WILLIAM J. CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW 1 WITH ANDREW FRIENDLY

May 6, 2005
Washington, D.C.

Participants
Russell Riley, chair
James Pfiffner

Also Present
Kelly Crawford Friendly

WILLIAM J. CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW 1 WITH ANDREW FRIENDLY

May 6, 2005

Russell Riley: This is the Andrew Friendly interview as a part of the Clinton Presidential History Project. Thank you for joining us. I know you've had a tough time getting here.

Andrew Friendly: It's my pleasure. I'm sorry that geographically it's challenging to make it work, but I'm glad to be here.

Riley: We're delighted to have you and we're going to make you work hard today in response to the trip. I believe this is the first time we've done a father-son combination oral history, because your dad—

Friendly: I'm pretty sure my father did do one. I guess I should back up and give you a full picture of my family and how I got involved in politics in the first place. I'm a fourth-generation Washingtonian, born in D.C. I come from a family of journalists. Even though I was born here, until I was about seven I lived overseas most of the time.

My father was a reporter for the *New York Times,* then *Newsweek.* We lived in Rome and Belgrade and Moscow and then came back in the fall of '76. I guess my first taste of politics was January 20, 1977. My uncle, Nick Friendly, my father's youngest brother, was an advance man for President [Jimmy] Carter's campaign, and at some level was put in charge of the inaugural parade. One of the last floats in President Carter's inaugural parade was a hay wagon filled with family members. He had the prerogative of being an organizer of the parade, so for whatever reason, we Washingtonians dressed up to look like farmers and rode in the back. I'll never forget my brother and me sitting in that wagon, freezing. We passed the reviewing stand waving, convinced that President Carter was waving directly at us.

Riley: If it was a farm wagon he probably was.

Friendly: I'm sure he was. These Washingtonian farmers.

Riley: Home folks.

Friendly: But let me give a little bit of background, then I'll tell more about myself. My grandfather, Alfred Friendly Sr., was a newspaper person, originally from Utah, Jewish. The original family name is Rosenbaum. When he went off to Amherst College in the '20s, it was pretty tough to be a Jew and to be published. I'm probably screwing up the whole family story, but his father died and he and his older brother took their mother's maiden name, which was Friendly. Also, I don't know if he stopped practicing. I don't know how observant he was, but his religion generally faded to the background.

He and a man who unfortunately just died a couple of weeks ago, Chal [Charles] Roberts, were best of friends. They traveled around the country for a year, writing the great story about traveling around the country, came back and started becoming newspapermen, both at the *Washington Post.* Then after the war, my grandfather went to work for Averell Harriman as part of the Marshall Plan in Paris, taking my father and the whole family, which is fascinatingly full circle, because in Governor Harriman's later years, my mother went to work as his assistant when he was in his mid-80s and 90s. We became very close, my brother and I and my parents, to the Governor and Mrs. [Averell] Harriman, so it was a bit of a full circle.

So my parents lived overseas. My grandfather continued being a reporter and was very close to the Graham family, to Phil [Graham] and Katherine [Graham], and he became managing editor of the *Washington Post.* My father followed him into journalism, as did one of my uncles. There's a nepotism rule at the *Washington Post*—my father couldn't work for the *Post*. He worked originally for *Newsweek,* which is a *Post* magazine. Then we went overseas. He went overseas before marrying my mother, with the *New York Times* in Indonesia and Nigeria and then Rome. We came back for a little bit. He worked on the Hill for Senator [Edmund] Muskie and then we went back overseas with *Newsweek* to Moscow for two years.

So my first real recollections, first memories, were Moscow. I was six and seven years old, I guess. We lived in a foreigner's compound. It was definitely the bad old days, where we were followed everywhere we went. Our apartment was bugged. My father was a bit of a troublemaker in that he was quite close to a lot of the "Refuseniks" and the dissidents and people like [Andrei] Sakharov and [Natan] Sharansky, and ended up smuggling things in and out of the country, manuscripts and medicines and causing trouble.

Riley: Did you know this at the time, or have you learned this since?

Friendly: I knew a little bit at the time because I remember being pulled over a couple of times and being harassed. You remember those magic pads where you would write on a piece of plastic and pull it up and things would disappear? Etch-a-Sketch as well. We had both of those in the apartment so that when my parents wanted to say things without having the bugs pick them up, without the KGB [Komitet Gosudarstvennoĭ Bezopasnosti] hearing, they'd write that out on the Etch-a-Sketch or Magic Pad.

My father caught our maid, who was Russian, twice calling from the apartment to the KGB telling who was in the apartment. It was just staggering.

Riley: That's got to be pretty intimidating for a seven year old.

Friendly: I knew these people were troublemakers. I remember going to a fair on the outskirts of Moscow and having the police break it up. The police pulled us over on the side of the road just to intimidate or harass us when we would go out to the country on weekends. But still, I'm six and seven years old. I didn't really understand the full scope of it.

My first political recollection, I remember this vividly. I guess it was early summer of '76. There was a copy of *Newsweek* magazine lying in the apartment and I remember asking my father—I guess there was a cover picture of Carter—who this was and my father explained it was about the elections and who he was for. He said he was for Governor Carter, and I guess that was my

first political awareness in any sense. I remember coming back and seeing pictures since then of lots of tee shirts, "The Grin Will Win," big pictures of President Carter's teeth and bumper stickers and things like that.

As I mentioned, my Uncle Nick was an advance man for the Carter campaign in '76. So I owe much of getting into politics, and certainly doing advance work, to Nick. He did that for Carter, then he also did it for Senator [Edward] Kennedy's campaign in '80, for [Walter] Mondale's campaign in '84. He was one of the scheduling desks. So I came back to D.C. I went to the little public school around the corner from my house, John Eaton, and then went in fourth grade to St. Alban's, the cathedral school, all the way through twelfth grade at St. Alban's, which is also where my dad and uncles and cousins had gone.

I guess you get introduced to politics there as well because so many classmates were Senators' sons or Congressmen's sons, a former Governor's son. But politics has always been dinner table conversation. The way people would talk about Little League or sports at home, inevitably it was about politics at our house. I grew up in Cleveland Park, right next to the National Cathedral. Our neighbors were politicians. A gentleman named Tim Wirth, who was a Congressman from Colorado, then became a Senator, became one of my parents' closest friends and has a daughter exactly my age who lived two doors away.

Then there are also journalists. Being exposed to people—family friends who are on the television or in the newspapers—I guess it was a part of growing up in D.C. It's not that unusual for Washington. But it gave me an awareness of what was going on that was much greater than that of other people around the country at a comparable age.

When we came back in '76, my dad left journalism. He worked on the Hill for a while. Then I think it was in '78 or '79 he went to work on the NSC [National Security Council] staff at the White House and was [Zbigniew] Brzezinski's press person, the NSC press spokesperson. I'm not sure exactly what his role entailed. I remember very clearly my brother and me taking a bus on a Saturday morning to go down and visit him and have lunch at the White House mess. There were huge protests in front of the White House. I remember people chanting, "Hell no, we won't go, we won't fight for Texaco." It was clearly something to do with the Middle East, sending American troops to protect oil interests in the Middle East, or at least that was the opinion. That was wild.

It was incredibly imposing at 8 or 9 years old to go down and go through the White House gates and have lunch with our father at the White House mess. As we were walking down the halls, President Carter came the other way and my father introduced us. That memory, obviously, rang incredibly true. Then the dark days set in.

One of the next great memories was on inauguration day, January 20, 1981. We drove out to Andrews Air Force Base to say goodbye to President Carter as he got on the plane to fly back to Georgia. I had taken a girlfriend of mine at the time. I was I guess 11 years old. We were listening to President [Ronald] Reagan's speech on the radio, and my brother in the back of the car said something like, "I wish President Reagan were dead." My mother looked at him and this girl who was with us said, "Don't wish he was dead—just wish he was in a nursing home."

[*laughter*] It kind of sunk in—here we are at 10 and 11 years old talking about politics. It seems incredibly odd that we had that kind of interest, but it was neat.

The majesty of going to that farewell ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base and the 21-gun salute, the military bands, incredibly positive memories of seeing that and then seeing the President get on Air Force One.

So in 1984, Mondale ran for President. He lived right around the corner from our house and was sort of a family friend, so by default he was the candidate—I guess he was really the only Democratic front-runner. My Uncle Nick went to work for his campaign early on doing scheduling and advance. I volunteered in the campaign headquarters at the beginning of the summer, which was right down Wisconsin Avenue. I'd bike down and answer telephones, I'd make copies, run errands, do all kinds of silly things, anything that was asked.

The day Mondale picked [Geraldine] Ferraro to be his running mate, my uncle asked if I would go out and make a tee shirt that said, "A woman's place is in the White House." So the next day on the front page of the newspapers was Geraldine Ferraro holding up on the Capitol steps this tee shirt and I thought, *Hey, that's pretty cool. Here's a little tee shirt that I made up the street in this little shop and there it is on the front page of the newspapers.* I guess it was an early taste of stage managing and creating—media manipulation, in a sense.

Then I went off to the convention in San Francisco. My uncle was out there. I flew out by myself and stayed at the Hastings Law School dorms and was a volunteer on the floor of the convention in Moscone Center in San Francisco. Fifteen years old and I thought this was the greatest thing, being on the floor, running around with signs, passing out things. My Uncle Nick got a baseball cap that when you pull a string down underneath your chin, two hands on the top clap. He put me in that baseball cap on the floor in front of a bank of four network TV cameras and then he and his friends stood right behind me. So during Mondale's speech, there I was, square in the middle of the TV cameras, and of course every network picked me up, standing there, pulling this silly string, clapping my hands.

I never found a copy of that tape, but I'm sure somewhere in the archives of all these news agencies I could find a copy of a 15-year-old me looking stupid.

Riley: You don't have them in your files—do you keep those video tapes in your collection for teaching purposes?

James Pfiffner: I don't have that one.

Friendly: That was the convention at which [Mario] Cuomo gave his incredibly memorable, passionate speech, and then Jesse Jackson also was rising and giving incredibly passionate speeches. It was fantastically exciting to be part of the convention and staying out until four o'clock in the morning, going to parties and meeting Robin Williams, doing things that no other 15-year-old should be doing. But it was fantastic and being part of history, at least as I saw it at the time.

I went back to high school, graduated from St. Albans, and then I went off to Middlebury College in Vermont. In the summertime I was a page on Capitol Hill. My father became, over the

years, a freelance editor and speechwriter, ghostwriter for books and articles and things like that, many of them for political folks. One project was for Congressman [Richard] Gephardt. I think the question was asked, "What is your rate?" "Make my son a page for the summer."

By no account should Washingtonian children be pages. A page position is for some type of payment or pay back to a constituent's child, but I was very fortunate to be a page on the Hill for one summer. As a page you spend your life walking the halls, delivering mail, running errands and messages. I did that for a couple of weeks and then was very fortunate to be chosen to be a cloakroom page on the Democratic side. There were half a dozen of us, I guess, assigned to the cloakroom, where we were actually in the midst of it all and didn't have to run around the halls but were actually sitting on the floor of the House and exposed to all kinds of behavior.

I'll never forget Congressman [Daniel] Rostenkowski—Chairman Rostenkowski—huge figure, booming voice, crude, walking into the cloakroom and bullying members. Also bullying us young staff, the pages, around. The intimidation of that was quite remarkable. But it was also fascinating to watch from afar the wheeling and dealing that happened in the cloakroom and the arm twisting—another taste of politics and the majesty of government.

I remember Prime Minister [Indira] Gandhi gave a speech to the joint session. It's pretty remarkable to be on the floor for a joint session. Little did I know that ten years later I'd be back on the floor for a joint session under very different circumstances. But watching that is a remarkable event.

I went off to college in Vermont at Middlebury, became a political science major as well as a Spanish major, and took a number of other things, but I had a great interest in American politics. After my freshman year, I convinced the school to let me take a semester off in the fall of 1988, and I went to do advance work for Governor [Michael] Dukakis's campaign. My Uncle Nick introduced me to people who were working on the Dukakis campaign. The ineptness of Democratic campaigns in general and the Dukakis campaign specifically—you had people all over the country coming out of the woodwork to volunteer their time and their services.

Dukakis went on hiatus for almost four weeks of August, when he came out of the convention in Atlanta with an 18-point lead and blew it quickly, every one, a classic history. I went down to Atlanta the beginning of July of that summer to help on the convention preparations, and my job was actually to be the body person for Olympia Dukakis, the Governor's movie star cousin. She had just won the Oscar for best actress for *Moonstruck*. This was my first role as a body person. She was obviously doing everything she could to try to get her cousin elected.

She was an interesting character and was the first person I'd ever met who was macrobiotic, which is a type of vegetarianism taken to the extreme. You have "happy" foods and "sad" foods and you have to eat them in conjunction—classic Hollywood peculiarities. Trying to find a macrobiotic restaurant or cook in Atlanta in 1988 was a challenge. [*laughter*] Finally the hotel—

Riley: I'm from the South, and we think just about all food is happy down there.

Friendly: I didn't know you could have sad foods or angry foods. My first taste at being a body person was an enlightening experience, an absolutely exhausting experience. She had probably one of the more hectic schedules.

She was actually a delegate to the convention from New Jersey, her home state, but she was also very much the celebrity of the campaign. We did shows every morning, and then she would go to delegate meetings and sit on the floor. She'd do all kinds of interviews. It was a non-stop, incredibly exciting, fun experience. Then Dukakis sat in Massachusetts for the month of August. I sat on Cape Cod for the month of August, and then went back out in the beginning of September to do advance work full-time.

The first time I remember seeing Bill Clinton was the famous convention speech in Atlanta in 1988 when he was the keynote speaker and wouldn't shut up. I remember sitting on the floor with Olympia Dukakis and the famous line when Clinton said, "and finally," or "Let me wrap up" and the crowd started erupting in cheers. This guy who had been touted as the savior of the Democratic Party—it certainly didn't seem that way at the time.

Riley: Olympia have any choice words?

Friendly: I don't remember her saying anything specific other than rolling her eyes and everyone looking at their watches, it being a very noticeable speech in its length and the fact that it was going way over—I remember the red light on the podium coming on and the TelePrompTer and everything telling him, "Shut up, you've gone over." I'd find out this was absolutely normal for the man.

Riley: Did you ever talk with President Clinton about that speech?

Friendly: I don't remember talking about that speech with him. When I started doing advance work in the fall, I was the most junior advance person traveling, 18 years old. I was doing motorcade advance—the grunt work.

Riley: This was in '88?

Friendly: In '88. There's a hierarchy of advance—the oldest and most experienced will do the lead advance for the Presidential candidate. The more junior you get, the more junior the assignments. Sometimes you get assigned to the Vice Presidential. For the debates, I was assigned to be an advance person for the surrogates, for the people, the politicians, Governors, Senators who would come and spin the press after the debates.

My first interaction with Governor Clinton was at those debates, the first one in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. We had a bus; a charter plane had flown them down from Washington. He had come from Little Rock. I believe Bruce Lindsey was with him. I don't remember for sure. I don't remember there being a trooper with him because I was the driver. All the other surrogates had left. I was tasked to stick with them and drive them to the hotel.

He went on and on and on. All the reporters left the room. He went out to a phone booth in the hall and started phone banking with the Arkansas press. I remember very clearly sitting in the hallway, waiting and waiting while Bill Clinton kept talking. That was my first experience. I reminded him later on, but he never really laughed about his tendency to be verbose. It was more of a smirk of, "Oh yeah, okay." So I kept doing advance work and working on the Dukakis – [Lloyd] Bentsen campaign and spent election night in '88 with Bentsen in Austin, Texas, which was actually the only happy party that night, because he had been reelected to the Senate.

Then I went back to college and knew that I wanted to get involved in the next campaign. Because I had taken a semester off to work on the Dukakis campaign, my timing was such that I would finish and get my degree January of '92, right as New Hampshire was heating up.

I rushed to finish my thesis and sent off letters. I was writing a thesis on what I thought the effect of NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] was going to be on Mexican politics. This was obviously pre-NAFTA. I think Clinton was the only Democratic candidate at the time who was actually pro NAFTA. Senator [Thomas] Harkin and Gephardt and the others were definitely playing the union hand—much more protectionist, not for free trade.

I'd like to say it was just the issue, but it wasn't. It was also connections. I knew people who were working on Clinton's campaign. He was also a southerner and had raised more money than the other candidates. So I thought he had as good a chance as any to get the nomination. I'm still thinking, like any other Democratic candidate, *He'll get the nomination and we'll go through the fall, then come November I'll go off and find a real job.*

So I wrote what is now an infamous letter to Bev Lindsey, Bruce Lindsey's wife, who was running the scheduling and advance operation in Little Rock—all of two people at the time.

Riley: You know this because you consulted with somebody, or—

Friendly: My uncle I think mentioned that Bev was the person. My uncle had known Bev from previous Mondale campaigns and such.

Riley: Was your uncle at that point—

Friendly: He was sitting on the sidelines. He really wasn't involved in this campaign, primarily because the headquarters were in Little Rock and I think most of the perpetual campaign establishment in Washington didn't want to move to Little Rock, which is in part why you had George [Stephanopoulos] and Dee Dee [Myers] and young people who were willing to move to Little Rock and join that campaign until the momentum started. Then the professionals came in. But I think if you look back on the history of the early people in the campaign, it was the non-professionals, the outsiders, who joined on. More of the insiders were working with the Harkin campaign, which is based here, and Gephardt here, and the other campaigns that were local.

Riley: But your uncle hadn't cast his lot with any of those local—

Friendly: He had not. I don't know if he just hadn't gotten his act together to figure out what he was going to do or what he wanted to do. I think he had other work.

Riley: I got you off track. You wrote a letter—.

Friendly: I wrote this letter that said, "I'm very interested in doing advance work. I've done it before. I'd love to do the New Hampshire primaries, and then do some of the states out west because I'd like to match up with skiing. So if I could work in Colorado and perhaps Utah and Wyoming—" all of course target states, terribly important. My knowledge of the electoral map and the primary schedule didn't quite mesh with—this letter got sent to Mitchell Schwartz and Wendy Smith, a romantically involved couple who were running the New Hampshire campaign.

Mitchell posted it up on the wall. This is classic—the guts of this guy to say he wants to go work advance, then he wants to go off and ski, but he'll be available when the ski season is over.

I drove myself, the day after pseudo-graduating from Middlebury, finishing my course work, across the border to New Hampshire and showed up in Manchester. My reputation preceded me. As soon as I walked in and introduced myself to Mitchell, he said, "Oh, you wrote the letter." But my timing was impeccable.

Riley: Had you heard anything from Arkansas at this point?

Friendly: Actually I had. I'd gone to Little Rock for an advance school. They flew me down and put me up. It was maybe a 50-person training seminar saying, "This is how our campaign is going to be structured. Here's how we're going to do advance events, and here are the people. A little bit of a school, a little bit of an evaluation process of who do we actually want to use.

Riley: This was the end of the summer?

Friendly: Mid-January '92. The New Hampshire primary is well underway.

Riley: Start us at that point. Jim, do you have any questions about the school? I'm fascinated.

Friendly: I was furiously trying to finish this thesis on NAFTA and Mexican politics and it was definitely to the side as I was trying to line up a spot on the campaign. I ended up doing just one full draft. I had issues with my thesis advisor and lack of direction, etc. I actually had a fascinating discussion with one of my professors who I was quite close to, a man named Ron Liebowitz, who about six months ago became the President of Middlebury—a fantastic thing for Middlebury and I think for me, but for Middlebury more importantly. He's a wonderful man.

I remember talking to Ron, saying I could spend another month finishing the thesis, making it good, but I've got this great opportunity. Let me go work on this campaign. You know what? I really don't care what I get on this thesis grade. In the end I got honors and it was all fine. I think probably because the school recognized my thesis by this professor who was not terribly effective or efficient. She didn't last at Middlebury.

I was working to get a position on the campaign. I went to this advance school in Little Rock, my first exposure to Little Rock and to the Excelsior Hotel, which is a hotel I would come to know unfortunately too well, and getting to know the people on the campaign. I kept lobbying, phone calling, and saying, "Okay, I'm going to go to New Hampshire," and go to New Hampshire. Where do I go? Who do I talk to? If you could get someone on the phone, it was always, "Just go and ask for Mitchell or Wendy." So I just got in the car and drove.

My story was not as good as the one of Stephen Goodin, who I hope you'll talk to as well. He's one of my closest friends and replaced me as Clinton's aide. He's a kid from Texas— fantastic story—grew up in a trailer park in Texas and worked for [Jonas] Martin Frost. He was determined to work for Bill Clinton and called and found out who was running the campaign, packed his car, quit his job at Chili's, drove to New Hampshire, showed up and said, "Here I am." He started working on the campaign and worked all the way through with me. I showed up and joined the campaign four or five days after the Gennifer Flowers story broke.

I get to New Hampshire, to Manchester, and a day or two later the draft letter breaks. I'm thinking to myself, *Classic. A brilliant choice. I have joined a Democratic campaign that will last all of another two weeks.*

Riley: You get to goof off quickly.

Friendly: I'll be going off to ski pretty soon. Or that letter I've had for the Harkin campaign or the Gephardt campaign, I guess I better pull that out of my computer. I really thought this was the endgame. Those were incredible days. They've been well documented, the "Comeback Kid," the *60 Minutes* story. I remember sitting in New Hampshire in some hotel bar watching the *60 Minutes* piece and then scrambling all over the state doing these events with sometimes hours of notice and sometimes a couple of days. There was a small band of us. I had a car from college and we would drive all around New Hampshire with a sound crew in tow that would have the staging and the lights and we would put up these events at college campuses and diners and in hotel ballrooms.

You're running on sheer adrenalin and it's just exhausting. I guess it was ten days, almost two weeks of doing that in New Hampshire. As you all know, the New Hampshire primary process is absurd as a determining factor of who is our nominee, and it is as exciting as real street-level politics as you can get. Shaking every hand in New Hampshire—New Hampshirites are so jaded that they will not vote for a person unless they've actually had a chance to shake hands.

I should back up. Middlebury has a January term, where you take one class for the month. I took a class on the New Hampshire primaries and spent January of '88 working on Paul Simon's campaign. Senator Simon from Illinois was a family friend, a wonderful man, very articulate. Ill-suited to be President probably, from the telegenic side—the bow tie, big glasses, big ears, so esoteric and erudite in some ways, even though he's from rural Illinois. I spent three weeks or so working in a field office in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, organizing little precincts, finding precinct captains, doing phone banks, getting a real sense of what field operations are about, and doing small events around the state when Simon was traveling in New Hampshire. We spent the last week of the class following the candidates around.

This was after Gary Hart had dropped out and then got back into the race. The class had 15 of us or so. We opened the newspaper that morning to find out where all the candidates were going to be that day and followed them around to see what retail politics was like for that week.

One of the saddest parts was going to some café in Concord I think it was, with Gary Hart. No one was in the café. He had no apparatus, no campaign. This is the guy who was the frontrunner, who was going to be the candidate, and there we are, a class of 15 Middlebury students, having lunch with Gary Hart in this café because no one else was in there, and pathetic because he stayed for an hour and a half. None of us were voters. Clearly it was a great example of a campaign going nowhere, and to see how quickly somebody could fall.

So here's this candidate brought down because of an affair. Fast forward four years ahead and I had just joined Bill Clinton's campaign that was being brought down by a similar affair. This is pathetic timing, I thought, and choices that I had made to join his campaign—

Pfiffner: Who taught that course?

Friendly: He wasn't a full professor at the time, a young guy named Ted Reuter or something. He has a number of books he's put out I found just recently on the Internet. He was a professor at George Mason for a while and then in Iowa, I think.

Riley: Went to California?

Friendly: He did go to California as well.

Riley: He wrote a nice review of my books—It's Reuter. I don't know where he is; he was at UCLA [University of California/Los Angeles].

Friendly: He has a political website, which I found. I should send him an e-mail. I lost track of him. He only taught at Middlebury for a year or a year and a half. My favorite professor—I'm not sure if you know—Eric Davis—a professor of political science at Middlebury. A diminutive man, we called him, "the penguin." He's a New Yorker with a heavy New York accent; he has been in Middlebury for probably 25 years and is a spectacular student and professor of American politics. He really got me energized and excited about American politics. He didn't lead that class, but I took a number of other American politics classes with him. Fast forwarding, one of the great joys of actually being at the White House was inviting him and the president at the time to come and visit the White House and say, "Here I am, your student two years out. Come and have lunch with me at the White House mess."

Pfiffner: Davis does good scholarship.

Riley: So we had you in New Hampshire—

Friendly: In New Hampshire, Bill Clinton comes back from the dead.

Riley: How close are you to Clinton at this point? Are you spending a lot of time—?

Friendly: I'm not. At this time I'm one of the advance cogs. I was not a lead advance person; I was what is called a "site advance person." I was a "make it happen" person. Running around the state I met Clinton and Hillary [Rodham Clinton] a number of times, but it was chaos.

Riley: But what you were doing was creating the campaign infrastructure that you saw Gary Hart didn't have.

Friendly: Exactly.

Riley: Organizationally speaking—

Friendly: As chaotic as New Hampshire and the campaign was, we were a pretty well-oiled machine, relatively speaking. We had a team of advance people, we had money to spend, and we put on good events. We were putting an enormous amount of effort and resources into saving the campaign in New Hampshire, and obviously it paid off. We had a fair number of people running around making Presidential-looking events, getting good crowds, creating good events. Clinton saved the campaign.

Riley: Let me ask you one question about this and then I'll come right back to you, Jim. You were there when the firestorms were breaking. My assumption is because you were very low to the ground that you were engaging with a lot of voters. Was this resonating with them? Were they turned off by it?

Friendly: New Hampshire voters are always, by their nature, jaded. But there was definitely an enthusiasm and an energy that Clinton created in New Hampshire and that was clear. If you look at any of the other candidates, they didn't have the type of turnout and enthusiasm and energy at rallies and at events that Bill Clinton had.

I'm not sure if it was the pack mentality like the journalists watching a train wreck happening, because there was this absurd—I mean, you've seen all the wonderful pictures and news footage of the press swarming Clinton, but there's a magnetism about him and it's well documented. That did definitely rub off. You could see it in the energy of these events and these crowds and the amount of energy he was putting in and clearly how much he cared about winning and how committed he was to this. We'd do events at two o'clock in the morning and there would still be hundreds and hundreds of people in the event. In that sense, we were running so quickly from event to event that you'd get lost in the minutia of doing the event. You don't have as much interaction with voters. I guess I didn't until Election Day, when we were leafleting in polling places.

But the people at the events by their nature are the ones who are excited. They've usually made their decision. They're not coming most of the time undecided just to hear. In New Hampshire that's a little bit of the case, but it was a remarkably energetic and enthusiastic crowd.

Pfiffner: How do you gin up a crowd, aside from the dynamism of the candidate? What do you do?

Friendly: The mechanics of the crowd—I was reading through in the briefing book. I can't remember if I talked with this guy, Brad Patterson. I think I may have. This is a great synopsis both of how our immediate office of the President and how advance operations work. He didn't go into great detail about crowd building, but crowd building, I tell people, is a science and an art. It's one of the hardest jobs in advance and it's everything from organizing volunteers to phone banking, to paid media—meaning ads in newspapers and on radio, rarely TV—to leafleting, putting flyers on car windshields in parking lots before you get kicked off the property, passing them out on sidewalks, doing visibility events, standing on corners at rush hour announcing the event.

Often the most effective is the free media for big events later in the campaign. Usually you'd stage events at the site where the rally is going to be. There's a process of announcing the trip. You get the local politicians involved to actually be at the site and announce the trip. That's the first hit that generates the first news stories.

Then you do sign painting parties at the site. There's going to be a big rally. You invite hundreds of volunteers down and they paint signs at the rally site. That generates another news story. The day before, you do a story about setting up for the event and you have them building the stages and getting the bands and everything ready. Then you have them do a story about the marching

band that's been invited to play for the candidate or for the President. All of this is to generate buzz and interest and get that, "Rally at noon in Central Park, tomorrow. Rally at noon at Central Park tomorrow." All of these generate enough interest that the events could happen. Most importantly though, you want to guarantee that the people in front between the press and the stage are your supporters. That's a science, targeting your known supporters, your most effective volunteers, your most committed people and giving them special tickets, VVIP [Very Very Important Person] tickets. Really it's just a penned in area, but right there at the front of the stage.

VIP tickets are way back, then supporter tickets are one step behind that. So you're packing that whole front area with the people you know are friendlies.

Pfiffner: As a professional, what's your take on President [George W.] Bush's very careful screening of crowds not during the campaign, even after he is President?

Friendly: It's remarkable that they've gotten away with it. There's a woman I've talked to who's a Ph.D. student at the University of Kentucky who's doing a study on advance and how advance people create events and deal with protesters. I spoke with her about this and then e-mailed her some stories from the paper about the events in Colorado that generate news, how they kicked out people because they saw them drive up in a car that had a "No blood for oil" bumper sticker. It's truly remarkable.

You stage manage every event. You try and pack the crowd, but at the same time these events are supposed to be open to the public. The President is supposed to be accessible to the general public. They've taken it to such an extreme. As I understand it, they've forced people to sign oaths of allegiance to the party and to the candidate. It boggles the mind that they're that particular.

One of Bill Clinton's incredible skills was dealing with protesters and hecklers. You look through countless events, where especially in the '92 campaign we were dogged by "Act Up" protesters, the gay activists. Everywhere we went, the "Act Up" protesters would be. We got to know them. I knew the guys by name because they would show up at all of our events. We had a kind of friendly camaraderie. In reality they shouldn't be protesting us; they should have been protesting President [George H. W.] Bush at the time. Bill Clinton was gay-friendly. But they were there to reinforce the message and make sure that Bill Clinton didn't ignore that message. Sometimes they got out of hand, sometimes they were fine.

But the way the current Bush administration handles these crowds and screens them to me is just undemocratic. You should allow people to dissent. If they're disruptive at an event, fine. You can escort them out. But to ask somebody to sign a pledge to come see their President speak, it's astonishing.

So there are the formulas of building a crowd, designing a site to ensure that your friendlies are as close to the candidate as possible, and then having ways of dealing with protesters. The fascinating thing—this happened when we were in office—advance people wear radios with the squiggly earpiece and have buttons, a Secret Service pin or some sort of pin that allows them access. They're immediately assumed to be Secret Service agents, which in one sense gives you

a sense of authority that you don't really have—obviously, it's illegal to pretend you're a federal agent. But the crowd automatically assumes that you're a Secret Service agent.

Even though I'm sure there were volunteer staffers who have been escorting these people out, it gives the Secret Service a terrible reputation that they are somehow stifling dissent. The fact that local police are involved in escorting these people out is shocking to me, because if these people are not security threats, there should be no reason to escort anybody out. If it's a private, invitation-only event, the organizers can ask somebody to leave. If they don't leave, if they put up a fight, perhaps they can ask the police to help them.

We were exceptionally careful not to break the law and not to break the rules about how you deal with dissenters. For those reasons you can, at private, ticketed events closed to the public, ask people to leave. If it's a public event, there are other ways to drown out the hecklers. Clinton was spectacular in dealing with hecklers. I remember him saying, "We've heard you, now listen to me." He had a skillful way of responding and stifling hecklers.

Riley: Let's get you back on the timeline. You were in New Hampshire, then you continued to do advance work.

Friendly: New Hampshire finished and I drove back to Washington. I left my car at my parents' house and hit the road full time. I started doing advance work, doing primaries all over the country for the campaign.

Riley: No ski destinations?

Friendly: No ski destinations. Much to my chagrin, I never made it skiing that winter at all. I guess I slowly worked my way up from just regular site advance to lead advance. I primarily was doing trips for Governor Clinton, but occasionally I did a couple of trips just for Mrs. Clinton. On her trips it would just be me. I would be THE advance person, so I got to know her a little bit during that time. That was my first introduction.

The Governor picked up Secret Service agents right after the New Hampshire primary, and that changes the dynamic, starts ratcheting it up.

Pfiffner: He came in second to [Paul] Tsongas, right?

Friendly: He came in second.

Pfiffner: By three or four points?

Friendly: I think all of the candidates after New Hampshire picked up protection.

Pfiffner: I just want to get at the reaction of the campaign and advance people—

Friendly: Euphoric.

Pfiffner: Because he did better than expected?

Friendly: It's an expectation game. Clinton, and more important, I guess [Paul] Begala and George and James Carville, you set the expectation so low that just by coming in second, it's a huge win. The Comeback Kid. So the news stories were all about Bill Clinton. Even though Tsongas was a local boy.

Riley: And everybody thought Clinton was toast.

Friendly: Was dead.

Pfiffner: Very seldom in the past have losers in New Hampshire gone out and taken it.

Friendly: Right. Because from New Hampshire we went straight to the South. I can't remember the exact sequence, but I remember he went straight to Georgia, to Atlanta, the next morning, after New Hampshire. Then he started his home territory. The feeling always was that if Clinton could play well enough in the North—he's a southern boy—he could do well.

So the dynamics changed a little bit in picking up Secret Service. You have to be slightly more organized. Bill Clinton started to become the candidate to watch. Obviously, Tsongas kept giving a run, as did the others. I don't know that it was Clinton's to lose by any stretch, but certainly he was viewed as a frontrunner at that time, which was a remarkable turnaround from ten days prior, when I thought the campaign would be over. There were still definitely all kinds of uncertainties, from money, not getting paid for months at a time, which is standard, par for the course in a campaign. But there were other stories. I'll never forget in New York I ended up spending almost two weeks in Manhattan doing advance for the New York primary relatively late in the game, but we were still contesting. The New York primary was pretty important because we had just lost Connecticut.

Jerry Brown won Connecticut—maybe my timeline is screwed up, but I believe Clinton essentially locked up the nomination in March on St. Patrick's Day in Illinois and Michigan, having won the Michigan and Illinois primaries. It was almost mathematically impossible for him not to get the nomination. But Brown kept up the campaigning. We went from there to Connecticut and lost to Brown in Connecticut. That was a pretty low point.

After having been essentially assured—even though Connecticut was a neighbor of Massachusetts—it was a question of could the southern boy play in the Northeast. We put a lot of energy into New York. It's a whole different ball game running for office in Manhattan because it's like no other press in the world. Maybe the Japanese press are similar, but the swarm mentality and the "gotcha" and the pulling out things. This is when the first Whitewater story broke.

I can't remember the reporter now, but the first *New York Times* story about the Whitewater land deal came out. That was one of the first big bumps or hiccups after the Gennifer Flowers and the draft story. This was also when he said that he didn't inhale—he said he didn't inhale in New Hampshire, I guess. But it was constantly self-inflicted wounds, not wounds that other candidates were inflicting on us. It was always something we were doing to ourselves. It was stories that were coming out about things that happened in the past, stupid missteps we made, it was getting into altercations, it was Hillary making that baking cookies comment in Illinois.

So there was always this roller coaster. That roller coaster theme, as has been well documented, carried all the way through the years in the White House. In fact, I think it was [John] Podesta who sent staffers little Lucite paperweights that said, "I survived the Clinton administration" with a picture of a roller coaster. For my six years with Bill Clinton, it was a constant roller coaster—very high highs, and very low lows.

I kept doing lead advances, meaning I got to know Clinton a little bit, but more importantly I got to know Bruce Lindsey better and George and Dee Dee, James—the staff around him. There's a comfort level when you see familiar faces. I also got to know the people back in Little Rock better, just by being out on every trip. I kept going all the way through the primaries until it was pretty clear that Clinton had it locked up.

We hit the cap of how much he could spend in early June. At the end of May I was sent to Little Rock to do advance in Little Rock, meaning he had to go back to be Governor. He also had to conserve money. I think for almost three weeks I was parked at the Excelsior Hotel as the one advance person in Little Rock. I don't think it was a decision made with any great foresight, but it was fortunate from my point of view in that I spent a lot of time with the campaign headquarters staff, a fair amount of time with Governor Clinton, and more importantly got to know Nancy Hernreich, who was managing the Governor's office. The Governor spent a lot of time working out of the Governor's mansion, and Nancy was the gatekeeper in managing that process.

In the basement of the Governor's mansion in Little Rock, there was a small office. They lived upstairs, but my interaction was with Nancy in that basement. I got to know her and Governor Clinton and Mrs. Clinton during those three weeks of down time or recouping time before the convention.

Riley: Did you find anything in Little Rock that surprised you?

Friendly: A couple of things. Little Rock is a very small town. Everybody knows everybody. It's a lot more relaxed. Things became a lot more relaxed in June. The nomination was ours. It was focusing on finding a Vice President nominee, it was gearing up for the general, it was doing some policy work, and it was replenishing coffers, raising money for the DNC [Democratic National Committee]. So Clinton would go off and do day trips here and there. I think I did some trips, but it was mostly managing him, doing events in Little Rock.

I'll never forget doing Memorial Day. He would lay a wreath every year he was Governor. So it was back to when he was being Governor, but with a different face. In Little Rock everyone knew him as Governor Clinton. He'd go into coffee shops, and he knew people. These people knew him in a very different way, and it's not nearly as exciting to them to see Clinton. I would just come from New York or other places where you couldn't go anywhere without being mobbed, back to Little Rock, where "Ho-hum, hey, Governor, how are you?" It's a very interesting dichotomy.

I spent some time in Hope, in Hot Springs, in Bentonville, in Fayetteville, and places in Arkansas. I got to know Arkansas much better than I ever thought I would.

Riley: You did that on your own, or you—

Friendly: No, those trips were for going off to do events, planning—Clinton would go off and do maybe an event a day or a couple every other day so he stayed in the news cycle. He wasn't totally off it, but he would do essentially free events.

Riley: So when you were doing advance from Little Rock, were you actually traveling with him?

Friendly: Yes, traveling to the spot ahead of time, but I would be the one staff person on the ground there with some local volunteers to walk him through, to shepherd him. So I got to know a little bit about his quirks, his interests, what he cares about. I certainly started to know about the infamous "Clinton time," running late for everything. I got a good taste of that.

Riley: What is it that you're discovering about this human being that you're investing—?

Friendly: Some of the things: He's a sponge. He absorbs everything. An advance person's job is to make sure there are no surprises, to do the briefing. Here I am, this northerner kid coming to do advance work in Arkansas. I don't speak funny, I'm definitely an outsider.

Riley: You don't speak normal. [*laughter*]

Friendly: I don't speak normal. I speak funny. Bill Clinton knows these people inside and out. He knows the state better than any person, and he's been to every potluck supper and coon supper and turkey drop and every affair and event. He's been to the wedding parties for all these people. Here I am trying to tell him who's going to be at these events and who he's supposed to acknowledge. He'd look at me like, "Boy, do you not know that this is my state? I know everything here."

So there's a little bit of feeling like a fish out of water, but also a realization that this guy is a superb politician and a superb intellect, because he would ignore the briefings that I would give him, understandably. He'd never stick to a prepared text; rarely was there a prepared text. Yet he would speak as eloquently about topics as I've ever seen people speak. That magnetism, even from people who had known him for a dozen or more years in Arkansas, still rubbed off. You'd see the excitement from people in Arkansas seeing Bill Clinton and that energy, even when he was an hour or two or three late. They were accustomed to that in Arkansas. They knew Clinton time was something different from what you and I think of as being on schedule.

It would drive me nuts. I very much want to be punctual and stick to a schedule and be much more organized. Not only did I think it was incredibly rude to keep people waiting for so long, I thought it was bad politics to keep people for so long, because you piss them off. Whether it's the police who are on overtime, or the crowds sitting out in the sweltering sun for extra hours, I still think it's incredibly poor form.

Riley: Surely he heard this argument from people. What was his reaction?

Friendly: He'd been hearing it for 15 years. It was nothing new. He'd get mad when he'd show up and he'd see the crowd and people had been sweltering and people passing out and ambulances there taking people off for heat exhaustion and the crowd was dropping. He'd say, "How could you let me go so long? How can you over-schedule me?" That was more what it was. This was a theme that carried on for years. It was always how could *you* have scheduled it

so poorly; how could *you* have let it go on so long? How could *you* have had this crowd here for so long in advance? How could *you* have tied up these streets for so long? It was never, "I spoke too long. I shook hands for too long."

Riley: You're supposed to know as an advance person that he's going to do that.

Friendly: And we learned and started making the adjustments. But no matter how much you'd adjust and how much padding you'd put in the schedule, he knew that it didn't take 25 minutes to go from Little Rock airport to the capital. "That's not going to take 25 minutes. I can do that in five. I've driven that route a thousand times. You're padding the schedule."

So your best efforts to leave buffers and things to take into account his tardiness would backfire because then he would know that he actually didn't have to be there by that time. But it was also one of his greatest skills, connecting with people and focusing on somebody, working a rope line and taking that extra time, listening to their story, holding their hand, looking them in the face. Seeing that in the spring of 1992—I'd never seen anybody like that, connecting with a crowd. I'm understating the obvious here. This is so well documented.

Riley: It doesn't matter how well documented it is. We're here to get your account of this. You'll have first-hand experiences with what we may think we know, and we don't always—

Friendly: So when Clinton would walk into a room or a crowd or onto a stage, there's an electricity and magnetism that immediately came about, and it was incredibly exciting to be around it. He was Elvis [Presley]. The joke, a nickname overplayed, but he was a rock star. I think I can carry it through today. He's one of those types of people that has this magnetism and this energy and this draw that really makes people weak in the knees and scream with excitement to meet him. Then there are other people who spit and yell and can't stand him.

Riley: That's an interesting point that actually leads me to a question I was going to ask you about your experiences in Little Rock. One of the great mysteries for those of us who are on the outside is trying to get a full understanding of the phenomenon of the Clinton haters, which starts in Arkansas. Did you—

Friendly: We got a little bit of that sense. It wasn't nearly as organized as later on, but there were always protesters on the outskirts of events, "Hey, draft dodger," "Hey, womanizer," "How many babies did you kill today?" Anti-abortion stuff, "Slick Willy." You'd see that epitaph everywhere. People would yell things out as Clinton would walk down the street. I guess it's par for the course in any campaign, especially for any Democrat. You know there will be anti-abortion protesters wherever you go; that's a given. The Slick Willy and the draft dodger stuff obviously was new, was not something I had been exposed to before, but it wasn't as frequent as it was later on in the campaign or certainly once he became President to ratchet it up to a different level.

Riley: Did you detect, when you were in Arkansas, any greater depth of this negative feeling?

Friendly: No. To the contrary, it was more of an excitement. Look at what our local boy has done. He's got all these people coming; the whole country is focusing on Little Rock. We've got the world's media coming into Little Rock. This is pretty exciting stuff. People are coming to

Hot Springs to talk to Mrs. [Virginia] Kelley, going to Hope. Who would ever have thought that French television and Japanese TV would be going to Hope, Arkansas? So it was much more of a novelty and an excitement about all this attention being paid to Little Rock.

Riley: You said that you were beginning to learn the quirks of the person.

Friendly: The other quirks of the person were certainly around the relationship between the President and Mrs. Clinton. She's obviously an exceptionally bright person, savvy, outgoing, a good politician, but she's not superhuman like Bill Clinton. She'd get tired, and like any human she'd get cranky. You knew when to give space and not to interrupt or press or prod much more easily than you would with Bill Clinton.

It was pretty rare to push Clinton over the line. He was always tired. He'd make himself tired because he wouldn't go to sleep. I started getting the sense of the Clinton clock, which was constantly set to Hawaii time, even when he was in D.C. It was really four or five hours different from what the rest of us were living. He'd be up until two o'clock in the morning when the rest of us would need to go to bed at ten or eleven, and he wouldn't want to get up and get going until eight. A jog was his way really of starting to wake up. He needed that time. If he could have waited until ten or eleven o'clock in the morning to start working, we probably would have been a lot better off all around, but then he'd want to go until ten o'clock at night.

Mrs. Clinton was much more like the rest of us, where you wake up at 6:30 or 7:00 and you need to take a break, you need some down time, you need to eat by yourself or quietly and you need to be left alone at times to recoup. I also got a sense of some of the tension and strain between the two of them. Being the only real staff person in Little Rock and advance person at the mansion, knowing when to come in was a very fine line to tread. There's a long circular driveway and sometimes I'd wait outside the gate in the car, sometimes I'd come in and sit in the car in the driveway, but it was always a fine line of when to come into the house.

I'd call Nancy or check with Nancy. "Is it appropriate for me to come in? Clinton's running 45 minutes late. Can you prod him along?" Sometimes she'd say, "You need to come in and try and see if you can get him going." I remember a couple of times walking into the kitchen. The Governor's mansion by no means is that fancy a place. A lot of work took place around the kitchen center island. Walking in, there is Governor Clinton, Mrs. Clinton, George, I think, and Begala and James having a very heated conversation around the center island. I had no idea what it was about. Clinton was 45 minutes late or something for whatever the event was. I went in the kitchen door, opened it up, and as I walked in, this look shooting daggers at me from Mrs. Clinton saying, "Andrew, wait outside."

I was learning to walk that fine line. I needed to play a role in trying to do my job as an advance person or to get him on schedule to get him to go do things, but I also knew, *Life is short here; let's not walk into this shooting gallery.*

Riley: Let's continue with this. I'm going to call a short break.

[BREAK]

Friendly: Getting back to the Clintons—tea, honey, and lemon reminds me about Clinton's voice and the constant battle of losing his voice. I remember in campaigns and certainly in the White House, having hot tea and lemon and honey in holding rooms because he was always going hoarse. He was always exhausted; he was never eating right. It turns out he was allergic to lots of different foods.

Riley: He didn't know that?

Friendly: He probably knew it, but he probably didn't care. How do you not know that you're allergic to some of these foods? Anyway, one thing that I know he knew he was allergic to is alcohol. I very rarely, if ever, saw him drink beer or any type of alcohol because it would make him all red. I'm sure, as documented in other places, alcohol is something he had a horrible history in his family with.

Eating crappy food at all times of the night and acid reflux. I guess at the time we didn't know what it was called, or only since Merck has been advertising it do we all know what acid reflux is.

Riley: But Pepcid is a great invention.

Friendly: It's a great invention, and I'm sure at some level—I wasn't traveling as his personal assistant during the campaign, there was actually a woman named Degee Wilhelm who was doing that role. Degee's married to David Wilhelm. David was the campaign manager. Degee is a wonderful woman, a slight curse of being an attractive blonde. It wasn't a terribly useful thing to have a young, attractive blonde being the personal assistant to the Governor, but she did it all the way through the campaign. Another attractive woman on the campaign was Wendy Smith, who was a very good friend. She was the field director in New Hampshire, then became the trip director and traveled with the Governor all the way through the election. She was the first trip director at the White House. I followed her in that role.

Getting back to some of the other things that started to strike me about Clinton, he had these strong-willed women around him. Mrs. Clinton, Nancy Hernreich, Betsey Wright, Susan Thomases, to whom I had a fair bit of exposure. I guess she was an official campaign employee. She's a New York attorney who had a very strong role in the first campaign, but then didn't really have a role, except as maybe an informal advisor to Mrs. Clinton. But she definitely had

Mrs. Clinton's ear and had a very strong impact on how the campaign was run, especially the advance and scheduling operation. She has a little bit of a dragon woman aspect to her.

Susan was a tough New York cookie, but in many regards campaigns need that. You need structure and discipline and organization, and people being held accountable. More often than not campaigns don't have that. Like any campaign, the Clinton campaign also didn't have that at times. You'd always wonder why someone was being rewarded with a plum assignment to do advance when they were totally incompetent and screwed up on three other trips. But Susan definitely brought some order.

The point of these strong-willed women—it was a theme that I certainly started to see. Having Wendy Smith and Degee and Dee Dee Myers as well, I started to see, in those respects, Clinton responding better or listening more closely to these women. Then you'd also see he clearly respected and responded well to George, Begala, James, and Bruce Lindsey.

Riley: Jim, do you have any follow ups in this area? I'm sure this is something we'll come back to.

Pfiffner: I'm just curious about Betsey Wright because she seemed to play such a central role in Arkansas and for one reason or another decided not to come to work—

Friendly: I don't know Betsey nearly as well because the role that she played in the campaign was essentially invisible to me. Not to overplay my role, because it really was a mechanic's role in the campaign. I was an implementer. I'd make things happen. I was not by any means a policy person, and that's true in the White House, too. Until the end, I was not involved in policy. I wasn't involved in setting agendas, except to the extent of an event agenda, setting what an event message should be. But still it was being dictated from above. So I don't know.

There's been a fair amount written about Betsey's role in helping to clean things up and straighten out things and being the go-to person for what happened in Arkansas. A similar role to what Bruce Lindsey played. I don't know why Betsey didn't come to D.C., but clearly she maintained a liaison role with Bruce and with the White House in trying to clear up the Whitewater stuff. She was a repository of knowledge.

Riley: Was she somebody you'd find at the Governor's mansion?

Friendly: Occasionally she'd be there, but in my experience, through the beginning time in June, it was the group selecting the Vice President. I guess Warren Christopher and Vernon Jordan led that search. I know Christopher was involved in transition. I think it may have been Vernon who was also doing the VP [Vice President] search, Nancy certainly.

Much of Clinton's work was being conducted out of the Governor's mansion in June, very much as in the transition. Almost everything was being done out of the Governor's mansion, as opposed to his office in the capital. But it was George and Begala and James, Dee Dee, Nancy, and Hillary. Those were the majority of the people I'd see, and Mickey Kantor and David Wilhelm to some level as well.

Riley: What were you finding out about Chelsea [Clinton] at this point?

Friendly: Very little, other than she seemed like an extremely intelligent young girl. She was really a child still and shielded from all the mayhem, effectively shielded from the silliness of campaigns. But I knew her very little.

Riley: So you were in Little Rock.

Friendly: I was in Little Rock in June.

Riley: The convention?

Friendly: I went up to New York at least a week before the convention to start helping with the advance to the extent that there was advance to be done. Harry Thomason is an interesting figure. I'm not sure you have him on your list—

Riley: He's on the bigger list.

Friendly: Harry obviously played an enormous role in helping to craft the Clinton image. As a Hollywood producer he had a keen sense of storytelling and production and made the movie, *The Man from Hope*. But he also took a role. I remember meeting him in New Hampshire and him on the outskirts, taking a role in helping, not directing, the advance people. I'm sure he was working with the scheduling people and with the image folks, the Begalas and George and James, because he was definitely around with us in New Hampshire and at other points during the primaries.

Then clearly took a role in *The Man from Hope,* in the presentation. In New York, the night that Clinton was nominated he made a surprise walk down Sixth Avenue from the basement of Macy's to the Garden.

Riley: Just for the record, you put air quotes around "surprise."

Friendly: Yes. It was not by any means a surprise. The day before, Harry pulled me and one other person aside and said, "Let's go look at the basement of Macy's because I think it would be great if Clinton walked into the convention and made a surprise visit to the hall the night he's nominated. So we concocted—in the basement of Macy's I think there's a bar or a restaurant—we put up lots of TVs with a group of his Arkansas friends, the "Arkansas travelers," which is another fascinating story about the goodwill, the energy, the excitement and the commitment of the people of Arkansas, these people who literally traveled from Arkansas to tell the truth, they say, about Bill Clinton in New Hampshire. It was a very powerful group of people, not so much in the numbers, but the fact that this group was able to generate as much press as they did, telling the real story about the real Bill Clinton.

Anyway, we watched that party and the nomination happen in the basement of Macy's. Clinton watched himself be nominated, and then we walked down the street with all the press in front of us filming him live. It was live in the convention hall, so everybody in the hall was seeing him walking down the street into Madison Square Garden. A nightmare for the police and Secret Service, but great dramatic effect.

Pfiffner: How did the Secret Service and you help draw a line between visibility and being very protective and obnoxious sometimes?

Friendly: It was a constant battle with the Secret Service between any campaign as someone said very well in this Bradley Patterson, the quote was, "If the Secret Service had their way, they would take the President or the candidate from the airplane, put him in a Sherman tank, drive him to a bank, put him in the vault, and lock him up for the night, and we'll have cleared out the streets within the three-mile radius of the motorcade." That's their job, understandably.

The President's job, or his desire, would be to walk the whole way with a crowd of 10,000 people following him, shaking hands as he goes. That would be our job too, with the press filming the whole thing. There's that constant struggle, and I can talk more about how we came to some agreements and how the Secret Service dramatically changed the way they did business and how we made some alterations as well in how you adjust to that bubble, those constraints. It was not always pretty, and not always fun, and many times it caused Clinton—I can go ahead and talk about it now—

Riley: Go ahead and proceed with it.

Friendly: It would anger Clinton to no end. During the campaign, it's a slow ratcheting up of protection. In the beginning in New Hampshire it was a small detail of maybe four or five agents, a little bit of police cooperation, but it's essentially done for show. I can't imagine there's much real protection that that small group of people can provide. But they could provide some protection against fanatics.

Again, it slowly ramps up to when he gets the nomination. It becomes a bigger deal and there's a more professional group of agents. Many of them are taken from the PPD, the Presidential Protective Division, which is the group that works, obviously, protecting the President. But they still mostly rely on field agents, who are cycling in and out. There's a core detail that travels full time, but you're relying mostly on the field agents to supplement that. It's not as professional a group as the PPD.

I'm jumping around here on the timelines, but the first time I really got scared with Clinton was on the first bus tour. We were in Ohio, I think in Cincinnati—

Riley: That's coming out of the convention?

Friendly: Out of the convention. The President was finishing, working a rope line in a park after giving a speech, and there was a guy in the rope line who looked a little off. You could tell. You know these people; he looks a little different. He had a tee shirt on. The Secret Service had picked this guy out. I was walking behind Clinton, I guess to collect things. I was an advance person on the bus tour, I wasn't his aide or anything, but I was playing that role, grabbing things that people had given him, autographs or what have you.

They get to this weird guy and he reaches to pull his shirt down to show the President whatever was written on it, an anti-abortion statement of some kind. He had a back brace on underneath, but you couldn't tell. The Secret Service thought he had explosives strapped to him. They had an agent standing behind him in the crowd and agents with Clinton, so as soon as he reached for his shirt to pull it down, they thought he was reaching to set off explosives. Two agents jumped him, covered him up, this guy in the crowd. The others whipped Clinton around and ran him up the hill, a split second, almost knocking me over. Clearly it scared the hell out of Clinton and me and

other people around, and this poor guy with a back brace on had just been sandwiched by two or three huge Secret Service agents.

But that gave you a new respect, a little bit of the sense of the fear of the risks involved for a candidate, a real respect for the job the Secret Service does, and the things that they watch out for. It also gives you a sense of mortality. Should I really be walking behind him as he does a rope line with these wackos, who, if there's someone who really wants to do something to him, the odds of them actually hitting Clinton are not as good as them hitting one of the people around him. Wouldn't it be safer if I walked a little bit to the side?

So you get a respect for the job that they do. It's an impossible job the Secret Service has, especially with somebody as energetic, outgoing, and unaccustomed to the constraints the Secret Service provides. Let me jump back into the timeline and talk about the convention again.

Riley: One of the things that I want to keep in mind here—did he chafe at the constraints?

Friendly: Yes. And his chafing at the constraints I can certainly talk about during the Presidency, not as much during the campaign. Let me expand on it and talk about it during the Presidency as well. During the campaign, the chafing was certainly about the constraints of how close he could get to crowds.

As is his nature, he would love to dive into a crowd. You've probably seen countless pictures of him extended in, over the rope line, touching people four or five deep in the crowd. He fed off of the energy of the crowd. He could have been exhausted and down and tired and upset, but as soon as he would walk into a room or a rally or an event, and the crowd would erupt, he would change. That sponge, not only absorbing the information, but absorbing the energy of a crowd, is remarkable. He'd turn into a different person. He'd get rejuvenated and reenergized by that crowd, and even more so, touching people, shaking hands, hearing stories, having that adoration. Again, the rock star feeling of having people fainting when they see him, screaming his name and cheering wildly. "I touched Clinton, I touched the President."

[redacted]

Riley: He's a physical guy?

Friendly: He's an extremely physical guy. His presence, being 6 foot 2, I think he was, and certainly at the beginning and during the campaign being quite heavy, up to I think 220 pounds or something. He's an imposing figure. He's got enormous hands, but he is very physical in that he will put his hands on your shoulder, he will hold onto your hands, sometimes longer than you may think comfortable. But he'll also look you straight in the eye and focus on you when talking. People said countless times that it could be a crowd of 10,000 people or a room full of thousands of people, and you would think you were the only person in the room because he would be so focused on you. You'd think he wasn't looking or paying attention to anybody and he could be scanning the whole crowd, shaking hands with other people, but you would be so in that trance or enthralled with him, he'd make you feel like it was just you in there.

Pfiffner: [John] Kennedy was like that too. What's fascinating though is that with his incredible sensitivity to other people and the way people react, he didn't pick it up or feel uncomfortable when everybody around him was feeling uncomfortable.

Friendly: There were times it would shock me because he would be incredibly generous with his time. He would listen to a person's story; he would shake their hands and really empathize with what they were saying. Then there were other times when he would just blow right by people. You'd make a real effort to introduce him to somebody—we would call it a "clutch." We'd set up a clutch to thank a super volunteer, to get a photo taken with a sick person, a March of Dimes person or something like that, and you would make a real effort, put him in the holding room, or in a hallway backstage, or you'd invite him in to get a photograph somewhere and make it something very special. It's special no matter what to meet the President, but you'd expect him to spend a little bit more time with that person, and sometimes he'd just blow through it.

You didn't know the rhyme or reason that sometimes he would stick and really connect with somebody and listen to that story and remember that story, and other times he would just pass through. Sometimes you felt uncomfortable that he would not linger long enough, that he wouldn't thank a superstar volunteer or sick child or somebody, he wouldn't spend enough time. The sick child is not necessarily the right example, because almost always he would spend inordinate amounts of time with a sick child or sick person.

Pfiffner: The difference was the ones you set up as opposed to the ones that he picked out. It was just sort of random.

Friendly: Yes, it was a little bit random, but the ones that we wouldn't have picked out, you could always know which ones he would stop and linger with on a rope line. [redacted]

[redacted]

Riley: Was this something that you picked up on when you were on the campaign trail, or did you pick up more of it when you were in the White House?

Friendly: I picked up more of it once we were in office, when I started spending more time with him. I guess I knew on the campaign trail not to put him in stupid positions. Don't put that kind of person anywhere to cloud something or to—why feed into the perception or the story? You shouldn't have to. But it was more when I was spending more time with him in the White House I guess.

Riley: So you were continuing to do advance work during the course of the general election.

Friendly: Yes, the convention in New York was memorable for me largely because it's also where I met my current wife. She came to start volunteering on the campaign at the convention, we met, and I ended up convincing her and convincing the campaign staff to put her out doing advance work. We ended up doing advance work together. Then she and I, with a couple of other friends, were asked to stay during the transition in Little Rock. She started working full time for Nancy Hernreich in the Governor's mansion and then became Nancy's assistant in the White House. We got married in '99.

The morning after the convention—it was over on Friday morning—I was supposed to go off and do a stop on the bus trip, to do advance in Paducah, Kentucky, or someplace like that, and instead the bus trip was, like traditional campaign chaos, organized, but not really organized. It was going to be a nightmare. I got thrown onto one of the press buses. It was a ten-bus or seven-bus motorcade, plus the Secret Service buses leaving Manhattan going to New Jersey and on to Pennsylvania and the like. That was our first sense of something important happening, or something different. It has been written about a number of times, the energy and excitement level generated from that first bus tour.

We knew that this was happening—the crowds were enormous, people were waiting in hotels in York, Pennsylvania, at one o'clock in the morning. We were three hours late and there were thousands of people waiting outside the hotel to see Clinton. We got a sense that something magical was happening, but weren't sure that that was translating to the press, who were exhausted, who didn't have hotel rooms, who couldn't get their bags. I remember two nights on that first bus trip sleeping on the floor in the hallway of a hotel for a couple of hours because we didn't have our shit together in getting enough hotel rooms or getting bags delivered to the press or people's rooms. We were three hours late and were scheduled to start at seven o'clock the next morning.

So I wasn't clear that the press were rested well enough to actually report the story that this was an impressive occurrence, that we were actually generating huge crowds and huge excitement. There were also funny little stories on that first bus trip—this is when you first started getting a sense of how incompetent we were at scheduling and how different Bill Clinton was at doing his own thing on campaigns.

First, a totally different story. A homeless woman got herself onto the first bus, not on the bus with the Clintons and Gores, but on one of the first staff buses. I remember the other staff walking on the bus. We stopped just after coming through the Lincoln Tunnel. The whole motorcade stopped without explaining why. Then I found out from Wendy Smith why they stopped. It turned out that they had to let this woman off because as they were going through on the bus tour, Wendy asked this woman, "Who are you?" As soon as Gore joined the campaign, there's an influx of Gore staff and it wasn't clear if she was a Gore staff person. She said, "I'm Patti Solis," a name that she had just heard. Patti was one of Hillary's staff people. Wendy said, "Nope, you're not Patti Solis." She called the Secret Service and said, "I think we should stop the motorcade and let this woman off."

Then you started getting the sense of Bill Clinton running the show and you started seeing a little bit of the chemistry between the Clintons and the Gores. That's when they started developing this rapport and this formula of introducing each other. Mrs. Gore would go first and introduce Hillary, then introduce Al Gore, then introduce Clinton. It got down to a canned speech, but at the time it was really quite dynamic. We'd stop and there would be a hundred people lined up at a crossing on some side road.

The guy who designed this whole trip is Mort Engelberg. Mort is a crotchety old advance guy, a former movie producer. He produced *Smokey and the Bandit* and the *Big Easy,* and a number of other, quite successful, semi-good movies. Mort was a political advance guy in Mondale's campaign and he was the first advance person for Clinton. He did Clinton's announcement speech and his first trip to New Hampshire. At the beginning of the campaign it was just Bruce and Mort and a state trooper traveling. It was Mort's idea to do the bus trip from New York to St. Louis. A lot of people take the credit for it, but it really was Mort.

Mort had driven the route, picked these side roads to take as opposed to main highways, picture-perfect places to get off and do photo ops and build crowds and impromptu stops. The whole idea of impromptu stops—once Clinton became President we started calling these OTRs, off the record movements. They may be impromptu and off the record to the local people, but they've all been pretty well crafted and thought through by the rest of us to accomplish a specific photograph or political goal.

Mort was the person behind designing this event, and knew, probably with Harry Thomason as well, the impact of having Clinton and these four politicians, the Gores and the Clintons, young, energetic, in contrast to the staid, conservative, senior President Bush. So we'd stop at truck stops and parks and have them throw footballs and do things outside and greet lots of people and stop to get ice cream cones. Inevitably there would be crowds of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people. Clinton would have to stop and shake hands with all of them. Mrs. Clinton and the Gores, being much more disciplined, knew we were already two hours late. They'd get back on the bus and it would be left to Bruce and to Wendy Smith and the advance people to almost tug and pull Clinton away from these crowds.

In subsequent stops and bus trips, we got much better about traveling with a mini stage and sound system and ropes, and we would actually start penning these people up in time and we'd set up this stage and sound system so he could actually talk to these people without feeling obligated to shake hands with every single one. But inevitably, on the radio traffic, on the buses,

we would say, “Okay, there’s a couple hundred people up at this next crossroads. Let’s just do a slow roll. Have the President stand up in the front of the bus and wave. There’s a microphone on the bus. He can talk on the loudspeaker.” So that would be the MO [modus operandi]. We’re going to do a slow roll.

Then Bruce would get on the radio and say, “He’s out.” He’d tell the bus driver to stop and he’d hop out and start shaking hands. I was five buses back with the press and we’d always have to run up and film. As soon as we’d get up there, he’d get right back on the bus. We’d go running back to the buses. You could never do anything quickly because there were not only the four candidates; there was the traveling staff and all the traveling press. It wasn’t just the domestic press—we had Japanese and German press. It was incredibly exciting. A reporter from *Vogue* magazine was traveling with us to chronicle this first bus trip. It was absurd. We were hours upon hours upon hours late, but they were magical events.

We’d stop at state fairs in Indiana and at crossroads in small rural areas. The purpose of the bus trip was obviously not only to do the national stories, because we got great national press, but you’d pull the local press from within a 200-mile radius who’d come and cover the story, so it was a great touch. I know there have been studies on all the different bus trips as well as the Clinton train trip in ’96, Gore’s 2000 boat trip and bus trips. If you calculated the communities that those trips went through and the electoral votes, the precinct votes, the correlation is incredibly strong about the impact that those had. A friend of mine did a study about the impact of those kinds of trips when he was at the Kennedy School.

So through the fall of ’92, I continued to do primarily lead advance work, in charge of these advance teams. Then I got assigned to do the debate prep advance trips. Before each of the Presidential debates, Clinton would spend three or four days doing debate prep. We were in Kansas City, Williamsburg, and Ypsilanti. At each of these, Clinton mostly did private debate prep. We’d set up podiums and small TV studio-like settings to mimic what the event was going to be like, and he’d spend all day doing the debate prep.

We’d also do a story, an event a day of some kind, so that he would be out in public and there would be a press event. I was lead advance person for each of those. Much of my time I spent with him and with the senior staff, so I got to know him a great deal better, but also again Bruce Lindsey and the other senior staff people, and Mrs. Clinton as well. We did that all the way through the election. On election night—

Riley: Let me ask you one question about the debate. Did he get nervous? I would think the pressure to perform under those circumstances would be almost crushing to any normal human being, and any normal person would have been nervous, anxious, and excited.

Friendly: I almost never saw Bill Clinton nervous about anything. Before big events, bigger speeches, he’d do some breathing exercises, take deep breaths, calm himself. But he is a master. He very rarely would show any signs of nervousness, of anxiety, and it would drive me nuts, because once he was President, I would be collapsing in nerves and shaking, especially when we were doing live national television events. We’d have to give two-minute warnings and we’d have to be right on time.

It's important to be on time when you have a joint session of Congress or when you're doing a speech to the country, and he would walk in with a minute to spare. I would be, and the producers would be, falling apart. The technicians would be collapsing. "Where the hell is this guy?" It's 8:59 and he's addressing the nation in one minute and he'd be in the bathroom gargling. He'd be God knows what and [*snapping fingers*] he'd do it flawlessly. I can go into more details about those kind of stories, but—

Riley: So you're in Little Rock for the election—

Friendly: Little Rock for the election night, obviously.

Pfiffner: Did you see or know of transition planning before the election?

Friendly: I knew that there was transition planning because I knew at some level Vernon and Warren Christopher had been plotting and I knew somebody had gotten office space in Little Rock. But it was one of those things that you never think about because it starts jinxing you if you were to actually start thinking, *What if we were to win.* Maybe it was my naiveté—I really didn't think we were going to win. Also, you don't want to let yourself think you're going to win because subsequently friends had thought they were going to win in 2000 and 2004 and were disappointed.

I was still thinking that like any other Democratic campaign, we'd have a good time until November and then I was going to go be a ski bum. I really thought I was going to go spend the winter out in Jackson Hole with my friends from Middlebury and be a ski bum for that winter. So the night that we actually won, it was remarkable. It was hard to believe. I knew that there was some of this site planning going on, but there really wasn't any planning from the advance side, from anything that we were exposed to.

We were told that we were going to be paid until Election Day and that was it. That was all we were told. They were going to fly us to Little Rock and then give us a ticket out of Little Rock to wherever we wanted to go the next day; that was all we knew.

Pfiffner: Jackson Hole.

Friendly: Actually I was going to come back to D.C, get my car, and drive to Jackson Hole. That was what I thought I was going to do. Essentially, "Thank you for your service, we'll see you in four years." So the night that we actually won was superb, fantastic, exciting, invigorating. But nobody had thought what was going to happen the next morning. The night of the election, when it was clear we won, I had gotten a call or a page from the advance person's director saying, "Can you be at the Governor's mansion tomorrow morning at seven in case he goes for a jog, in case something happens?" "Okay, sure." So I showed up at seven o'clock in the morning at the Governor's mansion and it was a different scene.

About a week or ten days before the election, the Secret Service knew what was going to happen. They knew he was going to win, so they bumped up the protection level to a different standard, almost to Presidential protection. Dave Carpenter became his shift leader and head of the Presidential Protective Division. They just ratcheted it up to a different level of protection.

Riley: This started in advance of the election.

Friendly: It did. It was in advance of the election.

Pfiffner: If they knew, is it that you were looking at the same numbers and they believed the numbers and you didn't because you didn't want to jinx it psychologically?

Friendly: I don't know that I was as sophisticated.

Pfiffner: Not you personally—

Friendly: The polling, the campaign, I think it was pretty clear that we were going to win, but no one talked about it, at least not in my group.

Pfiffner: So psychologically, you just don't want to talk about it.

Friendly: Yes. The Secret Service saw the writing on the wall, so they literally bumped up the protection ten days or two weeks before the election.

So I arrived the next morning at the Governor's mansion and there was no one there other than the Secret Service and press staking out on the sidewalk. Nancy Hernreich showed up. [*phone call interrupts*] So I showed up the day after the election at the Governor's mansion. The phone is ringing off the hook. When Clinton was Governor, the phone number was published. People could call the Governor at home. Their private mail and public mail was all delivered to the Governor's mansion.

No one had thought about what was going to happen if he becomes President, who's going to staff the Governor's mansion. So I showed up and answered telephones. Clinton was going to make a statement on the lawn that next morning, but no one was answering telephones. So I called Kelly, my girlfriend, and said, "You better come over, there's no one here answering phones. There's no one doing anything. It's a madhouse." So we showed up and spent 12 hours answering telephones and trying to do the screenings, silly things like—Kelly can tell some great stories about—I was made an offer to stay on as an advance person in Little Rock. Four of us were asked to stay in Little Rock during the transition.

Kelly and a couple of other friends were asked to stay and work in the Governor's mansion. They called themselves the "basement babes" because there were four women working for Nancy Hernreich in this space that maybe was twice the size of this room, cluttered with all the gifts that Clinton had been given. As I say, the phone number was public, so anybody who was trying to reach Clinton had the same number that the general public had.

The mail was all coming to the same address—the Clintons' private bills, their credit card statements, things like that. Their private correspondence was being delivered with the millions of letters from well-wishers around the world.

Riley: Job applications.

Friendly: Job applications, absolutely, letters from prison asking for pardons. Kelly tells these great stories—the Secret Service started up this screening process of screening the mail, but the mailman would come and say, "Where do you want the mail?" "Just leave it right here." "We have 15 boxes of it outside that's just been screened. What do you want to do with it?" There's no comprehension of the scale of what we just suddenly ran into.

Answering the phones, these wackos would call on one line and Prime Minister [Yitzhak] Rabin would be on the other line. Kelly is answering the phone, and it was Rosalynn Carter calling for Hillary. Kelly is intercommed up to Mrs. Clinton. "Mrs. Carter is on line four." Then she said, "Whoops, I don't know if she was line four. I think Marilyn the nut ball was on line three." Marilyn was crazy and she would call every day. Mrs. Clinton picked up line three or line four and that was Marilyn, not Rosalynn Carter. [*laughter*]

Then we were inundated with gifts. The President was sent cowboy boots and cowboy hats and paintings and pictures and blue jeans and leather jackets. Everybody in the world wanted to send him things. He's a little bit of a pack rat and he would come down to the basement to go through everything that had been sent to look at letters and stuff. He'd pick up all these presents and walk upstairs. We tried to have some kind of order—catalog them, figure out where they were from, and get thank-you notes and those kinds of things, but he'd pick them all up and he'd walk upstairs.

About five minutes later he'd come walking back downstairs saying, "I can't keep them." Or Mrs. Clinton would buzz down and say, "Don't you let him bring anything more up. Keep that stuff away from him." At the same time, the transition planning was taking place. Part of my job as advance, to the extent it was advance, was every morning showing up and the President would go jogging.

This is when people would assume that he'd go to McDonald's every morning to have egg McMuffins or Big Macs. He'd go jogging every morning and go to McDonald's, but it's because that's where he'd go and get a cup of coffee and talk to people. It was across the street from the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association], where sometimes he'd go and lift weights. But it was a different ball game for the Secret Service as well as for the press. The President-elect running down the streets of Little Rock is a very different scene now with all the press staking it out, going to the same McDonald's. People from all over the world now come into that McDonald's and stand outside the YMCA to shake hands with the Governor.

So the Saturday after the election, he goes golfing at this little country club outside of Little Rock, and my job was to advance the golf. That meant showing up half an hour ahead of time, talking to the golf pro, and making sure his other friends were there. This was actually the first time I met Webb Hubbell, who struck me as a very nice but peculiar-looking man. I'm not sure you've seen—Webb is a huge man, almost giant-like, an extremely nice person, and a couple of Clinton's other friends were going to go golfing with him that day. The issue was always: What are you going to do with the press?

From the day he started to pick up Secret Service through his days as President, there's a press pool, "death watch" is the unfortunate term for it, but it's a representative group of the press that would travel with the candidate and the President wherever he goes to take the pictures and share

them with the rest of the press corps. When Clinton arrived he went into the pro shop. Meanwhile the golf pro invited the press pool to come and stake out the first tee to film him teeing off.

I saw that happening and went to intercept Clinton to warn him about this. As I was walking back, Clinton came out of the pro shop looking a little bit like a slob, wearing his long Georgetown sweatshirt, a baseball cap, sneakers, khakis that didn't fit and holding a sandwich. He saw the press standing there and he blew up at me, "I have no privacy. I can't be left alone; I can't even play golf." It was just far enough so you couldn't pick up everything he was saying, but it was absolutely clear what he was doing.

Unfortunately, on the front page of the Sunday *New York Times* was a picture of him yelling at me, above the fold. The lead photograph is Bill Clinton complaining to Andrew Friendly about not having privacy.

Riley: I'm disappointed in my research assistant that that picture didn't make it into our briefing book. [*laughter*]

Friendly: It's a nice souvenir of mine. We're going to get a little into Clinton's temper, that it was like a volcano. It is well documented. He would explode, sometimes extremely violently and loud, shockingly at times. Nine times out of ten it wasn't directed at me, or any individual, but just at the general situation. He would vent. I would stand there. I'd take it. The first two dozen times it was painful, because here is the most powerful person in the world exploding at you, and I was 23, 24 years old. Nine times out of ten it was not something I had done. He had been either over-scheduled or Secret Service or someone had screwed up, had planned something wrong, or didn't tell him about something and he would erupt. Or there was something totally different that he was upset about and just because I happened to be around I'd get the brunt of that explosion.

George Stephanopoulos jokes that he was 6' 5" when he started the campaign with Clinton and he's now 5' 6" because of the beating that he took because of these explosions. But then they'd subside and he'd forget all about them and never another comment about it. No acknowledgment that he blew up at you, no nothing. It was often very tough to reason with him, to explain what happened or why it happened, or the thought process that went into it. It was mostly you'd just take it and say, "You're right" and "Let's move on."

Riley: A minute ago you said that it was sometimes violent. Do you mean he would—?

Friendly: It was pointing a finger, "You're wrong. It's not right. It's inexcusable," and the arms would be flailing. It would never be hitting or anything like that, but it would be arms flailing or the crooked pointer finger in your face and he'd get red and enraged and furious and stomp around for a second or two, but then it would pass like a summer thunderstorm or a volcano. It would stop. Occasionally a minute later there would be, "And another thing—" but usually it would just stop and we'd move onto the next thing.

Riley: Were you the only person who was the recipient of these—

Friendly: Oh no. Once we got in the White House and I think also during the campaign, George certainly took a lot of it. Nancy, to some extent—he and Nancy had a much longer history and a

different interaction. He respected Nancy enormously, but he would still explode and erupt. I don't think he disrespected me. He came to respect me more, I'm sure. I think Nancy was the first person to explain the temperament and warn me, "It's not directed at you. It's not your fault, necessarily. It's the proximity."

You can't imagine the pressure and strain and stress that a President or someone in that position is under. My God, I would have erupted more often than he did, especially at stupid things that would happen. Inevitably, the staff makes mistakes, Secret Service make mistakes. Oftentimes they were his own mistakes, but it's a lot easier to blame others than to acknowledge that you made the mistake yourself.

Riley: Did you ever see this kind of volcano erupt at somebody unprepared to handle it?

Friendly: Yes. I'd see it erupt sometimes at advance people who didn't really know. There was a little bit of the picking up the pieces afterward. You'd do a little bit of explaining—not explaining, a sort of comforting thing. "Don't worry; it's not your fault." Sometimes if I were there, or some of the other staff people who knew that it wasn't this person's fault, you'd try to interrupt and put yourself in-between because it's not fair to somebody who's not familiar with this to be subjected to that kind of—especially from the President or President-elect, so you'd interject.

But Clinton was also pretty careful about not doing it in front of people or to people who weren't accustomed to that.

Riley: That was basically what I was trying to find out.

Friendly: He would certainly get mad, and occasionally he'd be mad at the professional staff, the valets or the steward, but that was relatively rare. It was more the political staff, those of us who served at the pleasure of the President, or the volunteer staff, people who also were accustomed to his behavior, and people he had a closer relationship to.

So back to the timeline: The transition was a bit of chaos. None of us knew if we had a job after the election. Everybody started looking at the Plum Book, saying, "Here we are lowly advance people, in our early 20s. What in God's name could we do in the federal government?" We said, "I hear there are assistant jobs in the press office or the advance office has four slots. Four slots for the President and three for the Vice President, and two for the First Lady. Do you think we can get one of those?" Or, "I think there's a scheduling position." So trying to figure out whether maybe we could get a job and move back to Washington and work in the administration.

Diana Walker, who is a family friend and was a photographer for *Time* magazine, lived across the street from Vice President Mondale. She had been a photographer for *Time* in the White House during the Carter years, some of the Reagan years and Bush years and had been given extraordinary access to the Presidents. She's a charming, wonderful lady, and Bush One especially gave her extraordinary, behind-the-scenes access. She was the one who mentioned to my parents, or maybe even to me, that this position of the personal aide existed, that there is somebody who travels with the President, his body person.

Kelly, my wife, had been working with Nancy Hernreich. Nancy had gone up to meet with the woman who ran Bush's Oval Office to see how you run the office, what is it staffed with, who is in it, what are the needs, the budget. So when they were starting to think about the staff, this was mid-December, I guess—

Pfiffner: Was that Patty Presock?

Friendly: Patty Presock, who was wonderful. Patty was an enormous help to us.

Pfiffner: Her daughter took my class and they got in to see the President because of that. She's a very gracious person.

Friendly: And Patty stayed on for I think three months after the transition to help us sort things out. Patty started out as a career person, I believe, and gained Vice President Bush's and then President Bush's trust. She ran Bush's Oval Office and was enormously—

[*Riley steps out.*]

So I heard from Kelly, my girlfriend at the time, and from this friend, Diana Walker, that this position existed. I wrote a note to Nancy Hernreich and to Bruce Lindsey saying, "I know this position exists. I'd love to be considered."

Pfiffner: You didn't mention skiing this time? [*laughter*]

Friendly: I did not mention the skiing. "I'd love to be considered, but I'm probably going to be busy skiing for the first two months of the year." No I did not. I felt it best to leave that out.

Clinton was scheduled to go to Renaissance weekend in Hilton Head right after Christmas for the New Year's break. It was something that they had gone to for years. The advance office asked me to go and do the advance for that trip, so I went off to do that. That was a time when it was just the President and Hillary and Chelsea. We had a house loaned to us for them to use on the beach and it was much more low-key, removed from all the other staff. My role was a little bit of an intermediary between the Clintons and the Secret Service, the Clintons and the press, and the Clintons and the organizers of Renaissance weekend, Phil and Linda Lader.

I ended up spending quite a bit of time with the Clintons. At one point during that three or four days, Mrs. Clinton asked me, "Has anybody talked to you about a job? Is there anything you're interested in doing in the administration?" I said, "No one talked to me." We're only three weeks away from starting. "No one said anything to me, but I'd be very interested in working in the administration." And it was left at that. Once we got back to Little Rock after Renaissance weekend, I sent Mrs. Clinton a note as well, saying, "Since you asked, there is this position I heard about, the President's aide, that I'd love to be considered for." Again, I heard nothing.

Then a week before the inaugural, I was sent back to Washington to come and help do advance planning and work for the Clintons around the inaugural. A lot of the other advance people, all my colleagues and friends, had come up a month before, at least, to work on the inauguration, the planning of the parades and all the balls and events. Almost everything had been done, except I showed up to help do things like work with the folks at Blair House and the mechanics of that.

So in January, I guess it was January 17, three days before the inauguration, Nancy Hernreich asked me if I'd be interested in being Clinton's aide. This is three days before the inauguration. I'd assumed that there would be some type of job, but nobody had been offered any jobs. None of the advance people or the scheduling people had been offered positions in the White House. You probably remember we were very late to the game about planning the staffing of the White House. One of the disasters of the first couple of months was that it took us an absurdly long time to staff the lower-level positions.

Clinton has said a number of times that he spent too long planning senior positions, not just in the White House but in the Cabinet, and that it slowed down the whole process of filling out the support staff.

Pfiffner: Quick question on the decision to run the transition from Arkansas, whereas Reagan and others had run it from Washington. Did you get a sense of why that decision was made? Was it consciously made?

Friendly: I'm sure it was consciously made because Clinton is a micro-manager. He was literally interviewing and discussing almost every position, and spent—I remember clearly—hours upon hours upon hours of interviews with different candidates in the Governor's mansion. Part of my job during that transition was to pick up these candidates at the airport.

Pfiffner: For Cabinet positions.

Friendly: For Cabinet positions.

Pfiffner: Not White House staff?

Friendly: Some for White House staff as well. Picking up Bob Rubin and, awkwardly, this close friend, Tim Wirth, who was being considered for something but had pissed off people and ended up being offered something at a lower level, a position in the State Department. But during this transition time, the apparatus of the Presidency started to come. The WHCA, the White House Communication Agency, comes and drops a phone. The President starts getting the daily CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] briefings. A CIA briefer would come every morning and give him a security briefing. Alan Greenspan came to meet with Governor Clinton. I remember he had an agent drive him, but I was going to be the person at the airport to greet him and bring him to the Governor's mansion.

This is the beginning of the trappings. Here we are in sleepy little Little Rock. But the Secret Service starts stepping up, we start getting briefings on how things are going to operate differently with the service. We get the WHCA briefings and started to understand more of the bells and whistles that come with being President and a little bit of the responsibilities. Then the President-elect is spending all of his time meeting with Christopher, Hillary, Gore, Bruce, and to some extent George and others to do the Cabinet selection, and we would do announcements at the old state house maybe once a week or toward the end almost every other day, announcing who were going to be the Cabinet Secretaries.

It was a fascinating time, but it was also a disorganized time in many senses as well, because again, the junior-level people were in limbo, and there wasn't a lot of thought being put into who was going to help fill out those junior-level positions.

Pfiffner: He had the economic summit too, didn't he?

Friendly: Oh yes, we had the economic summit, the talk-a-thon in the Little Rock Convention Center. That's right. I had forgotten about that. There's a window into Bill Clinton's wonkiness. Clearly economics were the keystone of the campaign, but that's an event that went on for hours upon hours upon hours of Bill Clinton listening to these wonky descriptions about economic policy. Any other person would be glazed over, and there he was taking furious notes. But also, I think you got a sense of the impact that Mrs. Clinton had. I believe she had a seat at the table during that conference, and Gore did too. But it was clear that she was very much involved in the discussions during the transition, upstairs in the Governor's study, about the different people.

I certainly was not in on those discussions by any stretch, but Christopher would show up every morning with the briefing books and they'd walk through all these people endlessly with Gore, with Hillary, and with Bruce.

So we arrived in Washington, and the Clintons go and stay at Blair House.

Riley: Let me interrupt here—one of the things that we sometimes hear about the transition period is that there was some concern or jockeying for position between the campaign folks and the newcomers—

Friendly: The professionals.

Riley: Uncle Nick.

Friendly: Absolutely.

Riley: Was that something you witnessed?

Friendly: It was something I witnessed a little bit on the outside. I certainly wasn't involved. I would see, when there was scuttlebutt around. The norm is, "Now that we've won, let's bring in the pros, the people who know what they're doing." That was certainly some of the expectation, that we would be rewarded at some level. Quite frankly, my hope, my goal, was maybe getting a position in the advance office of the White House. But I was also resigned to probably going to work in one of the agencies, either doing advance for a Secretary or doing something around that for one of the Secretaries.

We all assumed that the professionals, the people who had done this before, would be brought in. So in one regard, the Clintons, who I've never thought of as being truly loyal to staffers, surprised me. Maybe it wasn't the Clintons, maybe it was Bruce and Nancy, because they did reward me and my wife, Kelly, and other people who worked a ton with wonderful positions in the White House itself. But that was also true with many of the other staff, George Stephanopoulos's assistant, Heather Beckel, and Dee Dee Myers's assistant, Dave Leavy, and the other people who were the support staff. Almost all of them were campaign people. I know

that was unusual. We were all quite young and inexperienced, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, not clearly clued in to what was supposed to happen.

Riley: Were there any people that didn't come to Washington that surprised you?

Friendly: There were a bunch. Susan Thomases—I was surprised that she didn't have a more formal role. Betsey Wright—I was surprised that she didn't have a formal role. David Wilhelm—I was surprised that he was sent off to be the head of the party. Mickey Kantor, as well—USTR [U.S. Trade Representative] as opposed to being Chief of Staff or something more senior in the White House. There were definitely people who you expected or anticipated, since they had played key senior roles in the campaign, who were cast aside.

I didn't know [Thomas] Mack McLarty at all. I had met him twice. I don't think many of us knew Mack other than as a very good-natured, nice gentleman who was a friend of the President's. It was certainly a surprise to me, and I'm quite sure it was a surprise to lots of people, that he was chosen as Chief of Staff, a total outsider.

Riley: In more ways than one, evidently, an outsider to the campaign—

Friendly: Outsider to the campaign as well as outsider to Washington. In retrospect it's pretty clear why he was chosen. I love Mack, and he's been a wonderful person to me, but in retrospect a horrible choice as Chief of Staff. The two models between Mack and Leon Panetta couldn't be more clearly opposed and effective, I believe. Leon was a superb, in my mind, Chief of Staff.

Pfiffner: Maybe the President had to have the experience with McLarty before he realized that he needed somebody like Panetta and would let Panetta do what needed to be done.

Friendly: Clearly. And the missed cues and the missteps of the micro managing. I'm reading into this, but it's not a novel opinion. Clinton, having Mack as a Chief of Staff, was much more having Clinton being the Chief of Staff as well, with Hillary's input and George and others. Mack was a relatively ineffective, genial, perfectly competent smart man as Chief of Staff, but not somebody at all skilled in management of a huge bureaucracy or in management with Congress.

Riley: You mentioned Mickey Kantor's name a minute ago. His stock during this period seems to have been on a bit of a roller coaster. Do you know why?

Friendly: I don't know why. I don't know why he was passed over, what the background was. I always got along very well with Mickey and he was extremely nice to me, but again, I was never privy to the policy discussions or the politics involved and why he was passed over.

Pfiffner: The press seemed to think that there was a struggle between Stephanopoulos and Kantor during the transition.

Friendly: That's very possible.

Riley: I don't remember Eli Segal's name being mentioned here.

Friendly: That's another person who clearly was, at some level, passed over. I have enormous respect for Eli and like him very much. I don't know why he was passed over. He was put in to run the AmeriCorps, the national service program, clearly a program that Clinton felt extremely strongly about, but still it was certainly seen as a slight to put him off in the woods starting this program up.

Pfiffner: In talking about passing over, was there any sense that you had concerning the veterans of the Carter administration and how they were perceived? Were they seen as losers and we don't want anything to do with them or—

Friendly: Clearly it was a concerted effort not to bring in the Washington pros. There was not a single one until we started bringing [David] Gergen, bringing people with experience. In many regards that was a fatal mistake. I'm not the right person to talk about this, but the relationship between President Carter and Clinton is an extremely complicated one. I saw some signs of that and I would be happy to talk about that certainly around Haiti and a couple of other things. But maybe it was guilt by association with some of these professionals, the staff people who had worked in the previous administration and the reluctance to bring them back in. I don't fully know Bruce Lindsey's experience from the Carter years. There may have been some of his influence as well to avoid having—

Pfiffner: In addition to that, it sounds like there's a conscious decision not to do old Washington hands, aside from the Carter administration.

Friendly: That's true as well. We just ran a really cool, a great campaign. We've got a great mandate, that was the opinion, a trouncing in the Electoral College, and we've got this agenda and we're going to take a new cut at this. It's a breath of fresh air in Washington, a new breed of young, energetic people. That feeling cut across a lot of different things. It was a shock to the system for the professional White House staff and the Secret Service to have this young group of workaholics show up. They were very much used to a different pace of doing things, a different organizational structure, a different maturity level, a different scheduling—everything.

Pfiffner: They didn't remember the Carter administration. They must have missed that.

Friendly: They were lulled into 12 years of very comfortable, predictable, organized, mature, disciplined, businesslike professionals. Here we come in, we are 20-something, some of us are in blue jeans with longer hair, without a hell of a lot of experience, trying to do four or five events a day, running the Secret Service crazy without scheduling events with a couple hours of notice, doing huge parties in the White House, running the poor staff around, the President staying up until one o'clock in the morning, the butlers and ushers being exhausted, having parties that were three times the size of normal parties they'd hold.

The facilities people—this was later on in the year, but we'd ruin the south lawn time and time again from the number of these parties we'd have, and they'd have to replace the lawn time and time again. The President marching to a different schedule in Clinton time. They were not used to it. They were used to a punctual President who stuck to a schedule, who came down when the schedule said he was going to come downstairs to go to the Oval Office, and finished when the schedule said he was going to finish, and took lunch when he was scheduled to take lunch and

depart the White House. The police would be ready when the schedule said they were going to leave. It took a lot of giving and taking and growing pains between our groups.

Pfiffner: What about that unfortunate incident when a young woman supposedly said something—

Friendly: The military—we don't talk to people in uniform?

Pfiffner: Yes. How did that—

Friendly: I still don't believe that ever happened. We may have been young and naïve, but there was hardly anybody in that White House who was stupid. In fact, my experience was quite to the contrary. I worked with some of the brightest people I'll ever meet including the young staff, my colleagues. To think that somebody equivalent to me would say that to anybody in uniform just boggles my mind.

Pfiffner: It didn't ring true to me.

Friendly: Now, it fit a stereotype that unfortunately we did a lot to reinforce. The first couple of months were extremely painful, some of it self-inflicted wounds but mostly, I believe, because the Republicans were very smart about how they set the agenda. The Zoë Baird and Lani Guinier fiascos were certainly our own doing. That was absurd. But the gays in the military and then the healthcare debacle were not our own doing. Gays in the military, especially. Gays in the military was something they were brilliant about manipulating from day one.

Pfiffner: The Republicans?

Friendly: The Republicans used that to totally derail any type of honeymoon and agenda setting that we wanted. That clearly undermined the President's reputation with the military, painfully—with the military aides who worked in the White House, with the helicopter squadron, the Air Force people that we worked with, WHCA, all the way to that first visit when the President took a helicopter to the *Teddy Roosevelt*, the aircraft carrier. It was a miserable trip because of the press talking to sailors, asking, "How do you really feel about this guy?" "Well, we're not going to have any gays on this ship. How dare—what does he think?" That was pretty painful.

Then we had all kinds of other self-inflicted wounds of stepping all over ourselves and doing three or four events a day, over-scheduling. I remember—if I could look through the schedules—we'd be so backed up and so late to everything, and we'd step all over our messages because we were doing a healthcare event, then a welfare event, then a tax event, then an economic event. The discipline that we thought we had during the campaign didn't translate over to the beginning of the administration.

Pfiffner: One more side issue on the transition: How did the Bush people, the outgoing administration, treat you? Were they generally helpful? Were they resentful?

Friendly: Patty Presock was enormously helpful for Nancy when she stayed and said, "Here's the real scoop. Here's how you deal with the Secret Service. Here's how you deal with the military support. Here's how you deal with the entrenched staff that don't switch, that don't

move—the usher's office. Here are the things you get asked for, and this is how you get things done." It was enormously helpful.

Before starting, I had two conversations with former aides—Tim McBride, and I'm trying to remember who the other one was who'd worked for Bush who said, "Here's how you should view your job and here are the people you should trust, or learn to trust, and here are the people you need to be wary of. They don't necessarily have your best interests at heart; they have conflicting roles. But you can also learn to rely on them if you learn to use them correctly." That was invaluable. On January 21st, walking through the White House gates for the first time was a fantastic, magical experience. All we were told was, "Be here by eight o'clock in the morning and they'll have your name at the gate."

So Kelly and I drove to the ellipse and asked if we could park there. We walked up to the South Gate and South Executive Avenue, gave our driver's licenses and they said, "Come in. You go in that door over there." We walked in and asked the guards where to go. The guard said, "You go down this corridor and up these stairs, and there's your office." So we walk in and Nancy happened to be there already and said, "This is your office." It was totally clean, no paper, no pens, a telephone and that was about it. It was incredible. I said, "Now what?" I'll never forget.

First of all, it's awe-inspiring. I look—the door was open. I had the little office outside the Oval at the beginning. The receptionist's office, Betty Currie, the secretary, then there's a little closet of an office that I had, and the door into the Oval. The door was open to the Oval Office and I said, "Jesus, that's the Oval Office. And out that door is the Rose Garden, and that's the Executive Mansion." The walls were also empty. They were covered with blow-up photographs that the White House photographer has taken, so obviously the photographs from the Bush years are taken down. That's when I started looking through some of the drawers. There were actually some mistakenly leftover Bush pens, stuff like that, but otherwise the place had been stripped down. There were no typewriters, no computer, no paper, or any of the basics.

Eventually a paper schedule shows up and says the President is supposed to do an open house, supposed to greet people. We're going to do an open house downstairs and he's going to do it from the diplomatic reception room. That didn't mean anything to me. I didn't know where the diplomatic reception room was, and where is the President? I think it was Patty or one of the ushers or somebody walked me over, down the corridor, the portico by the Rose Garden, into the mansion, and I walked up the back stairs to the ushers' office and was introduced to Gary Walters, the chief usher, who is an interesting gentleman. "Now what? Where's the President? Where did he go?" He said, "We believe they're still asleep. We haven't heard from them yet."

Not knowing what to do, I said, "How would you wake up President Bush? What would you do?" He said, "We'd go up and knock on the door." So Gary took me up in the elevator to the residence floor, went to the President and Mrs. Clinton's bedroom, knocked on the door and said, "Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton, good morning. We're late." They said, "Okay. We'll be right out." That was the last time I did that. The President, I remembered, much prefers to have you call on the telephone. During the campaign we'd just call into his room and say, "You're late, come on down." Mrs. Clinton reminded me that's the way we should have done it and we don't need to come knocking on the door anymore.

So there I was, wearing a temporary plastic pass, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. Actually, I was exhausted because I'd been at the inaugural balls the night before until two in the morning. I was waiting for them to come down. I went down to the diplomatic reception room to find out what we were supposed to do. Some of my friends, advance colleagues, had been roped into helping to try to somehow organize this open house and working with the ushers' folks. The press had already been set up and they were going to do a rope line—the President and the Gores were going to stand in the diplomatic reception room and we were just going to let people come by and shake hands and say hello.

Pfiffner: Who were those people? Who decided—?

Friendly: I think it was anybody who lined up could come—

Riley: It was an open house.

Friendly: It was in the tradition of—

Pfiffner: The Secret Service put up with this?

Friendly: It was in the tradition of Andrew Jackson that Bill Clinton wanted to copy, and it was an open house to the general public. People lined up for hours upon hours and curled out through the driveway of the south lawn and out to the ellipse. There were thousands of people. The Clintons were absolutely exhausted but they came down and started shaking hands and I stood there to the side and took all the gifts people were bringing to them. All this time they were in front of the press and had Lavalier microphones on, so they were covering everything that the President and the Vice President—they couldn't say anything other than hello, welcome, nice to see you. This went on for hours. The poor man and Hillary were exhausted.

At one point Mrs. Clinton pulled me aside with the President and said, "How much longer? How many people are out there?" I ran outside to look and the line snaked all the way out the driveway. I came back in and told her and she said, "We've got to cut this off. This is crazy." So we pulled aside and I said to them, "Okay, we're going to cut it off, but there are another thousand people or so outside." She said the famous line, "We're going to screw those people if we cut it off." Unfortunately, that line, picked up by the Lavalier microphones, was the news that night of Mrs. Clinton saying to the President, to me, "We're going to screw those people."

So we ended up taking all these people and putting them along a rope line on the south lawn. The President went out, said some words, and then shook hands with them on the rope line. But that was a great first step on day one, "We're going to screw those people." Then he went upstairs and had receptions with all of the campaign staff, all his Arkansas friends, and his Georgetown friends. There must have been two or three more receptions that night. It went on until ten o'clock. It was a nightmare of a night. Then the next day, or maybe that day, we had a Cabinet meeting as well. We swore in I guess the Cabinet—couldn't have sworn them in because they hadn't been approved.

Pfiffner: That's right.

Friendly: Those three or four days are a blur.

Riley: Some of them could have been—

Pfiffner: Yes. They can do it quickly.

Friendly: Some of them may have been approved, because pretty quickly there was a swearing in of Cabinet folks. I'm not sure how many of them there were—clearly not the Attorney General.

Riley: That's the kind of thing that's easy enough to check. We don't have to worry about—

Friendly: But those first three days were an absolute blur. At the end of each of these receptions—they would go until eight o'clock or so at night—we'd go back to the Oval Office and he'd have to meet with George and Bruce and Mack and figure out what the hell we're going to do about the broadsides that we were getting on gays in the military and Zoë Baird and then Lani Guinier and all these mini scandals that were dominating all of the news.

So while we were doing all the parties and finishing up the inauguration stuff, they're actually trying to deal with real issues without having any systems in place, without knowing who the assistants were. The computers, I remember. First getting to the White House and the phone system was so antiquated. At Middlebury maybe we were a little advanced, but we had voice mail in '89, '90, '91. I get to the White House and some of the phones were rotary dial. They were the ones with the big yellow lit buttons. On my desk I could pick up the same extension the President had on his desk. I could listen in on his phone calls. It was just incredibly antiquated technology.

I came from Middlebury, where we had Macintosh computers—very functional, easy to use. At the White House, when we finally get computers, they're all DOS [Disk Operating System] based, incredibly cumbersome to use. We did get cell phones and WHCA pagers, but from the infrastructure we had been able to piece together in the campaign and the infrastructure that I had in college, coming to the most powerful office in the land the technology was back-ass. It was pretty shocking.

Then the lack of systems. We were making it up as we went along. What is my responsibility versus Betty's, versus Nancy's? Nancy was sitting on the opposite side of the Oval Office. There's the President's study, dining room, and then an office next to it, which is where Nancy was sitting. I was at the front door with Betty.

Six months into it when George moved out of doing the briefing role and into a senior advisor role, he took that office. Nancy came to mine and I got two offices. I had a small desk outside the Oval next to Betty, and another desk down the hall where all the papers and other stuff were kept. But just trying to figure out the mechanics of who gets to go into the Oval and who doesn't. What's the process for trying to cut off meetings? Again, Bill Clinton's not normal style of letting meetings continue and continue and continue and hearing out the different points of view was a challenging way to operate at the beginning, when there wasn't a lot of structure. Almost anybody had free access, free flow into the Oval Office.

I should look back and through the paperwork to see the numbers of people at meetings. It was everybody from Howard Paster, who was the Congressional liaison, trying to help understand

where we stand in terms of getting people approved by Congress, to how can we launch some initiatives, and what do we want to make our first legislation. In fact, the Family Medical Leave Act, I remember very clearly, was a quick push because it had been vetoed before and Clinton was adamant about getting that done.

But we were also trying to put out fires. How do you respond to the gays in the military, getting Secretary [Les] Aspin to come, and what is our policy going to be, and Colin Powell. This is Colin Powell, the most remarkable person in America, more popular than Bill Clinton. Talk about magnetism and aura when he would come in. We were all differential. Mr. Colin Powell just won the war and he's superman.

Pfiffner: Then he came out against gays in the military.

Friendly: Yes, he came out against gays in the military—devastating.

Pfiffner: Was most of the top White House staff designated? Was there somebody in charge besides the President to organize the sorts of things that you're talking about?

Friendly: The mechanics—I guess I'm not the right person to ask, because I was so much more lost in the minutia of the day to day, trying to make things happen. Take a ridiculously over-scheduled day that inevitably is going to be eaten away by these mini disasters that we were going to have to respond to—many issues, meetings that are going to come up to deal with. I never had a chance to look at the bigger picture. I'm sure that's the stuff that Nancy was working on with Mack and the Deputy Chiefs of Staff. I'm trying to remember who the first two Deputy Chiefs of Staff were.

Riley: I should know that.

Friendly: One was Gore's—

Riley: Roy Neel? Roy came later.

Friendly: Did he come later? He wasn't one of the early ones.

Riley: Phil Lader came later, but I can't remember who—was Mark Gearan?

Friendly: Mark Gearan was there. I don't know that he was Deputy Chief of Staff. He was a Communications Director first, but was at some level in that operation. They were trying to work that stuff out. Podesta was the first Staff Secretary, so I had a lot of interactions with his office, but they were still trying to learn the processes. The NSC office was actually up and running and professional. Tony [Lake] and Sandy [Samuel Berger] had the benefit of having entrenched, experienced, professional support with Wilma Hall, his assistant, his secretary—Fawn Hall's mom. The other assistants in that office had been there for decades. They knew how things worked and made that place hum, compared to the rest of the building.

Riley: At this point are you then doing things on an *ad hoc* basis until you reach a comfort level?

Friendly: It wasn't as much an *ad hoc* basis as it was trying to follow a formula. Again, there were schedules that were being done, and the schedule every morning started with the two security briefings, the CIA briefing for 15 minutes, every day it was scheduled to start at nine o'clock, sometimes a little earlier. Fifteen minutes for the CIA briefing—

Pfiffner: Who did that? Did the director or a career staffer?

Friendly: The CIA briefing? There was always a CIA briefer, but often the director would come. [James] Woolsey was the first director, wasn't he?

Pfiffner: I think so.

Friendly: So Woolsey would come. There was never a whole lot of warmth between the President and Woolsey. I don't know how he was chosen in the first place. I don't know why that lack of warmth was there, but there was never a personal connection with him. Clinton obviously had personal connections with lots of people, but it was clear there was never a personal connection with him. So I'm not sure if Woolsey would come to try to get face time but also try to establish that personal relationship. But he would certainly come. Many times he would come for that first 15 minutes. Inevitably they would end up waiting out in the West Wing lobby for 20 minutes, half an hour, until the President finally showed up.

Riley: Who decided that the President's day would start at nine o'clock?

Friendly: I assume it was the scheduling office with Nancy. I'm guessing, knowing the way that Clinton normally worked as Governor.

Riley: But they figured—

Friendly: They figured you couldn't start him much earlier than that. We would try. Occasionally we would shoot to do it earlier than that.

Riley: The schedules that you had shown—just for the record, Andrew has brought a box of materials including some of the daily schedules. We looked at one at the beginning and I think that one started at eight o'clock.

Pfiffner: They're all crossed out, right?

Friendly: The schedules would show starting early, but they'd be—one's a Saturday, one's a Monday, but the Monday, May 3, 1993, showed the briefing starting at 9:00 to 9:15, then the next briefing 9:15 to 9:30. For both of those the staff contact was Tony Lake. The first one is the CIA briefing. Gore always attended those briefings, that first half hour, those two meetings. So it was always the President, the Vice President, Tony Lake, Sandy Berger, Leon Fuerth, who was the Vice President's Security Advisor. Jim Woolsey attended, as well as the CIA briefer, whose name I didn't have.

Riley: We'll try to make a copy of this one if we can, to append it, or at least make sure that ultimately one of these gets—this is Monday, May 3. One of the curious things here is that it does show that he arrives at the Oval at 8:15.

Friendly: Almost always the President would have on the schedule, TBA [To Be Announced] jog. At the beginning of the administration, he'd go jogging. This is pre real security threats. There were certainly security threats and it would drive the Secret Service insane that he would want to go jogging every morning. His real desire was to go at the beginning. He did jog out the gates of the White House on the Mall. Only after the Secret Service twice found lunatics waiting out there on the ellipse or somewhere nearby with weapons or something waiting for the President to come jogging did they finally convince him that if he wanted to jog they would have to drive him over to Fort McNair down by Haines Point and let him jog down there. It just was too risky to have him run along the Mall.

The President would jog, but the Secret Service, what they would do, every morning the press office would get the pool and they'd go sit out in the van waiting on the driveway in front of the south lawn. The Secret Service would be dressed and ready to go and there would be policemen standing by to escort the motorcade.

The usher, who would bring the President down in the elevator, would buzz the elevator three times—bzz, bzz, bzz—to signify that the President is coming down as opposed to twice if the First Lady or someone else was coming down. The Secret Service would never know until he came out of the elevator and they saw his clothes if they were going to go jogging or to the Oval Office. That was again a very different way for them to operate. They were used to knowing without a doubt. The President's schedule says he's going to jog—he's going to jog.

That was tough because they would have to have agents dressed to jog and agents dressed to go to work. Sometimes they'd have to have double, extra agents on board. Again, the police resources were sitting there to escort the motorcade and the cars were all lined up and ready to go to take him. Many times he'd jog, but many times he'd sleep in and didn't want to jog because he was up too late. That was pretty tough. In many regards, in my mind, it was pretty rude, too. It certainly didn't help engendering good will between an organization that by its nature is distrustful of us because we're different from them, politically as well as the way we operate, and it's a tax on their resources and a tax on the police resources.

It wasn't a whole lot of fun for the press, sitting for hours on end in this cramped van out on the south lawn, having shown up at 5:30 in the morning for this press call.

But it was also incredibly frustrating to the President, who said, "There's no sense of spontaneity. I can never have spontaneity. I can never—" He constantly referred to the White House as the crown jewel of the federal penitentiary system. I'm not sure that it's his line. I think it was some other President's line, but he would say, "I'm held prisoner in this place." There are countless examples of him bristling against the restrictions of being President and the restrictions of having the Secret Service dictate how a day would go, how he would operate, how he would do something.

[BREAK]

Friendly: I hope this is helpful.

Riley: Absolutely. It's right on target.

Friendly: Actually, this is not a bad example. I'll walk through a little bit more of his schedule. On the last point we were talking about, in terms of bristling under the constraints of the office, I'll never forget that one of the very first weeks, maybe the first week we were in office, Strobe Talbott, a good friend who was working in the State Department, had just published a book and was having a book party at one of the local hotels. It was on the President's schedule at the very end as a sort of TBD [To be Decided]. Maybe it wasn't even on the schedule, but we had told the Secret Service that this was a possibility, that he might want to go to this event.

Riley: This is a book signing for Strobe Talbott.

Friendly: At the very beginning of the administration. The President had hinted, sort of FYI, this is going on. You've been invited. Would you like to go? He kind of hemmed and hawed and then he said, about five or six o'clock, "Let's go." So I went to the Secret Service and said to the agent, "Let's go." "Well, we need 20 minutes to get the motorcade here so we can get up there."

Clinton was like, "Shit, 20 minutes? I can't just go? I want to just go." It was one of those minor eruptions. I ended up bringing the agent in and saying, "Could you help explain? We just need to tell what the restrictions are." He said, "We only have an emergency limo on the premises. We need to have the full motorcade, but they're in Anacostia. Everything can be here and lined up in 20 minutes. I need to send an agent up there ahead of time to make sure that we're ready when we show up and I need a police escort. It's going to take me 20 minutes."

Clinton understandably was upset. "There's no spontaneity. I can't go do something. I just can't go out and see friends. I just want to go to this book party." He got in a huff. We got the motorcade together in the 20 minutes, but he was in a huff and was making a point, so he ended up stalling for a little bit longer. There may have been another meeting that he needed to attend. We ended up going an hour late or something like that, towards the end of the book party. We'd sent word ahead that he was going to come and people stuck around. It was that and the jog, the lack of spontaneity, those kinds of restrictions. He really did bristle under it.

We made a point of making the White House open to tours. This was obviously pre 9/11, but he always said, "I'm a tenant in your house. This house belongs to the American people, and as much as possible we should keep this place open for the public tours, understanding that we're going to need to use it for events and things like that that may restrict the use of it."

The tours might come in through the East Wing and they put up Chinese screens on the hall in the basement, on the ground floor level, and the President would come down the elevator and then walk on this side of the screen back to the portico and the Oval Office. Occasionally he'd peek around the screen and wave at tourists as they were going through. They'd get thrilled and excited and he'd love it too. He said, "My God, I actually get to see real people." He'd joke that the Secret Service's job is to keep Presidents as one-term. Their job is to protect and keep them in this tank, in a bubble so they don't get a chance to see the civilians who are actually going to vote for them, real citizens, and that their real mandate is to keep Presidents limited to one term. He definitely chafed under those restrictions.

The other restrictions, the spontaneity of wanting to pull over in a motorcade. Whenever we traveled, especially outside of Washington, the crowds would line up to see the motorcade. Actually, when we first got to office, we tried to make a concerted effort—Clinton thought it would be a waste of money to take the big 747, what is traditionally thought of as Air Force One. It would save taxpayers more money to take the smaller airplane. What we came to realize is that the 747 is oftentimes a bigger deal than the President. People want to see that airplane. There is something incredibly impressive about that huge 747 with that beautiful paint job that invokes the majesty of the Presidency, and it is as important to see that as it is to see the President from a great distance.

The importance of the motorcade, driving in the big limo with the flags on it and the police cars and all that, that is an incredibly important part of the American symbolism, the symbolism of the Presidency. Inevitably there would be crowds lined up in front of a McDonald's with a sign saying, "Mr. President, stop here for your Big Mac." Or "Stop. Get a doughnut or a cup of coffee at this store." And, being the natural politician that he is, he'd want to stop and shake everyone's hand, despite the fact that we were hours late. For the Secret Service, it's less than what they want to have the President stop the motorcade, get out, and shake hands with a crowd that hasn't been cleaned, hasn't been screened. So we'd try to come to some type of agreement.

A lot of times these crowds would show up outside the place where we were having the event, the speech, the roundtable, the town hall meeting. We'd start to know it as we're driving into the event. We'd see a thousand people standing out on a street corner and inevitably we'd pull up to the back of the building, underneath a tent, where the President would go, or onto a loading dock and again, the Bradley Patterson book is perfect in describing how we kept Sherwin-Williams in business because the President would always chafe, "Never in my life again am I going to be able to go in through a front door. I will always be taken in through a loading dock, by the garbage dumpster, up a service elevator that has been freshly painted. God forbid I actually see real people. Again, it's the Secret Service's way to keep me from getting re-elected."

So we'd drive by these large crowds, and without the President saying anything to me, I'd say to the Secret Service, "You'd better screen that crowd because I can tell you we're going to go out and shake those hands." So we'd pull up, and the way the motorcades are arranged, it's the lead police car, a Secret Service car, the spare limousine, which is usually a slightly smaller version than the real limo, but the spare goes first and then the real limo. I'd ride in the spare with two agents and Clinton's doctor. So inevitably, when you don't know any better, the crowds are all waving at the first limo, thinking that's where the President is riding. He's actually riding in the one right behind. He'd get furious at the people waving and then they'd see his car go by and he'd be waving at everybody. But they'd be waving at the wrong car.

Riley: You can't see inside?

Friendly: You can sort of see inside, but there's thick bulletproof glass, and the doors weighed—it's crazy, you need two hands to open them. So he'd tell the agents, "Get more space between the two cars so that if they realize that they don't see me in the first one, I can wave and they can see me in the other." There's this little microphone and speaker system in his limo, so he could say, "Hey, good to see you, thank you for coming out." [*does an impression*]

Riley: You do a very nice impression.

Friendly: Years of experience.

Riley: You can practically pass for a southerner.

Friendly: Exactly, almost. My mother is from Virginia, southern by heritage. Inevitably, we'd go to these events and they'd end up screening the crowd and put them into a rope line, then he'd go out and shake hands and love it. That would be a little bit of his fix. We'd try to do it as quickly as possible ahead of the event so he'd be ginned up and excited before the event would happen. But inevitably we'd be holding 3,000 people in a packed gym where it's 120 degrees and they would have been waiting for three hours because Clinton was two hours late.

Pfiffner: Gosh.

Friendly: We'd end up doing those events first.

Riley: Let me ask you a question about that. There were rumors that occasionally the President escaped the bubble, so to speak—managed to sneak out of the White House without—

Friendly: That's impossible.

Riley: Impossible?

Friendly: Yes. There were the rumors that Bruce had snuck the President out in the back of a pickup truck or something like that, put a rug over him and snuck him out in the back of a car. That's just not feasible. The only thing Bruce mentioned to me was at the very beginning they snuck up onto the roof of the White House, and I don't think you can really sneak up onto the roof because outside the third floor there's a walkway or a door or something that goes up. First of all, every door in the place is alarmed. It's not like the Secret Service doesn't know what's happening. And on the roof of the White House there are sharpshooters up there, permanently. So they knew, but I think Bruce and the President thought they were sneaking around.

Riley: Two Arkansas boys.

Friendly: Two Arkansas boys saying, "Look where we are."

Pfiffner: We fooled them this time.

Friendly: They don't know what we're doing. But the idea of the President sneaking around, it's preposterous. I'm sure there were times where the Secret Service didn't know where he was in the residence, in which room, what part of the house he was in. That's just inevitable. Here's another part of the chafing under—President Reagan obviously being a good deal older, and after the assassination Mrs. Reagan insisted that the agents be posted on the residence floor, on that second floor, just outside the elevator, so it's really about 150 feet from their bedroom, from their living quarters. That continued through the Bush years.

Clinton took real umbrage at the agents having to ride up in the elevator with him and being posted outside that door. He saw it as an invasion of privacy. So the agents backed off. They no longer held a post on that second floor. Once he got into the residence, they kept their post. There's a ground floor staircase with an alarmed glass door. They had a uniformed guy at the bottom of that staircase and then they had the uniformed guys at the bottom of the other staircase, the back stairs, and the Secret Service command post down in the basement, at the bottom of the elevator. So it was definitely a lot of give and take and the Secret Service learning.

Rich Miller was the head of the detail, Dave Carpenter was the second in command. He's the tall, white-haired guy. Great story. Our first trip, we flew to Detroit on Air Force One. We pull in, park the plane, they open up the front door and Carpenter stands in the front door as they open up and the crowd is off in a hangar a distance away and they erupt—they think it's the President. That's the last time Carpenter ever did it. He was so embarrassed. People always mistook him, when they were working the rope lines people would say, "Is this your brother? Your dad?" Carpenter loved it. In many ways he was a lot like Clinton. He was a much more relaxed, much looser, more jovial agent than many of the strict, ex-military, by-the-book guys. But he and Rich Miller, who was the head of the detail, would talk openly about how they changed their ways of protecting the President. I'm not sure if you have any of the agents on your list.

Riley: We don't actually. That's a good idea.

Friendly: I can think of a couple of military aides you should talk to, but the agents, Dave Carpenter and Lew Merletti, Rich Miller. Actually my big transition—Rich Miller was the head of the detail under Bush and stayed on for the first year under Clinton, wonderful man, more of a straight arrow. Dave Carpenter was his number two, and then took over as number one when Rich retired. There's a love-hate relationship between the Secret Service and the President. It's a necessary evil. He knows he's stuck with the agents for life, but obviously there's a lot of bristling under the constraints. But the agents talked a lot about how they had to improve and change their way of protecting the President because they again were used to a very regimented, strict President who was much less energetic. The energy level that Clinton brought—he was 20 years younger, or more, than Bush. Bush would be in bed by ten o'clock and in the office at seven. Clinton would be in bed at one or two and at the office at nine maybe.

Riley: My understanding is that there's a tracking mechanism for the President inside the White House—

Friendly: There's a box—I'm trying to remember actually what the box is called. There's a little display unit that the Secret Service would update with the location of the five protectees: the President, First Lady, or it would be under the military terms, POTUS [President of the U.S], FLOTUS [First Lady of the U.S.], VPOTUS [Vice President of the U.S.], and SLOTUS [Second Lady of the U.S.]. Actually they would say Mrs. Gore. She did not like SLOTUS [*laughter*], Second Lady, or whatever it was, and Chelsea. It was in usually pretty general terms. It would either say West Wing or OEOB [Old Executive Office Building], or residence.

Riley: Was that manually operated, or was the President—

Friendly: It was manually operated.

Riley: So he wasn't wearing a pager device that would track his movement in the building.

Friendly: The only cool thing like that that the President had was the codes. It was the size of a credit card that had the seal of the President on it and I presume if you snap it open it would actually give the launch codes.

Pfiffner: Was the football guy around all the time?

Friendly: Anytime the President left the 18 acres, what the military called the campus, the military aide would have the football, the briefcase. But whenever the President was on the 18 acres, the military aide stayed over in an office called the PEOC, the Presidential Emergency Operations Center. The place where [Richard] Cheney and others were during the 9/11 attacks is in the basement of the East Wing. It's a bunker. They have some cots and big blast doors. It was installed by Harry Truman when they rebuilt the White House.

Riley: You've been down there?

Friendly: Yes. It's very Spartan. It's where a military aide would spend the night every night when we were in the residence because they were on 24-hour duty. It's the emergency operations center, so there's connectivity with all the facilities. I'm pretty sure there's a tunnel between that and the Oval.

Riley: The codes changed on a daily basis?

Friendly: No, I think they're changed on a weekly or maybe monthly basis. Occasionally the President would, again, probably not appropriately, but would give me his wallet and money clip to hold and I know, in fact, one of the former military aides inappropriately has done a book blasting the President, and talked about how sometimes he would give the codes to an aide to hold. That occasionally was me, which probably is slightly inappropriate, but the mil-aide is still the one who has to authenticate the codes, and it's the President's order. So it's not like because I have the codes I'm going to launch the missiles.

Riley: You just mentioned something. I'll ask this and then we'll break for lunch. You said the President would hand you his money clip. Does the President keep cash on him?

Friendly: He did, but unfortunately he'd rarely spend it and he would usually rely on me to buy something and often I'd never get repaid. Kelly, my wife, tells a great story of buying presents for the President to give Chelsea or the First Lady, going out and getting a whole bunch of presents. Mrs. Clinton would keep the books. She was the one who cut the checks and kept the money in the family. An assistant of hers actually paid all their bills and stuff like that.

Kelly bought a $30 or something present. So she sent the bill to this woman and Mrs. Clinton wrote Kelly a check for 30 bucks. Kelly took it to the little White House Federal Credit Union where we had an account to cash it and the woman behind the counter said, "Honey, you don't want to cash this." Kelly said, "I need the cash, I do want to cash it." It was classic. The Clintons were constantly ahead of the game because people never cashed their checks. [*laughter*]

Riley: That's a great story. With that let's break. We're scheduled for an hour downstairs.

[BREAK]

Riley: Jim unfortunately is going to have to take off in just a few minutes so I thought I'd turn to him and see if he may have a few questions before his departure, even if they're out of order.

Pfiffner: Let me just throw out a number of things that I thought might be interesting. You may or may not be able to talk to them, or you may think that some of them are more important than others. Personnel recruitment was one of them and how was that, political PAS [Presidential Appointee in a Position Requiring Senate Confirmation] appointments, and the range of people who were involved in that. Another was the Chief of Staff issue, particularly McLarty. You spoke to this a bit, versus Panetta and the President's change in his attitude towards how much he felt he needed to delegate to the Chief of Staff.

And access to the President, the walk-in privilege. It seemed in the first year or so many people had this privilege. Panetta came in and tightened it up, which sounds like you were in a really good position to see the Dick Morris access, "Charlie's" access to the President, how it was handled, and whether it made sense to you looking back at it. David Gergen coming in, how he was accepted by the White House staff and whether he was able to help as intended. And then of course, the First Lady's role in politics, policy, personnel and the 25 percent cut in White House staff. All of those are of interest to me, so any one of them—

Friendly: Let me start with the last one, because it's related to so many of the others. The 25 percent cut in the White House staff is one thing I know Clinton talked a number of times about as being a huge mistake. Had he known what a burden that would cause and how many problems that would cause for the administration, he would never have proposed it. At some level we certainly figured a way to get around it, because what we ended up doing, and I don't know the specific numbers, we ended up getting a lot of detailees. It's a numbers and a budgeting game.

The White House staff budget numbers were, I'm sure, cut by 25 percent, but we were able to do that by getting people detailed from other departments and agencies to the White House for extended periods. I think there were limits of six months or a year—

Pfiffner: Yes. GAO [General Accounting Office] keeps track of that.

Friendly: But that was a common way of getting around that commitment. But it's tied to the recruiting process. I keep coming back to Bruce Lindsey, who obviously was one of the President's closest confidants. He was also a good friend. For the first two years in Washington he actually lived at my grandmother's house in Georgetown. Bruce is a peculiar guy. His life was really about Bill Clinton and the White House, and it took a horrible toll on him personally as well. He lost an enormous amount of weight, became very unhealthy, and got caught up in being labeled an unindicted co-conspirator. He had mountains of legal bills, and his marriage broke up during this time. There was a lot of heartache from being such close friends with the President.

An interesting example, Bruce is a man who was as close as anybody in the White House to the President. Literally, he traveled everywhere with us. He was as close a confidant as there was. I remember Kelly saying to the President as an aside. "By the way, did you know that Bruce is living with Andrew's grandmother?" This was a year or so into the administration. The President had no idea. The President would almost never ask about you personally, how you were doing. It was so much about him. This is, I think, a familiar attribute. Even to this day, when we see the President, Hillary would certainly ask, if Kelly is not with me, "How's Kelly, how are the children? How are you doing?" The President is very much still focused on himself, and I think that's a common thing.

Anyway, that's a long way of saying that recruiting the Presidential personnel was such an important task that Bruce was really in charge of that for the first year or so of the administration, ensuring that our political people were placed appropriately. People were taken care of in terms of ambassadorships. Like any administration, it's the process of doling out the largesse in positions, in ambassadorships. It's well documented that donors and supporters get treatment, but then there are also a number of personal friends who got posts—everybody from Phil Lader to Strobe Talbott. Not to say that those were unqualified for the positions, but then there were also friends and former colleagues from Georgetown who got ambassadorial posts and positions like that.

Recruiting was certainly a time-consuming and cumbersome process, and I know a number of mistakes and challenges that we faced in the beginning were because we didn't have staff in place. And it took a long time for the agencies to fill up and staff. I'm not sure to what extent it was because it was controlled by the White House. In a lot of places it's the White House that keeps the reins on the political appointees at the top levels of these agencies. We were probably really slow in the White House in vetting, accepting, or approving those appointments.

That's also tied to Mack and your questions about the White House and the organization and how efficiently or inefficiently it ran. As I mentioned before, I had worked under Mack when he was Chief of Staff and then more directly for Mack when he was Special Envoy and I was an assistant to him. I have a great deal of respect for him. He's a very bright guy, but ill suited for the role of Chief of Staff. There's a guy named [James A.] Skip Rutherford who told a great story of working for Mack when Mack was chairman of ARKLA, the Arkansas-Louisiana Gas Company, based in Little Rock. I guess Skip was in that office with Mack.

There used to be a large jar of quarters on the secretary's table outside Mack's office. Every time the staff came out of a meeting and Mack had changed his mind on something, they'd put a quarter in that jar. They said that jar was constantly jam-packed because as wonderful, as smart, as bright as Mack is, he was incredibly indecisive.

Pfiffner: Sounds like Clinton, in the sense of keeping all of his options open.

Friendly: Keeping your options open until you're absolutely pressed to make a decision. Yes, I think that's definitely the case.

Riley: Were you surprised when he named McLarty?

Friendly: I was surprised because I didn't know Mack at all. But there were also a couple of other people that I never knew. I didn't know who Bernie Nussbaum was. I didn't know who Howard Paster was. I really didn't know who Tony Lake was. I knew Sandy, but that was through family. He was very close to Pamela Harriman, so I knew him that way. But there were a number of people who were, I guess, Washington establishment-esque. Mack certainly didn't fit that role. I didn't know where Bernie came from. My experience with the campaign was with the mechanics in the campaign. But why Mack over Mickey or Eli Segal or some of the other people I knew from the campaign—yes, it was a little bit of a surprise.

Riley: I don't want to steer away from Jim's questions here.

Friendly: It was clear that Mack was chosen because of his close ties with the President. I guess you can read it many ways—the President doesn't know many successful business people. Mack and the President were the two rising stars. It's been well documented in Arkansas. Mack took the business route; Clinton took the political route. I think everyone thought that Mack would have been Governor before Clinton would have been Governor. Maybe it was because of that close relationship, but also because of an assumption of his business success, the President thought this was a perfect candidate.

He can be a liaison with the business world. Here's a well-respected Fortune 500 executive and he's a close friend. I can trust him implicitly and I also can continue to manage the place. So I don't know if the President realized that Mack wasn't going to be a successful manager. I don't know what he was thinking. I don't know how different it would have been, frankly, if Leon had been the Chief of Staff to start with, but they took on very different roles.

Leon's expertise of dealing with Congress was invaluable. Had that expertise been used in the first part of the administration on all of the issues, as opposed to Leon doing it just on the budget issues, who knows. Leon was extremely helpful, along with Howard Paster, in getting the first budget deal done. That was absolutely crucial.

Pfiffner: To have the balanced budget.

Friendly: And without Leon and Howard Paster playing the roles they played in those positions, if Leon had been distracted by being Chief of Staff, maybe it wouldn't have been successful. I don't know.

Riley: But there's an inference in Jim's question that I think is fairly commonplace among those of us who are looking in from the outside, and that is, the President probably wasn't ready for a Panetta-style Chief of Staff at the outset.

Friendly: I imagine he wasn't. He was quite clear on the agenda he wanted. I'm not sure that he knew how complicated and how demanding his job was going to be. Scaling from Governor of Arkansas to being President of the United States is a huge step. The microscope that you're under and the issues you have to deal with—the challenges are just magnified.

So I'm not sure if it was a purposeful decision to have somebody, but the lack of structure and clear reporting lines and organizational driving—there were too many independent players. There weren't enough enforcers. I was looking through some of the timelines and the notes.

When Gergen came to the White House, there were mixed emotions. I saw how upset George and Dee Dee were, especially. I remember when the story leaked; we were in New York or Philadelphia the night before. It was a Friday night and Dee Dee had just been on the phone with George and George was obviously devastated that we were relying on this ex—[*knock on door, wife and child come in. Introductions*].

I was just talking about when Gergen came. I was saying it was mixed emotions. I remember how depressing at one level that we had to—here we are sort of admitting defeat, having to accept this Republican in our midst, but he was a professional. For good or for bad, he knew how things were supposed to be run. I remember saying to him, explicitly, "I'm glad you're here." That Saturday morning when we made the announcement in the Rose Garden, I said, "I'm glad you're here because you can help bring some order and structure."

Kelly Crawford Friendly: Remember when he asked you, "Do you have a copy of the schedule a month out?" And Andrew said, "We don't even have a copy of tomorrow's schedule." And he said, "My gosh, that's not how we used to do things."

Friendly: That's right.

Riley: This is why it's fabulous having two people at the table.

Friendly: I explained that you joined at the convention, did advance work, were a "basement babe" with Nancy, answering the phones, doing the mail.

K. Friendly: It was total chaos. A couple of mornings after Clinton was elected, there was no structure. They didn't know what to expect at all. I'll never forget. The postman arrived and he had those boxes of mail.

Friendly: I told him the story.

Riley: That's okay, go ahead.

K. Friendly: We said, "Oh my gosh, all that mail." And he said, "I have something like 16 more in the back of the truck." Chelsea's report card and their gas bill were mixed in with a letter from Jimmy Carter and thousands of random people writing to him. We had to go through every single piece of mail. Hundreds of people sent gifts in. I remember a man arrived with a painting. He just knocked on the door to the Governor's mansion—

Friendly: The Secret Service door.

K. Friendly: He left the painting; it wasn't even finished. He left it with a little palate of paint to finish up one corner because he was so anxious to get it to the President. It was absolute chaos. You'd have the phone ringing and Rosalynn Carter would be on one line—

Friendly: And crazy Marilyn on the other, as I told them.

K. Friendly: So it was total chaos.

Friendly: But then you came to work with us in the Oval Office as Nancy's assistant, Nancy's deputy.

Riley: When did you find out that you were going to get your job?

K. Friendly: Not until we were here. During the inaugural, everybody was staying at the Blair House. We weren't actually staying there, but we were working out of there. We had to take everything from the basement over to the Blair House to run stuff. Bruce Lindsey said to me, "We're so excited. We'll see you tomorrow at the White House." I said, "I don't have a job, so if you need me, I'm happy to come." He said, "No, no, you do have a job, you should talk to Nancy. You're coming." That was how I found out. Then Nancy said, "Oh my gosh, you *do* have a job. I forgot to tell you."

This is January 19th. The morning of January 20th we were with them at the Blair House, helping get them off to church service. They went across the street to the White House to say hello to the Bushes and ride up to the Capitol with the Bushes. We got left behind.

No car for us, no nothing.

Friendly: No tickets to the inauguration. We walked.

K. Friendly: We walked. There were I don't know how many—

Friendly: Half a million people.

K. Friendly: We were like the last four. We had been with him two seconds ago, and we watched him get sworn in—

Friendly: Not even watched. We couldn't even see a speck up there.

K. Friendly: I mean from practically down here. That's how crazy it was. I have one funny story from the transition, about the gifts. Did you tell them about it?

Friendly: Tell them in your terms.

K. Friendly: There was so much stuff coming in. The President is so wonderful. He absolutely loves anything that anybody sent. It was just fabulous. Wood-back chairs with his head made out of papier-mâché in the back—all kinds of random stuff. At the end Mrs. Clinton, Carolyn Huber, and Capricia [Marshall] were trying to pack up their house because we were leaving in a couple of days.

They had their whole life to pack up and get organized and the President kept taking stuff from downstairs, saying he wanted to take it with them. There'd be 500 ties and he'd take 20 of them up. Then Hillary would bring them back down. One night it was late. He had all this stuff and I was following him around. He'd say, "I want to take this with me, I want to take that with me." I had this armful of stuff. He said, "Take it all upstairs so it gets packed." I was walking by the stairs, and Hillary was at the top of the stairs. She said, "Take that downstairs. We'll never get packed, never get done here. Get back downstairs. I don't want to see another thing." So I'm

walking back down the steps, and he said, “Take it up. I told you to take it up.” I handed it to him and said, “You deal with her. I’m not getting in the middle of this.”

Friendly: This is so last minute. It’s classic, like anybody. You see how human people are. Yes, they’re suddenly vaulted into this incredibly important position, but they’re also very human. They’re packing up 15 years worth of memorabilia of living in this house. The movers are there with boxes upon boxes and they’re moving their whole life to this new, big house.

K. Friendly: They had no idea what to expect. It was stressful.

Friendly: So, back to Gergen.

Riley: Jim is going to have to leave, and we’re trying to get a few of these things taken care of.

Friendly: So again, I was incredibly pleased at one level that we were having an adult, someone who has been there before who can help bring some structure, some organization. I wasn’t really thinking of it in policy terms—*now we’re going to cave and we need some more Republican policies.* I was thinking of some order and structure to what is unfortunately too chaotic a White House. It was also part of the shuffle. When George moved to his less visible position, he was no longer doing the briefings. Dee Dee was going to do the briefing. So it was an elevation of Dee Dee.

K. Friendly: I don’t think she saw it that way. I think it was hard on her, too.

Friendly: It was certainly hard on her.

K. Friendly: And the way they handled it was I think really hard on her because it was a surprise.

Friendly: It was absolutely a surprise. The way the mornings would work, especially in those first six months, more often than not it was the President coming in for a nine o’clock meeting and instead of saying, “Okay, I’m ready to see Tony Lake and the briefers,” it was, “Where’s George?” Because he would have seen something in the newspaper that morning, or more likely than not, Mrs. Clinton was up, had read the newspapers and gotten him all worked up about something. “How could your staff let this happen? Your staff is not serving you well. Your staff is screwing up. This is inexcusable. How could they get this story so wrong?”

You could tell by the manner of his walk and by his mood that he’d been beaten up or he’d read something and he would say, “Where’s George?” immediately. So it would be about ten or fifteen minutes of George—with Mack often—but George going in and getting beaten up. Nine times out of ten it was something he had nothing to do with, but it was seen as a failure on some level in our communications department.

George was also the sounding board because he was pulled in so many different directions. He was then sitting in all the policy meetings and he was that political sounding board that we talked about before. He was the campaign expert and policy person to try and give some political—George was also meeting with the pollsters, the public policy people, and the political people. He was having his hand in far too many things.

Riley: And the Hill.

Friendly: And the Hill, yes, because he was the conduit to the Hill at one level. He was also expected to be the briefer to the press. The poor guy was way overworked. So it was definitely good to lighten George's load. I know that he felt his role diminished by having Gergen come in though, because there was certainly now a Gergen political and public policy role, as well as some of the mechanics and order having gotten him in.

In terms of bringing some more structure around the walk-ins, we were talking about Mack and how ineffective—we can redact, we can hold everything back.

Riley: In fact, we're going to break in a few minutes and review the ground rules with you.

K. Friendly: Mack adores Andrew.

Friendly: [redacted] Nancy helped to try instill some order and structure and also tried to be the gatekeeper along with us. She was the one giving us the directions of the people who can walk in without an appointment: the Vice President, Hillary, Chelsea, and Mack. Everybody else needs to ask and check with us first, including Tony Lake. Clearly, if Tony Lake goes in, there's a problem. He needs to go in. But the others—more often than not George would go in, but we were supposed to check first.

So having more structure and discipline—it was nice to have no dress code, but the White House needs a dress code.

K. Friendly: And we were made fun of because we were already so young that if there was ever a time that Andrew was in Paris and showed up at an event without a tie, it became a story in the *Washington Post* that those young people don't know how to dress even when they get there. They were looking for anything to make us out to be—

Friendly: The young, inexperienced, inept kids. Blue jeans in the White House, it's not appropriate, and that should have been restricted. In fact, Evelyn Lieberman, who eventually became a Deputy Chief of Staff, but prior to that was the enforcer on Hillary's staff, she was Maggie's [Williams] Deputy Chief of Staff. It was refreshing to have that kind of structure and enforcement. It would have been better if we had had those kinds of ground rules ahead of time. At the same time, having some free thinkers and flexibility is a good thing.

K. Friendly: People often said that that was the reason that Betsey Wright was not brought along in a Chief of Staff role, because she had controlled things so much in the government. Clinton actually wanted more control of it, so having someone more like Mack, less like Betsey, allowed him to sit around the table for four hours and talk about one nitty-gritty piece of policy, whereas Betsey Wright would never have stood for that. If it was part of the meeting—great. Sit down and do it.

Friendly: She answered the reason as to why Betsey didn't come, and I didn't know.

K. Friendly: You should ask somebody. I don't know this firsthand, but that was the sense that I got. Somebody like Nancy would certainly know. But I know that her style that had been part of the Governor's mansion was not brought along in the early days to the White House. It was always, "If Betsey were here, things wouldn't be—"

Pfiffner: Yes. My impression is that Mack wasn't so much a bad manager as that Bill didn't want to let him manage.

Friendly: I think that's probably pretty accurate. I think, though, Hillary was one of the first to see the pitfalls of the chaos, the over-scheduling. To me, over-scheduling is a lack of discipline. Everyone knows that Presidents get pulled in. Every schedule, every day, gets changed because you have to react to something. What is actually put on the schedule is not necessarily what happens. The fact that we were scheduling four or five events open to the press a day at the beginning was poor management and poor communications policy.

Riley: Did the President contribute to this?

Friendly: Of course.

K. Friendly: He wanted to do everything. He had more energy than all of us. He would love to do four different policy announcements in one day, and actually had worked on all four of them.

Friendly: Because they'd show how hard he was working and that he had this broad agenda. He wanted to prove that he was going to be delivering on it, that we were doing all the things we talked about doing. The problem is it all got lost in the ether, because in reality, the only thing that got covered was gays in the military.

K. Friendly: And we would sit there, day after day, watching the news in Betty Currie's office. He'd be so frustrated because what we'd done all day for 24 hours would in no way be reflected in what was on the television. That was so frustrating to all of us. It was so demoralizing. We did things today that really had an effect on Social Security or Medicare—

Friendly: Family medical leave—

K. Friendly: Family medical leave really has an effect on people's lives, yet we were talking day after day about gays in the military, which quite frankly doesn't have an effect on very many people's lives at all. He would have spent ten minutes on gays in the military, but ten hours on family medical leave.

Friendly: The 25 percent staff cut elevated the importance of having interns. Obviously, that's a theme that comes in later on. Do you have anything to add about the 25 percent staff cut? We relied on interns for a lot of help. Not for policy, but for the mechanics.

K. Friendly: I think going into it, it was, "Oh, we'll just cut 25 percent everywhere," and no one really took a look. Actually it's nice to have someone who does filing because we didn't file a paper for two years. I think that there was a lot of stuff done instantaneously that shouldn't have happened.

Pfiffner: One more thing—when Panetta came in, the thing with Dee Dee. It sounded like Panetta decided she's got to go and then she appealed it to Clinton. And Clinton—

Friendly: I remember that exceptionally well. Leon decided that Dee Dee had to go, and that was his prerogative. Understandably, Clinton felt an enormous amount of loyalty. Dee Dee was clearly very upset. I remember when she went in and talked to the President about it and he said she could stay. Obviously that undermined Leon, but here's somebody who was with him from the very beginning. The press liked her. There was always a tension the President had—and this is a horrible part of the Press Secretary's job: You have to be liked and effective with the press corps because they rely on you. You serve two masters.

I know at times the President questioned whose interests she had in mind. I mean, that's the nature of any Press Secretary. Do you care more about the press or are you taking care of me? But I remember clearly the day she went in to talk to the President about her leaving. That was also demoralizing to us young campaign staff because here's another sign of the campaigners, these young, hardworking, energetic, and determined people being pushed aside for the professionals coming in.

K. Friendly: She was the highest profiled woman, and there were a lot of white men sitting around the table with Clinton. The women in the White House were *really* upset, and upset about the way it was handled. I think Clinton played golf with Mike McCurry to interview him. We were all, "You couldn't go play golf with a woman?" It was a classic way of the insider boys going out and having a game of golf, and, "Boy, they got along well. So let's bring McCurry in."

Friendly: But Mike was fantastic.

K. Friendly: I adore Mike. I'm very close with Mike. But just the way it was handled.

Riley: But that's a persistent theme throughout, right? Because there are a couple of women who were at what arguably would have been senior level positions. Christine Varney and Joan Baggett, right?

Friendly: And Carol Rasco.

Riley: Carol had the title but not evidently the full range of responsibilities—

Friendly: She didn't have the full range of responsibility, but she had an enormous amount of influence with the President. The President respected her.

K. Friendly: But she wasn't part of the core—

Friendly: No. So there wasn't a woman who was part of the core circle—

K. Friendly: Except for Dee Dee. Dee Dee was.

Friendly: And Nancy, but not on public policy.

K. Friendly: And Nancy, but on a different level.

Riley: Let's pause here. We're about to lose someone.

[Jim Pfiffner leaves. Break and background on interview procedure]

Riley: Let me come back and ask you, Kelly, to tell us what your position was in the early phase of the administration.

Kelly Crawford Friendly: When I came the morning after the inaugural, I was a staff assistant in the immediate Office of the President. Most of what I did was as assistant to Nancy Hernreich. Have you talked to Nancy?

Riley: We have not yet.

K. Friendly: You definitely should. As Andrew I'm sure told you, she managed the President's day-to-day schedule with Andrew. But a huge part of what she did was control the paper flow. Anything the President signed also came back through me. I decided if it was something that he should have in his personal files, whether it would go into the archives, and made copies of stuff so he had a record of things. All the pictures that he took I marked so he could sign them for people, that kind of stuff. Another huge part of my role, and how I spent a ton of my time, was taking care of all the friends and family who visited him, people who were coming to Washington. Hundreds of people a week came to see him.

Friendly: Everybody in Arkansas knew Bill Clinton. They all wanted to come see him—

K. Friendly: And he wanted to see them all. I'd do a memo that would have the letter and stuff behind it saying, "Joe Schmo is here on Saturday. He's with the Arkansas Realtors Association and there are 40 people." He'd write on the side, "Want to see him." Rarely would he say, "I don't want to see him." So not only did we put people in the radio address, but on a day-to-day basis we were always trying to put people into a helicopter departure or get them in for a quick photo in the Oval Office and that kind of stuff. So I took care of all the friends and family who came to see him.

Riley: Where were you physically located?

K. Friendly: I was in the West Wing. The first couple of days, I was in the office with Nancy Hernreich. Then that office became George's office and I was in the office across the hall. Bruce Lindsey was on one side, then there was a little double door and I was in it with four assistants in that room.

Friendly: Linda Tripp.

K. Friendly: Linda Tripp sat in front of me—

Riley: Your good buddy.

K. Friendly: Actually I was pretty close with her, scary as it may seem.

Friendly: The radio address was a big piece—

K. Friendly: The radio address is what I did handle.

Friendly: The radio address every Saturday. The President gives his radio address at 10:00, or 10:06. More often than not we did it live, which was unusual. Previously, Presidents Reagan and Bush used to record them, for obvious reasons. Why have to do something live if you can record it? But we turned it into an event because we had to make everything more complicated than it needed to be.

K. Friendly: And it was his one opportunity to really see everybody. We used to have sometimes a hundred people sitting in there—

Friendly: In the Oval Office, listening while he recorded.

K. Friendly: Afterward, he would go up and take a picture with every single person. I'd stand next to him with a piece of paper and say, "Mr. President, you remember Andrew Friendly. You remember Andrew's mom and his great-grandma." And he would say, "Ah, yes." So I'd stand there with him and make the introductions.

Riley: How did you educate yourself on this? You're not an Arkansan.

Friendly: Honorary.

K. Friendly: Yes. I was deemed an honorary Arkansan. Nancy knew all these people, so she was the one. I'd say these people are coming and she'd filter it. But I'd talked to them ten times that week because they were all so nervous about what to wear, what time should we get there. Then they'd remind me or I'd tell them. But I know all of Arkansas now.

Friendly: But then you also unfortunately got caught in the middle of Johnny Chung.

K. Friendly: That wasn't so much, Johnny—I just testified before Congress that there were some Chinese businessmen who were in town who got into the radio address through the DNC and through Mark Middleton, but ultimately I was the one who was standing there and introduced him to the President. When the radio address ended, the President was furious that they had been part of it and that they had gone through the political way, through the DNC, and through me.

Riley: He knew at the time?

K. Friendly: We knew at the time that it was a question, didn't know that it was a mistake, but he said, "Who are those people? Do we know who they are? Why were they here, Kelly?" I got my notes and said they were here through the DNC, that so-and-so asked us to get them in. He said, "Did they go through Tony Lake and through the NSC? That's who they should have gone through, because they're Chinese businessmen." They brought a very rare piece of ivory, something that was inappropriate. I remember that day saying, "You're never close to the

President until he's yelled at you. Once he's yelled at you, you know that you're part of the inner circle." He yelled at me. He screamed. I ended up having to testify before Congress about it.

Riley: This was much later, right?

K. Friendly: This was in—

Riley: Ninety-six?

K. Friendly: No, because I left in '95.

Riley: I didn't realize. Most of the Chinese stuff comes later than that, as I recall.

K. Friendly: When we were testifying before Congress it came up, but these guys—it ended up that it wasn't that big of a deal, but it was one more sign of people—

Friendly: Buying access.

K. Friendly: Buying access to the DNC.

Riley: Jim put out a bunch of questions before he left, and since you're already thinking about that, then I can come back and probe on some of these a little bit. Both of you have mentioned Bruce Lindsey. We haven't interviewed Bruce yet. He said he'd talk with us after the President's talked with us. [*laughter*]

K. Friendly: We can convince him.

Riley: No—I'll see Bruce next week. He's on our advisory committee and very supportive. I was sort of making a joke, but at the heart of it is a little bit of mystery about exactly what Bruce's role was in the administration.

Friendly: And rightfully so, I guess. Bruce, what's the term? Consiglieri—that was Bruce's role. He, along with Nancy, were the institutional knowledge. They were the unquestioning, loyal, supportive, be there from day one, gave up almost everything to be there, to support the President. Bruce really did almost give up everything—

K. Friendly: His marriage.

Friendly: His marriage, his health—

K. Friendly: He left his kids behind. But I think that with the Clintons, there was a little bit of skepticism about everybody. Like you're not quite sure, when there are a lot of leaks. No one ever questioned that it would come from Bruce or Nancy. Anybody else in the West Wing of the White House could have been a part of that, but I don't think Bruce and Nancy ever had a single interest in power, money, anything, except for the Clintons, for Bill Clinton.

Riley: So he was just a persistent presence for anything that the President wanted a sounding board for.

Friendly: Yes. But he was also a calming influence for the President. He was the sounding board—

K. Friendly: And he was Whitewater. He had all the documents on Whitewater. He, with Jim Lyons, did the Lyons Report. He was a huge part of that. He lived with Andrew's grandmother in Georgetown. He'd go home at night, at ten o'clock. He had really no home. He was sleeping in the third floor of her house and worked his tail off during Whitewater.

Friendly: But his role for the President was the card-playing friend, the run-anything-by friend, because he's not going to open his mouth. He was a little bit the legal troubleshooter, obviously, because it was the Whitewater stuff that he spent a lot of time troubleshooting. But it wasn't just Whitewater, it was a lot of other things, including in his job as Director of Personnel ensuring that these people were all taken care of. Then in the counsel's office it was ensuring that the Clintons' issues—that it wasn't just the Office of the President that would be protected, but it was Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton who were being protected as well.

K. Friendly: I'll never forget—this is such a telling part of the President and Bruce's relationship—Bruce gave everything to the President. One day I mentioned to the President something about, "Oh, you know Bruce has bought an apartment. He's going to move out of Andrew's grandmother's." He'd lived with Andrew's grandmother for a year and a half, two years, and the President said, "He lives with Andrew's grandma?" He never even knew where Bruce went at the end of the day. They never talked about that. So I think it was probably a pretty one-sided relationship. But that's typical.

Friendly: It was typical of Bill Clinton. From our experience it was certainly not typical of Hillary.

K. Friendly: She knew.

Friendly: She knew everything about all of her staff. She was interested, she cared, she asked questions, she was involved. But as we talked about a little bit before, it was definitely all about the President.

Riley: Did the President have close personal friends?

K. Friendly: He had lots of different groups of close personal friends. He had had old, old friends to whom he was very close, like David Leopoulos and Carolyn Staley, who were his childhood friends. He was close to them.

Friendly: But they're very different—

K. Friendly: They're very different. Some of them came to Washington. Then he had his Georgetown friends, and there were a few of them that he was really close with, a few Yale people. But someone like Bruce spanned all that.

Friendly: Bruce was a friend in many regards, but he wasn't a drinking buddy—not that the President drinks. He didn't play golf. Webb Hubbell was as close a personal friend—

K. Friendly: Both of them with Hillary, and Vince—

Friendly: Vince Foster.

K. Friendly: As couples, I think they probably did a lot together.

Friendly: We haven't touched on that at all, but that was a devastating blow when Vince killed himself. That was the summer of—

Riley: Ninety-three? I'm almost positive it occurred—

Friendly: July of '93. I remember reading it in here and it amazed me that it was—

K. Friendly: But the types of friends that they had were different from the types—

Riley: Gergen comes in May.

Friendly: July 20 of '93.

Riley: Why don't we talk about that since the issue has been raised. Where were you when you got the news?

Friendly: I didn't get the news until the next morning when we arrived at the White House. It was late at night when the news broke and I remember it was one of the few times that the President went without the press. There was no pool on duty.

Riley: He'd been making a *Larry King* appearance that night, but neither of you—

Friendly: I was actually there for the *Larry King* show.

K. Friendly: That's when Mack told him, wasn't it, during—

Friendly: Yes. I was there for the *Larry King*, but I left after—Mack must have told him, but he must have gone. I just didn't know about it.

Riley: I think they wanted it to run long and there was a concern that some caller might have gotten the news and broken it to him, so Mack I guess had broken in. But in any event—

Friendly: I remember the *Larry King* show was being taped in the residence on the ground floor. I left and didn't hear anything, I guess. Maybe it was in the news the next morning. Maybe I heard it that way, but I remember arriving at the White House and the gloom, the shock, with Nancy. I knew who Vince was. I knew the President and Hillary were very close to Vince, but I didn't know Vince.

K. Friendly: The people in Arkansas really knew him. All the Arkansans were much closer. His kids—our intern, Jennifer Pierce, was friends with his daughter. He was, in many ways, close to a lot of people.

Friendly: So it was incredibly upsetting. Then we all went back to Little Rock for the funeral.

Riley: Did the President ever talk about this—

Friendly: Not with me, no. Wasn't there a White House staff meeting soon after that talking about the importance of balance and the importance of the work we were doing? I think it was later that summer.

K. Friendly: That was all Hillary's doing. Occasionally they would do something when something really bad happened. Wow, we've got to make sure people are feeling good about themselves. So there would be something in the East Room. They'd gather.

Friendly: I remember after the first hundred days for example, everybody got a rose and a note from the President and First Lady saying, "Thank you for all of your hard work. We're doing great work for the people. Keep it up."

K. Friendly: I think the sense from them, too, was that people did not feel great about their jobs. It was hard work and you weren't getting any—

Friendly: We were getting beaten up.

K. Friendly: We were getting beaten up left and right. They felt that way and I think they occasionally would realize that people around them were feeling that way.

Friendly: So I was just looking in terms of the timeline. I don't know if you want to do it—

Riley: That's as good as anything else. That may spur some memory.

Friendly: Then August 10th is when the deficit reduction plan was passed. Gore did the tie-breaking vote. That was a huge day. I remember clearly. Obviously, we had what we called a war room. We had many of them, for each of these legislative battles, but that was clearly a victory. As meager a victory as it was, it was an important milestone. After what had been a very difficult seven months, it was a sign of some real accomplishment.

K. Friendly: I think people had no idea at that time of the value—

Friendly: Right. It was still very much of a crapshoot.

K. Friendly: A question at that point.

Friendly: It's not here on the timeline, but I know then they went off to Martha's Vineyard for their first vacation. I remember—

Riley: Did you go with him?

Friendly: I flew up there with them, I spent a day with them, but I actually then went on my own vacation on Cape Cod to get away from them. I can talk a little bit more about vacations.

K. Friendly: The success of Andrew's job was that he never vacationed with them.

Friendly: That's not true. I did vacation plenty of times with them.

K. Friendly: Rarely. You didn't go on the big, long vacations.

Friendly: That's not true. I was in Jackson Hole with them for a week; I was in Hawaii with them. Vacations were about the worst things to do with them. The term "vacation" means you're supposed to be away from the White House and from stuff. So everyone else, all the other staff, took it as their vacation too. It was the one time they could get away. So the times I had to go with them, Bruce and I would be the staff people. We would be it.

K. Friendly: And they didn't want to see you. They wanted to be on vacation too. They didn't want to be interrupted because—

Friendly: The military aide would have the CIA daily brief, and sometimes I'd be giving that to him, but I'd also be the daily update from the White House. Either it's messages to be passed, or sometimes it would be the Chief of Staff McLarty or Panetta calling, but more often than not it would be through me and sometimes through Bruce. So I'd be the nag. I'd be the one saying, "Did you call so-and-so? Did you do this? Have you signed these papers? Have you read this briefing material? George wants to know if you've signed off on this." But more importantly, or more painfully, I was the liaison with the Secret Service and the press corps and the advance team.

So even though they're on vacation, he can't be spontaneous. He can't say, "Okay, I want to go play golf." Or, "I want to walk on the beach" or "I want to go shopping." It was, "So, Mr. President, what would you like to do today?" Nine o'clock in the morning I'd be waiting there in the kitchen, "What do you want to do today? What do you want to do tomorrow?"

When you're on vacation, the last thing you want to do is map things out, but you can't just show up at golf courses, and you need people to play with. And those people you want to play with should be vetted because we've made the mistake enough times beforehand. "Did you want to play with so-and-so again?" Or, "So and so is available and wants to play." Then the Secret Service needs to know when you want to go. The local police need to know where you want to go, what you want to do. The press pool has to be waiting. And their inclination, like any normal people, would be, "I don't know. We're on vacation. We'll think about it." Meanwhile the Secret Service and the press and the police are all just waiting.

K. Friendly: And pushing Andrew.

Friendly: And pushing me to find out what they're going to do.

Riley: Because they'd like to have some down time too.

Friendly: Instead of having everybody on call, waiting around, it would be wonderful to give them a lid. We call it a "lid." "You have a lid for the day. You guys can all go home and enjoy yourselves."

Riley: A lid?

Friendly: L-i-d. We'd put a lid on the day. There would be nothing going on. "You guys can go home and relax." The press can stand down and the police don't worry because they're not going anywhere. The Secret Service could just stand by for an emergency.

So the job doing vacation stuff was miserable. Sometimes you're in some nice places, but the first pseudo-vacation was after the first foreign trip. The first foreign trip actually was a fascinating one. I'm jumping around here. The first one we went to Vancouver in April '93 to meet with [Boris] Yeltsin. Yeltsin was drunk. They had a meeting, then they went on a boat ride through Vancouver harbor and Yeltsin was tanked. It was remarkable.

K. Friendly: It wasn't the last time.

Friendly: It certainly wasn't the last time.

Riley: Had you been briefed to expect that he might—

Friendly: I think Strobe had given some hints that he might be. He liked the vodka. But I remember the times of Clinton having phone calls with Yeltsin. The way the phone call would work, Clinton would say something. Our translator would translate his into Russian, Yeltsin would listen, and then Yeltsin would talk in Russian. Their translator would translate to English, and Clinton would listen. So Clinton was always doing crossword puzzles or reading briefing materials or whatever when he was doing these foreign phone calls.

But I'll never forget, the phone calls with Yeltsin were always—Clinton would hold the earpiece up like this and put his hand over the mouthpiece and say, "He's drunk. He's drunk." It was usually late at night, Moscow time, when he'd be talking to Yeltsin. Tony Lake would be sitting in the room and listening on an extension, or somebody else would be in the situation room. It would always be the same, but the President was always, "Oh, he's drunk again."

K. Friendly: But they had a great friendship.

Friendly: They did.

K. Friendly: They definitely had a bond. It wasn't just—

Friendly: So while we're talking about Yeltsin, there was another trip when we went to the Kremlin and, for me, it was really amazing. Having lived in Moscow as a child, being kicked out of Moscow, and then returning with the President—we spent a night in the Kremlin. Yeltsin gave us guest rooms in the Kremlin. It was the President, the First Lady, and a small group of staff, including me. It was a Friday night, and the President had to tape the radio address for Saturday morning airing because he couldn't do it live from Moscow.

Friday night he was at a state dinner, or official dinner at least, with Yeltsin. Yeltsin, being a true Russian, had toast after toast after toast with vodka, and the President, drinking hardly at all, if ever, got tanked. Here we are in the Kremlin, and after dinner, one of the protocol officials walked us through some of the great halls of the Kremlin in the middle of the night, which is spectacular. The President is all beet-red because he's had this vodka, and he's supposed to do the radio address recording.

We're sitting in one of these beautifully ornate rooms, a holding room in the Kremlin. The Russians have put out a huge spread of caviar and smoked fish—extraordinary—and the President is half drunk, trying to do the radio address. It must have taken three or four attempts to do the radio address, because he kept laughing.

K. Friendly: And he probably had two glasses of—

Friendly: No, I bet he had more than that. But that was a remarkable evening. So we were talking about Yeltsin, vacations, and trips. The first real foreign trip was to the G7 meeting in Tokyo.

Riley: This is before the August vacation?

Friendly: Yes. This is July 5th, '93.

Riley: Somebody is going to have some down time associated with that trip.

Friendly: July 4th we went to Philadelphia. Then there were horrible floods in Iowa and Illinois, and it looks like we stopped in Eldridge, Iowa, and Moline, Illinois, and then we went on to San Francisco. Then we flew from San Francisco to Tokyo. There was the G7 meeting in Tokyo. This was our first real foreign trip. It was pretty extraordinary, the full majesty of the Presidency, you have two huge 747s flying and the whole thing.

We went on to Korea from there. I remember in Seoul we were supposed to stay at the Hyatt Hotel and there had been an explosion. One of the boilers had blown up two days before we were to arrive. At the last minute they weren't sure if it was a bomb or what it was. We ended up moving to the Ambassador's residence.

That night there was a state dinner that Kelly Craighead and I did not attend. We went off shopping in Itaewon, which was the cheapo, knockoff district of Seoul. We got ties and all this other knockoff stuff. I remember coming back to the Ambassador's residence, to the President and First Lady, showing them all of our wares, and the President and First Lady ogling and loving all this stuff and saying, "These were actually gifts to you from the shop owners?" And the President said, "Oh, that's wonderful, we should give them a signed, autographed picture for them to hang up." We all thought that was a wonderful idea until we realized that these are all knockoffs of American products. The idea of them having a signed picture from the President up on the board—

K. Friendly: We remembered Charlene Barshefsky when we were in China and went shopping on that street—

Friendly: The "Silk Alley" out of Beijing.

K. Friendly: The Silk Alley, which is all knock offs, and we're thinking, *How could you possibly be doing this? If this doesn't undermine American companies then what does?* And she was the Trade Representative.

Friendly: The next morning in Seoul, remember Clinton was famous for going jogging. Well, the Korean President wanted to go jogging with President Clinton at the Blue House, which is the President's residence in Seoul. The President of Korea, whose name I can't remember right now, was considerably older and not in as good shape. His idea of jogging was essentially power walking. They had this little track on the grounds, so we showed up.

The Koreans and Japanese are much more formal, and they had this as a press event. Both Presidents were in their tracksuits at 7:30 in the morning. We arrived and they go walking around the track together in front of all the press. Here they are, the two Presidents doing their exercise in the morning. For the Koreans it was very important seeing this symbolism of the relaxed, vivacious young President exercising with their—I remember the President finishing that, saying, "Can I go for a jog now?"

Riley: Did you ever go running with the President?

Friendly: No, I didn't.

K. Friendly: Andrew doesn't run.

Friendly: It would have served me well. I'm sure I would have had more energy than I did.

Riley: Anyway, you're still on vacation.

Friendly: After that trip we stopped in Hawaii on the way home to spend a couple of days. We went to Pearl Harbor. The President laid a wreath and then we spent a couple of days of down time. The President, everybody, stayed at this hotel—the Kahala Hilton I think it was—a beautiful hotel, beautiful little beach, but the problem was the press were staying there with us. The President and the First Lady were staying in this beautiful suite upstairs.

This is our first realization that the President and the First Lady can't stay in a resort at a hotel, because when they came down to be on the beach, it was a public beach. The press were obligated to film and cover it. They didn't have any private time. The President was thrilled because there was a beautiful golf course right there and he played golf, but for Mrs. Clinton it was horrible. There was no privacy. It was just a disaster.

Of course Kelly Craighead and I were the ones to get the brunt of what a disaster it was. "It's not relaxing. How can we be on vacation? We can't even go outside to the beach or to the pool. We're in a fishbowl. It's just not tolerable."

Riley: So at that point, you're having to think about how can we—?

Friendly: How can we improve on this? Can we come to a truce?

K. Friendly: So many other Presidents had had money before, and they had families that had—the Clintons and most of the friends that they hung out with didn't have estates.

Friendly: That they could lend them.

K. Friendly: They didn't have any of that kind of support. So it was different for them.

Friendly: So you started thinking, *Where can they actually go for vacation? How can we do this so that they can be alone?* Actually on subsequent trips to Hawaii, there is a military R and R that had private houses they stayed in. It was actually a great solution. Then they borrowed people's homes that were much more private, where they could actually go out and sit by a pool and go swimming in Martha's Vineyard. But it's part of that fishbowl, being kept in prison, that the President and Mrs. Clinton did not feel like they had any privacy, any free time.

Riley: They liked going to Martha's Vineyard?

Friendly: I know Mrs. Clinton especially loved it. The President liked it, too, because he got to play golf. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there were a lot of the same people that they saw—Vernon Jordan and Ann [Jordan] and a lot of the Washington crowd, but Martha's Vineyard in many ways became much more of an extension of the social scene. Then for obvious reasons, political reasons, it didn't make sense for them to keep going there, but the President loved it because he could play golf. He had great golf and lots of friends. He loved going to the parties. He's an extremely social person.

K. Friendly: And there were lots of interesting people—Bill Styron and his wife.

Friendly: And Jackie Kennedy.

K. Friendly: When you asked about friends, Vernon was a great friend, and I think it was great to have somebody who was on the outside of the White House. He was the one really close person who wasn't doing White House. I mean, he was in on everything, but a really close friend of his.

Friendly: Not to say that he wasn't benefiting from the relationship. So the vacations were definitely tough.

Riley: We talked a bit about golf over lunch, but you said you had some golf stories—

Friendly: A couple of quick golf stories. I don't golf and I never understood the incredible fascination and the passion that he has for golf. Later in the administration he got to play more. I know that we made a mistake—he was offered before he took office a membership at the Robert Trent Jones course, is that where it was?

K. Friendly: I think it was the other, where your uncle—

Friendly: Avenel? He was offered a free membership at a nearby course here that he could have accepted prior to becoming President, but decided not to. So he was limited to play, unless he was a guest of somebody, at those courses. He was limited to playing at the Army-Navy Club, which was convenient, but I know that he was resented by many of the members there. Not just resented, but disliked. He certainly felt limited by only being able to play that course. He would go and play some of the other—the Robert Trent Jones course he played a number of times. Also, remember the head of the military office, David Watkins, took a helicopter to Camp David

and went to play golf as well. That act undermined any chance that the President could ever take a helicopter to go play golf anywhere. It was seen as so extravagant.

Riley: Is it your sense that that actually was a legitimate—

Friendly: David Watkins's taking—? No.

Riley: David's story was a legitimate story? He was just there to play golf himself; he really wasn't—

Friendly: No, I'm sorry. He was doing some type of advance work. There was a justification for taking this trip, but it still wasn't appropriate for him to be taking a military helicopter as a staffer. Even as the head of the White House military unit, in our minds—

K. Friendly: It was the kind of thing that the Clintons were so—all that isn't really there just to use unless there's a reason.

Friendly: There are legitimate reasons for the President to use a helicopter to go to play golf. Resources, time constraints, saving the police—

Riley: Saving the commuters.

Friendly: There are all kinds of reasons, but because of that fiasco by David Watkins, the President could not use a helicopter. So he was limited in that sense as well. That frustrated him. But other golf issues. There are plenty of examples of what I call Presidential prerogative, the mulligans, where the President would take three or four shots and only count one of them—

K. Friendly: The Secret Service were making a joke out of it.

Friendly: One case in point: We were in San Diego, in del Coronado, the Coronado Island. The rest of the staff were waiting at the airplane and the President pulled up in an incredibly jubilant mood. He gets out of the car and says, "I broke 80, I broke 80!" And this wonderful Secret Service agent, Billy Sauls, who is this big, black man, very outgoing and funny. Clinton's saying "Broke 80, broke 80." I looked over at Billy and Billy is shaking his head, saying, "No." And I laughed. Clinton saw Billy and said, "Yes, I did. I did break 80." Billy kept shaking his head, no, no. "It's all in how you count the scores, Mr. President."

The President did have, in many regards, a really good relationship with some of the agents. In some of the cases the President would play in miserable weather, darkness. He'd play as long as he possibly could. He had limited chances to get out and he was going to take advantage of any time he got out. I remember in one of the cases he was playing close to darkness and the Secret Service have infrared binoculars. He hit a shot, and according to the agents, he hit a shot that went way to hell. No one could see where it was. So he asked the agents with the infrared binoculars and with the viewfinder how far the shot went and where the ball was.

Not being a golfer, I didn't go on a lot of these trips with him. But the golf was a wonderful way for him to relax, to get some type of a break, and also to get some work done. It was a very

useful political tool to take members of Congress, Ambassadors, and foreign leaders to golf. That was a wonderful way—

K. Friendly: He went with friends a lot too.

Riley: Did he have favorite golfing partners?

Friendly: Vernon was one—

K. Friendly: He played with Vernon a lot. There were some regulars, people who came in from out of town, like Mac Geschwind. He came a couple of times. People he'd played with in Arkansas would come to town.

Friendly: Then there were also political golf partners, people he wanted to ensure that he would golf with as thank-yous or for political reasons. Those were less fun for him obviously, but we would again try to be as careful as possible and did a lot of screening of these people to make sure that he's playing with the perfect folks. It became oftentimes not as relaxing for him as it could be.

Riley: Sure. He's on duty. What else did he like to do to relax?

K. Friendly: Read. He read a ton.

Friendly: He read a ton. Part of my job and Kelly's and all of us in the Oval Office was ensuring that he had a full number of books, but he was always given books. I remember countless times we would stop—there used to be a mystery bookstore up on Connecticut Avenue—

Riley: By Dupont Circle.

Friendly: Yes, by Dupont Circle, and we would go to the Hilton Hotel up there for events and on the way back, "Can we stop at the mystery book shop and run in?"

Riley: He would want to run in?

Friendly: He would want to stop and run in.

K. Friendly: He loved to do those things that a normal—

Friendly: Yes. He loved to do that, to run into stores, to see people, to shake hands, run and get a cup of coffee somewhere. "You know, if I actually stopped and saw somebody, I'd actually feel like a normal person once in a while." It was his minor way of rebelling. "I know we're late for something, but give me a break here. Let me run into this shop." I mean, going shopping at Christmas time.

K. Friendly: He loved to shop.

Friendly: At Georgetown Park or at Union Station, it was his chance to, well, first of all, to see real people—

K. Friendly: And to feel like something he was doing was normal.

Riley: Did you have to close down the whole place in order to make it secure for him to go in?

Friendly: They didn't close down the whole place, but the way the Secret Service would do it, as long as it was a surprise that he's coming, it was okay. They would just let people stay who happened to be there, but once he got there—

K. Friendly: They didn't let new people in.

Friendly: They'd screen people and put up ropes.

Riley: So he liked to read—

Friendly: He loved crossword puzzles, was a fanatical hearts player. He loved movies.

Riley: Did you play hearts with him?

Friendly: I played some hearts with him, on the airplane and on the helicopters, especially on the airplane—it was sort of a sanctuary, because especially during the campaign, you'd go from stop to stop to stop. It was exhausting. It was the one place where you could decompress. You could be reached by telephone, and sometimes there was paperwork to be done. Sometimes you'd have guests on board that the President would have to entertain or at least be with, but it was a chance to watch a movie. There were VCRs [videocassette recorders] on the plane.

It was a chance to play hearts, to take a nap, to do crossword puzzles, let his hair down, relax for a second, put his feet up. The staff felt that way—at least I felt that way as well. Here I am, spending all day every day with him. The last thing I want to do is also play hearts with the man. I'd much rather sit by myself or sit with some of my colleagues, my friends, shoot the breeze with them and watch a movie with them. Some other staff lived for the chance to play hearts with him.

Riley: Hearts and not poker—

Friendly: It was almost always hearts. And he loved trying to shoot the moon. He would compare heart scores. We'd land at Andrews Air Force Base, he'd be in the midst of a game, and he'd be in his jeans and casual clothes. We'd be sitting there while he finished the game. He'd run up, change into a little bit nicer clothes, come off the airplane, then we'd start the game up again on the helicopter and he'd play the whole time on the helicopter until we landed and then say, "Okay, let's finish the game inside. Come upstairs."

Riley: So a very competitive card player.

Friendly: Very competitive card player.

Riley: Did he have favorite card-playing companions?

K. Friendly: Bruce.

Friendly: Bruce, certainly. Doug Sosnik, who was a political director. He played a great deal with Bob McNeilly, who was chief photographer. Who else did he play with? Sometimes with the medical doctor, [Eleanor] Connie Mariano, a wonderful woman. Who else did he play with? The traveling National Security Council people would play, and sometimes the other traveling Chief of Staff person or Staff Secretary.

Traveling with the President—for those of us who did it all the time—gets a little bit old. It's hard to talk about the experience of traveling with the President. It's often a reward or something really wonderful to do to staffers who worked very hard, giving them the face time, giving them the excitement of traveling on Air Force One. You try to be cognizant of that and let other people have some of that excitement of being with the President that you take for granted.

I remember so clearly the first time we went on the helicopter and on Air Force One. I think the first time on Air Force One was this trip to Detroit where I told you Dave Carpenter, the agent, came to the front door and the crowd thought it was Clinton. First of all, it's an incredibly dramatic experience having Marine One land on the south lawn if you're standing there watching it land. We would often do rope lines, invite people, guests, friends, and people from Capitol Hill, interns, to come out and shake the President's hand or watch him take off in the helicopter.

That first trip, I remember going out, walking to the helicopter. The military aide could have briefed you on the protocol. Usually you'd wait until the President goes on. He goes on the front stairs, the staff come on the back stairs. Similarly on Air Force One, the President goes up the front stairs. If you're on the helicopter, you wait until he gets in the plane, then you can follow up the front stairs as well. But it's all so new and dramatic. Here you are, walking to get onto this icon of America, Marine One, on the south lawn. You lift off and have the most spectacular view you can ever imagine, taking off from the south lawn, of the Washington Monument. You fly right next to it and turn and fly over the Capitol and Jefferson Memorial, then land out at Andrews Air Force Base and park right in front of the 747, Air Force One.

You get off the helicopter and there's this absolutely gorgeous—another icon of America—gleaming 747, and walking up those stairs is a truly magical experience. It doesn't get old, no matter how many times you've flown on that airplane.

K. Friendly: It's so cool.

Friendly: No matter where you are in the world, it's magical, seeing that airplane. As I was mentioning a little bit before, we came to realize that taking the little old DC9 plane just doesn't cut it. It's a nice-looking plane—

K. Friendly: People want to see the big bird. They love it.

Friendly: There's a whole lot of power that comes with that big airplane. I remember all of us, like kids in a candy shop, when we first walked on that airplane. We all had dreamt about this day and actually getting to fly on it. Obviously, the Air Force crew was in some way excited to have us onboard, but they all really liked President Bush. The pilot especially was a former Texan, a Texas A & M pilot, very close to President Bush. President Bush had been a pilot in World War II, military, quite conservative, totally distrustful of us young people who wanted gays in the military. So it was a little bit of unease.

There were a couple of military aides who were very understanding of us and were much easier for us to relate to. There were certainly some times when there was some tension between us and the military support folks. I had, in large part, a much better relationship with the military aides who are, by their nature, at the top of their game. These are some of the top of the top. Since then I've seen them in the news because they've all been promoted and they're the future generation of leadership in the military. Except for one of them, [Robert] Buzz Patterson, who wrote a kiss-and-tell book afterwards, which is staggering.

That first trip they were showing us all the bells and whistles of the airplane. Here are the communications, here's how you make a phone call, and here are the televisions and the fax machines and the computers. The whole plane is designed to be a working office, and often we had to use it as such. The capabilities of the plane, while advertised, don't actually meet up to expectations sometimes, as is often the case. Sometimes the communications equipment on commercial jetliners was better than the equipment on Air Force One.

Riley: You haven't mentioned the towels with the seals on them and the little boxes of—

Friendly: The boxes of M&Ms with the seals are pretty neat, and the coasters. All the little trinkets are pretty neat, but I remember on that first flight, looking in one of the cupboards and the crew had neglected to remove three or four videotapes of Bush '92 campaign commercials bashing Clinton. They had been watching them during the campaign, and left them in one of the cupboards. "Guys, you should probably take this off. There's a new game in town."

Riley: I would have pocketed them.

Friendly: I know. I probably should have done that. But the magic of traveling on that airplane, especially when you're going overseas and you land in that airplane and they roll out the red carpet and the honor guards and honor band, the staff come down the stairs, then the President comes down, and the 21-gun salute. That's when you get the chills.

K. Friendly: And you pinch yourself. We did every day. This is the greatest job in the world.

Friendly: Yes, you do pinch yourself. You say, "How did we get here? How did we get to be part of this?" For all of the BS [bullshit] that we had to put up with at times, and the exhaustion and the frustration levels—then there were times, just any time you walk in the White House gates, or you get on the helicopter or the airplane, or you just walk into the Oval Office. I'll never forget the countless times walking into the Oval Office and there's the President sitting behind the Resolute Desk, the most famous desk, with the famous picture of John-John [Kennedy] looking out underneath it, and there's the President sitting by himself at the desk, head down, glasses, and I walk in, just me, and I look around. The great seal of the President on the ceiling and the seal mirrored on the carpet and I'd look at myself and think, *My God, it's like a Hollywood set. What am I doing here?*

Riley: You've done pretty well for yourselves.

Friendly: Incredibly fortunate.

K. Friendly: At 22 years old.

Friendly: But at the same time, you expect a certain level of professionalism and competence for the President, and there are plenty of times when you get disappointed about the support that the President of the United States gets, whether it's technology-based—I was talking about the telephone system and the computers and communications gear. I can't tell you how many times—the White House communications agency's primary job is to provide secure communications wherever the President is, in holding rooms, on the airplane, in helicopters, in limousines. There's a quick funny story.

The first overnight trip I think we made was in Chillicothe, Ohio. We stayed in some random little motel. It was one of the biggest things that ever hit Chillicothe, Ohio. The President had gone to do this town hall meeting and the local McDonald's had huge banners up, "Please, Mr. President, come for your free Big Mac." As was always the case, the hotel owner re-did the room with brand-new furniture, repainted the hallway.

K. Friendly: We used to say that Clinton's whole world smelled like fresh paint because everybody painted every room he ever walked into.

Friendly: The stench of fresh paint was everywhere. Be careful what you leaned up against because there's always fresh paint somewhere. But the White House communications agency, all the phones that they dropped, they put in every holding room or suite—White House phones with a big White House seal on it, with a direct-dial button to the operator. Traditionally they would take out the little hotel phone and just have the White House drop line, the direct number, the original operator, and they would cover up the dial pad and just have one button you push when you place a call because Presidents Bush and Reagan would place every call through the signal operator or through the White House operator.

I remember the first night we get into this hotel suite the President said, "How do I make a call?" The head of the White House Communications Agency said, "Mr. President, here's the phone. Just press one button and the operator will come on." He said, "I just want to make a phone call, just dial direct. I know the number. I just want to be able to dial direct. Where's the hotel phone?" He said, "We take that out." The President said, "Leave them in here. You know it wouldn't hurt me every once in a while to get a wrong number, have somebody call me by mistake."

K. Friendly: And they did install, I think, a line in the White House, which they probably ended up not using as much. They really had that sense, "We want to keep being normal people. We don't want every single call to be on the record—"

Friendly: Screened.

K. Friendly: We don't want to have to talk to the operator and check in. We just want to call people.

Friendly: We know people's phone numbers. We'd like to just be able to call out.

K. Friendly: There was a story, too, when Hillary and Chelsea went to the supermarket with one of the White House ushers to show them what they wanted to eat. I thought Hillary thought that

she would do that again, which I don't think she probably ever did. But they did want to just be—

Friendly: They upgraded the little kitchen. There's a tiny little pantry family kitchen in the residence, and they upgraded it a little bit so that they could actually—

K. Friendly: Make an egg themselves. Hillary didn't want to have to call down and get somebody to make her kid a fried egg.

Friendly: The President would say, "Leave the hotel phone in my room. It really wouldn't hurt me every once in a while to be called in the middle of the night and woken up and reminded that I'm a real person." But I think no one ever did because they still disabled the phone calling in.

Riley: I think you could very easily feel cut off. It's a real question for those of us on the outside about how is it that Presidents are able to maintain their sense of reality in the White House. How is it—most politicians develop their own ways and reliance on their own instincts and their own senses for detecting political reality as well as the reality of people around them.

Friendly: Clinton was brilliant in that sense. Obviously, the risk that you're surrounded by yes men and no one is going to tell you the truth or no one is going to question you. I'll never forget one thing he said. I remember it to this day. "There is no easy decision that gets to the President, never." That makes sense, because if it was an easy decision, somebody would have made it down the line. Every decision that finally has to be made by his desk is a tough one, a real challenge, a questionable one. It requires a lot of thought and pros and cons. So that's one thing. But the reality check—to an extent, the evils of polling are a way of, at some level, of a reality check.

The President would get weekly polls and would have, more often than not, weekly poll meetings. I know that there was a fair amount of fallout and anger with Stan Greenberg at the beginning. I'm not sure what it was based on, whether he was feeling that Stan wasn't giving him accurate feedback on what people's thoughts were, but there was a shift, and we can talk a little bit about Dick Morris and "Charlie." But in the briefing book, anytime the President went anywhere there would be a page about local prices, what did a gallon of milk cost in that community, what did gas cost—

K. Friendly: Remember George Bush—when you're talking about being out of touch, rightly so, George Bush, the father, had never been grocery shopping and seen those bar scans until he went on a campaign trip to see a jug of milk get scanned and said, "What's that?" Everybody said, "My God, you don't go to the grocery store anymore. You're out of touch."

Friendly: So carrying cash in his pocket—not that he ever spent very much of it—but he carried it.

Riley: We heard your story about Mrs. Clinton's check, by the way.

K. Friendly: My trying to cash it and the woman saying no, and my saying "Yes, I need the twelve dollars."

Friendly: But having a memo that said this is what a gallon of milk costs, this is what a gallon of gasoline costs, staples like bread and other things. Here are average home prices in this community, a kind of general demographic breakdown so you have a better sense, but no way of knowing what the political whims are. But there were political briefings for everywhere we went. Clinton—my God, this is a man who knew his results for every precinct in almost every state. He could do the breakdown of what the election results were, and sometimes in Congressional races what the Congressional results were by precinct.

K. Friendly: On rope lines he stopped and talked to people.

Friendly: Ad nauseum.

K. Friendly: That was his way of keeping in touch. He would hear stories and make us follow up with people, and then people would come to the radio address who didn't have their health insurance or this or that. He really did develop these bonds with totally random people that he met on a rope line.

Friendly: Part of my job as his aide was following him on this rope line, taking gifts from people as described in his book, taking things to be signed for autographs. But then a lot of times people would say, "I've got an issue with veterans affairs," or tell Clinton stories. He would integrate those stories into his talks, into speeches he would give. He'd use them as case examples. As Kelly was saying, often they would be invited for events and would be held up as examples of what's wrong and what's right. That was one way of staying in touch. But it's incredibly tough to stay in touch, to have a pulse on what's going on.

When you look at the breakdown of our travel in '93, this is a great way of doing electoral politics. Clinton visited California fourteen times. That's more than double anywhere else he went in the country. Obviously for political reasons, the feeling was, and has been proven true, thanks to demographics, and then in '94 twelve times, that California was the linchpin for Democrats. You have to carry California. If you look at some of the other states, there are whole swaths of the country we didn't visit that never were in play politically.

Riley: I don't think Alabama showed up.

Friendly: I'll tell you that the only time I've been to Alabama I was in Birmingham. I did a trip for Clinton in '92 during the campaign, and it was actually one of my disastrous trips. He did a speech in front of a fountain in downtown Birmingham. It was the day the Rodney King verdict was announced and the rioting happened in LA. I had put the stage in front of this beautiful fountain in downtown Birmingham, which was all good and well until you look at it on television and the fountain looks like snow behind him. It's just a pure white. You can't see anything except this snow. It was a disaster, especially because it was on the national news because of him reacting to the Rodney King.

Riley: What's the worst event you did? I'm sure there's got to be a bigger bomb than that.

Friendly: The worst event, one of the biggest disasters, was the healthcare speech to the joint session of Congress.

K. Friendly: Have you not heard this story? This is a great story.

Riley: Not from him I haven't.

Friendly: Talking about micromanaging and working on these speeches. The President would rewrite these speeches.

K. Friendly: Deb Coyle—remember that first speech? Previous Presidents had these things locked up at least the day before. I'll never forget Deb Coyle, who was supposedly his secretary with Betty Currie. She went on to be a—

Friendly: She was a professional secretary.

K. Friendly: She was amazing. She was in charge of the speech. Twenty minutes before eight o'clock—he's delivering this thing eight o'clock. In this room are Hillary, the President, I don't know who else—

Friendly: George.

K. Friendly: But tinkering still with the words of the speech. Then they had to take a copy up—

Friendly: That was one speech. This speech I'm talking about, it was the same type of thing, the President reworking, rewriting, until the very last second. This was a speech to the joint session of Congress introducing the healthcare initiative. I'm pretty sure it was that speech and not the State of the Union. The President had George ride in the limousine with him and Hillary. They continued to work on it, rewriting line after line after line on the motorcade up. We're five minutes away from going live and having him walk in at eight o'clock. We get out of the motorcade, George and I run to where the TelePrompTer operator is with the disk that has the latest version of the speech, and in fact the only version of the speech that the TelePrompTer operator has gotten.

The TelePrompTer operator had set up the TelePrompTers and was practicing, making sure it worked, using an old speech. We run up, George gives him the disks, and then sits with him and edits the text. Meanwhile, I run onto the chamber floor with the actual text version. The tradition is—I'm pretty sure this is the State of the Union, not healthcare—that the President gives a text copy of the speech to the Speaker and to the Vice President behind him, and then oftentimes the members of Congress have copies as well. Today that's the way it's done. With previous Presidents that was the way it was done.

K. Friendly: Not us.

Friendly: Not us. We had to reinvent the wheel. I go up and give a text version, put it on the podium with an envelope of some prior version that we had printed out for the Vice President and Speaker and then I stand right next to the podium while George is still working with the TelePrompTer operator rewriting. The President walks in to the joint chamber, walks down the aisle, goes up to the podium. George comes in and stands next to me in the chamber and the President gets up to it and opens the text and looks up at the TelePrompTer, turns around and says to the Vice President, "It's the wrong speech in the TelePrompTer."

The Vice President says, "What do you mean?" "It's the wrong speech in the TelePrompTer." You could tell, whatever the title, it's the wrong one. So the Vice President comes down off the rostrum, says to George and me, "It's the wrong speech in the TelePrompTer." We panic; we run to the back. The first seven minutes or so of the President's joint session he had the wrong speech in the TelePrompTer—

K. Friendly: And that moving in front of you—can you imagine how distracting?

Friendly: So we ran back there and the TelePrompTer operator was scrolling through trying to find—

Riley: So all of this stuff is flashing—

Friendly: Flying past him on the screens. He's trying to concentrate on the text, and he knows this so well—he's brilliant.

Riley: So he's got—

Friendly: He does have a text version—

Riley: But that's a different matter—

Friendly: Than what's coming up.

Riley: You've got this stuff flying past you and you know that something's really wrong.

Friendly; Something's really wrong. I get nervous just remembering.

Riley: I can tell.

Friendly: There's another story almost as bad. We figured out that what had happened was that after loading the new speech, the TelePrompTer operator accidentally switched back to the old practice speech that was on there. We finally figured it out, but it took us seven minutes to catch up to where he was until we could get it all working. Obviously, nobody in the country knew that it was the wrong speech on the TelePrompTer until we leaked it to the press to say, "This guy is so good."

K. Friendly: They said that no one even knew. When you guys came back that night, there was a party afterwards. A bunch of people were up in the solarium.

Friendly: The top floor of the residence.

K. Friendly: And Andrew or George said, "You should call the guy who works the TelePrompTer." Because he thought he was going to lose his job. That's his one responsibility. I remember Clinton called him, saying, "Don't worry about it." This guy was so relieved.

Riley: I can imagine.

K. Friendly: He wasn't going to get kicked out of the military.

Riley: I think you're right; I think it was the State of the Union. It followed the healthcare speech.

Riley: I think in the healthcare speech that was up there.

Friendly: You'd think we'd have learned our lesson, but the same thing would happen again and again, whether it was a speech to the nation from the Oval Office or a speech to Congress, any time we used a TelePrompTer, it was a recipe for disaster. The President was giving his address, accepting the nomination the second time around, at the '96 convention in Chicago—

Riley: Let me stop you here because this is another part of your job—

Friendly: As a trip director, I left the job—I'm jumping all around. I apologize. After the midterm elections, December of '94, I left as his personal aide and became the trip director. I was replaced by Stephen Goodin as his personal aide. As trip director, my role was working in the scheduling advance office, planning all these trips with the scheduling desks and the advance people, and then going on the trips and troubleshooting, making sure they ran smoothly. So it was a lot of similar responsibilities to the personal aide, but instead of worrying about the President specifically, I worried about the whole traveling party, how everything fit together, supervising the advance people.

At the convention in '96 I was the trip director, but I still was worrying about big picture issues. So the President gets up in Chicago at the United Center to accept the nomination, and the TelePrompTers—two small screens right by the lectern and a giant screen television in the back of the hall—three-quarters into the speech, the two small close-in screens stop working. The only screen that works is the far off one.

This is theoretically the most important speech the President is going to give during the election, and the TelePrompTer breaks. I could count on two hands the number of times we used a TelePrompTer, because the President just wasn't well suited to using one. He gave almost every speech off-the-cuff or just with notes, or we'd have these fiascoes of having him rewrite a speech. So we shied away from using TelePrompTers, with reason, because there would be issues.

Riley: Any other blow-ups?

Friendly: Oh there were plenty of other blow-ups. One trip to Italy—I'm trying to remember when it was—it was not the D-Day trip. It was before Leon was Chief of Staff. We went to Rome and saw the Pope. Maybe it was '94.

Riley: There's a foreign trip, a Presidential visit to Vatican City, June 2, 1994, an audience with John Paul II.

Friendly: That must have been it. So it must have been the same trip as the 50th anniversary of D-Day trip. The President saw the Pope and then we gave a speech to the people of Rome, with the Mayor of Rome. Instead of using a professional interpreter, we thought it would be neat if Leon Panetta did the interpretation. I don't know why we thought that would be a good idea, but we did. The President gave a speech and Leon did the interpreting, but it was totally flat. It was a

disaster, the interpretation. There was a back-up, a woman who did some of the interpretation as well, but she wasn't very forceful. It was a disaster. The crowd didn't react. It was totally flat. It was miserable.

When we get back to the Ambassador's residence and the President blows up, I think because Mrs. Clinton blew up at him in the car on the way back to the residence. I'll never forget sitting in the driveway, the President and Mrs. Clinton blowing up at me and Brian McPartlin, who was the lead advance person, about whose brilliant idea was it to have Leon and this woman do the interpretation. The crowd didn't understand any of it; none of the jokes came across.

All the rest of the staff decided to stand back by the motorcade while the advance person and I take the heat, and this poor advance guy had nothing to do with that decision. I don't know whose decision it was, but it was classic that people who weren't used to the temper and didn't know that it was brief and flash-in-the-pan would stand back and be shocked to see this and would let the rest of us take the brunt of it. Then that storm would just get blown off in some other way. It was one of the low points, and often they were related to exhaustion.

Whenever we would travel internationally, we were jet lagged, but you don't have a chance to recover from that jet lag. As soon as the President hits the ground he's expected to perform. He's scheduled from minute one all the way through, and anytime that there may be downtime, he wants to be a tourist. He wants to enjoy the fact that he's in Rome as opposed to taking a break and getting some rest. Any sensible person would have taken a break. He wants to grab the opportunity to actually see something instead of just being cooped up in conference rooms and official dinners. So it was always a combination of exhaustion and the like that made things very tough. But that trip—I've just got a couple of things that I remember about that trip while we're on it.

That trip was the 50th anniversary of D-Day, and it was one of the most powerful trips I remember, for a variety of reasons. We started in Rome and then did this event at the Nettuno American cemetery [Sicily-Rome American Cemetery] there, and we did this audience with the Pope. I'll never forget the clothing questions about what Mrs. Clinton would wear and whether she would wear the veil—not the veil, I've forgotten the name of it—or not.

As advance people and personal staff, you'd worry about the minutest details. You had to. You didn't want something to be screwed up and forgotten and embarrassing, because sometimes the most minute details were the ones that would cause the fiasco. But then at the same time, sometimes more often than not, it would be a larger issue that you thought would never be something that would blow up and become a bigger concern.

But this trip to Europe, the 50th anniversary, was fascinating because obviously, the President having been accused of being a draft dodger—we had invited Senator [Robert] Dole to come with us, the World War II hero and leader of the Senate. So the trip had all kinds of political overtones. But it was also a way for the President to make a very powerful statement with these veterans who were mistrustful.

We went to London and were with the Prime Minister and the Queen [Elizabeth] and spent a night on the *Britannia,* which was a pretty remarkable experience with the Queen. The next

morning a small group of us, the President and the First Lady, Kelly Craighead, myself, Mack McLarty, and one NSC person, all the staff who slept aboard had breakfast together around the dining room table—me and Mack, the President and the First Lady, Prince Charles, Princess Diana, not the Queen but the Queen Mum—it was quite surreal.

But back to the radio address as well. The President had gone to do this memorial event in England in the countryside. Then we went to Checkers to meet with the Prime Minister. Somebody had made a mistake about the time difference, and we had to do the radio address live from London back to the U.S. They had screwed up by an hour. We thought we had an hour more of time than we did, so we had to do the radio address from another location. We didn't have the uplink and the communications capacity to do it from where we were, so we had to tear through the English countryside to get to the site where the President could do the radio address. He arrived with two and a half minutes to spare to do this live radio address. Why didn't we record it? Why did we have to do it live?

K. Friendly: Why you didn't have a member of Congress or somebody—a canned speech that somebody could give.

Friendly: But that's the kind of thing. Continuing on that trip, we spent a night on the *George Washington* aircraft carrier and later were accused of stealing towels. I'm not sure if you remember that mini scandal. There was an accusation that the White House staff stole *George Washington* aircraft carrier towels. But the next morning, the 50th anniversary of June 6, 1994, it was an absolutely remarkable day where we helicoptered from the aircraft carrier right off the Normandy coast into the fog of Normandy to commemorate the storming of the beaches. We did three or four stops along the Normandy coast. It was one of the most memorable days in terms of the history associated with it.

We ended the day at Colleville cemetery [Normandy American Cemetery], the famous American cemetery overlooking the coast, with Senator Dole there. The political implications of having Senator Dole with us were incredibly clear. The President gave a remarkable speech that actually won over, I think, a number of veterans who were there. I'm not sure what the impact was back home, but for all of us, we thought it was a hugely successful trip.

Then we helicoptered to Paris and landed the helicopters in the center of Paris, a spectacular event. The next night we had a state dinner with President [François] Mitterrand. After dinner, he invited the President to the Louvre. I.M. Pei was a guest at the dinner, so we had a midnight tour of the Louvre with President and Mrs. Clinton, President Mitterrand, and I.M. Pei, and the Director of the Louvre walking us through the museum in the middle of the night.

Riley: How long was the tour?

Friendly: We spent about an hour. It was just remarkable to have that kind of place to yourself in the middle of the night.

Riley, to K. Friendly: Are you going to be able to stay?

K. Friendly: For about 45 minutes.

Riley: Why don't we take a break? I've got a list of questions mostly about temperament and personality and so forth, and it would be helpful to have you around.

Friendly: To extract more information [*laughter*].

Riley: Exactly.

[BREAK]

Riley: At one point you had said that the President was a multitasker, which is something that I hear occasionally. I wonder if you'd elaborate on that a little bit.

Friendly: He was remarkable in terms of his ability to multitask. He'd always have a crossword puzzle going, daily would rip out the *New York Times* crossword puzzle and would have a version of the Sunday crossword puzzle as well. He'd be doing that while reading a briefing book, while he was on the phone with a foreign leader or with anybody—

K. Friendly: Members of Congress.

Friendly: While he was being briefed for the next event by me—which, more often than not, I thought he'd be ignoring—he'd also have a policy discussion going on with somebody else in the room.

K. Friendly: He was good at it. He could do all of those things and take in every single detail. He was really good at the ability of maintaining all those conversations.

Friendly: I remember either Nancy or Kelly or Betty Currie or somebody would walk in with a folder of things that had to be signed. I'd be briefing him on something, somebody else would be briefing him on the policy at the same time, and he'd be proofreading letters and catching mistakes—

K. Friendly: Like, "Her middle name isn't Ann. It's Mary."

Friendly: The address is wrong; they've moved since then.

K. Friendly: Check this out. I think they moved down the street.

Friendly: People who weren't used to that would always stop and wait for him to do something and he would say, "No, come on, come on, keep going, keep briefing me, keep telling me, I've got limited time here. We're late."

K. Friendly: I think every person that ever briefed him walked away feeling like no matter what, even if they were "the" expert on nuclear—he always knew more than they did, always, whether it was by the questions he asked or just the interest he showed. Most of the time he probably did

always know more, but he'd be doing all these things and be carrying on this very high level conversation about something extremely detailed.

Friendly: There were other times when he'd focus like a laser beam and it would be incredibly intense. Not to trivialize his attention span and his focus, because there are countless times when I'd try and pull him away from something, whether it's a national security briefing, a political briefing, or a meeting with a member of Congress, and my role, unfortunately, was to try and keep him on schedule and interrupt him. I'd come into the room and first I would open the door. I'd walk in and stand there to be a signal. He'd ignore me.

The person staffing that meeting would shuffle around, sit on the edge of their chair, and signal that the meeting was going over. Inevitably the guest would ignore me as well, so I'd leave. But that would be the first signal. Five minutes later I'd come back in again and do the whole game again. Sometimes I'd pass the President a note. Maybe the guest would get the sense that it's time to go. The President would ignore me. The staff person would actually get to the edge of his seat or start to stand up. The guest would get to the edge of his seat and start to stand up and the President would say, "Oh no, don't worry about it. I have plenty of time," and he'd keep going.

It's a little bit of a political move because the President is showing, look, I've got all the time in the world to talk to you and iron this out. But it was also very much of his nature, wanting to get to every meeting. Sometimes, as Kelly was saying, the meetings would drag on and on and we'd go around in circles. That was the role that Betsey Wright played in ending when she was in the Governor's mansion. There weren't enough people to play that role of ending it later on. Mack to some extent would try, but was not as successful I think as Leon and Erskine Bowles were in terms of being an enforcer.

Riley: Other than the speeches, were there ever any occasions you recall where having these delays really created a headache or a problem for the President?

K. Friendly: I don't know if you talked about this, but in the early days, there wasn't this phone and office time, and he really had a sense that he didn't have time to think and write or—

Friendly: On his schedule. They set aside that time, that so-called phone and office time, which gave a chance for him to think or have some conversations if he wanted to, but to try to put those into a frame versus having a meeting just go on and on and on.

Riley: How early were those instituted?

K. Friendly: I don't know. You can go back and look at the schedule.

Friendly: It took at least six months before we started putting that kind of time in the afternoon, usually.

Riley: And this was partly as a response to him complaining that he didn't have time to think.

Friendly: Yes, very clearly. It was a constant refrain, "I never have time to think here. I never have time to myself."

Riley: You said one of the things that you got to be pretty good at was taking his temperature by looking at him first thing in the morning. Were there people who'd then touch base with you during the course of the day to find out what his temperature was?

Friendly: Oh absolutely. It would start off first thing in the morning. Before anyone would go into a meeting there'd be a temperature check, especially for George. The first call in the morning when I'd call George down, he'd say, "Okay. What's it like in there?" It usually was volcanic. Or you try to get a hint, "Do you know what he's upset about?" But it was a constant refrain. You give an update. You have 15 minutes on the schedule, but the reality is you really have only 10, and that means it would go for 20, because inevitably the President would be asking more questions.

It was always hard for a staff person to try to keep the schedule because they felt torn. I didn't feel torn. My responsibility was trying to keep him channeled, but the President would keep asking and would be much more inquisitive and probing and for these staff people, it's pretty exciting that the President is taking such great interest in the subject that they're totally focused on.

Riley: For those of us who are on the outside looking at this, the question was always, was in fact the President badly served by his staff in certain ways? Were there some mismatches for positions? Or is it the case that the President basically got the staff that he deserved? What you're suggesting is a bit of the latter—that in effect, the delays weren't staff-induced delays. This was a function of his own temperament.

Friendly: Oh, I believe so. He was very much a—maybe this is too simplistic, but let's make sure we discuss this and cover all the bases. Unfortunately, he sometimes did not make a decision until actually forced to at the very last minute. Sometimes those decisions were done sloppily because they were done at the last minute. I think a fine example is the pardons at the very end of the administration. That's a clear example of something that was done sloppily at the last minute. Mistakes were made doing that.

Riley: Did he play favorites on the staff? Were there some people who could get away with being sloppy?

K. Friendly: Oh, sure.

[two pages have been redacted**]**

K. Friendly: By you becoming part of the story. It's not about us. We're just there to serve him. It's about him and the decision he makes. But other people made it—

Riley: I suppose, since we're on the subject, my guess is that you were terrifically disappointed in the way things ended up after '98.

Friendly: Mind bogglingly disappointed.

K. Friendly: Andrew more so than—

Friendly: I was fortunate in that I left being his personal aide in December ’94. Stephen Goodin took over for me. Monica [Lewinsky] didn’t come to be an intern until the following summer, so I didn’t know her. I guess I saw her in the halls and she used my name somewhere, but I didn’t know her. So I never saw any of that relationship. In fact, Kelly and I had heard the story that Monica was telling, from a totally random friend—

K. Friendly: Who wasn’t even in politics.

Friendly: This girl said, “I heard a story about this girl who’s an intern who had been having an affair with the President—”

Riley: It didn’t come back to you through Linda Tripp, did it?

K. Friendly: No, no, no.

Riley: I don’t mean directly, but would she have been—

K. Friendly: I had left too. I didn’t know Monica either. It was Elizabeth Weed in New York—

Friendly: This friend who lives in New York had heard the story through friends in New York that this story was going around.

K. Friendly: And we said there always have been all kinds of stories like that.

Friendly: We said, “There’s no way it could happen. The President would not have an affair with an intern. There were plenty of other opportunities with adults who may or may not have had affairs with the President. It wasn’t something I worried about unless he was stupid enough to do it. I guess in all of our minds, it was an unwritten, unspoken agreement that once the President had told the Gennifer Flowers story, once he had the discussion on *60 Minutes* with Hillary, he agreed to be a candidate. For eight years, we’ll be fine. We’re not going to do anything stupid. I can control myself. I’ll be fine.

[redacted] So when I heard this story from a friend that had been going around New York, I dismissed it outright. I just said, “That’s not feasible.”

Riley: It’s not feasible because it physically couldn’t happen?

Friendly: Physically couldn’t happen.

K. Friendly: The access and that people wouldn't allow it. Nancy would put the kibosh on it in a second. And how this person would get in, how it would work. It didn't seem—

Friendly: The story broke—

K. Friendly: The night of your birthday.

Friendly: The day before my birthday, on January 23rd, or something like that, of '97, '98. I remember my brother and his now wife, who lived in Ecuador, came to the White House for lunch that day with my mom and you and it was an incredibly gloomy, depressing day around there because when the story broke there was, "No, this can't be true." But in the back of our minds, we're thinking, *I wouldn't put it by him.*

K. Friendly: There was so much detail, but I thought the story broke the night of your birthday.

Friendly: No.

Riley: [Matt] Drudge came out with it the day before it showed up on the front page—

Friendly: Then actually two days, or a day later, we had a birthday party dinner for me at my grandmother's house. It was all friends and colleagues and Bruce came. It was a lot of young people and obviously there's gloom, doom humor. George had actually just—

K. Friendly: Your uncle wrote a—

Friendly: George had actually used the impeachment term. He was the first person to say it could lead to impeachment. And my uncle, who had just retired as a *New York Times* reporter, R.W. Apple, Johnny Apple—

Riley: I didn't know he was your uncle.

Friendly: By marriage. He's married to my mom's sister. He came to this birthday party and I don't know that I'll ever forgive him for this—told Maureen Dowd that he had been at this party with all these White House people and the gloom and doom and depressing stuff that was going on there—

K. Friendly: He wrote the story.

Friendly: No he didn't. Maureen wrote it. So Maureen wrote a story talking about the gloom and doom at the White House and at a young person's—

K. Friendly: We need to go find the story, but it said—

Friendly: It didn't actually mention my name—

K. Friendly: An example of the White House, at a black-tie dinner, it said, throughout Washington, doom and gloom. If you're at a black-tie party, everybody's talking about it, even the young, the eager, the devoted people celebrating a 30th birthday party you feel the mood, implying it must be true because we were all so upset.

Friendly: I had actually told the President a week or ten days ahead of time that I was going to leave the White House, that I was going off to business school. I had actually gotten in. I applied right after the reelection, took off a year to go and work for Mack because there was an opportunity when he was doing Latin American affairs. I wanted to spend time focusing on Latin America, so I deferred for a year from business school. But when the President gave up on pushing for free trade areas in the Americas, we pulled back from getting the fast-track authority. So my role working with Mack, which was trying to push for that, really dried up because we gave up on that initiative.

I decided I was going to take time off to goof off, go do some trips for the President, then go to business school. I had told him just before the Monica story broke that I was going to leave. Then the Monica story breaks. It was incredibly off-putting and depressing and sad watching the story from afar, because obviously we were gone for that summer. Kelly left the administration; she'd been in the Treasury Department. Then we went off to business school. Business school is so consuming, but it was also distracting, seeing the story take place. For whatever reason, a couple of the TV networks kept using file footage of me with Clinton when they were talking about the story. So I'm at business school and these people say, "I saw you on television with Clinton." Then watching the impeachment hearings.

K. Friendly: It was horrible.

Friendly: I wouldn't talk to the President for a year—not that he made an effort to see me or anything, but I consciously—

K. Friendly: He came to Chicago—

Friendly: He came to Chicago a couple of times and I wouldn't go see him.

K. Friendly: He was so pissed. And I think there was this—they always ask this question of the Secret Service: Is there anything in your past that might embarrass the President? Especially with all of us, we *never* did *anything*, because we had these incredible positions. Even if there was something that maybe could have been legitimate, like a gift that really wasn't of value that was over the limit—

Friendly: Or if there was a preexisting relationship, if you knew it was someone you could justify accepting some type of gift or a dinner or something.

K. Friendly: We never did anything because we never wanted to embarrass him or do something, and then to think that he really embarrassed us in so many ways. In my heart of hearts, I adore the man. I think he's great. I guess I justified it that as disappointed as I am in the decisions that he made in his personal life and how it has colored everything and the way people view the work you did for him, at least the big decisions for things that really affected people's lives I feel really good about. He didn't betray me. Some people felt betrayed on some of the decisions he made. That wasn't the betrayal; it was more on a personal level.

Friendly: People will nitpick and say, "You know it was a witch hunt by Ken Starr." Yes, in many regards it was a witch hunt and they shouldn't have been looking into that. It was a man's personal life, and I agree. But to me the bigger issue was how could he have done it with a 23-

year-old girl? How could he have had that kind of inappropriate relationship with a young girl? And then—

K. Friendly: For all the people who hated him because he was a little bit of an outside person or didn't have great judgment, he played right into their hands.

Friendly: But then on top of it, the lying about it. I understand the reason he did it, the strategy he took and he didn't want to admit to it, but you know what? It's always the cover up that's worse than the crime.

K. Friendly: And all of us who had to go talk to Ken Starr's people and people who felt like they were betraying the President, knowing that he knew. We weren't, because we didn't know anything, but some of our friends—

Friendly: We still were subpoenaed. I still had to testify.

Riley: You got in the summary hearing.

K. Friendly: And I did too, I had to go talk to the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation].

Friendly: And we were fortunate. Our friend Stephen, for example, had tons of legal bills. Maggie Williams, my God, and others—I know the President feels guilty about that. But still, it's inexcusable. I'll never forgive him for that. But you have to take the whole record. I also will never be able to thank him enough for the opportunity I had.

Riley: Is there anything else you have on that that you want to talk about?

Friendly: No.

Riley: Was the President very good at detecting when people were kissing up to him? Did he like to be flattered?

K. Friendly: Yes he did.

Friendly: Yes, he liked to be flattered. He liked "yes people," but I don't know if he had enough of a bullshit detector. Not a great judge of character sometimes.

K. Friendly: At 23 I was the last person—he loved everybody. In a way it was something really sweet about him, but no, not at all. I think some of the political people and donors who surrounded him clearly had—

Friendly: People that he liked, or wanted to associate himself with, you knew that they were people doing it for their own good, for their own reasons, for self-aggrandizement, I think mostly around the fundraising. One of the things that clouded my experience enormously was seeing the influence of money, fundraising, and the impact that that had. We were extremely successful doing it. But the type of people we had to associate with, the amount of influence that those people had—by influence I mean the amount of time they spent with the President—it's a horrible part of our system.

K. Friendly: A horrible necessity.

Friendly: We the Democrats, Terry McAuliffe, and the President were exceptionally good at it. But judge of character? I'd question some of the people that he would eagerly associate with.

Riley: Maybe this is a good time to talk about Dick Morris because there are those who would suggest he fits that category. When did you first realize that—?

Friendly: I didn't know who Dick Morris was, other than Nancy—

K. Friendly: We were part of the cover—

Friendly: Nancy told me that if this guy, Dick Morris—I didn't know who he was—would call me, that I should just pass on his messages to the President.

Riley: Is this after the '94 midterms?

Friendly: No, this was prior.

K. Friendly: Was it prior? I thought the first time that Hillary called him was right after the midterms.

Friendly: Was it right after the midterms?

K. Friendly: I think so. You could go check it.

Friendly: I thought it was prior—

Riley: It's actually an important question, because I think the conventional wisdom is that Morris was called in once again after the devastation of the '94 midterms.

Friendly: I had thought that maybe my timing was wrong. I don't know how I would check that Dick called, that I was passing messages before the midterms. I remember explicitly that during the midterms we were radioactive. In fact I made a note in here that no one wanted to see us. No one wanted to campaign with us.

Riley: You're talking about the Congressional races.

Friendly: The Congressional races. Clinton was radioactive and there were all kinds of stories talking about how no candidates wanted him near, and that killed him. I mean, here's a man who was the best politician in the country, and not to be able to play a role—he thought he could make a strong argument why he should play and a stronger argument for the things we'd done and some of the mistakes we'd made. That absolutely killed him. But I had thought that Dick had been talking to him before, maybe towards the end of '94.

Riley: It wouldn't completely surprise me because I think that I have heard testimony from others that the contacts did predate the election.

Friendly: In fact, they did predate. I know for sure because I left as his personal aide in December of '94 and I remember explicitly before leaving being a conduit for messages.

Riley: It's important for us to know that.

K. Friendly: Nancy would know for sure. She was the conduit.

Riley: I'll try to make a note to ask her when we talk to her, but in any event, Nancy tells you that if you get any communication—

Friendly: If Dick calls, Dick will call through the signal operator probably or the White House operator, and he'll call for you when you're on the road. If he calls for you on the road, either make sure the President gets the message to call him back or just make sure that the President gets the messages.

K. Friendly: I don't even remember if she said, "It's Dick Morris," or "Charlie." I don't know that I knew who it really was. He'd call all the time and say things like, "Take a message for me."

Friendly: He'd only call me when we were traveling. When we were in the White House or when he couldn't reach the President directly or couldn't reach Nancy or Kelly—

K. Friendly: He'd call Nancy or me on a daily basis. He'd say things like, "Are you by a computer? Okay, take down this message." And he'd have you type up this message and he'd say, "Go walk it in to him right now." I'd say, "He's in with Nelson Mandela. I'm not going to walk in." And he'd say, "Walk it in there right now." He was just obsessive about this and calling. Then he'd arrive in the East Wing and come through to the residence, so we'd have to go meet him and walk him up. So it was this big—

Riley: This was when he was still undercover.

K. Friendly: Oh, yes, he was totally stealth. I don't think I knew his name. I think I thought he was "Charlie." Charlie left this message.

Riley: I'm trying to get a clear picture. You're supposed to go meet Charlie and escort him privately into the residence?

K. Friendly: Yes, and take these random messages about—I didn't even know what some of them were. I just remember him typing up—they were about polls and this or that.

Friendly: But he would say things like, "Use these words," or "Use this terminology," or "Next time he's with the press, tell him to say this." I didn't know the background, I was just passing notes on, but it was laughable, like a little game of cat and mouse that we're playing with the President. And he's a squirrelly man.

K. Friendly: You're getting messages from a great uncle from Eugene, Arkansas, saying "Tell the President not to say that or not to wear that tie." You don't know if he's legitimate or the great uncle's legitimate.

Riley: Other than Nancy is telling you that—

K. Friendly: Yes, yes, right, but I mean—

Riley: That you're supposed to do this, which I guess suggests to you that this guy is more legit than—

Friendly: Yes, but once you meet him, you wonder how legit this guy is. He's a squirrelly, squirrelly individual. Talk about judge of characters—you look at this guy, you start talking to him, and you wonder—

K. Friendly: Totally manic.

Friendly: I didn't get a sense of his brilliance. But he's off; he's squirrelly. And then it was only confirmed in spades when he's on the street here playing toesies with a hooker.

K. Friendly: I mean the kinds of people—

Friendly: It's a bad novel. Think about it—the President of the United States having sex with an intern, and his pollster is having toe sex with a hooker. It's a bad joke.

K. Friendly: So those are the kinds of things that were embarrassing to us.

Friendly: Embarrassing, they're horrific!

K. Friendly: Andrew is in business school and I'm working at this bank and these people are like—who are the people that *you're* associating with? It's a question of *our* judgment.

Friendly: Of course for me it's incredibly embarrassing, "Oh, you were the President's personal aide? So you were the one who was facilitating, securing, procuring."

Riley: Mrs. Clinton is usually given credit for being a very shrewd judge of character.

Friendly: Absolutely.

Riley: But on Dick Morris, she signed off on it.

K. Friendly: Yes. Dick is smart, and he was right about a lot of the stuff. I think that—

Friendly: The triangulation and the moving to the center—

K. Friendly: He was right.

Friendly: He was right, in retrospect. He's squirrelly. And in retrospect, look at his character and look at what he was doing.

Riley: Exactly. Well, he's on our list. We haven't interviewed him yet. That's one that—

K. Friendly: I'm sure he'll talk to you for ten days.

Riley: Excellent.

Friendly: As long as he gets lots of credit for it.

Riley: Well, I'll give him, at least on tape, all the credit he would need. I've just gone through the questions randomly here as they occurred to me last night. Does the President have a good sense of humor?

K. Friendly: Yes. I don't know if it's a sense of humor. He likes to laugh and joke and have fun and tell funny stories.

Friendly: But he's not a joke teller and jovial, a backslapper.

K. Friendly: But he's fun.

Friendly: Absolutely. He's a lot of fun to be with. But I get the impression about President Bush that he's much more of a jokester and prankster—

K. Friendly: Gives people nicknames—

Friendly: More fun to be around. The President was certainly fun and interesting and exciting and we would laugh a lot, but it's not as if he was a joke teller.

Riley: Sort of situational humor, making fun of your tie—

Friendly: Yes. And we would watch stupid movies on Air Force One together.

K. Friendly: Seeing articles in a newspaper that were random.

Friendly: And tell jokes—

Riley: Stupid movies.

Friendly: He loved the stupidest—the stupider the movie, the better for him. You really questioned his taste countless times, some of his fashion tastes, certainly his food taste. He had no sense of good food. None. I don't know that he would know good food from bad food.

K. Friendly: But this is Andrew Friendly who lives in northwest Washington. He came from Arkansas. I'm from Kansas City. I'm somewhere in-between.

Friendly: KC Masterpiece was a delicacy for the man.

Riley: And for any real, thinking American as far as I'm concerned.

Friendly: Air Force One food was abysmal.

K. Friendly: The military cooked it. It was slop. It was worse; it was like meatloaf—

Friendly: It was like canned meatloaf and canned vegetables and stuff that they buy—gross stuff.

Riley: Clinton probably grew up on that stuff from his grandfather's store.

Friendly: Then he's wined and dined and feted at the fanciest restaurants and the fanciest banquets in the world, but you know, I don't think he really cared. I think he liked food, but I don't think he really cared about food.

Then fashion sense—he had a horrible fashion sense. It improved over the years; he got better clothes. Early on, this tailor who worked with Donna Karan in New York came down. The Clintons paid for it all, brought down some really nice quality stuff and they got some good things. But they redid his private study in the residence, called the treaty room, in such heavy, heavy, dark colors. It was just atrocious, so overdone. It was abysmal. Not important. But back to his taste about movies. We'd sit on that airplane and watch—one example, the classically brilliant, stupid movie, *Dumb and Dumber*.

Riley: I love Jim Carrey, but that's one I haven't even been able to watch.

Friendly: It's a hilariously stupid movie, and there's Clinton sitting there. This is one of the most brilliant people I've ever met and he's sitting there chewing a cigar, playing hearts, watching *Dumb and Dumber,* laughing hysterically, but then also not getting some of the story line. I mean partly because he's playing cards, he's doing a crossword puzzle, talking to somebody, and watching *Dumb and Dumber*. But there I am trying to describe the plot line of *Dumb and Dumber* to the President of the United States. This is surreal.

Riley: So there are limits to his multitasking.

Friendly: There are.

K. Friendly: But that's what makes him so fascinating.

Riley: It's part Arkansas.

K. Friendly: It makes him real.

Riley: Of course, he's a Rhodes Scholar out of Arkansas.

Friendly: The contradictions are remarkable in the man.

Riley: Partly it's contradictions, partly it's being multifaceted that attracts—

K. Friendly: It enables him to connect with the normal person. My dad has no political background. When he met Bill Clinton he thought that he was the President's best friend. He makes people feel great about themselves. I remember even my dad said, "I can understand why some women would think that the President was coming on to them because I felt that way. I felt like he thought I was brilliant and wonderful." He makes everybody feel that way.

Friendly: Virginia Kelley was a great insight to the President. What a wonderful, warm-hearted woman, but also a slight edge to her, real character, the hair, her taste—

K. Friendly: Gambling and drinking and smoking, a fascinating story. The whole Clinton story is fascinating. It's a remarkable story, and he's a remarkable man.

Riley: So other movies you recall, other than *Dumb and Dumber*?

Friendly: *Dumb and Dumber* stands out as a classic. I mean, trying to explain the plot line of *Dumb and Dumber* to the President of the United States. We watched bad movies, John Travolta, *Black Hawk Down*. We watched—you name the bad movie.

Riley: That must have been a bit painful for him, I would think.

Friendly: I'm sorry, maybe not *Black Hawk Down*. Was it called *Black Hawk Down*?

K. Friendly: No.

Friendly: *Black Hawk Down* was the one about Somalia. That I did not watch with him. Somalia was one of the absolute low points. In fact, the families of some of the soldiers killed in Somalia, I remember them coming in. We were having an event in the residence of the White House, in the East Room, and the President meeting with one of the families in the Green Room and the father of the family lighting into the President, "How could you have let my son die in Somalia?" Yelling at the President, going off on him.

First of all, it was bad enough for the President. There were some real down moments. That was one of the worst.

K. Friendly: Oklahoma City.

Friendly: Oklahoma City after the bombing was one of the saddest things I've ever been to. When Ron Brown's airplane crashed and going to Dover to greet all the bodies.

K. Friendly: I think it's fascinating that there's no footage. Bush never went out, didn't allow cameras to go out and greet those bodies, and Clinton went out there all the time—

Friendly: To Dover.

K. Friendly: To Dover.

Friendly: But we weren't fighting a war with thousands of people dying.

Riley: There's a difference. I think one of the things that this President has been noted for was his ability to comfort people.

K. Friendly: Absolutely.

Friendly: So Dover, Oklahoma City—we spent an enormous amount of time with the family members in Oklahoma City and with the families—remember when the TWA [Trans World Airlines] plane blew up over Long Island and Ron Brown's plane—

Riley: Describe for us how he—

K. Friendly: He's a kind of preacher. He has this sense about him. He's very spiritual and very—

Friendly: Yes, that's one thing we haven't talked at all about—his spirituality. I certainly got a sense of that and I could see his comfort level in churches, where it was enormous. Kelly had a good deal of interaction with some of the ministers and the folks that the President would rely on who would come in and talk with him. There's a sense that the President would get a lot, but he would also give an enormous amount to these people when he'd go and comfort them in these horrible times, whether it was at the bombings or plane crashes.

K. Friendly: His words and his actions. His public words—

Friendly: But the private actions—

K. Friendly: He'd just hug you and hold you. Women and men—it was incredible to watch the comfort that he did provide to people.

Riley: I'm assuming that you were with him as he was getting himself prepared to go in. You said that he was never nervous in making a presentation. Did you get the sense that he had to do something different mentally or spiritually in order to get himself up for going into a—

Friendly: Not necessarily going in for an occasion, but he would come out of them, and you could see him absolutely drained and overwhelmed with how much emotion had just been taken out. Whether it was the Oklahoma City events or the meeting with families from Somalia—that was one of the toughest. Frankly, calling family of service members who had died—my God, what a horrible thing to have to do.

Riley: Were you in the office listening?

Friendly: Yes, I'd be sitting in the office listening to him having to do that, or meeting with family members, whether they're police officers, firemen, military officers. Occasionally, every now and then a police officer or somebody would be killed during a visit, during a motorcade. A couple of times police officers were killed during motorcades protecting the President, and my God, that hit home. These are guys who are just doing their job, helping to protect the President, and they got hit by a car and killed. Nothing worse than feeling some type of guilt, whether it was military death or—that was very tough. But he has an amazing ability to comfort people. He does.

Riley: He went through a very difficult period those first two years, not just the political problems, which would be difficult for any human to deal with, but the Vince Foster suicide—

Friendly: Then his mother died.

Riley: His mother dies, her father died, Ron Brown is killed in the airplane crash.

K. Friendly: Webb Hubbell.

Riley: Webb Hubbell is in trouble.

K. Friendly: It was tough.

Friendly: Whitewater.

K. Friendly: Whitewater was always there. Whitewater never stopped.

Riley: What kind of reserves does a human being draw on in those circumstances?

K. Friendly: You should ask Linda Lader that question.

Friendly: You compartmentalize stuff, too.

K. Friendly: You have to. You don't have a choice. You have to go on. It's like Hillary sometimes getting up and seeing her on TV. What is your choice? You don't have a choice; you've got to get up and do the job. He used to say, "I just get up and do my job every day. It's the greatest job." But you don't really have a choice.

Friendly: The alternative is you're just going to walk away. I don't know—it was remarkable. For the rest of us you hear these mini scandals or mini events or issues, whether it's travelgate or Whitewater or what have you, and you would compartmentalize it. But then you would also start thinking, *That's politics in Washington*. Unfortunately sometimes you start blaming it on politics and go tit for tat and say, "I don't believe it's the way Washington has to work." More often than not, it's sort of implicit—

K. Friendly: But how he kept himself up day to day, I don't know. He simply loved his job.

Riley: I think the other way, of course, is that you can become Nixonian, can start creating enemies where they didn't necessarily exist.

Friendly: I don't think he—

K. Friendly: He said that at heart, I don't think—

Friendly: That's not to say that he didn't definitely see Ken Starr as an enemy.

K. Friendly: Oh yes, but he was legitimate.

Friendly: There were not necessarily Nixonian enemies, but it was very clear in his mind and in Hillary's that there were people, a concerted effort—proven out, I would argue—to undermine the administration.

K. Friendly: And partly because they didn't play the game. They came to Washington but didn't play the game. They still socialized with their Arkansan friends, they didn't—

Friendly: But that wasn't the reason for the Republican attacks. The Republican attacks were a visceral dislike—

K. Friendly: But they didn't have those people to protect them. The people who often provided that shield of, "No, no, they're still one of us."

Riley: Andrew, I'd like to hear you on this point, as a fourth generation Washingtonian: did the President worry about not having enough friends in the Washington network?

Friendly: I don't know that he worried about it. I know I heard him talk about the Washington establishment. I think Vernon was his bridge to that Washington establishment. I know he was, to the extent that he had a bridge. There were a couple of other people in the administration who provided some of that bridge—Sandy Berger and other people who had been here and played the game for long enough. There was definitely a mistrust of typical Washington, the people who feed off of the way things are done here.

I never thought that they mistrusted me for being a Washingtonian or part of that.

Riley: You mean the Clintons.

Friendly: The Clintons. I know that the President didn't know for the longest time that, for example, Johnny Apple was my uncle. Here's the *New York Times* editorial page ripping into him all the time and I don't know that he knew that Johnny was my uncle.

Riley: But that was sort of a Howell Raines thing.

Friendly: It was a Howell Raines thing, and the President used to use Howell Raines's name in vain a lot.

Riley: Do you have any sense about what it was between the two of them?

Friendly: Don't know if it was a southern competitive streak or what it was, but clearly there was a lot of animosity there. The President felt it towards Howell, and it was clear that on some level it was mutual.

Riley: I think so. My hunch would be the same thing, that there's a sort of southern competitiveness. Raines fancied himself as not being nearly the pragmatist that Clinton was, much more idealistic.

Friendly: But there was definitely distrust of the establishment.

[K. Friendly leaves.]

Riley: Anything that you want to say about the Washington establishment?

Friendly: It was strange because the Washington establishment—clearly they didn't play with them here in Washington, but then they go to Martha's Vineyard and that's all they play with, right? I mean, the dinners with Kay Graham and with Vernon and with Begala, it's Washington

moved up to the Vineyard. So it was peculiar. They don't play the game here; they don't hang out with that crowd. And yet on vacation they do.

Riley: It may be important to note the timing on this. The first vacation occurs I guess in August, so again the damage may have been done by then. You've gone through a campaign, through an incoming transition. You've got eight or nine months. It might have been possible to win everybody back.

Friendly: I don't know. It was never a sense of us against them or a real concerted effort to exclude people. It just was we've got other things to focus on rather than play the Washington game, I guess.

Riley: I've asked you in more indirect ways about this, but I'll ask it directly here. How did he take press criticism? Did it bounce off him, or did it really—

Friendly: I think any of the Presidents or politicians who say they don't read the newspaper, don't look at polls, are full of shit. They're absolutely—excuse my language—lying because the Presidents, including President George Bush today, I know they read the newspaper. You can't avoid it. It's the best way to judge how their message is being translated. You can't watch every news report, every local news story. But it's also why we actively came up with a strategy of going around the national papers and going to town hall meetings, doing local interviews, doing satellite interviews to local stations, doing radio, doing roundtables with local press, with local reporters.

As I mentioned, the *New York Times* and I guess increasingly the *Washington Times*, was taken seriously, which is mind boggling, but the *Times*, the *Post*, the *Journal* were delivered every morning to the residence, and often in that first year, the President would come walking down to the Oval Office waving one of the headlines. The press office compiled the clips of all the relevant stories. He'd rip out a page of the clips and he'd scribble something across and say, "What's this about, George?" or "Dee Dee, how did we get this?" He'd constantly write notes to people to try to get something in the clips explained to him. So absolutely, he looked at the impact.

Riley: Leaks?

Friendly: Drove him absolutely nuts. People he suspected of leaking he wanted out of there, absolutely. Didn't necessarily happen, but he wanted. He said, "I want names. I want to know who's leaking, who's doing this, who's undermining our efforts." It drove him crazy.

Riley: Did he have suspicions of who they were?

Friendly: At least one person I know. First of all, I know he thought that Dee Dee and George were doing some of these things, and Mark Gearan and some of the communications people, the people who are supposed to talk to the press. He thought they were the ones who weren't necessarily serving him well. At times he definitely thought they were serving him well. But then David Dreyer, for example, who was one of the communications and speechwriters, one of the communication people—I think he was convinced that David was leaking, and I'm not sure what

that was based on. It drove him nuts whether it was in the White House or different agencies. The discipline the current administration has is really pretty impressive.

Riley: It is remarkable, isn't it? I guess every President is concerned about leaks, but this seemed to be a particularly porous White House, at least during the first year.

Friendly: Yes, and again, I think that was the fact that there was no enforcer in the place. There was no one who was going to knock heads.

Riley: So there was no cost associated with leaking. You were feathering your own nest.

Friendly: You were feathering your own nest because the relationships you had with reporters —maybe you were sticking around in Washington and your self-aggrandizement or something—

Riley: Or going to New York, not to mention names. Vacations, I think we've talked about extensively. I'm going to go back down through Jim's questions.

Friendly: I'll look through some of the notes I made here as well. The assassination of Prime Minister [Yitzhak] Rabin was a real low point. There are some fascinating stories around when Yasser Arafat and Rabin came to the White House for that famous handshake on the South Lawn. I think Tony Lake has talked about this, but there was an enormous amount of negotiations with Arafat about uniform, the clothes he was going to wear, whether or not he was going to have his pistol with him, and then with Rabin about whether he was going to shake hands with Arafat or not.

I remember that morning, before the actual event on the South Lawn, being in the Oval Office with Gore and Tony Lake and George stage managing how Clinton was going to facilitate the handshake, and literally walking through how the President was going to put his arms around the two of them and pull them together to make that handshake with him in the middle. But the negotiation with Arafat about whether or not he would have his pistol and what he would wear—just before we went out to the South Lawn we were in the diplomatic reception room, which is the room that leads out to the South Lawn, and it was just the President, the Vice President, Rabin and Arafat and me and a photographer in the room. That was pretty remarkable. That's one of the times when you pinch yourself.

Gore and I were standing, talking to Arafat, sort of keeping him on one side—there are no corners in the room—while the President and Rabin were talking in the other part. I knew how important it was to the President and how much effort he made to bring some resolution to that—similarly Northern Ireland, how much effort he brought to that.

Riley: You traveled with him to Northern Ireland?

Friendly: I did travel with him to Northern Ireland.

Riley: That by all accounts was a remarkable trip.

Friendly: Absolutely remarkable trip. One of those trips where you're exhausted, but you feed off the energy and the excitement, the enthusiasm, the potential of the visit, the historic nature of

the visit. Another important political trip for the U.S. as well was the trip to Bosnia when we went to Tuzla. This was the beginning of January '96, so Clinton had made the calculation—he had sent American troops in to hold the peace, native troops as well. It was a risky political solution. This was gearing up for the '96 reelection.

We decided that he would go to visit and see the troops, buck them up and show his personal commitment and support for this pretty risky mission. At first I went on the pre-advance, and we went actually to Sarajevo to see if the President could go to Sarajevo. The Secret Service and the military said, "God no, you cannot come here yet." But we went to Tuzla, our small base, we went to Hungary, to talk to American troops there, then went to Zagreb as well. It was an extremely important trip for local politics as well as U.S. national politics.

Riley: Let's move back more domestically and ask you if we could go through the Cabinet at the time and get your thumbnail sketches of the President's working relationships, or his interpersonal relations with members of the Cabinet. I'm afraid my memory is probably going to fail me in some of these.

Friendly: Let's see. Lloyd Bentsen was the first Secretary of the Treasury. The President had a great deal of respect for Secretary Bentsen. I'm not sure Secretary Bentsen had a great deal of respect for the President, but certainly some level of respect. But here's the wise, older statesman working for the young upshot, so there's certainly a political respect, I'm not sure how much of an economic respect there was. The President turned to Rubin for a large part of the economic agenda, but I don't know how much.

Riley: Those two got along. Rubin managed Bentsen's personal portfolio, didn't he?

Friendly: He certainly did. Bob Rubin is a remarkable person, both political and economic mind. He was very smart in politics, in how he managed his political relationships with the President and other members of the Cabinet. I think it would be very hard to find somebody who didn't like Bob Rubin and doesn't respect him.

Riley: And he seemed to almost have had a kind of singular level of influence with the President. Is that unfair to say?

Friendly: No. I don't think that's unfair. I think Al Gore had an enormous influence with the President, absolutely enormous. Now, at the same time, the President often, I won't say resented, but was not terribly eager for their weekly lunches, because the Vice President would come with a laundry list of issues that he beat up the President on, like, "Let's go after this, or after this."

I remember the President would stall and delay and stall and delay, going into those lunches that they would have—the two of them, weekly—in his private dining room. It was body language as well. At the same time, the President respected the Vice President's opinion. It was remarkable how much the Vice President participated. When you look back in history, how much he participated in all decisions, in all meetings, both domestic and foreign.

Riley: But you're raising that in relation to—when I say singular influence, the first thing that came to your mind was Gore as somebody who would have had parallel or superior influence—

Friendly: Exactly. The people with key influences obviously with the President, different types of influence, but Hillary, the Vice President, Rubin, George, clearly.

Riley: Bruce, but in a—

Friendly: Bruce in a different way, though. Bruce was a sounding board. He certainly wasn't a policy promoter or—

Riley: All right. What about Warren Christopher?

Friendly: Again, I think respected, too tepid. The President certainly respected and liked him, but there was never a warm relationship there. It was certainly a relationship of respect.

Riley: You didn't get the same sense that if Chris wanted to see the President that there was a—

Friendly: We wouldn't stop it, by any means. The President would see him, certainly, because Christopher played by the rules. He was used to a certain set of—the way things happen. He was cut-and-dry, stuck to a schedule, like Bentsen. These were the consummate professionals and were constantly frustrated by our seeming lackadaisical approach and lack of discipline. I think Bob Rubin was, as well, and to some extent Tony Lake too.

Riley: Some of those guys came out of much more structured—

Friendly: Different generations.

Riley: Christopher certainly by temperament was an organized person, right down to his wardrobe.

Friendly: Right. His wardrobe was perfectly put together, handcrafted clothes.

Riley: Absolutely. Bentsen I think—generational also. Rubin—corporate sector.

Friendly: Right. Tony—a little bit by nature of running a professional organization, the NSC, you are by its nature organized, most of the time. There were certainly plenty of times when they weren't. But compared to the political and communications operations.

Riley: Let's see, who else—

Friendly: Les Aspin at Defense. Obviously, there was a fair amount of tension around gays in the military and related stuff. Haiti was certainly an issue. President Clinton's relationship with President Carter—I certainly don't know the full history, but I do remember the specifics around Haiti and the true pain and frustration with President Carter and his negotiations in Haiti and the frustrations with Tony Lake and the Vice President. And the President's level of how they saw President Carter being a loose cannon, an independent player, in Korea and in Haiti both.

Riley: I guess the President's ambivalence about Carter had gone all the way back to his time as Governor—

Friendly: When Carter had the Mariel boat lift people.

Riley: Is that something that came up in conversations with the President?

Friendly: No, no, just background, I just knew it. But there was always clearly a tension between them.

Riley: With Aspin, were they simpatico?

Friendly: Oh yes. Aspin was a backslapper. He was friendly, outgoing, he was nice. Again, the President respected him, but I think there were still awesome tensions.

Riley: Because of issues—

Friendly: Policy issues, absolutely.

Riley: Ultimately Janet Reno goes in the Justice Department.

Friendly: Right. That's who—Kelly didn't get a chance to talk about it, but she was Janet Reno's personal press secretary. She did all of Reno's press. Clearly a great deal of tension between the President and Attorney General Reno. I don't know fully what it was all about. I know the President respected her, but I think also questioned some of her judgment.

Riley: Do you think this was after Waco?

Friendly: Yes because Waco was pretty early on. That was April 19th, so yes, it was clearly after Waco.

Riley: There has been some sense that—

Friendly: I'm not sure if he lost confidence in her. I don't think he lost confidence in her after that.

Riley: She became sort of a folk hero—not among the fringe, who blamed her for burning up children down there, but among other sort of nonpartisan Americans. This was a woman who stepped out front—

Friendly: This is a person who stuck to her convictions and said what she meant and meant what she said.

Riley: And came right out and said, "I accept responsibility for this." Was there, on the President's part, a kind of resentment that—

Friendly: I don't think it was a resentment. I think it was just frustration that she wasn't always on the reservation. Maybe a little bit of political tone deafness. I think there was some of that frustration, an independent player. She was doing her job and she was supposed to be independent, and this was a little bit understated, it was never explicit, but there was certainly tension about her independent streak.

Riley: That probably gets aggravated later on with all the independent counsels.

Friendly: Exactly.

Riley: Bob Reich, when he's at Labor?

Friendly: I think the President respected, but was never close. Bob Reich was slightly annoying.

Riley: Also a little bit peripatetic, like Al Gore, I guess. Both got an idea a minute.

Friendly: Absolutely, and a little bit of beating Clinton up on not pushing hard enough on certain things. Clinton went to a middle road as opposed to pushing more, pushing harder on some things. But there was no tension that I sensed there.

Riley: Did their personal relationship suffer as a result of Reich being in the Cabinet?

Friendly: I don't think so. I don't know; I didn't get a sense of it. Since then I know that Reich has been very critical of the President, but I did not get a sense at the time of a strained relationship.

Riley: Henry Cisneros?

Friendly: I think the President liked Henry a great deal. Obviously, he was clearly disappointed with how things happened. But Cisneros, Ron Brown, these are younger generation, little backslapping, little "good old boy," not the squeaky clean, straight arrow, Warren Christopher types. That's something that Clinton liked, that slight edge to them. You could tell a dirty joke around them. You wouldn't tell a dirty joke around Warren Christopher or Lloyd Bentsen.

Riley: Who else are we omitting?

Friendly: Hazel O'Leary. There was never really a sense of closeness.

Riley: Donna Shalala?

Friendly: Donna Shalala, now there's a pit bull—spitfire, I mean. I think the President had immense respect for her. I don't think there was ever a close personal relationship. But I don't know that there's any animosity, either. Let's see who else, agriculture—

Riley: Woolsey you talked about earlier.

Friendly: There was never any sense of warmth there; it was always strained, to my sense. Then to [John] Deutch it was a little bit better. There was never warmth there, but it was a warmer relationship than with Woolsey.

Riley: Then Bill Perry goes to Defense after—

Friendly: Again, a straight shooter. No warmth, but a great deal of respect.

Riley: We're getting close to when we need to close off, so let me raise two questions here. One is, from your perspective, were there people on the Hill that the President really liked and relied on?

Friendly: The President had a good relationship with Senator [John] Breaux. They're southerners, same generation, both fast-to-rise young men. There's a good deal of backslapping and fun. There was a fair amount of camaraderie between the President and Senator Breaux. And I think there were plenty of times when Senator Breaux went against, I'm trying to remember the BTU [British thermal unit] issue, there was a BTU tax discussion. I think Senator Breaux was one of the strong advocates against it, I would imagine because of Louisiana. But that was one person that the President definitely related to.

I think the President got along quite well with Senator [George] Mitchell quite well. He was not the same kind of backslapper, obviously, that Senator Breaux was, but they had a good working relationship.

Riley: Anybody on the Hill who really turned his stomach?

Friendly: Other than the Republicans?

Riley: The Republicans, we'll leave that, but were there any Democrats?

Friendly: I'm trying to remember the specifics, but there were always ones who would constantly beat up on him when they'd see him.

Riley: He had an odd relationship with Bob Kerrey.

Friendly: Yes he did. Bob Kerrey was certainly one who would always beat up on him, but so would the black caucus. It seemed like you could never do enough. Enough was never enough. But there was also a sympathy for and a connection with, as has been well documented, the President's connection with African Americans was—is—spectacular.

Riley: And you witnessed that on—

Friendly: Oh, countless times in black churches, in African American neighborhoods. It was remarkable. I can't remember who it was who said Bill Clinton was the first black President. He was a man who really could connect and relate to.

Riley: [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan also.

Friendly: Yes, there was a great story of Senator Moynihan—pain in the neck. We were in New York and Senator Moynihan flew back with us on Air Force One. This is a personal story, but Senator Moynihan gets on board the airplane and starts yelling, "Whiskey, bring me whiskey." It's a 45-minute flight from Kennedy to Andrews. He must have had three or four whiskeys. We land at Andrews and the President says to the Senator, "Senator, I'd be happy to give you a ride on the helicopter back to the White House." He hems and haws and finally says, "Okay."

So I do last minute juggling to bump someone off the helicopter so he could go on. The President goes down the front stairs of the airplane and I stand at the top of the stairs to let the Senator down and I put my hand on the Senator's back and said, "Senator, please, go ahead." He snaps, and turns at me, and says, "I am a United States Senator. Never touch me unless you're shaking my hand." Booming voice, right in my face, right in front of the Secret Service agent and in front

of Bruce Lindsey, and we all go, "Okay, Senator." And he stumbles down the steps of the airplane and stumbles onto the helicopter, poor man. He was tanked. But it was fascinating. It was kind of an old school politician. The things you read about, these politicians getting drunk.

Riley: And the Senators, too.

Friendly: But he was also a man of incredible intellect and the President admires somebody's intellect enormously.

Riley: I think that was one of those cases where you think that those two should have been, in an ideal world, practically best buddies.

Friendly: Yes, but, they come from such different backgrounds. There's the erudite Moynihan and the relatively—I wouldn't say unsophisticated Clinton because he was by no means unsophisticated, but here's a guy from the different side of the tracks.

Riley: So you can't imagine sitting down and watching *Dumb and Dumber*—

Friendly: With Senator Moynihan? Absolutely not. *Masterpiece Theater* perhaps.

Riley: With him hosting. Let me ask you this and we'll close. Obviously we haven't done everything that we ought to do, but is there anything in particular that you came in prepared to talk about today that we ought to take five or ten minutes and put on the record? Then we can talk about next steps from there.

Friendly: I'm just trying to think if there's anything at a huge level. There's nothing really central. A couple of things I'll just touch on and we can certainly follow up at another time. There were never down moments or moments of boredom in the White House. I guess that's the nature of being in the White House. But we were also in a constant state of campaign, as has been written about a number of times. Maybe the beginning of the permanent campaign, where we were always selling something—we had a war room for this, a war room for that, and it takes a hell of a lot out of the staff and a lot out of the President. You burn up a fair amount of capital, but at the same time you also can build up some of that capital.

I guess it's a long way of saying we tried an enormous amount and made some great successes, but also wore people out. That was at the beginning. When we started moving to this incremental—I guess the school uniforms is a fine example of going from these lofty ideas—we were going to make a national healthcare plan, we were raising people out of poverty. We were doing these huge important issues, fixing the budget, reducing deficits. Some of these things we were successful at and made huge strides. Then to go from 100 miles an hour down to what seemed like 25. Even though the economy was booming and we were making great success, going down to school uniforms and these Dick Morris-tested, innocuous, simplistic, middle-of-the-road issues seemed like a real lame duck letdown.

Riley: Did you get the feeling the President felt that way too?

Friendly: There was a part of him. Here we were, so ambitious and energetic and trying to change the world. In many places we made huge missteps, but instead of trying again and again,

we made these incremental improvements. Now to say we made incremental improvements in healthcare successfully—that was huge. We definitely made improvements in the economy, and crime and welfare and childcare and all these things were definite improvements, I'm very proud of those accomplishments. But to think of the potential, if we kept to that, and also to think of the squandered opportunities because the administration became so preoccupied with Monica, Monicagate, all that crap, the lost opportunity was really unfortunate and scarring to so many people.

Riley: It shows.

[END TRANSCRIPT]