pleased, we did a phased approach. We wanted to begin with a set of announcements on science and technology. One of the things we discovered was that the departments were already doing so much, investing so much in the United States. The United States is leading the world in public funding and activity and energy around NOx SOx and mercury *and* CO_2.

Another issue that had been outlined in this Cabinet-level review was that eventually technology will to some extent save us, but it is going to take a long time. The question is, what do you do, what level of insurance policy do you buy from now until then? That was the larger policy question. As Condi, I think, says in her book, and it is how I felt, that not to eventually go on—We had this big science and technology announcement. It was well received as a good, strong first step. But then people were like, "So what's the policy on carbon going to be?" That was the hole—We all recognized that was to come.

We had the majority of the Cabinet lined up to support a policy on CO_2 and not to come out with a policy on CO_2, and just to leave it languishing was not a wise course of action. It was my first signal that I did not—I was displeased with that process.

Riley: Was it clear that the Vice President's staff was operating with the Vice President's imprimatur and therefore it wasn't something that could be appealed, or was there any effort made to—?

Bridgeland: Gary and I briefed the Vice President. He listened. He was a wonderful person to brief. He's very smart. I liked the Vice President as a person. He would be in most of the briefings in the Oval Office. The President would sit here and the Vice President would sit in the

next chair. He would always be very attentive and listen. Didn't ask as many questions, really left that to the President. The same thing in the climate review, he didn't ask a single question. Except at the end of it he said, "You men really have your act together, and you've done a really good job." He was very complimentary.

Gary and I left and went, "Wow. Let's brief the Vice President every day." We don't get the smack in the head.

Riley: No boxing.

Bridgeland: But it became clear to me that something else was going on. I'll tell you that there was a very strong force that helped drive this too, which was the Congress. I kept getting summoned up to the Hill and then eventually Jim Connaughton, who came on as head of the Council for Environmental Quality, summoned up to the Hill by people like [James] Inhofe and others who didn't think we should have the policies that we did on climate.

There was also a debate between Christie Todd Whitman at EPA that said at some level CO_2 is a pollutant, and the economic team was saying, "What do you mean CO_2 is a pollutant, it's everywhere." Some people in the Congress were saying we're still coming out of the Ice Age.

Riley: Some members of Congress coming out of the Ice Age?

Bridgeland: I think some are still in the Ice Age.

Walcott: I was going to say it would be nice if they're coming out.

Bridgeland: Exactly. But then if you read the National Academy of Sciences' reaction to our questions and you just pare away the politics and the emotion, we captured it in our June release on science and technology, if memory serves me right. We actually listed out what was clear and what was still unclear. I'll give you two examples.

The feedback mechanisms, the carbon cycle, how much CO_2 the oceans absorb or tropical forests absorb, particularly the oceans are not as well known in terms of the carbon cycle and the effects. Looking at the man-made impact on climate and then in turn on warming is a more complex scientific question that even the National Academy hedges a lot in their answers. That's the worst situation for a policy maker. The science isn't clear enough so we needed a strong insurance policy. Now interestingly, the country is moving toward an adaptation strategy more than a preventive strategy.

Riley: To further your metaphor, the premiums are very expensive too. So it is the worst of all possible worlds in that the science is unclear and it is very costly.

Bridgeland: That's right. But there were market-based strategies emerging around the trading of carbon emissions. Some of that innovation was going on.

The last thing I'll say is that China and India, two of the leading emerging, developing countries that are emitters and will be strong emitters, aren't part of Kyoto. So there is this international regime that is also poorly done. It's not as if you're going to really tackle the problem. It is like

putting a tax on certain countries, and obviously the United States is the leading emitter, but it was a very complex landscape.

Riley: The President tasked you to do this and it comes to a sort of muddle. Does he get frustrated?

Bridgeland: The good news is everything up to the CO_2 policy, which is not insignificant, is beautifully done in his view. I can't tell you how many times he comes into the Roosevelt Room with the Cabinet there and says, "This is a great piece of work. You've exhaustively talked to the researchers and the climatologists and all the stakeholders and businesses. You've harnessed the power of the national energy labs." He was really pleased with the depth of the process.

You always knew—because sometimes you'd have 24 hours to prepare something to brief him—and the contrast between that and a Cabinet-level review process, where for weeks on end you're with teams of people, you're digging in, you end up with a better product. He was extremely pleased. The disappointment was when no clear policy emerged on CO_2 after he had made the commitment on the campaign.

In part that was strong pressure from the Congress and then this 95 to 0 vote, then in part the Vice President's office exerted a strong hand there. In the context of the Energy Policy Working Group that was also going on, those dynamics forced, in my view, a bad outcome, which was no policy on CO_2.

Riley: Did you have a window onto what was going on in the Vice President's working groups?

Bridgeland: Yes, I would attend the Energy Policy Working Group so I knew what was going on. Even though that was also very much the purview of the Economic Policy Council. But I felt it was pretty critical given the other issues we were working on. Then the Vice President's representative, [I. Lewis] Scooter Libby, would be in our meetings.

Riley: There was a lot of press criticism and interest group criticism of this.

Bridgeland: Yes, there was tremendous public pressure on both sides. We kept our heads down and I think did the right thing all the way up to—And then the failure was not having a CO_2 policy. That was a huge disappointment to a lot of us, because we had a majority of the Cabinet lined up behind it. That seemed like an odd outcome to me.

Riley: But you said that one of the contributing factors to that odd outcome was the pressure from the Vice President's operation.

Bridgeland: Yes, and the Congress.

Riley: There was criticism of the Vice President's operation as being in the baldest terms sort of bought off by the industrial interests. Since you had a window onto this, could you comment at all on what you were seeing? Was this an honest effort, a give-and-take?

Bridgeland: What is so interesting to me is that in our conversations with industry leaders, because of their desire for regulatory certainty, they didn't want an environment where it was going to be "We don't know what the rules are."

Riley: Which is what happened.

Bridgeland: Which is what happened. That's why it is not fully clear—I can't give you the answer. It would be an easy answer; I know it is an answer the press wants to write about and has written about. "Oh, they were bought off by the utilities." That is not the experience I had.

Riley: Because the industry was more supportive than we might have expected.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Let's take a break.

[BREAK]

Riley: I want to look at the summary of things that you included in your journal on July 1, I'm reading from page 173. This is where I had marked. Let me just read these out and see if any of these jar any recollections or are illustrative of things we ought to dig in on for a few minutes before we get to 9/11.

No Child Left Behind, campaign finance reform, federal election reform, which you talked about already, substance abuse policy, and demand reduction and treatment. New Freedom Initiative for Americans with Disabilities, Everglades/national parks, project labor agreements, immigration policy, Missouri River basin, veterans' task force, and you said ten other issues.

Bridgeland: That was just that little period of time. It was literally like this all the time. All these wires. I talked about federal election reform coming out of the Florida recount, bipartisan commission, the Miller Center, and then the federal election reform legislation in Congress. That was another example of progress that didn't get a lot of news, and that was fine because you could have seen it go in a very different direction.

Campaign finance reform, we sent a set of principles up to the Hill. This was emblematic of wanting to send signals about our principles and policy to the Hill but leave the Congress to work its will in this very cooperative spirit. On the Faith-Based Initiative, we created a Faith-Based Office within the White House by Executive order with an assistant to the President reporting directly to the President.

Riley: You had the action on doing that?

Bridgeland: Yes. I thought it was critical that we bring in John DiIulio to run it. He had basically put faith-based in the public square, had all these creative ideas that informed the

campaign. I knew the President really liked him. He was a Democrat, and I felt this would really bring this bipartisan spirit that came roaring out of Texas and now could roar out of Philadelphia. I spent time recruiting John DiIulio. That was one of the best experiences in the White House for me, getting to know John DiIulio. We really hit it off. When I went to Andy Card and Josh and said, "It took a lot, but he'll do it," they were like, "*Really*?" They were very surprised. When we told the President he was ecstatic.

Perry: When you say it took a lot?

Bridgeland: With John. He lived in Philadelphia; he had a family. He's Philly born, Philly bred, Philly there to stay. He commuted every morning on the train an hour and a half to get to senior staff by 7:30. Plus, he was writing the *American Government* book, teaching classes at Penn [University of Pennsylvania]. He had a life, working with all these think tanks. He was very entangled in good ways. There were back-and-forth calls with John about it. Plus he was coming into a Republican administration. That's something to consider.

Walcott: You could lose friends over that.

Bridgeland: Talk to John. He'll give you his perspective on it, but it took a little time.

Riley: We're planning on having the two of you at the table at the same time.

Bridgeland: That will be a blast, I'd enjoy that. So I won't talk too much about faith-based. Then we created as part of this Executive order the faith-based offices within departments and agencies. With John's strong guidance we really wanted to find out what was actually going on. What is the current landscape? What is the playing field? That effort was a key focus of Presidential action and attention.

Then national parks, something the President and the First Lady in particular both loved. We went to the Everglades and Fran Mainella was announced as the Director of the National Park Service. We had had this initiative, National Parks-National Treasures, on the campaign. You look historically. It is a little unexpected maybe but Republican Presidents have done very bold, dramatic things around national parks, from Lincoln to Teddy Roosevelt to Eisenhower who had Mission 66. This administration ended up doing a lot on national parks. That was a signature initiative.

Riley: Did you have to sweep the area for pythons before—?

Bridgeland: Not then, they weren't as invasive.

Riley: That's a Democratic problem.

Bridgeland: I remember it was my first helicopter ride and we were going through the Everglades. There are not a lot of tarmacs in the Everglades, and I'm in this military helicopter and think of Senator Bob Graham—Talk about note taking, the guy took notes every 30 seconds on what he was doing. I felt like we were just going to be swept out the back of the helicopter. I was holding on for dear life so we could do our national parks initiative.

Riley: Before 9/11 was there any issue area that you weren't getting to that you were surprised by that perhaps—I know immigration comes later.

Bridgeland: Social Security comes later. There were ways in which we integrated a lot of our policies later, like this ownership society. I felt as if we were moving on a lot of fronts. I felt pretty good about the movement. This faith-based bill emerges in the House. A lot of members take up your issues, want to introduce a bill and get it moving. Sometimes they don't reach out to coordinate quite as well, so some of that dynamic can be a surprise.

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families act, we had a big initiative around foster care and adoption. We wanted to care for people who were aging out of the foster care system and then facilitate adoptions when appropriate, so that these young people weren't growing up with six and seven families bouncing from home to home, sometimes at risk to themselves. That was another good example, something under the radar screen we got done on a bipartisan basis. There were quite a few of those things and quite a few executive actions.

Riley: Were guns on the President's agenda?

Bridgeland: I think it was James Q. Wilson who said that guns themselves aren't a problem, it's having them in the hands of people who commit crimes.

Riley: The bullets.

Bridgeland: Then there was this issue of the safety of guns in homes. We had a safety lock initiative that made guns in the homes safer.

Riley: Did you cross wires with the NRA [National Rifle Association]?

Bridgeland: No, not on that. The other thing we did, we learned about the Boston gun project, which was Duncan Kennedy, I think it was at Harvard, a really effective crime-fighting effort that recognized that gangs form because they need family, it is the substitution for family. But if you take guns out of there, you remove the focus on violence and focus them toward positive things in the community. This ten-point coalition Gene Rivers had led, he was on the cover of *Newsweek* for it. We were looking at policies around fighting crime. Substance abuse was another area of focus.

Riley: You say in the book that there is a pivot in your own efforts after 9/11.

Bridgeland: Yes, completely changes. I remember how beautiful that day was. I remember getting out of my car and walking into the West Wing. My first memory of 9/11 was how gorgeous the day was, how clear. I go to my West Wing office. I get my Sisyphus, my briefing book, and I get in one of those military cars to head over to brief Christie Todd Whitman and Jimmy Connaughton. Jim is head of CEQ [Council on Environmental Quality] by then. So we're briefing Christie Todd Whitman and her team on the climate change issue and getting further input. I catalog all the details in the book. I don't know if you want me to go through 9/11 or highlight anything.

Riley: I don't know that there is any need to unless there are aspects of it that you felt needed to be omitted from the book.

Bridgeland: The only thing I will say on the pivot is literally that night you could see everything changed. I can give you an example. One of the lenses we had was on immigration policy. How do we make it more customer-friendly and consumer-based and welcoming? After 9/11 that lens, we were looking at the issuance of visas and at the systems, and it was all about homeland security. I was in the Situation Room twice a day with all the key Deputy Secretaries. The man who had been commander of an entire fleet, [Charles S.] Steve Abbott, a Rhodes Scholar, had been brought in to be the Deputy Assistant to the President for Homeland Security. He was coordinating these operations in the Situation Room.

The first outgrowth of 9/11 was the Domestic Consequences Policy Council. It was run by Josh Bolten, and Gary Edson and I were brought in to help Josh with it. Out of it Gary and I co-chaired the New York Economic Revitalization Task Force and all these outgrowths and things that had to be handled in the context of the three areas that were hit.

Walcott: The response organizationally is interesting. It seems that interagency task forces start springing up everywhere.

Bridgeland: Completely, because there was such a need to coordinate. Then, from it, you see the realignment of government with the largest government reform first prompted by Joe Lieberman and others in the Congress, hence the Department of Homeland Security eventually. We created two new policy councils in the White House, which is interesting historically because we had domestic, economic, and national security. After 9/11 we created the Homeland Security Policy Council and then the National Community Service Policy Council, which gave unprecedented reach and authority within the White House, across the Cabinet, and to the President for national service.

Riley: If you can, why don't you narrate us through those stories? What appears in your book is your personal account of how you deal with the day and the immediate aftermath, but you're talking about some institutional things that I don't think get recorded there, and you're right, they are historically important.

Bridgeland: One is the President's actions and speeches and leadership on it. The other is the institutional mechanisms we're putting in place in the White House to sustain coordinated action over time.

Riley: That's the boring piece that the people at this table love. You have a rapt audience.

Bridgeland: As I mentioned yesterday he says, "Where's Ridge?" He wants a Governor. He wants Governor Ridge. He becomes Assistant to the President for Homeland Security. So Tom Ridge ends up coming to all the senior staff meetings and briefings with the President. They create this Homeland Security Council within the White House, and Ridge has an office right in the West Wing.

Riley: Your office is in the West Wing?

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: We didn't ask you about that. Where?

Bridgeland: Upstairs, in the domestic policy space. Karl Rove, who had Hillary Clinton's office when she was First Lady, was right next to me, and right next door to us was Alberto Gonzales, the White House counsel.

Walcott: And your staff is over—?

Bridgeland: The domestic policy staff is over in the EEOB. Josh Bolten and Joe Hagin are downstairs. Andy Card is in the Chief of Staff's office. Tom Ridge ends up being in a downstairs office, the Vice President is downstairs.

So there is a Domestic Consequences Policy Council working group that meets every single day and brings together the Deputy Secretaries to coordinate—transportation, across all the departments and agencies—everything that is relevant.

Riley: This is set up how quickly?

Bridgeland: The day after. Gary and Josh and I are working on the constitution and the description of it and it is convened literally if not the day after, two days. It is within 48 hours.

Riley: You get your marching orders from Andy or the President?

Bridgeland: Sure, but Josh was really in charge of it. We all felt so strongly the need for it because of the volume of issues we were dealing with across departments and agencies. By the way, every day I came into the White House and we wondered whether we were going to be hit. It was literally this environment of "Oh, my God, within a week, two weeks, a month, we're going to be hit again."

Then there is the anthrax scare. I was up in the Hart Building, I happened to be one of the few staff who were, and I had to take Cipro. I don't think I was exposed to it, but there was an abundance of caution. There was just that spirit of the vulnerability that the whole country was feeling. There was just a ton to do. Plus the incoming from [Rudolph] Giuliani and the Governor of New York, [George] Pataki. The worry around the economy, tourism, and travel. The country was shedding jobs. Planes had been grounded for days. There was a lot of nervousness there.

We responded with this domestic policy working group that was a new structure. Eventually it becomes what we do in the Situation Room twice a day, which is kind of the new homeland security infrastructure. We've got transportation, HUD [Housing and Urban Development], labor, education, all the groups assembled. Then on the screens often you'd have the Department of Defense team and boy, you learn what a bureaucracy that is. I had never seen it really because I'm a domestic policy guy. All of a sudden I have a window into that world. You talk about structures, memos—"Frank, Frank, we need a decision!" It was like pulling teeth. It made me realize how hard Condi's job was and Steve Hadley's.

There were lots of issues around TSA [Transportation Security Administration] and airports and curbside check-in. It got very granular in terms of how do you protect Americans and what were the vulnerabilities in the system? Then of course a lot of interplay with Congress because Congress is anxious to do a lot. Because there was this appetite in the country, and Bob Putnam would later say, "Once or twice a century you're given an opportunity to foster a kind of civic renewal that doesn't come again." So in addition to the President, the day of and the speech and then the Rose Garden ceremonies announcing—There was this outpouring where the country wanted to contribute. We created something called Liberty Unites. It was just a mechanism for them to do so.

Then things like America's Fund for Afghan Children. He wanted to send a strong signal that we weren't stereotyping or generalizing the response. Give people across America the opportunity to give back. Eventually I'm in the Oval Office briefing him on another issue, and he turns to me and says, "Bridge—" I'll never forget it, he said, "I want an initiative that will foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility." Those were the words he used. I remember going out the door with Josh Bolten saying, "At least the expectations are low. All he wants is for us to change the culture."

I wrestled with that for weeks, talked to people. We ended up recommending the creation by executive action of a fifth policy council that would give whoever ran it the ability to convene efforts across the Cabinet. So he announces in Atlanta in November the preview of it, but we save it for the State of the Union and it gets launched then.

Walcott: This is in the context of immediately after 9/11 the President seeming to tell America to go shopping, which in fact he more or less did, and criticism of that that says, "Why doesn't he ask us to sacrifice at this moment?"

Bridgeland: Let me address that because it's really important. The President never, ever used those words. The way it emerged was Frank Pellegrini, a *Time* magazine reporter, writes this piece in *Time* that says, "Bush found his voice, found his moment, when he speaks to the joint session of Congress." He says it is the most spine-chilling speech of his life and the country is responding. So Pellegrini in the *Time* magazine story goes through every element of the speech including, by the way, the summons to the country to help your neighbor and nation, continue to show your good heart and America's compassion, support in these areas of the country, and think of your own service.

In the context of the President saying, by the way, we're shedding jobs, the travel and tourism industry is in real trouble, the markets have been way down, the economy is a real concern to the country. The President in the context of the speech that also issues the call to service says, "I want you to have continued faith in the American economy and lead your lives. Go into the vulnerability, don't have fear." Pellegrini then interprets that language as "and for God's sake, go shopping." Never in the President's words. If you read the President's text you'd say that's not only a reasonable thing for him to say, it is an essential thing for him to say. Pellegrini was complimenting the President, using those words.

Now what is interesting is the whole "go shopping" myth doesn't emerge until almost the second term as we're moving into the 2008 election. I think the reason it doesn't is that the President is

doing a lot. To me that's one of the more egregious examples of the perpetuation of a myth that is completely unfair. Let me tell you why.

First, he makes national community service and volunteering a signature priority in the State of the Union in 2002 and announces in his budget hundreds of millions of dollars in new resources for it. He goes on to marry two concepts that had traditionally been competing—traditional volunteering, which Ronald Reagan and other Republicans had embraced, with real investments in national and international service programs that Democrats traditionally embraced.

He increases AmeriCorps by 50 percent, which for context the Obama administration—even after signing the Serve America Act that we codeveloped and worked with [Orrin] Hatch and Kennedy on, and I served in the Obama administration so I'm an ally—has only increased AmeriCorps by 9 percent. Bush did 50 percent, huge. He increases Peace Corps to the highest levels in 37 years. We talk about Kennedy and we talk about Clinton and we give those Presidents credit for what was created. But beyond that he goes on to create the Citizen Corps for Homeland Security, which Tom Ridge and I co-convened a task force on the role of citizens in protecting the homeland.

What we discovered, and I also learned this through a scan I had done for the crime prevention field, there was some existing infrastructure in the country that had deployed citizens in disaster response in really effective ways. We had community emergency response teams that we tripled.

We created a new program called the Medical Reserve Corps, which now has more than 200,000 trained nurses, doctors, and dentists who in the aftermath of Katrina, when government was failing, were deployed and brought surge capacity. We created Citizen Corps Council efforts. The Harris County Citizen Corps effort in Harris County, Texas, mobilized 68,000 volunteers in 48 hours after Hurricane Katrina. They were the ones who cared for the evacuees to the Houston Astrodome.

We created Fire Corps, which brought the fire union and nonunion groups together to ramp up the capacity of fire departments to do their job better. We did the same thing for volunteers in police service. We doubled neighborhood watch. There were more than a thousand Citizen Corps Councils in the United States, and every Governor has a Citizen Corps effort. I can't go anywhere in the country and speak without seeing Citizen Corps such as the Ohio Citizen Corps or—It's pervasive.

Then we looked at the Peace Corps. We had 215,000 applications for 6,000 slots. John Kennedy said the Peace Corps would be truly serious when we had 100,000 Americans serving abroad every year. Here we are, we inherit it, there are 5,500 to 6,000 slots. Working with Colin Powell we create Volunteers for Prosperity to mobilize highly skilled Americans for shorter-term assignments than the two years to work on HIV, AIDS, and malaria and issues that are urgent, important to the Congress, where the Congress is making massive investments.

When I left there were 43,000 Volunteers for Prosperity, five or six times the number of Peace Corps volunteers. So the President goes on to do 37 events. I go to the Oval Office and Condi looks at me and says, "My God, Bridge, *another* Freedom Corps event?" Given all that, given the personal time and energy put into it, given the structures, not only a coordinating council but

then a White House office with an assistant to the President, a team, and detailees for other departments and agencies, I won't go on and catalog everything, a lot of it is in the book. But it is completely unfair to say that the President simply told the country to go shopping. In fact, when you look at the sweep of history, it is the largest civic engagement initiative in government since [Franklin] Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps in terms of numbers of people engaged in national and community service.

We also had an American history and civics initiative, which is cataloged in the book *Teaching America*. We harnessed Justice Anthony Kennedy on the Supreme Court who had a Dialogue on Freedom initiative. We harnessed David McCullough who was breaking through to average Americans who couldn't go through an airport without seeing his book on John Adams. We engaged Bob Putnam. We reached out to all these people across the country in the civic education field.

We created an American History Civics and Service Initiative, including a White House Summit on American History, Civics, and Service, in which we bring the field together. Out of it there is real money, real investments in teaching American history, grants and new efforts for summer seminars and institutes for the National Endowment for the Humanities, new programs for the Department of Education, a Rose Garden ceremony that brings the three branches of government together. We have Senator Kennedy, Lamar Alexander on a bipartisan basis, Justice Kennedy from the Supreme Court, David McCullough, and the civic education field. We even linked this tradition of the golden thread of American democracy, which is service together with—We felt like, "How can you understand how your own service story fits in the sweep of American history if you don't know American history?"

We made significant efforts. Also coordinated efforts with the Library of Congress and the National Archives and tried to unlock the treasures that the federal government itself holds to make those more readily available to the American people, teachers, and students. I'll stop there, that was a long answer. But that's why, given the effort and given the results—And some things were rocky, Operation TIPS [Terrorism Information and Prevention System] did not come to pass at the federal level; AmeriCorps had a rocky period. Given the record and what we actually achieved and the numbers of people engaged, and then put in, for the first time, data at the Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor and Statistics so we could tell the country how it is actually doing every year on volunteering.

Here is the biggest point, maybe. In addition to all these federal investments and all these programs that were growing, both new and existing in the country, 59 million Americans volunteered the year after 9/11, from September 2001 to September 2002. When I went to the Secretaries of Labor and Commerce to get these data sets, to get the volunteering survey put in place annually, I knew it was a big risk because the year after 9/11 was probably going to be the highest levels of volunteering in the country.

I went to the President and said, "Mr. President, I'm going to give you quarterly reports on the Freedom Corps. I'll be able to tell you all the federal investments and how we are growing these programs and how things are going, what we can do by executive action, what we need the Congress to help us with, but I can't tell you how the country is responding because we don't have the data." I said, "I'm going to get the data. I actually asked the Census Bureau and BLS

[Bureau of Labor Statistics] to collaborate to do an annual volunteering survey, but there is a risk. That is a year from now, two years from now, the numbers will be down because as 9/11 wanes, as much as we do and as many events as you do and the call to service, it could wane."

He said, "Is it the right thing to do, Bridge?" I said, "Mr. President, it is the right thing to do."

Riley: Let me step in here. The corollary to what you've been answering is the question about the extent to which the President asked for any sacrifices on the part of the American people at a time when people were, as you have just indicated, highly receptive to calls from on high.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: Almost everything you've described relates to voluntarism, which doesn't invoke, or invokes at a relatively modest level, the coercive authority of the state. Were there serious discussions given as to whether or not there ought to be more intrusive, for lack of a better word, government policies to take advantage of this high moment? There were people who said, "What about taxes?" You could make a counterargument and say it is a terrible time for taxes because of the economy. But would there have been a moment for trying to do something like that?

Bridgeland: I'm so glad you asked that. First the President issues a two-year call to service. He says, "I want you to contribute—" It's not just volunteer and help a neighbor even though I think volunteering should be honored. It is to give two years of service to your country. That could be in the Peace Corps, it could be in AmeriCorps, it could be in the new Citizen Corps, that could be eventually in Volunteers for Prosperity. It could be through Senior Corps. We're ramping up Senior Corps to almost 600,000 Americans and working with AARP [American Association of Retired Persons], which represented almost 40 million. But the first deliberation we had after 9/11 I was in Josh Bolten's office and we said, "What if we were to mandate that every 18- to 24-year-old in the country had to serve a year or two of civilian service? Let's just require it. Our jobs won't be hard. We won't have to go through all—" what I just told you. "Let's just do it. Civilian counterpart."

We look into it and find it's probably unconstitutional for the government to mandate civilian service. That's point one. Point two was that to mandate that 18- to 24-year-olds would serve in some civilian capacity would have had a political *eruption* on the Hill. We took some very informal soundings and people were not for the heavy hand of government to that extent.

Walcott: John McCain was advocating that, wasn't he?

Bridgeland: No. John McCain, whom I talked with extensively, and Evan Bayh, had a couple of bills. One was a bill that would ramp up AmeriCorps to 250,000 slots, which eventually we did through the Serve America Act, an authorization, and the appropriations are a heavy lift every year. They also had a bill through the defense appropriations, I think it was, it was like an 18, 18, 18, where you could have options to enlist in the military and then have a term of voluntary civilian service. No mandate, no requirement. It went through, but it hasn't been very successful; the take-up rate has not been high.

There is a National Call to Service Program that was run by the Veterans Department. If I remember it was [Carl] Levin who really initiated it after 9/11, again out of defense

appropriations that gave returning veterans an opportunity to serve on the home front and get some support for it. We would later do research showing that veterans who have horrible transitions home, suicide rates, poverty, homelessness, and PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] are much higher than in the civilian population. When they serve on the home front, their transitions home are much better.

We wrote a report called "All Volunteer Force" and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff gave us our foreword. This is in my role at Civic Enterprises. So we discovered problems with constitutionality. I talked to Harris Wofford too, who had loved that idea and back in 1968 or something had broached it with the Congress and said, "Bridge, our finding was that it was unconstitutional." So Harris and I talked about a lottery draft. Could you reinstitute a lottery draft on the military so every young person 18 to 24, let's say, or 26, would know that their birthday might be called, their number might be called. A certain number would enlist in the military, but you would also have a civilian option.

Perry: Every person 18 to 24, would that include women as well?

Bridgeland: Absolutely. So maybe a lottery. We thought of a lot of creative mechanisms and quickly discovered constitutional problems, no appetite in Congress, and then questions about OK, so is the government going to direct where they serve? Are you going to clear what's OK and what isn't? Is Planned Parenthood OK? Is working with a radical group that is advocating violence against America? It became the slippery slope, the heavy hand of government dictating. So we pursued those alternatives that were a little more mandatory, heavy-handed.

Riley: Now this is all happening in a very compacted time.

Bridgeland: Absolutely. I'm leading this effort. We've got discussions with different elements of senior staff at different times. I go from the ground up and commission my staff quickly. I say, "Tell me what every President of the United States has done in service or civic engagement initiatives, and I need a report within a week." We learned that every single President, including William Henry Harrison who gives that long-winded speech and dies six weeks later, said meaningful things about service.

Walcott: Look where it got him, at least he has a legacy.

Bridgeland: Then we see Teddy Roosevelt's speech in the Sorbonne. Then FDR [Franklin D. Roosevelt], three million people over the life of the Civilian Conservation Corps—by summer he calls Congress back into emergency session. By summer he has 250,000 boys in the woods, public lands, serving, with a little stipend and wage. So basically what we do is we build from the ground up the traditions that have actually worked and ultimately been accepted by Congress.

I will tell you when we proposed the Freedom Corps I got a call from a Senator saying, "You remember Hillarycare?" I said, "Yes, I do." He said, "Just wait on AmeriCorps." So then Dick Armey—

Perry: Because of the Clinton connection.

Bridgeland: Yes. Dick Armey says right away that the AmeriCorps piece—which was *one* piece; we eventually had 42 initiatives in Freedom Corps—is obnoxious and refuses to bring it to the floor. I go in to meet with Majority Leader Tom DeLay and I had with me what was happening in his congressional district, things like Habitat for Humanity and Teach for America and Boys and Girls Club, the word *AmeriCorps* doesn't appear in the federal statute. I went in and said, "Mr. Leader, as you know I'm director of this initiative for the President and reporting directly to him. He cares deeply about this. I was so thrilled to see Habitat for Humanity and Teach for America and Boys and Girls Clubs and these homeless shelters in your district."

He says, "Bridge, I love those programs. I visit those programs. My wife and I volunteer, we serve." I said, "You do?" He said, "Yes, those are great programs, we need to keep those going." I said, "You know there are some relatively important federal investments in those programs." He goes, "Oh, yes, that makes great sense."

I said, "Mr. Leader, I won't ever use that word if you can help us move the bill." He said, "What word are you talking about?" I said, "Well, there's this word, but I hate to use it, it's AmeriCorps." He said, "Oh, yes, I'm not for that. That absolutely not. You can't…"

"But, Mr. Leader," I said, "Habitat for Humanity, there is one person in those Habitat builds, have you ever seen them? They actually organize and train the thousands of volunteers who help build these homes. Remember that one person?" He said, "Yes, I remember in Habitat." I said, "That person gets support from the corporate agency called the Corporation for National and Community Service. Some people call that AmeriCorps. But we won't ever use that word."

There was a disconnect. Everybody liked service. Harris Wofford will tell you if John Kennedy hadn't been assassinated, the Peace Corps wouldn't exist. Isn't that interesting? This federal investment in some kind of volunteering just has a rub, a conflict. Even in the context of the things that were mandatory, having an expanded federal role and investing in more opportunities for more Americans to serve continues to be a somewhat controversial idea. The House is trying to shut down the Corporation for National and Community Service and zero out AmeriCorps, and it does it every year and the Senate comes along and saves it.

Riley: It is not clear to me why a draft for these purposes is constitutionally suspect when a military draft is not. Can you explain that to me?

Bridgeland: In 1913 I think it is, there is a Supreme Court case that looks at the war, the statute on the military draft, and the Court passes that it is constitutional. But there seems to be in the legal review of civilian—Mandating that Americans serve in a civilian capacity doesn't seem to be under the authorities. There is no provision in the Constitution that would enable the government to do that. I can't imagine the Commerce Clause or other powers that would permit it. We had the White House counsel's office look into it. This guy Tim Flanigan—

Walcott: Draft them all into the military and then give them that civilian option?

Bridgeland: What we saw as part of this review is a lot of countries have a civilian counterpart to a military draft. In a lot of cases it is for conscientious objectors, who for religious or other grounds are not going to serve in the military. It's a safety valve to keep them in the country and productive. That's something we were looking at, but frankly there was no appetite.

He could have announced it with fanfare and it could have had a few op-eds in the *New York Times* or something, but the Congress would have just—That was not a politically feasible thing to do.

Bragaw: Do you think there was some type of connection between moments of national tragedy and these initiatives for redefining service and policy?

Bridgeland: Definitely. There is a strong connection. When people are confronted with that kind of tragedy, it creates—I call it a patina of civility. I remember going out and turning right onto George Washington Parkway. There is this very crowded area every morning where people are honking and fighting, and people were welcoming each other in. It was just *remarkable*. This whole spirit.

Karen Hughes was very adept at capturing things. She said, "It's really like building on the millions of acts of kindness and goodness and decency, isn't it?" A spirit of the country was emerging. We thought it was our job to accelerate and then give concrete support to it.

Another way we did it—We knew the President's voice over time would diminish in terms of the ability, so he and Mrs. [Laura] Bush, through this $30 million ad campaign, were on TV all the time. Senior staff would come in and joke, "Bridge, I saw a movie, the first movie I've seen in a year in the theater. I couldn't believe it, before the movie there was this PSA [public service announcement] that you guys had put together that talked about this tradition of service and 'You too can serve the country. Go to the Freedom Corps website or call this number to find the opportunity. Enjoy your movie.'"

Ari Fleischer, who loves baseball, went to a Yankees game. He said, "Bridge, right in the middle, on the screen was flashing this PSA from Mariano Rivera who did a Freedom Corps ad." We created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to tap iconic Americans. It was Sean Astin—*Lord of the Rings* was out. He was the character with Frodo Baggins who was the service guy.

Riley: He was Rudy too.

Bridgeland: He was Rudy. I was speaking with Sean Astin all over America. Miss America. Bob Dole and John Glenn came together on a bipartisan basis. These two heroes in American life, served in World War II, did a joint PSA. In the first few years you couldn't go to some public venue without seeing these messages reinforcing—I also discovered there were about eight different small clearinghouses that tried to connect Americans to volunteer opportunities. We brought them all together, assembled them in the White House. I said, "Stand down on your turf, we're going to bring all these things together, it is going to be citizen-centered." We created one clearinghouse that enabled you to enter in your ZIP code, where you lived, then what your interest was, and all these volunteer opportunities would show up so you could immediately connect, or you could sign up for Peace Corps or AmeriCorps or the Citizen Corps for disaster response all in one place.

We were getting like 15 million unique visitors. It was a heavily utilized system. At the end of that process—Sorry to go on, but this is important—we created a new President's Volunteer Service Award. I started to get calls from deans of colleges saying, "This President's Volunteer

Service Award is showing up on college applications." I said, "Good, we want it to. We're trying to institute—" because we saw from the volunteering data that schools, workplaces, and faith-based institutions were the three areas where Americans serve the most. We organized a thousand CEOs to make institutional changes in their policies and practices to foster a culture of service.

Wachovia gave 82,000 employees six days of paid leave to do service. These were serious commitments by corporations in the context of the workplace. It wasn't just a federal play. We really worked with the institutions that were reaching millions of Americans to make private sector plays too.

Riley: John, I recall that there was discussion just before 9/11 of the potential for a civility initiative out of the administration. This was something generated privately.

Bridgeland: Yes, there were quite a few actually, depending on which way you're going. There were some looking at fostering civility in our private dialogue in the Court and Congress. There was an initiative led by a rabbi about words matter and the words we use in our public dialogue. He got all these Congressmen and leaders and former Presidents to sign it. It was good, but you wondered where the legs were. Words matter, fine. Let's be more careful. What's next?

We were about to announce an initiative called Communities of Character.

Riley: I think that was it.

Bridgeland: There were a number of things that were kind of emerging. This would have married the Faith-Based Initiative with some of our other community-based initiatives. Then 9/11 hit.

Riley: So you're tasked with setting up something new, you're tasked with changing the culture.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Riley: How do you go about doing that?

Bridgeland: The most exciting and exhausting experience I've ever had because there was all this creative energy. You have a clean sheet of paper, and you need to create an initiative that will do that. Understanding the limits of government to do that too. I've explained a little bit the architecture we put in place and then the office. We set up the office, and he announces at the State of the Union. I travel with him. I do the press gaggle with Ari in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. We meet with one of these new Citizen Corps Councils. This brought together the American Red Cross, the United Way, the disaster response teams, the water system teams. In those days you were thinking any moment, any mall, any water system, any bioterror. Then we designed it so those would be ramping up systems that could respond to disasters of any kind: hurricane, tornado, train wreck. That's what sustained it, because we haven't had another attack.

Steve Abbott said to me, "What I love about the Citizen Corps is that it will keep in the consciousness of Americans this notion to be prepared and be ready." Because I think as 9/11 wanes and depending on whether we're hit again—If we're not hit again, that's of course

wonderful. But then Americans will lose their sensibility around the sense of being ready. So it got integrated into this "Be ready" campaign. Tom Ridge was everywhere in public dialogue.

We were marching along on building—This was the first initiative that successfully linked international and domestic service. Peace Corps has always been out there as an independent effort. It took some work in the Congress to convince people that that was a good idea because a previous administration tried to bring them under one umbrella and fold them all together. I think it was called ACTION. That failed. Then there was legislation that expressly said the Peace Corps was independent.

What we wanted to do was give White House visibility and attention and federal support to the international programs as well as the domestic—and we also put Peace Corps in predominantly Muslim countries because we felt it was really important for Americans to have this presence and face and contact in Muslim countries. We work on this with quarterly reports to the President. We do 37 events with the President, so I'm constantly briefing him.

I'm also in charge of the Faith-Based Initiative. After John DiIulio left, it was his deputies. Then we brought in Jim Towey as the Director of the Faith-Based Initiative, so I was meeting with Jim and his team. Then I had other elements of the compassion agenda still within my purview. But the Freedom Corps and the Faith-Based Initiative were the areas of focus.

We also discovered in the volunteering data that almost half the volunteers were volunteering through faith-based institutions. It was a beautiful alignment to fold faith-based into the larger culture of service.

Walcott: Was there any specific effort to reach out to Arab Americans or American Muslims?

Bridgeland: Yes. The day of 9/11, on the President's schedule, we were scheduled to meet with Muslim leaders. It's not well known, but it was on the schedule. The President was meeting with religious leaders including Muslim leaders.

Walcott: Was that scheduled for the afternoon?

Bridgeland: It was scheduled for when he came back from the school in Florida.

Perry: What were the topics to be?

Bridgeland: Faith-Based Initiative, looking at how are you serving the poor and the needy? What are your roles in your communities? Do you access any federal funding? Are you part of—Like Catholic Charities for years has been getting, Salvation Army—A lot of mainline religious institutions for years had strong connections with the government, and others were fearful. They thought, *If I take government money, then there can't be the cross on the wall*, or the more controversial issue was religious hiring. "I am a faith-based organization and the '64 Civil Rights Statute and this exemption permits me to—" Many of them didn't know that they were permitted to hire people who continued to share their faith.

Imagine an environmental organization being forced to hire somebody who doesn't believe in conservation. So just listening, getting a feel for what they were doing, how government could be helpful in helping them help the poor and the needy. Of course all those meetings were canceled.

One of the first things he does is he goes to a mosque and sends the signal that this response will be targeted to those who support terrorism. This is not going to be generalized. Because there was a lot of anti-Arab and Muslim sentiment in the country obviously. People were very fearful. He repeatedly tried to send the signal that that was not to be condoned.

That was one of the reasons we had America's Fund for Afghan Children too. We saw the data around child mortality and the conditions in Afghanistan, particularly as they related to women and children. Then sort of a March of Dimes, harness this collective civic groundswell from young people to do something. We thought that was a creative way to harness their civic interest and it turned out to be. They were sending books and supplies and tents and clothing. There was a huge outpouring from the children of America to help the children of Afghanistan.

Perry: You mentioned the First Lady being a part of the public service announcements regarding voluntarism.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Perry: We know about her initiatives for Afghan women. Was she involved in the children's portion of that?

Bridgeland: Heavily. She went out to the Points of Light Conference, the volunteering conference in Utah. She spoke the first day and I spoke the second day. She asked for a briefing on Freedom Corps very early, and I briefed her on that. Then with her chief of staff, Anita McBride, and her whole team. We started to work very closely because the First Lady was intensely interested in these issues. She becomes very active and has a lot of her own initiatives out of the East Wing that are nicely connected to the Freedom Corps effort out of the West Wing.

Riley: You mentioned in the book that there were conversations with Clay Johnson as you were getting underway.

Bridgeland: Yes. You asked if we did anything more heavy-handed.

Riley: Yes.

Bridgeland: A lot of people thought the President asking the American people to serve for two years over the course of their lives was—

Riley: Too much.

Bridgeland: "What? We're having the President ask Americans to give—" this sacrifice. Then Clay wanted to know how we were going to measure that. He had been chief of staff, head of Presidential Personnel, a very practical guy. I said, "We're going to measure it in a number of ways. Americans are going to respond in millions of ways. One way is if they serve in the Peace

Corps, that's two years. Serve in AmeriCorps you can serve back-to-back terms, but that's at least a year. We'll probably create some kind of Presidential recognition—" I didn't know what it would be at the time, but Presidential recognition that would say you serve—You could get the two-year Call to Service Award, so even the volunteer who is not going through the federally supported program could get some kind of recognition.

I said, "By the nature of this, Clay, it is a very individual and personal decision where to spend your time and how to serve." The research shows that the leading reason for people serving is that someone has asked them to serve. I said, "We don't have data that shows us that Presidential enlistment matters." Sadly, even though Kennedy did exactly the right thing and had the most powerful call to serve in this two-word inversion, "Ask not…." But Putnam wrote a book called *Bowling Alone* that shows that was the zenith, that was the height of the American renaissance coming out of the greatest generation. Then, as Bob says, "The country completely blew it." After Kennedy issues that call to service, all of the indicators of our civic health from volunteering to voting to community projects to social trust and institutional trust, all precipitously decline for the next 30 to 40 years, even though growing up in the '60s I and others felt the spirit of public service, like government service was a noble thing.

One of the things we probably missed an opportunity to do, but then the Congress would have been negative on it I think, a lot of the Republicans in particular, was to talk about how going into government service was a noble calling. We were talking about Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Citizen Corps, all the volunteering, weaving the traditions of Reagan and Clinton, Kennedy and Bush 41, Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt together. But there is this group called the Partnership for Public Service—I would later serve on the board—that came in and said, "What about government? Can you do the call to government service?"

Eventually, I think in the second term, he says something about it. The other thing that is powerful, Freedom Corps became the vehicle through which Bush 41 and Clinton organized their tsunami efforts. More than a billion dollars was raised from the private sector. You turn on the TV and President Clinton, that finger, the way. "And I want you all to join the USA Freedom Corps." There he is reaching into Bush as we reached into AmeriCorps and Clinton and Kennedy and Peace Corps. It had such a unifying—Anytime senior staff in the White House wanted to do something that was very unifying, they turned to Freedom Corps. There were a number of occasions like that where senior staff said, "How can we bring the tsunami relief together?" It was Freedom Corps.

Now the disappointment was in the second term when the war became hot. The war is going on and becomes divisive. I see that everything is going to be turning to foreign policy and domestic priorities are going to be tough to move. I serve for four years. I made the decision to move on. There were a couple more events on Freedom Corps, and I encouraged this event at the end of 2008 that was on the White House South Lawn. It brings the whole field together and celebrates what was done and issues the call to the next stage. But it lost oxygen, everything did, Freedom Corps, Faith-Based, domestic initiatives. You touched on it earlier, Chuck, in your comment about things becoming partisan over time, and then the war. There are circumstances that intervene.

Walcott: Not unlike what happened in the '60s.

Bridgeland: Same thing, right. I had dinner with Joe Califano the other night and he said, "Nobody remembers Johnson for anything but Vietnam." I said, "Joe, it's not true. Civil rights, Head Start, Job Corps, VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America]. You did so much." But to this day we still have these little periods of anxiety. Did you do enough? Operations TIPS, the local TIPS shut down the snipers from Washington who were terrifying our communities. My own daughter growing up in this environment of "Is everything terrorism and violence and innocent people being killed?"

The TIPS system shuts it down. It locates these two individuals, the trucking route. That's exactly what we were trying to do at the federal level, just spawn TIPS systems all across the country. Because the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] and Dick Armey and others opposed it, that didn't move forward. That was an example of something that failed. AmeriCorps was rocky. There was an overenrollment of 20,000. There wasn't a system put in place under the Clinton administration that actually tracked the stipends with the amount of funding in the Trust for Education awards. All of a sudden I'm about to deliver a speech to the Points of Lights Conference, and Rosie Mauk, who is running AmeriCorps, says, "Bridge, I hate to tell you this, but we just enrolled 20,000 people in AmeriCorps and just discovered, because there is no accountability in the system, that there is not sufficient funding in the trust to pay the education awards."

"Now, ladies and gentleman, John Bridgeland is going to speak" and half of me has lost all blood in my body and the other half is supposed to be articulate. It was a moment. Then for the next month we learned that under the Anti-Deficiency Act and working with OMB, you have to set aside all the funding immediately, through the Education Trust, the minute somebody is enrolled. So you have a class of 20,000 that is enrolled, and all the funding for the awards that won't get paid out for a year or more has to be available now. That is very inflexible, very hard to address. Eventually it got fixed and through a lot of hard work—

Riley: You said you spent years on this.

Bridgeland: That's what it felt like. In different periods 70 percent of my time is just focused on fixing this. Then of course from it we were doing the heavy lift to increase AmeriCorps by 50 percent, which we did, but it required me being a gadfly every day, every week. The First Lady using her capital and calling members of Congress to say, "This is a top priority, we have to get it done." We made it happen.

I also learned that our Freedom Corps initiative was in the top five. I was in Andy Card's office. What are the top five priorities for the President? You'd be seeing things like emergency assistance, national security, these *big* things related to homeland security. Then there was Freedom Corps. But I learned that if I didn't have access to the President and I wasn't on that priority list, we wouldn't have gotten those things done at all. It was an enormous lift. I think the Obama administration, even though the Serve America Act, the field and vision we all worked on and Kennedy and Hatch worked on together, envisions a quantum leap in national community service, it has just grown infinitesimally and that is the challenge.

Walcott: Is there any role for the Vice President in all this?

Bridgeland: Good question. Yes, Lynne Cheney loves American history. So we collaborate. I brief her. She gives a speech at Princeton [University] I think it was. I talked to her about the Battle of Princeton and how [George] Washington lost battle after battle, then at Trenton and sort of reemerges and had a little Newburgh, New York, moment. The things he said, "When we became the soldier we did not lay aside the citizen." He had a lot of interesting things to say about citizen service.

She speaks at our American History Civics and Service Initiative and has this idea to connect an understanding of American history with genealogy, family history, which is really interesting. Now we're working with Ancestry.com on something like that. That is kind of interesting. The Vice President himself was not involved.

Walcott: But was not opposed.

Bridgeland: Not to my knowledge. I don't think he is interested in the service and faith-based.

Bragaw: You described the loss of altitude, the oxygen going away from these programs during the second term.

Bridgeland: Yes.

Bragaw: To what degree do you think Katrina becomes a pivotal moment for that?

Bridgeland: It does. Clearly the wars. All the national focus, all the energy in Congress, the domestic agenda is difficult, not just difficult but it is not the focus. There is national security and homeland security. Then Katrina comes and really knocks things off their feet.

Riley: You're gone by them.

Bridgeland: I'm gone by then, but the infrastructure we put in place here, when government is failing—like a day after Katrina hits, Mike Brown, who is the Director of FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] calls me on my cell phone. Mike and I worked together with Joe Allbaugh in the Citizen Corps. Mike was a great advocate for Citizen Corps and helped build that with Tom Ridge and Joe Allbaugh and others. He says, "Bridge, there has been this event. Imagine instead of Ground Zero, New York City, the entire state of New York is a disaster area and we can't function."

I said to him, "Literally you can't communicate? You can't set up—Why don't you bring the military in right away? Get them to do the airlifting and the stuff in the areas that have been hit, and then set up your FEMA site in an area where you can function outside the zone." We had some little conversations about it. Eventually they did something like that, but it was a slow response and people were suffering. But the infrastructure we created at Freedom Corps, Medical Reserve Corps, the Citizen Corps Councils, they were lifelines to thousands of people. That was encouraging.

Cokie Roberts called me because she is from New Orleans, and Walter Isaacson, who became part of this effort, had worked as a reporter in New Orleans. Cokie said, Day One, "Where's the Citizen Corps?" I said, "You're darn right." I called FEMA and said, "Where's the Citizen

Corps?" Sure enough, less directed by FEMA and more from the efforts that we organized at the local communities themselves, which was the way we wanted it to work, I was able to call Cokie back and say, "Let me give you an example." They were featured on ABC [American Broadcasting Company], the Person of the Week. "Here is one positive thing that is happening out of all the horror." It was encouraging that that piece of it was working.

Riley: Who takes over your portfolio, or does anybody take over your portfolio?

Bridgeland: They were talking to some really significant people to take over Freedom Corps.

Riley: I'm actually going back before then. Who takes over your portfolio in the Domestic Policy Office?

Bridgeland: Jay Lefkowitz, who had been counsel at OMB, intensely bright. His litigation practice was to take on the cases that nobody else thought there was any hope for. He would create gold out of dust sometimes. He is such a bright, capable person. We had a lot of collaboration on a lot of fronts. Jay managed that portfolio very well.

Then he leaves and Margaret becomes Secretary of Education. Claude Allen was brought in for a period of time and then Karl Zinsmeister. That was the flow.

Riley: I'm assuming you're wholly immersed in what you're doing now in your new portfolio rather than having anything broader to do with domestic policy.

Bridgeland: Right.

Riley: Were there missed opportunities? Was there momentum on certain things that you thought might have been carried through in the domestic policy—?

Bridgeland: In the second term?

Riley: Even in the first term, after you leave the position? I guess you're only there for about a year.

Bridgeland: For domestic policy?

Riley: Yes.

Bridgeland: Yes, but after 9/11, starting January 2002 we have divided the portfolio, which is another organizational issue.

Riley: More than just the division between you and Margaret.

Bridgeland: Yes. I had a lot of the compassion issues.

Riley: So you held on to that.

Bridgeland: Yes, I had that. I was building Freedom Corps, running the Faith-Based Office, and then also on issues related to the aftermath, the next generation of welfare reform and drug

abuse. Still there were lots of issues we worked on. In terms of missed opportunities, future efforts give you context. Like the Obama administration's Faith-Based Initiative is more of a rhetorical—They reach out, they're involving faith-based leaders in sort of education, but there has never been a State of the Union commitment. There has never been, to my knowledge, a line in the President's budget that would advance the Faith-Based Initiative.

Just for context, when I was there, in every single State of the Union and then the President's budgets there were multiple domestic priorities including, "We're going to get 100,000 mentors for children and prisoners through this Faith-Based Initiative." We put funding against it, and it was a commitment that was eventually met. The same thing with Freedom Corps. We put real money, real investment. It was State of the Union, President's budget. Some things got a lot of visibility, others didn't. Some things went really well, others didn't.

When I left, part of me was exhilarated by what we created and the hope and promise of it, and part of me was concerned that with the shift away from domestic policy it might not get the continuing attention it deserved.

Riley: Sure.

Bridgeland: Service and faith-based and the compassionate agenda generally—As I look back, I'm really pleased at a lot of the executive action that was taken, a lot of the time and energy we put into the Congress in terms of the investments that were committed and made, but also disappointed that—Did we permanently change the culture in the country? No. Can any federal initiative do that? Probably not. Did it become everything I wanted it to become? No. That's why when I started Civic Enterprises part of the mission was, because I knew within government, which is bureaucratic and difficult, I actually could create platforms on the outside that would push these things forward.

Just to tell the completion of the story, we convened the field left, right, and center—from Harris Wofford and the Kennedy administration through Gregg Petersmeyer in Bush 41 to the Clinton team—all together and said, "What's a quantum leap in national community service and international service?" And we envisioned it together across all these administrations. Then we met with Senator Hatch and Senator Kennedy, who had been incredibly kind and supportive of me, as was Sargent Shriver, and they said, "We'll do it on a bipartisan basis."

We worked with their staff. They take this plan, they put it in the Serve America Act. It passes with 79 votes. I'm driving through the countryside of Kentucky to a dropout summit. My cell phone rings. I didn't recognize the number; I wasn't going to answer it. I pick it up and I say hello sort of tentatively, thinking, *Oh, my. Now I'm going to be in an hour conversation with somebody I didn't necessarily*—"Bridge? It's Ted Kennedy."

I said, "Senator, how are you?" He had left the Hill because he was so ill. He said, "Remember when my brother talked about passing the torch?" I said, "Yes, Senator, I was very young but I came to know it."

And he said, "We really blowtorched this thing, didn't we?" He lets out this booming laugh. I thought, *Oh, my God, here is this man, he is so ill he is no longer in the Senate*, I think he was in Florida. *He is taking the time to call me, a lousy Republican, around this sense of completion*.

The other thing I learned, I read a book written by a guy who had pancreatic cancer. He said, "They put hardship in your way to figure out which walls you'll continue to climb and test your mettle."

I learned that when you're in government, don't *stop* when you leave. In some senses you can help fulfill the promise more effectively on the outside. Through this effort we got the quantum leap in national and community service. The civic health, the volunteering stuff—authorized. Volunteers for Prosperity, which the President created by Executive order—authorized. The ramp-up of AmeriCorps—authorized. References to Citizen Corps—authorized. Connecting national service to the dropout crisis to the public land crisis—authorized.

The architecture of what we built at Freedom Corps, we had created and it was in executive action, but the danger of that is that the subsequent administration will ignore it. One thing the Obama administration has ignored, and I keep pressing them on, is there is this policy council that gives you huge ability—Jonathan Greenblatt, for example—to have access to the President and to coordinate across the Cabinet on national and community service and you should use it. Both offices continued, the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation, it was renamed. Then the White House Office for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The architecture continues and the work continues. That was something I learned.

The other thing we were able to do is go to the Department of Education and press this dropout issue and get a common calculation of graduation rates. Then we got the Secretary and the department more engaged on the dropout crisis, which has borne a lot of fruit. Some of the domestic policy initiatives have continued strongly with more support from a bipartisan field on the outside and people like Colin and Alma Powell, who are making the dropout issue their number one issue.

Walcott: That raises a question because increasingly the Republican Party has become more committed to shrinking government. It looked as though, at least in the primary season, anything like these programs would be anathema to the base of the party and therefore to the candidates.

Bridgeland: Right.

Walcott: Do you think that is a real phenomenon, that there is a danger that if in fact the Republicans got back in they wouldn't be very interested?

Bridgeland: I'll take a contrarian view, which is that if in fact it is our moment of truth as the [Alan] Simpson-[Erskine] Bowles Commission says it is and we have to do it all, cut federal spending, reform the tax code, address the entitlement crisis, you could make a strong argument that citizen- and community-based strength and work on public issues is preeminent now because the federal role can't be pervasive and fully funded at every turn. I like this Race to the Top program and the sense that we're going to funnel limited government resources into innovative areas that are research-based, evaluated, or proven effective. Foster the spirit of Race to the Top. We'll give you a limited amount of money and then everybody—because they want to compete for the funds—is going to do the reforms, it's a great model. I think Reagan recognized it in calling volunteer service this "deep and mighty river flowing through the history of the country" and created this office of private sector initiative.

I think you see increasingly more public-private partnerships, and increasingly there will have to be reliance on the private and nonprofit sectors, which also have the strength of being able to experiment and innovate. It's not always with taxpayer dollars subject to Congressional hearings, so they have more flexibility to innovate. I talk to people like Rob Portman and others about it. They say, "Yes, that has to be the next wave."

Simply talking about, "Oh, we're expanding AmeriCorps," no, that's dead. But if we talk about unleashing citizen- and community-based institutions to solve our toughest public problems, that will continue to be important.

Perry: I want to drill down on the President's placing faith-based initiatives in the top five of his priorities as you mentioned. Did the President ever speak to you about his personal faith? Did you see manifestations of that? We know how important it is and was to him and how he felt it saved him, there was a personal salvation element involving his—?

Bridgeland: Clearly on that list of five I was talking about when it was the Freedom Corps at that time but which captured the Faith-Based Initiative. The Freedom Corps was the broader umbrella. That was "touching every willing heart," as he said. Any American who wanted to serve regardless of faith, regardless of background, but within it lots of Americans were serving through faith-based or driven by faith to serve.

Yes, he would talk about his faith and how it changed his own life and had seen a lot of programs like Prison Fellowship. The tricky part is that the faith component often affects the transformation. The addict becomes clean through the Bible or the Torah or the five principles of the Muslim faith, one of which is charity. There is the transformation. That is something government can't fund. Government can fund the social service delivery. That creates an interesting question, doesn't it? In a lot of these programs, what probably is effecting the change is the faith component. One of the purposes of the Compassion Capital Fund was to increase the capacity of organizations to reach more individuals in a way that funded the social service delivery but then left the other activities that are not funded by the federal government to work their will without completely "de-faithing" the organization.

The President really understood these issues and believed in them and had a strong understanding of the power of faith to transform lives. I think that was in part the genesis of why he wanted a Faith-Based Initiative. But it also sets up this inherent tension because there are clear lines the government cannot cross. He never asked us to cross them, but there was this interesting dimension.

Riley: You're still in the White House the entire time? You're in the same office?

Bridgeland: I'm in the Oval Office and I brief the President on Freedom Corps, and his question is, "Who is going to run the stuff?" Whenever you mentioned a program he said, "Who is running that?" "Well, Tommy Thompson is very much in charge, but he has designated this person to do Compassion Capital Fund," whatever it is. He said, "Bridge, I want you to run it." Josh was like, "Wait a minute."

Riley: "He already has a job."

Bridgeland: Talked to Josh and Andy. The deal was I would keep my West Wing office and I would also be at Jackson Place because that's where the Council of Environmental Quality, the Faith-Based Initiative, all the White House czars or offices were.

Perry: You said, "the deal." Did you ask to maintain your office there or did they offer that as part of the deal?

Bridgeland: It was mutual between Josh and me because it would reflect my continuing role. I'm on Air Force One with Andy Card and he says, "Bridge"—I don't mean to sound self-aggrandizing—He said, "Clearly you have been the policy MVP [most valuable player] in the White House. You will continue to do amazing things. But I have been thinking about it, and I think it is important for you to be with your team." I had felt that too. I said, "I want to be with my team." He said, "You're going to be an Assistant to the President so *you* can request policy time. *You* will be in senior staff meetings, *you* can eat in whatever dining room you want, *you* can use the Ward Room, you have every access to the President in the West Wing consistent with all the rules we've talked about. But you should be with your team." So I ended up working out of Jackson Place, but I was in senior staff every morning.

Riley: OK.

Bridgeland: But I gave up my West Wing office.

Riley: About what time does this take place?

Bridgeland: January 2002.

Riley: That early.

Bridgeland: I had been in some senior staff meetings the first year, but Margaret was in a lot—

Riley: That's an interesting situation.

Bridgeland: All of a sudden I'm at every senior staff meeting. Every one of them, but with additional responsibilities and then a part of the domestic policy agenda. Does that clarify?

Riley: It's very important.

Bridgeland: Part of this was, I think, outgrowth of the campaign and my capacities that they, if anything they were very gracious in carving out good room for me. I was the first person to be elevated to Assistant to the President. I remember Karl saying, "This is long overdue."

Riley: But that's an important predicate for what I'm about to ask you, which is to give us your commentary about the extent to which the foreign policy, the wars are crowding out White House attention and more specifically Presidential attention to the domestic agenda during the balance of your time with the President.

Bridgeland: It's late in 2003 when I start to see just the practical—I'll ask for time and I'll get it but not as quickly as I was getting it. Or we'll propose an event and we'll get it but in three

months, not a week. Things like that. Nothing malicious, nothing negative about the agenda, more just the national security team is in there, the homeland security team is in there. Priorities, by their nature, have shifted some.

Riley: You're seeing at your meetings those national security things are not on the agenda?

Bridgeland: In the senior staff meetings of course it is discussed, all the issues are. But when I'm requesting time or the flow of submitting memos, going through the senior staff process it is within my portfolio. We continue to work with Steve Hadley and Condi Rice on issues, like even the Peace Corps there was overlap. They were interested. We were going into predominantly Muslim countries and East Timor, the first newly independent country in the 21st century. There were things like that that they needed to be aware of. They had national security people and State Department people working in individual countries.

Riley: Then let me with those two predicates, one, where you are, and two, what was going on in the administration, ask you a final global question about your own assessment of the President's legacy on domestic policy, your sense about what went well, what didn't go well. What those of us on the outside really ought to be paying attention to.

Bridgeland: When I think of the President's legacy I think of somebody who led and shaped an appropriate role for government, limited but active. And as you mentioned, Chuck, there is a lot of flow in the other direction. Just move government aside, cut all this spending. The Tea Party movement reflects some of this. The President was extremely active and progressive on a lot of issues, particularly as they related to individual citizens, the needy, and the poor. Extraordinary things done in education, in the service area—almost unprecedented in some ways. In the faith-based effort—And interestingly, I think you could make an argument that the President was not only an agenda setter but through executive action did an extraordinary amount. The legislative process had its peaks and valleys.

You could also make a strong argument that he was the conservation President. He designates the largest area in the Pacific Ocean, puts it under protection, generates worldwide news. In talking to Sylvia Earle, the great oceanographer, it was a big moment historically. He makes the largest investments in growth in the national parks budget and creates a centennial initiative and challenge. Not only is the national government supporting national parks, but the private sector comes on board.

So the conservation field, which I know for Republicans can be fits and starts or even be something they don't get a lot of credit for. If you look objectively at conservation, at the education, service, faith-based, conservation components and then some underlying components around Americans with Disabilities. They went to the Supreme Court a number of times to enforce the ADA. We followed the *Olmstead* Supreme Court decision, implemented that, connected more Americans through assistive technologies to workforce and community-based settings so they're not in institutions or settings where they can't thrive. These are 54 million Americans with disabilities.

There are lots of things a little bit under the radar that related to the compassion agenda: Safe and Stable Families, adoption, and foster care that I think are really important to lots of people. I

think his greatest legacy, for which he is sometimes remembered and sometimes strangely not, is the bold effort on HIV/AIDS and malaria. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States was created to combat malaria in the south. Now it has been eliminated, this fully preventable and treatable disease. We spent $30 million a year before Bush. Now it is $1.2 billion over five years with these plans in Africa and 250,000 lives have been saved in HIV/AIDS. Mark Dybul could tell you; you should talk to Mark about the HIV/AIDS initiative. Mark Dybul and Tony Fauci and Gary Edson.

The legacy in the foreign aid, international arena on these diseases is remarkable. We did a White House summit on malaria.

Riley: It has Matt Damon wanting to kiss him on the mouth, did you read this?

Bridgeland: That's not part of the legacy.

Riley: You didn't see this in the paper the last week, I take it.

Bridgeland: Around these issues?

Riley: About this issue. He said he would kiss President Bush on the mouth if he saw him.

Walcott: That's scary.

Bridgeland: That is a little scary. It will be interesting to see how history treats it, but I think in a lot of areas including domestic policy there are some strong rays of hope. I went down to Presidents Park in Williamsburg, Virginia. They have all the statues of the Presidents and then they had the legacies. They had, first thing, "Creation of the Office of Faith-Based Initiative." They thought that act alone was so historically significant because there is this long-standing tension between religion and government.

The second was, I think they talked about the 9/11 attacks. The third, creation of the USA Freedom Corps enlisting millions of Americans after 9/11 in a culture of service. I go back and see Bush 41, Points of Light. I see Clinton, AmeriCorps. I see Kennedy, Peace Corps. I see Roosevelt, Civilian Conservation Corps. Then the fourth was No Child Left Behind, the education initiative. They had two wars with Afghanistan and Iraq, the tax cuts and reform. They went through the legacies. It was interesting to see what the early reading—this is the National Council on Scholars. You probably know these groups. It is interesting to see what history has teed up.

This was early but then PEPFAR [President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief] and the President's malaria initiative and that whole sweep of issues was outlined.

Riley: From your perspective, knowing him as well as you do, were there specific areas where he left frustrated that he hadn't been able to make more progress?

Bridgeland: I think he wishes we could have done more in all these areas. But he is not a looker backer. He might say it that way. He is not so much concerned about the legacy. He is more concerned about, "What are we doing?" So when he sees the Serve America Act and the

quantum leap and this, the book he has seen, he'd say, "Great," because we're continuing to move.

Working with his daughter, Barbara Bush, on the Global Health Corps and then there is all this advancement on the malaria issue with Ray Chambers and Malaria No More and our groups, he's like, "Great, you're advancing these causes." You should ask others, but I don't hear him talking about the past, which I think is probably healthy.

Riley: The work continues, right? He is very active with the foundation and the institute.

Bridgeland: The work continues. He has been very active on HIV/AIDS, malaria. He has done these summits on the follow-up campaign around cancer.

Perry: And veterans. This week he talked about wanting to continue—

Bridgeland: He has done a number of events with veterans and in the institute and the foundation, building out all that.

Perry: Have we talked about your actual leaving in terms of why you did and your thoughts?

Bridgeland: My thought was, one, I felt like we had put in place all the architecture on this Freedom Corps initiative, the creative process was done. The AmeriCorps commitment was met, Peace Corps wasn't doubled, but we had pumped in a lot of new money and grown it to the highest levels in 37 years, and Sarge Shriver was thrilled. Even though he said, "Why aren't we at 100,000?" I said, "I don't know, we've never been." The highest was 15,000 in 1966, and then it just declines from there even though the country wants more of it.

I see all these things are in place and working well, that combined with I don't see much oxygen left in the domestic policy agenda. I'm the kind of person who wants to do things and I don't want to just—plus the election is coming. That whole sweep, which is like another campaign, and I've already been through one of those with a recount. People always talk about their family, but my kids had grown up for four years literally in formative moments when they didn't see their dad a lot. That was a big factor. I really wanted to continue the work, and I thought I could do it more effectively on the outside.

I wrote this very nice letter that I think is in the book, a very warm letter to the President. I let Andy and everybody know that I was going to leave in 2004. There was a nice back-and-forth whether I should do that. A nice sendoff at the senior staff and then I got a beautiful personal note from the President, and then they put out a really nice statement. The other thing is, you look around at senior staff, even from the beginning and you realize public service is also a risky business. A lot of people don't go out well. Or worse, in some cases their careers are destroyed. You keep your head down, you do the right thing, you work hard, and hopefully it goes OK, but it is not a certain enterprise.

Riley: We have a more encompassing definition of public service here, which is to history and you've helped us in that enterprise. You've been a good sport not just to spend the last two days with us but to commit to let us tap you again at some point and get you and John together on a session about faith-based.

Bridgeland: Faith-based is interesting, it's really rich.

Riley: We'll find a convenient point to do that. If we need to come to Washington to see you.

Bridgeland: We can come down; John was excited to come down here.

Riley: We'd love to have you, it's easier for us obviously. Thank you so much.

Bridgeland: Thank you so much, it has been a pleasure.

Riley: We appreciate it very much; it has been illuminating. We appreciate your candor and your taking the time. Some of this I'm sure is not pleasant to revisit.

Bridgeland: I'm grateful for the process, glad you're doing this. It's educational.

Riley: It's not just educational, it's an awful lot of fun.

Bridgeland: It is fun.

Riley: We do this kind of work because we're interested in it to begin with, so when they're going well as this one has, there is no place in the world you'd rather be than sitting here listening, a front-row seat to history. Thanks for helping out.