



WILLIAM J. CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

August 30, 2006
Charlottesville, Virginia

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TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

August 30, 2006

Riley: This is the Madeleine Albright interview as a part of the Clinton Presidential History Project. Again, I want to express my appreciation for your agreeing to come down and visit with us. I know you've been—I was going to say on the road, but in the air an awful lot.

Albright: In the air.

Riley: It's very good of you to make time in your schedule to be with us. We had a brief conversation about ground rules before we came on tape. The one thing that I want to repeat for the record is that everyone at the table has been advised that the proceedings are being conducted under a veil of confidentiality. You're the only person at the table who's allowed to repeat what occurs in the room. We do this to encourage you to speak candidly to history.

One of the things that we also do at the beginning of an interview, to help the transcriber, is a voice identification, so I'm going to go around the room and ask everybody to say a couple of words and identify himself or herself to aid the transcriber. I'm Russell Riley, Associate Professor here at the Miller Center, and I'm heading up the Clinton Presidential History Project.

Albright: I'm Madeleine Albright, the victim.

Strong: Bob Strong from Washington and Lee University, formerly of the Miller Center. I was actually here for the [Zbigniew] Brzezinski interview.

Chidester: I'm Jeff Chidester, research director for the Clinton project.

Smith: Jamie Smith; I'm with Secretary Albright.

Knott: I'm Stephen Knott, Associate Professor and co-chair of the Oral History Program with Russell.

Riley: A couple of things I should say also at the outset. One is we have read your memoir and you've done quite a service to history by taking the time to create this kind of record. I had reported to Jamie last week something that I very infrequently do, which is to send a note telling her how much I enjoyed reading this book. It is truly an exceptional read, not just because of the factual content, but also because of your own personal story. It was a real pleasure to spend several days preparing with this book.

What the book does for us is it actually is a little bit liberating, because what tends to happen in these oral history interviews is we will spend a lot of time recapitulating narratives and timelines, and there will be some of that I'm sure as we go through the day. But we really can deal with much broader thought questions and things of that nature than having to stay overly wedded to the narrative.

The other thing is that we were just reflecting on the fact that you were here almost exactly 25 years ago as a part of the [Jimmy] Carter project. You're sitting in exactly the same room that you were sitting in before. One of your interviewers will be with us at lunch today—Jim Young, who has been the director of the program. So for us—

Strong: The room is better decorated.

Riley: The room is better decorated, and the building is about twice or three times as large as it was before. I wanted to begin by talking a little bit about your Carter experience because it is always helpful for those of us who study institutions to get a sense of how those institutions have evolved over time. You've had an interesting window into Washington politics generally, and the Presidency in particular, over time. I'm going to start by taking us into deep water rather than asking you to recap your own biography, because we already have it here.

I'm wondering if you could talk for a little bit about the basic differences in Washington and life in Washington, and something about the institutions in the time that you served with President Carter and at the point you come back and begin serving with President Clinton. I know this is a very broad question, but let me throw that out and see if you could reflect on that a little bit. Maybe Bob and others here will help refine my question as we go along. Let's start there as a way to build on it.

Albright: That's a very interesting way to begin. First of all, there's no question I saw it from a very different angle. I was a lower-level staffer on the National Security Council. I had worked on Capitol Hill for Senator [Edmund] Muskie, so I had a very good sense of Congress and executive-legislative relations. I have always thought that the executive-legislative relationship is the most interesting aspect of American government. In the in-between years I actually taught courses on executive-legislative relations.

It made me reflect a bit more on what had happened during the Carter administration, especially in terms of the way decisions were taken on, for instance, the Panama Canal treaty, which was something that I had worked on for Senator Muskie, and then was in the White House for Carter when it actually got approved.

In both administrations a great deal of time was spent on how you deal with Congress. So for me, the difference was the caliber of the members of Congress. I'm prejudiced about this. I worked for one of the giants in Ed Muskie, who was not only—well, he was Chairman of the budget process as it went into place. Then he had done all the environmental legislation and had been on the Foreign Relations Committee. So he was really a big guy.

One thing I learned in the Clinton administration is that you spend a lot of time on the Hill as a Cabinet member testifying. I did that both as UN [United Nations] Ambassador and as Secretary of State. I used to say all the time that they weren't hearings, they were yellings. What would

happen is the members of Congress, more on the House than on the Senate side, would make their statement, yell at you, and not really listen to the answers. It was different, I thought, from what I had seen working for Ed Muskie. For me the major difference between the 1970s and the 1990s would be the caliber of the members of Congress. Perhaps it was made more complicated by the fact that, after 1994, we had a Republican Congress and a Democratic President.

The thing that had not changed—I think was very interesting, and we’ll obviously talk about this more—is the relationship between the Department of State and the National Security Council. From a personal perspective it was the most interesting thing because it was definitely “where you stand is where you sit.” When I worked for Brzezinski I really had a sense that the NSC [National Security Council] had a crucial role to play, that the State Department sent over reams of stuff that nobody read. The State Department didn’t have enough of a sense of how the White House operated.

Then of course when I was at the State Department, I thought that the NSC was controlling and too operational, wasn’t doing its job, whatever. The institutional conflict is inevitable, so this magnifies the importance of personal relationships and of informal decision-making procedures. In the Carter administration the top officials had foreign policy breakfasts. I never was in them, but they had a lot of discussions. In my time, we had one breakfast a week, which was in Sandy Berger’s office, or before that (when I was UN Ambassador) with Tony Lake, in terms of State, Defense, CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff].

When I was Secretary of State, then there would also be a weekly lunch, which was an Albright, Berger, [William] Cohen—ABC lunch, which was similar to what had happened during the Carter administration.

Strong: Lots of things to follow up on. Vance had a daily letter or memo he gave to Carter directly. When you were Secretary of State, did you have a routine, direct communication with Clinton that didn’t go through Berger or the National Security Council? What was it? Is that an important mechanism, document?

Albright: I did do night notes. I didn’t do them every night and I don’t know if Vance did or didn’t.

Strong: Not every night, but he was permitted to do—

Albright: Right. And I was permitted to do that. I felt basically that I had good access to the President. I didn’t have to go around the NSC. Despite what I just said in terms of NSC-State relations, I think that probably Sandy and I had as good a relationship between a Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, except, as I often say in speeches, when [Henry] Kissinger was both.

Strong: He had a good relationship with himself.

Albright: I didn’t feel that I couldn’t get to the President either in person or on the phone. I could reach him whenever I needed to.

Strong: And in thinking about those relationships, is personality more important than institutional structures and prerogatives?

Albright: I think personality has a lot to do with it. You obviously operate within the framework of the institutional aspects. But if you have a hostile relationship with whomever, it affects everything. And if you have a friendly relationship, then you can get around some of the institutional difficulties. To get down to specifics, Sandy Berger and I had been friends for—actually I think we first met during the Carter administration in a very limited way, because he was deputy director of policy planning and I was a staffer on the NSC. We later got to know each other better through all the losing Democratic Presidential campaigns we were involved in.

He had come on the airplane during the [Walter] Mondale-[Geraldine] Ferraro campaign in 1984. So we got to know each other then. Anyway, we'd known each other a very long time. When he was National Security Advisor, we would have our moments when he'd call up and say, "What the hell is this in the newspapers? How did this get in here?" Then I'd say something rude, and then we'd get over it. We'd say, "This is ridiculous." We actually did things that probably two men would not do. We hugged each other, made up, moved on. So the friendship part of it was very important.

There were days when I tried very hard to dislike Sandy Berger and I couldn't. So that puts it into the institutional thing, because the institutions do set it up that the staffers on both sides help to create some animosity. I'm convinced of that, on both sides. Some staffer would go and rev their principal up. That's why Sandy and I—we must have talked 10 times a day, depending on what was going on. We'd say, "That didn't really happen." So that friendship, I think, overlies the institutional.

Strong: Another question related to that. You did say that over the decades you observed it was harder to have those personal relationships between executive branch and members of the legislature. That did get strained. I want to come back and talk a little bit more about why—partisanship is part of it—but there may be other factors. Within the executive branch, are things harder now than they were in the 1970s? Harder to maintain those personal relationships?

Albright: I can't answer that very well because my level of operating was so different. There certainly was nothing harder than the Vance-Brzezinski relationship. That permeated everything. From the perspective of where I worked, in fact, some of the animosities from them carried over because the cast of characters was kind of similar. Actually, Sandy and I had very interesting discussions about the fact that—I think what did happen is that the NSC does get more and more operational because the White House gets more and more operational, whether it's in domestic policy or whatever. That's really off-putting, but in terms of my own personal relationships, I can't speak to that. I had excellent personal relationships in the NSC. It may be true of other people, but I don't think that that was an issue so much.

I think there's a certain amount of competition among Cabinet members no matter what. I saw it from a lower level in the Carter administration. I can't remember whether we talked about it 25 years ago, but I had a bit of a problem in that I had worked for Ed Muskie and then he became Secretary of State. Ed Muskie gave his first interview with James Reston. I'll never forget this.

They asked him, “How do you feel about the NSC?” He said, “Well, my former assistant, Madeleine Albright, is over there, it will be fine.”

I could not have survived a second term between those two, because Muskie would call me up and he’d say, “Your friend, Zbig Brzezinski, in every one of these meetings with the President shows off what he knows about the number of tribes in Nigeria. Who cares?” I said, “Senator, he’s a professor, that’s what he’ll do.” Then the next phone call would be from Brzezinski, and he’d say, “Your friend, Ed Muskie, all he does in principals meetings is ask questions.” I’d say, “Zbig, he is a Senator. That’s what they do.” This went back and forth. Then they’d argue about who was more Polish. Really. *[laughter]*

Riley: Who was more Polish?

Albright: Brzezinski. And I said that to Muskie. I said, “First of all, both his parents are Polish, he speaks Polish, he’s more Polish.” It really was ridiculous. As far as I’m concerned, nothing could have been more complicated than those particular relationships. I really had a great vantage point on that.

Riley: Were there particular lessons that you drew out of the experience of the Carter years that you carried forward?

Albright: Yes, actually some of them very specifically. What happened to me, I was a professor for ten years. So I took the experiences of my time with the Carter administration and for ten years thought about them and taught about them. One of the things that I taught about a lot was the NSC system. I had, as a basis, something very interesting, which was that Bob Gates had first been an assistant to David Aaron, who had been Brzezinski’s deputy. He sat in the same rabbit warren that I did downstairs by the situation room. I had to give talks sometimes about how the NSC started to visiting students. So he wrote out for me a history of the NSC, which I still have. So that whole thing evolved for me about how the National Security Council system had started, how every President used it for his own purposes, and the whole history of it.

I was very much aware of it and very much aware of the way Brzezinski had used it. So, in 1992, when I was asked to do the transition for the NSC, those were lessons that I really looked at in terms of how the committee system was going to work, what the working groups were going to be, the relationships, who was going to chair them. That had been the part that was really important in the Carter administration. There were two major—there was the policy review committee and the special coordination committee. Zbig chaired the special coordination committee, which always had to do with cross-cutting issues and crises.

For me, the interesting question always was, When does a crisis end? Because that was the way Zbig maintained power, which was to never end a crisis so that it wouldn’t go back to Vance chairing it or Brown chairing it. So we began to look at different ways the system would work. The role of the deputies committee was something different in the Clinton administration.

So to that extent there were lessons that I had taken from my working at the NSC and then my study of the NSC. Then obviously I looked at it during the [Ronald] Reagan administration. I remember one time I had to introduce Zbig during the Reagan administration. I said I would like to introduce President Carter’s only National Security Advisor, because by then the Republicans

had had six. So I looked at how it operated, and then whether the NSC should have somebody who was responsible for Congressional relations. I really did think about it a lot.

The NSC is, for me—when I said executive-legislative relations are inter-branch matters, I think the NSC system is the most interesting foreign policy mechanism in the system.

Riley: Were there lessons about Congressional relations that you pulled out, either positive or negative lessons?

Albright: Mostly positive. As I said, I'm probably one of the—it's probably not true now—but I was one of the few people in the Carter administration who had actually worked in the legislative branch, certainly in the NSC. There I spent my entire time always telling them, "You have to respect Congress. They have a constitutional prerogative on foreign policy making." And Zbig, who was not supposed to go to the Hill, did in fact. He never appeared in a hearing, except I think on Billy Carter, but he'd want to go to the Hill. We'd go to the Hill and we'd sit there and wait for some Senator and he'd say, "I don't understand why I have to sit here and wait for this person and why I'm not meeting with ten people at the same time." I said, "Because they're elected and you're not."

So I knew what my place was when as an official I went to the Hill and was respectful of the Senators and many members of the House. I took with me my background from having worked on the Hill more than I think most Cabinet members, except for Secretary Cohen. But I brought with me what I think was a lesson of respect for members of Congress, and I gave them the benefit of the doubt on many things. Also, I'd always take a phone call from a member of Congress. I think generally it was something that we instilled.

I had a very strong Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Barbara Larkin. We spent a lot of time together and a lot of time getting ready for hearings. I often felt it was like studying for orals or something. I found it very hard—it's fun to talk to other professors. Somehow it seems like cheating to go up there with a big book and actually look things up. So I thought I had to memorize all this or I had to know the answers to every budget question. They'd say, "You don't really need to do that; you can look it up."

Riley: Was there anything about—

Albright: By the way, is this too chatty?

Riley: Absolutely not, it's very rich, very rich. Were there any lessons about—I'm trying to figure out how to phrase this—Presidential power generally? You were watching President Carter up close and personal. Did you leave that experience going into the 1980s with a perception about how a President ought to behave, especially in foreign relations or in Congressional relations? There was this enduring sense that—bluntly—the Carter Presidency was a failure.

Albright: I so disagree with that.

Riley: I'm throwing that out as a vein of conventional wisdom that is certainly debatable, but the question would be about what you learned about how Presidents deal with issues, or how

Presidents behave, that you were bringing through into the '80s and was informing your work later as you returned to a Democratic administration.

Albright: What is interesting is that there truly is such power in the office of the Presidency that in many ways you imbue the person who is the President with all kinds of things that may or may not be true of that particular personality. But I was so awed by being at the White House the first time, the second time too, by the smallness of the building and the largeness of the post.

I never forget going into my first meeting with President Carter. My job was that I would sit in on every meeting that the President had with members of Congress. But I had never been in a bureaucracy.

Riley: Was this only on foreign policy issues, or every meeting?

Albright: No, only on foreign policy. But I hadn't been in a bureaucracy. So I didn't know how to behave. The first meeting was actually on the Middle East arms sales, which is why they brought me in at that particular moment. There was a meeting with many members of Congress—ranking, and the Chairman, and the members of the Cabinet—and I was a staffer sitting in the back. I listened with great interest, and when Senator [Jacob] Javits or somebody wanted some information, I knew to write a note that I had to get that.

What happened then was we went back to our offices. Brzezinski called me from his office and said, "Would you please come up and read your notes to Secretary Brown, Secretary Vance, and me?" I looked, and there's nothing but a bunch of scratches and I thought, *Okay, I'm going to lose my job over this.* I went up there; it was awful. I said, "I didn't realize I was going to be a secretary." He said, "You were the junior member in this meeting, right? That's the job, for you to write things down." Anyway, there was this great awe of the Presidents.

I think that what happened in the Carter Presidency is that I was not part—I was in all these meetings, but he didn't strike me as a particularly approachable person, and therefore there was this thing about "THE" President. I think I took that thing with me to the Clinton administration. It would never have occurred to me to call the President anything but the President or to do anything other than stand up when he came into the room, which was not true of other staffers.

I found that aspect very jarring, the lack of respect for the Presidency by some members of his immediate staff, which was not so evident in the Carter administration. I don't know whether it had something to do with the age, because President Clinton really was a younger person. But what you do take—this is me; I'm such a sucker for American history—is great respect for the position. So you enhance the person with that, you imbue him with that power.

Riley: To try to refine the question a little bit, was there any sense, in looking back at your experience with President Carter, places where you felt there might have been improved performance that would have gotten him re-elected? Were there lessons or reflections on what might have been instead of what happened?

Albright: It all has to do with the hostage crisis. I think we got totally mesmerized by the hostage crisis. Something in retrospect that should not have happened—it's very hard, especially for an American President. I happen to think that Carter did an incredible amount for American

foreign policy, with the whole human rights approach to it. It went back to a Woodrow Wilson kind of thing, but a different approach. He really was very humane and religious. So for him to have not paid attention to the lives of the hostages would have been antithetical to his character.

What happened however, is that they became the central issue. Probably what should have happened is we should have gone on. We became hostages to the hostages. The combination of that and Ted Koppel and *Nightline* was paralyzing. It overshadowed everything that was going on. Then of course the rescue mission that didn't work. I think that would have made a huge difference if it had succeeded. You look back at what Carter accomplished at Camp David and various things and the human rights policies and normalization with China, SALT [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks], reacting to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which I think were very far reaching.

It's so hard for me to compare the two things because I really was just a staffer the first time. But the difficulty of making the decisions—Carter was decisive; at least he seemed decisive to me.

There was one weird thing about him. You had to know him in meetings to know that when he said, "I agree," that meant he agreed. When he said, "I understand," it meant he didn't agree. After a while, listening to how he talked to members of Congress, you could tell what was going on, but you didn't know at first. And he smiled at the wrong time. He smiled a lot when he wasn't really smiling. He was much harder for me to read than President Clinton. But Clinton is ten years younger than I am. I was a Cabinet Secretary. So it's a little hard to compare.

Riley: We want to pick up on this, because there's certainly some evidence that people would misread President Clinton in meetings also. Bob, go ahead.

Strong: I want to ask another comparative question and get back to the question of legislative-executive relations. Probably the hardest vote in foreign policy for Carter on Capitol Hill was Panama Canal. In your years, what was the hardest vote in foreign policy for the Clinton administration on Capitol Hill? Then I want to ask some more questions about the efforts that were connected with prevailing, or seeking to prevail on that vote.

Albright: If I can go back on something on the Panama Canal thing—this was something that was very interesting because I did play on both sides of that. It taught me a lesson. What happened on the Panama Canal—I was working for Muskie. I knew he was for it, and so I committed him very early, which was a terrible mistake from the perspective of a Senator because everybody else was getting something for their vote. At one stage I think somebody said, "You must have been out of your mind. We could have gotten the Dickey-Lincoln dam. How could you have committed him so early?"

I said because he was for it. The relationships between Carter and somebody like Muskie were not good originally, mostly due to staff. If you remember, Carter considered Muskie for the Vice Presidency and then didn't—I was the one who got the phone call. It was just nasty.

Muskie's staff—we were just awful, didn't want to really do a good hearing for Bert Lance. It was embarrassing. Muskie brought us into the office and said, "Look, we have only one President at a time. This one happens to be a Democrat and we are going to do everything we can to support him." So he was very forthcoming.

What happened—I can't remember all this exactly—but Carter's people were not really good at Congressional relations. They had come in from Georgia. People didn't like Hamilton Jordan, thought he was arrogant. They asked the Senate to vote on Paul Warnke's confirmation for ACDA [Arms Control and Disarmament Agency] Director. Then came the Panama Canal and SALT II. Sequencing and spacing are important when you are trying to look for votes. So I did take that lesson with me.

What was the hardest vote during the Clinton Presidency? I don't know; there were a lot. We worked with a Republican Congress. I think probably votes that were on the Comprehensive Test Ban or the chemical weapons convention were hard to do. I can't answer that very well. Certain votes on funding for Bosnia were very hard to do because they demanded of us—in order to get that vote, we had to promise to be out in a year, which was something that I think we thought we could live up to at the time we promised it, but couldn't. So we were working on a whole host of votes that were very difficult. Do you have one that you think was the most difficult?

Strong: I thought you were going to say UN funding, but that's really—

Albright: It was part of it. What was very interesting, that took a lot of work, was NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] enlargement. But we worked that very well. I really think that we had learned a lot of lessons.

Strong: That one you won overwhelmingly.

Albright: Yes, but I think we set up this outside committee. We worked with Republicans on it. I set up this whole back and forth with [Jesse] Helms on it. We knew what we were doing on it. That was a sustained effort. It was hard, but we had a laid-out legislative strategy.

On UN funding, that's part of a different issue, but it's not one vote. In looking through your timeline, I see you spend quite a bit of time on peacekeeping operations. What happened was that there was a systematic kind of campaign on Congress' part to limit the ability of the U.S. to participate in peacekeeping operations when I was at the UN. Every time I wanted to vote on a peacekeeping operation, we would had to have worked on it for weeks ahead of time, had the money lined up, and sometimes it was an emergency and it was difficult to do. It was all part of the UN funding, etc. But that was a series of votes, and it was very difficult.

Strong: What I wanted to get at—I think it's fair to say in the 1990s there would have been more partisanship. It's certainly a matter that Republicans gained control of the House and Senate. I think the life of members of the legislature is different than it would have been in the 1970s, and the hearings were more unpleasant. But I think Clinton actually does quite well in getting Congress to do what he sees needs to be done, at least in foreign affairs. I wonder—maybe it's more unpleasant, and maybe there's more acrimony in hearings, but is there really an issue in Congressional-Presidential relations that is a real deterioration?

Albright: Well, maybe the way to put it—and again, I look at it from a different perspective. We spent an incredible amount of time massaging the feelings of members of Congress and going to nine zillion hearings and getting ready for them. I think various things that—as you prepare yourself for a job, how much time do you spend on Congressional hearings and how much time

do you spend on your job as Secretary of State or the outward aspect of it? There just was a lot of time spent. We worked very hard on trying to get the votes that we had.

It's interesting that you see it the way you do, because I think people now—I was reading the papers this morning, and our beloved Secretary of Defense is criticizing people for not knowing history, when I think he doesn't. Votes taken that might undercut the morale of the military. They were constantly—the Republican Congress—saying that what we were doing in Bosnia and Kosovo was not appropriate, or threatening to cut funds, or making it very difficult. We had to work it and keep going, no matter what. So I think we were successful in getting some of the foreign assistance budgets that we needed, but never quite as much as we wanted. We couldn't get the international criminal court or Kyoto. Those things.

I couldn't give it a percentage. I think we did pretty well on a lot of things, but not on everything that we wanted, obviously. Family planning.

Strong: Could we put a percentage on the amount of time a Secretary of State spends on Congressional relations? I'm sure it varies from day to day.

Albright: It varies because what you have is the budget cycle. You begin with the subcommittees, then move up. You do the authorizing and the appropriating, and then there would be special times. I'm not really good at—one of the reasons I can't answer this question—if you were going to ask me the percentages, I think maybe somewhere between an eighth and a quarter. It takes quite a bit of time. Whether it's specifically in getting ready for the hearings, or sometimes what would happen, you'd have the hearings and there would be a lot of outstanding questions, which are obviously not answered by the Secretary herself, but some of them have to be reviewed because they are sensitive. Thinking about legislative strategy, then dealing with members of Congress specifically, because if they wanted to talk or summon me to the Hill, you'd do that. The kind of things that you wouldn't think of—going to give a speech for Jesse Helms in North Carolina or Mitch McConnell, or responding to something that they want, which may not be on your schedule. Then having them for lunch or whatever. So quite a lot of time, yes.

Riley: I want to ask one more question that is sort of the before and after, or the Carter and Clinton. I hope that as we go through the rest of the conversations today you'll feel free to do the same thing when it comes to your mind. One of the things that we haven't talked about is the fact that the Cold War ended, before and after, which is a big deal.

I wondered—because a lot of what you've talked about relates to mechanisms and organizations. Is there something important for us to understand about the way the foreign policy process worked because the Cold War ended? We know that the sets of issues were very different, but is there something about the relative importance of the actors or the way that the actors are engaged in the process that we ought to pay attention to?

Albright: First of all, I think there was a general sense that the national security agenda broadens, that it's not a matter of just—this is reflected in the mechanisms, too—that it's not just a matter of the Defense Department and the State Department, but ultimately that many departments are involved. Though I have to say that I had a preview of this during the Carter

administration during the Mariel boatlift. There was a meeting in the situation room that I'll never forget because there were so many more people in it than ever before. You had the Justice Department, and HHS [Health and Human Services], and all the various departments that in some way would be affected by people coming into the United States.

So rather than the narrower view, which was of the Cold War in which AID [Agency for International Development], etc., our assistance programs were directed at our competition with the Soviet Union, there would be much broader, more uncharted waters in terms of the issues that you dealt with. By statute the NSC consists of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and CIA and Joint Chiefs as advisors. So when I was doing the NSC transition for Clinton, I pointed out that it might be necessary to broaden the list of principals by Presidential decision.

So the Secretary of the Treasury then came in as a regular participant, and the UN Ambassador, which, by the way, I recommended long before it ever occurred to me that I would be the UN Ambassador. Then the fact that Secretary of Commerce played a greater role. There would be many more discussions, for instance, with HHS if we looked at health issues. There was a much broader range of issues that became part of what was going on, and looking at 21st century institutions I think much more deliberately.

Again, on the Cold War, you have to understand where I sat during the Carter administration. I sat with Brzezinski for whom that was a major aspect. I think that probably some of the divisions that happened with Secretary Vance had to do with different views of how the Cold War should be handled. Obviously the relationships with the Chinese that were, from Brzezinski's point of view, much more of a card to play against the Soviets. Vance wanted to concentrate on getting the SALT treaties done and had a much more lawyerly approach to it.

I think in the Clinton administration we really did have a sense that we were working for the first real post-Cold War President, and that there were so many more issues that needed to be integrated into what we thought of as national security. There really was a sense that you had to look at foreign assistance from a different perspective. There were many more countries that you had to deal with on the basis of their own importance rather than how they played in some sort of a competition with the Soviet Union, much more emphasis on economics and on trade and the difficulty of integrating the international economic portfolios.

This is something that started during the Carter administration. Henry Owen was a person who worked at the NSC. His portfolio was international economics. You couldn't quite figure out the chain of command and what he was doing and how that fit in with assistance programs. One of the things that developed was this whole thing of the NEC [National Economic Council] under Clinton. Then there still continued to be questions as to who really handled international economics, whether it was at the NSC or some interaction of the NSC and the NEC. But it was definitely a broader brush.

Strong: When was the first time you met Clinton? And was he someone you were paying attention to in those years in the '80s when you were interested in various Democratic Presidential candidates?

Albright: I can't remember the exact first time I met him. I probably ran into him at various events. In my campaign life, one campaign led to another. What happened was that the people who had worked for Geraldine Ferraro, many of them—John Sasso and that group were from Massachusetts. So they began to be interested in [Michael] Dukakis in '88. There was some thought among people—Sandy Berger, for instance, was a friend of Clinton's from the [George] McGovern campaign. I had worked for Ed Muskie. I wasn't that enthusiastic about McGovern, so I didn't know a lot of the McGovern people. But Sandy and Clinton had known each other from that.

In '84 I had been Mondale's representative on the platform committee. I was so troubled by the fact that we couldn't agree on anything. There were the [Gary] Hart people and the Mondale people, and we looked like crazies before we ever even got a candidate. I thought if we spent time together between Presidential campaigns, we might be able to develop some sort of coherent platform. So I began to invite people to my house for foreign policy dinners all the time. Sandy very early on made it clear that he thought that Clinton was really going to be the right person to run.

Strong: This is before '88?

Albright: Right. But what happened is that it looked like Clinton might go in in '88. Whether I actually physically met him before that I don't know. But then he decided not to go in. People were very surprised that I chose Dukakis very early. I remember—

Riley: Why did you do that?

Albright: It's a very funny story. Part of it does have to do with the people around. I had met Dukakis for the first time in 1976 when he was chairman of the platform committee. I was asked by the DNC [Democratic National Committee] to go and be the staffer for a regional hearing in Denver. Dukakis was out there and I was very impressed with him. He did a great job in what he was doing. I'd followed him a bit. He'd been voted the best Governor, and I thought he was a really interesting person.

John Sasso had been on the Mondale-Ferraro campaign. He wanted to talk to me about Dukakis and what Dukakis was like. We met in a hotel and Dukakis came in. He said, "How's my Secretary of State?" I thought, *That's pretty good*. I can't remember who all the other candidates were; somebody called it Snow White—Pat Schroeder—and the seven dwarfs. There were a lot of people who didn't impress me. I didn't like [Richard] Gephardt's view on some of the trade issues even then.

Strong: [Albert] Gore?

Albright: Gore was in it. Anyway, Dukakis appealed to me. There were discussions of Clinton at that stage. I think I probably shook hands with Clinton at the '88 convention. That was my favorite convention because I did all the foreign policy stuff on the platform on the floor and I had a great time. But the time I really got to know Clinton was when he came up—frankly, many of us in the campaign didn't like the fact that Clinton would not commit to Dukakis. There were a number of times there were discussions in which people would say, "What is Clinton? Is he for

Dukakis or not?” I remember people saying he’s playing many sides here. But then he gave this endless nominating speech, which Sandy Berger wrote as I remember—it’s all very incestuous.

Riley: It might have been possible to dislike Sandy in the middle of that speech. *[laughter]*

Albright: “In conclusion—” But I was so overtaken with my own importance at that convention.

So Clinton—we were getting ready for the debates. Various people were asked to brief Dukakis on taking various positions. A lot of different people came. Clinton came. He was brilliant. He was very good. Obviously he was committed by then. He gave very good advice. Then we all went out for dinner. Susan Estrich and Susan Brophy, a bunch of us went out to dinner with Clinton and he was great. He was very smart and funny and already what we knew that he was, kind of larger than life.

After that campaign, we lost contact. But Clinton had been a student at Georgetown. He and I talked occasionally because he was on the board of overseers and various things. Then one of the more amusing things—somebody asked me to do a seconding letter for his nomination to the Council on Foreign Relations, which I did and still have, in which I basically say he might end up being a national leader, that he would definitely add to the level of discussion, that he liked to talk, or something like that. So I did that.

We stayed in touch. The truly ironic part is I have really worked in every Democratic Presidential campaign except in ’92. I was president of the Center for National Policy, which was a 501c3, so we offered various briefings to everybody, including Republicans. Obviously the Republicans didn’t pick up the offer, and other Democratic Presidential candidates did, primarily Bob Kerrey. I continued to have meetings at my house with various candidates, Tom Harkin. And Clinton, because he already had his own brain trust, actually did not call on us at all. I’d see him at various fundraisers or something like that, and it was really weird. Normally I had a straight path to whomever I thought was going to be the candidate. It was totally opposite of the Dukakis experience. So I really was not a part of it.

At the ’92 convention I was co-chair of the platform committee that time with Bill Richardson. We’d been in Santa Fe for the meetings. Already there seemed to be something I was quite uncomfortable with, which was what’s-his-name from the DLC [Democratic Leadership Council].

Riley: Al From?

Albright: Al From had worked for Muskie too. We had known each other for a very long time. There was a little bit of competition between the Center for National Policy and the DLC. But I also found that all of a sudden the platform was going kind of anti-labor to me. Some of the discussions that we had in Santa Fe, the DLC line, was a little too centrist for where I was.

Riley: This was on domestic issues.

Albright: This was domestic. When you’re co-chair of the whole thing—we had a lot of regional hearings and interesting things. I spoke at the ’92 convention from the podium, but I was not in the campaign. You may get sick of all these stories—

Riley: No, they're wonderful.

Albright: What happened in '88 was I really was queen of the floor on foreign policy issues. We were doing "no first-use" issues, Palestinian state, and the defense budget, and I was all over the floor of the convention, flak jacket and walkie-talkies. People would say, "Go talk to X delegation," and I'd rush over there. In fact I was nicknamed R2D2. *[laughter]* Everybody had to talk to me. I was in the trailers and all that.

Then in '92, had it not been for my friend, Susan Brophy, I would have had nothing to do in the convention. But she asked me to go and stand next to some delegation and go like this when they were supposed to stand up.

Riley: Raising the hands and lowering them.

Albright: That was it. That was my only role, beyond speaking. I did speak from the podium. But in terms of real activity, I was totally out of it.

But what happened was, once he was the nominee, there were again—funny how life works. I had a student when I first started teaching at Georgetown—her name was Nancy Soderberg. Nancy had come to work for me when she was a student. This was in '84. She said, "Is there anything you can do to help me get into the campaign?" I said, "Why would you be asking me?" She said, "I know you've got political connections." So she started out being a delegate counter in the '84 convention. She went to work for [Edward M.] Kennedy and then she came to work for Dukakis doing issues. She went back to Kennedy, and then she did issues for Clinton. She said, "You've got to write some papers." Everything was happening in central and Eastern Europe, my area, some in the Balkans. I said, "I'm still president of the Center for National Policy." She said, "You just have to do these papers." So I did a series of papers for candidate Clinton on that. I never went to Little Rock during that campaign.

Riley: And you weren't consulting routinely on the phone with anybody?

Albright: No, just through Nancy. Jim Steinberg was down there. Another friend of mine, Barry Carter, was down there. So there were people down there. I would see Clinton at things. He gave three speeches at Georgetown. I think they asked me to review the last one on national security. But you can imagine this was all a little frustrating, since I had been so much a part of everything. Then Sandy was put in charge of the whole national security cluster and he asked me to do the national security council transition.

Riley: This was before or after the election?

Albright: After the election. In fact, I didn't go to Little Rock for the election night. I was really, in contrast—

Riley: You had your nose pressed to the window.

Albright: It was very weird, it truly was. In fact, something happened that made me so mad. I'll never forget it. During the campaign at some point Tony Lake and Sandy came to see me and they said, "We just want you to know that you were in charge during the Dukakis campaign and

we are in charge now.” I said, “I’m not asking to be in charge.” But there was a very direct message to me that this was not my campaign.

Then Sandy asked me to do the NSC transition—we clearly have a very yin-yang relationship. I think he might say the same thing about me, that he tried to dislike me and couldn’t. But he asked me to do this and I was thrilled. I loved the idea of doing it. So I was the first Clinton person to go back into the White House. I arrived in early November. I went up to the guard’s gate. I think this is in the book. I said, “We’re back.” I sat in an office that was about three feet from the office that I’d left in ’81. But the downstairs had all been redecorated and they used china cups instead of Styrofoam, and it was all mahogany. It was like going into the house that you owned and somebody had redecorated it and put all their own photographs around. It was a very strange feeling.

I asked [Karl] Rick Inderfurth to join me. The job was to go and figure out what everybody at the NSC had been doing. It was the real handover. Then, because the NSC is as flexible as anybody wants, we really thought a lot about what the organization should be. It was at that stage that we thought about the fact that the UN was going to play a much greater role, which goes to your point about the end of the Cold War. The UN clearly was not an instrument that was of any use during that period, but we thought that it could and should be of much greater use.

Therefore the decision was made. Jeane Kirkpatrick had been invited to principals meetings, but she was not a regular member. So we suggested that the UN Ambassador be a Cabinet member and a member of the Principals Committee.

The whole job was interesting. Literally we went around and interviewed everybody. Having been transitioned into before, it was very strange from the Carter to the Reagan administration, because a man called [James] Bud Nance, who ended up working for Jesse Helms, which was a weird connection, had come in and said that they had decided, because they thought that Brzezinski had too much power, that they would de-fang the National Security Advisor. The idea was that he would not have a press or Congressional relations person. I was one of the fangs.

I knew what it was like to be transitioned into by unfriendly people. So I went around with Rick and we interviewed everybody. You make decisions about whom you are suggesting to keep, who are the political people, who are the professionals. It was at that stage that we decided that Dick Clarke should stay. But my strangest moment, having been there and everything, to go into an office that had been Ollie North’s. The offices in the Old Executive Office Building are very tall with high ceilings. Ollie North had created a whole second level in his office. They had built—he really was operating, I was surprised to see it—a little staircase inside. We presented all these suggestions.

Riley: We being—

Albright: Rick and I. In written form, to Tony, about what could and should be done, what the size of the budget could be, how the NSC system would work, what its relationship might be with the new NEC. In the meantime you sat there and waited and you thought, *Maybe somebody will call to offer me a job.* It just kept taking longer and longer and nothing was happening. Then at some point Sandy called me in and said, “We want to offer you—” I had thought about what I

wanted, and I wanted to be Deputy Secretary of State because no woman had had that job. I thought, *If that doesn't work, then Assistant Secretary for Europe.*

Sandy called me in and said, "We want you to be Ambassador to the UN." The first words out of my mouth were, "Dick Gardner will kill me." Dick Gardner was a friend of mine from ages, from when he was in the [John F.] Kennedy administration. I knew that that was the one job in the world that he wanted. He had worked for Al Gore and Al Gore really liked him. So instead of saying, "Yes, that's great," those were literally my first words. Sandy said, "Don't worry, we'll take care of that."

Anyway, I said, "Thank you." He said, "Nothing is set. You just have to think about it and wait." So I waited and I waited and I waited. Finally in December I couldn't stand it anymore. I went to my office on a Sunday and kept waiting and would call my machine and nothing would happen. I was writing memos. Finally around five o'clock there was a phone call from somebody saying, "Warren Christopher's office." I should check; the lawyers wanted to talk to me about getting vetted. I said, "Well, they're certainly going to give me some job."

I put all my stuff together and then I got home. Warren Christopher called and he said, "Come down to Little Rock, but don't tell anybody." The night before, I had to go to Chuck Ruff's to get vetted. He starts out by saying, "You were born in the United States." I said, "No, I wasn't." We went through three o'clock in the morning, this endless story. Getting to Little Rock from Washington is like going to outer space. Also I had planned a Christmas party for the Center for National Policy, but I couldn't tell anybody where I was going. So I had to go forward.

I told the woman who worked with me that I had a family issue and she had to have the party at my house while I was gone. So I get to Little Rock. Fortunately I was on the airplane with Dick Riley's wife. She said, "You do realize that Dick sat in his hotel room the whole day waiting for this phone call." I sat there and sat there. Nancy Soderberg, who was down there, would call up and say, "Everything is fine. He will see you; don't worry about it." Finally, at eight o'clock at night, Christopher calls and says, "The President-elect would like to see you later tonight." I said, "Later tonight?"

I had been up—he said, "Yes, but you and I can have dinner first." So we go and have dinner. We're sitting in this dining room where there's no other human being. He said to me, "I'm going to tell you something. I'm going to be Secretary of State." I said, "Chris, that's so great." He said, "Don't show any emotion." There's nobody in the whole place. He said, "You're going to go meet with the President-elect." So we went to the mansion. It was eleven o'clock at night, for the most important interview of my entire life.

Riley: Are you a night person?

Albright: No, I'm a morning person. Nancy in the meantime kept saying, "Call your kids. They should be here because the announcement's going to be tomorrow." I said, "Nancy, there's no reason to think I'm actually going to get this job. I don't want to get them here and I'm not going to get it and whatever." She said, "Go and see Clinton." So I get there and I sit in this kind of outer porch waiting. Chelsea [Clinton] is flitting around inside among boxes. Jim Woolsey walks out. He had had his interview.

Clinton was fantastic. He said, “I want you to be the UN Ambassador.” One of my questions, I said to Chris when I was having dinner with him, “Is the UN job going to be a Cabinet-level job?” He said, “I don’t know, ask the President.” So even before I open my mouth he said, “It’s going to be a Cabinet-level job.” We talked about the importance of the UN. It really was quite stunning. He said that he saw it as a very important organization. It was part of what he wanted to see in a post-Cold War world. He actually said, and I think he might have meant it, that if he weren’t going to be President, he’d love to be Ambassador to the UN.

We talked a lot about general foreign policy issues and the way that he saw the role of the United States and all of that. I get out of there and Nancy calls me and said she had arranged for the kids to come. Then I wake up in the morning and CNN [cable network news] says—Clinton had told me what the whole team was going to be. CNN says, “Tom Pickering is going to be head of the CIA,” a whole bunch of things that were totally different, and I believed CNN. [laughter] I just thought, *If it’s on TV it must be true.*

Then we all get to the mansion for sort of a pre-announcement meeting, what kinds of things we were going to say. It was evident within five minutes that Jim Woolsey was on a totally different wavelength from everybody else. Just very interesting, kind of strange, a different approach to things. Then we have this announcement. My kids were so funny afterwards. They said, “Mom, these are all the people who came to our house for dinner.” Then everybody was very excited and very pleased. We were all going to leave Little Rock. Jim Woolsey, because he was going to be head of CIA, already had an airplane. The rest of us—Little Rock was fogged in and we had to stay.

We all went to dinner. It was very exciting at first. After a while, we all thought, *Okay, we’ve got to get out of here, we have things to do.* It got a little—everybody was tired. We went back to the hotel. I couldn’t sleep, finally took something. The phone rings and this man says, “Ambassador Albright?” I’d never been called that. He said, “I’m the Ambassador from Bangladesh.” I said, “It’s one o’clock in the morning.” He said, “I just wanted to make sure you would never forget me.” [laughter]

Riley: And it worked.

Albright: Then we go back and it all starts.

Riley: I want to dial back on a couple of things. You okay to continue?

Albright: I’m fine. Probably too chatty for history.

Riley: We’ll take a break in a few minutes. I wanted to ask you a question about—

Albright: Can I mention one thing? Nancy sent me something and said they had submitted a list to Clinton about people who should be in the administration, a long list of names. The only one that had a check mark by it in his left-handed way was my name and “good” written under it. I was very pleased with that.

Riley: You touched a couple of times on these meetings you used to have at your home when the Democrats were in exile, so to speak. Can you tell us a little bit about that? What were these things like? They have a sort of aura and mystery from outside.

Albright: What's really funny is that people described it as a salon, which is a joke, because they were around my dining room table. I had a housekeeper who was not a great cook, so we just had casseroles or something. There would probably be about 12 people there. What we'd try to do—there were some professors from Georgetown, Sandy Berger, and various people who reappear. We'd usually have a subject we'd talk about and have a couple of people present some ideas and then have a discussion about it. The whole purpose, as I said earlier, was to get ourselves ready for having a united front doing the platform. But they were just good discussions.

I remember one time in the paper they said after we had won that they were salons. Somebody said, "Well, we certainly don't go there for the food." I think that they were just really good discussions and we all got to know each other.

Strong: I have a follow up too. When that Democratic advisor circle was gathering, what was the most divisive issue?

Albright: The most divisive issue—well, it depended on the era. I think the most was the approach to the Soviet Union. There was hard-line versus—I was always much more hawkish than everybody. Something that started in the '84 campaign and then went on was the use of force. Under what circumstances do you use force?

The Hart line—Gary Hart—that continued through was a discussion that then gets picked up at various times in every administration, whether or not you have very defined rules for the use of force. It had been something that [George] Shultz and [Caspar] Weinberger had fights over. The Shultz-Weinberger argument had originally been a Mondale- Hart argument. That was a very divisive thing, whether you had to go through a checklist of predetermined conditions or whether it was the job of the President to decide when to use force. It was all related then to the Cold War and the Soviets.

Knott: You said you were hawkish and you mentioned earlier that you didn't like George McGovern. Were you ever tempted at any point during these years to go the way of, for instance, a Jeane Kirkpatrick?

Albright: No.

Knott: Why didn't you go that way?

Albright: Because I'm not that hawkish. Also I was raised to be an anti-Communist; there's no question about that. I had a different view of what the American role should be in terms of cooperation and partnership and alliances. I never had the view of America's dominance. It has been harder to explain that than I ever thought it would be.

I have said, and I stick by it, that America is the indispensable nation. But that does not mean that we should try to act alone, or that we don't cooperate generally or are not part of institutions.

I basically said it in order to rally the American people to realize that just because the Cold War had ended, that didn't mean that we didn't have international responsibilities. So I don't have that "We're better than everybody else" view, despite the fact that I do think we're an exceptional nation.

I think that the way I phrased it in my new book is, "We are an exceptional nation, but we can't ask that exceptions be made for us." So that's really why I didn't even go as far as being a Henry Jackson Democrat. I'm anti-Communist, but not close-minded I think.

The thing that I found hard—I always did find hard, and I mentioned this to a lot of my students—it's very hard not to be part of whatever the mood of a campaign is. There were some Democrats who, for a long time, made fun of anybody who was—the post-Vietnam group was fairly derogatory about people who had hardline views about the Communists. With Dukakis for instance, I know now exactly why they brought me on. They thought he was too soft on some of the Russian things.

Riley: Who was that?

Albright: Dukakis and various people, Sasso. I remember having this ridiculous discussion with Dukakis when he said, "I'll get along with [Mikhail] Gorbachev because we're both lawyers." So during the debate prep stuff, I was advising that we needed to at least have the capability to threaten force. I can't remember what the issue was. I remember him saying in front of everyone, "There you go again, my bomber." So I did have the reputation of being fairly hard line and anticommunist, but not so far to be in Henry Jackson or Jeane Kirkpatrick's—

Strong: In the conversation with Clinton in Little Rock, does he raise Somalia, Bosnia, any of the issues that are likely to be important for a UN Ambassador?

Albright: I honestly can't remember, because I was so overwhelmed.

Strong: So it was a general discussion.

Albright: A general discussion. We had had discussions about Bosnia. I remember, during the convention in New York, there were a couple of meetings of foreign policy people. There had been a discussion about the importance of being tough in Bosnia, which then leads to some questions about why we didn't pursue a stronger policy at the beginning.

Chidester: What were your perceptions of Clinton's understanding of foreign policy issues? At this time he's a Governor of a small state. He doesn't have the best foreign policy credentials, but he's also quite intelligent. From these general conversations, and also other early conversations, did you feel that he had a deep understanding of foreign policy issues?

Albright: My sense about him was, first of all, I thought he was—I'm just trying to remember. He was there a long time during the Dukakis debate prep stuff, and we clearly covered foreign policy issues. He showed a nuanced understanding of issues. Then in some of the conversations we'd had in the intervening years, mostly to do with Georgetown, we had had some foreign policy discussions. I did something probably by deduction, which is—he had gone to the School of Foreign Service, which is where I taught. I know what the students are like there. You don't

get people who aren't—it's a trade school in many ways. It's part of special training; you take all kinds of courses that are very specific to international relations. So I knew what kind of background he had, which is quite a stunning background, I think, for an undergraduate.

I think he had probably as good an understanding of foreign policy issues as most Presidents going in. There is no way to overstate to all of you how smart Bill Clinton is, what an incredibly absorptive mind he has, how curious he is, and how much reading he does. That was evident in every single meeting I ever had with him. He would always ask the next question or take the issue one level higher. I never had any question as to whether he was capable of it.

Then the speech that he gave at Georgetown I think was very well informed, but speeches anybody can write. He did a good job on the Q and As. He did a pretty good job in the debate. We had just survived Reagan. I must say, my impression now of father [George H.W.] Bush is much higher than it was at the time. I regret every negative word I ever said about father Bush because he is a star in comparison to his son. I think he did have a good understanding of foreign policy, George Bush. I was pretty impressed with Clinton, but I have to admit some of it was deductive in terms of knowing what kind of students—the fact that this kid from Arkansas chose to come to Georgetown and had worked for [William] Fulbright and had pursued this education.

Riley: And had gone to law school.

Albright: Right. So I didn't have any concerns about that.

Riley: You helped with debate preparation?

Albright: No, this was back when Clinton helped to prep Dukakis—

Riley: I misunderstood.

Albright: I literally had nothing to do in 1992 beyond being in a couple of meetings and writing some papers.

Riley: That's what I thought I heard, but I wanted to make sure that was clear. I wanted to ask. Let me follow up with two or three quick questions and Bob, we'll come back to you. One was, you had mentioned that very early on you detected in these conversations that Woolsey was not on the same wavelength as everybody. Can you elaborate on that? What is it—?

Albright: What I think had happened here was that Woolsey had been chosen partially because, I don't know what you call the neocons of the Democratic Party—the [Henry] Jackson wing of the Democratic Party had wanted to have somebody. Then the real problem was that Woolsey wanted to be Secretary of Defense. That was very evident in terms of his view of things, whatever interjections he made at meetings, the way he treated Les Aspin and things like that. He just had a different viewpoint.

Riley: Two others. You told us a fair amount about your previous relationship with Sandy Berger, but Tony Lake is also important at this stage. Did you have a long working relationship with Tony?

Albright: Not quite as much, because Tony lived in Massachusetts. I had known him, also. Let me back up on something. There was definitely animosity between State and Defense during the Brzezinski-Vance era. There's no question about it. I had gone to work for Brzezinski right after we left the Carter White House. In fact, I helped him in putting his book together. There were people that had had a very hard time with. Brzezinski writes a lot about this, about his whole China initiative. We had Mike Oksenberg. He took the lead, and he and Dick Holbrooke at State argued constantly. So there was a sense, if you go back and look at Brzezinski's memoirs, he has a few choice words.

Tony was there at State as the policy-planning guy, and I think was viewed a little bit as wishy-washy on some of the issues of the Cold War. But I don't think I really knew Tony at that point. Then there were a variety of places that we saw each other, at conferences or at some Democratic events. During the Dukakis campaign, because he was at the University of Massachusetts, he would be a part of a few things, but not to the extent that a lot of people were. He kind of dipped in and out. Sandy is the one who brought Tony in because he had worked for Tony and they had been really good friends. Tony was definitely a central person in the Clinton campaign. Clearly we did not get along that well. Part of it had to do with, I don't know what it had to do with, but we had issues.

Riley: You're suggesting the roots go way back.

Albright: Some of it. I at various times would say either to him or later to Sandy, "I'm not Brzezinski." This goes to some of the personal relationships. There is a history to various things. I actually thought I would get along better with Tony than I did because our views, later in terms of Bosnia and things, were very similar.

I think one of the most interesting Washington developments, and very un-Washingtonian, is that Sandy could have been National Security Advisor at the beginning. He says this himself—he felt that he didn't have the experience and so he suggested that Tony be National Security Advisor and that he be his deputy. Then Tony, who seemed like a very sweet guy, proved very controlling. He ran the principals meetings in a very different way from Sandy, much less effectively, and he was rude to me. There's no other way to describe it.

We'll probably get to this on Bosnia. First of all I felt very strongly about it. But being at the UN I think gave me a totally different view of foreign policy from other principals. As I've said in many places, I saw more different foreigners per square inch than any other American diplomat to get a sense of how other countries were reacting to America's position. That was one of the reasons I thought, no matter who had the job, it was valuable to have the UN Ambassador on the principals committee, because you could bring a whole different view. Every time I would talk more than two minutes, Tony would start going like that [*drumming fingers on table*] or looking at his watch. So that got on my nerves.

Strong: That recommendation that the UN Ambassador be Cabinet officer with status on the principals, did that mean that the UN Ambassador was going to have more staff? Did that mean the UN Ambassador was going to have an office in Washington as well as one in New York? Or was it just a question of status and duties?

Albright: At the time, when Rick and I recommended it, we didn't fully understand that question. It was more originally that that voice needed to be heard in terms of what I just said, bringing an additional level of information and understanding to the table and then taking it back. What then happened, and it just shows my ignorance of this, I truly didn't understand how U.S.-UN—which is the U.S. mission to the UN—operated.

One had the feeling from a lot of the reading that I thought I'd done, that it was almost like an agency. But the truth was, it was an embassy. It just happens to be in the United States. What we found out in the course of the transition was that there had been what was called USUNW, a Washington office for the UN Ambassador within the State Department that was associated with the bureau of international organization affairs but had its own office. The rumor was that Pickering, when he was UN Ambassador, got into trouble with Secretary of State James Baker. Baker was upset because Pickering was always on television during the Iraq crisis. So they decided to abolish the USUNW office.

I thought that that was impossible. Given the fact that we had said there should be a principals' role, there had to be a Washington office. Christopher was terrific. We talked about this. It was a very complicated organizational chart because I was an instructed Ambassador, but I had a dotted line to Christopher directly. Also, because of the principals committee setup, I felt comfortable talking to the National Security Council directly. Christopher was actually very generous because he said, "You are an instructed Ambassador, but I expect you to express whatever views you want in the principals committee."

It was very interesting sitting in many places. But what we did do then was actually create a UNUSW office in which I had a Chief of Staff and some people who worked closely with the legal section and with the international organizations bureau, including David Scheffer and Jim O'Brien. So we developed a little place. It meant, physically, when I came to Washington, which I had to do—for some reason when this all started I thought the Clinton administration would be organized and there actually would be Cabinet meetings on Monday and we would have principals meetings at particular times. We practically never had Cabinet meetings. At the beginning the principals meetings happened constantly and I'd be going back and forth between New York and Washington. I thought, *Okay, what would make sense is if I could spend the weekends in Washington.* I didn't give up my house. It was crazy.

But I did have a place in the building, in the State Department. It also meant—Christopher was great. He said, "Whenever you're in Washington I want you to come to my morning meetings." I was very much a part of what he was doing. I had a very good relationship with him. The Deputy Secretary, Cliff Wharton—at the beginning, I didn't know him that well, but when Strobe [Talbot] became deputy, we spent a lot of time together. So I was more integrated, I think, into the building and also into the White House than previous UN Ambassadors.

Riley: One more question and we'll take a break. Dick Gardner ends up with a couple of nice diplomatic assignments, but doesn't get an appointment at a very high level. What was the story behind that? You had seemed to think that he might have—

Albright: I never quite understood this. I first met the Gardners in 1962. We were next door neighbors. He was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for IO. I thought that was the highest

level diplomat I would ever meet. He was really, really smart about the UN and population issues. He's an international lawyer. During the Carter administration, he was one of the three people who originally supported Carter—Vance, Brzezinski, and Gardner. He doesn't quite make it. He's Ambassador to Italy, but is not on the same level. I don't know. I think that people—he's full of himself, to a great extent. He's his own worst enemy.

I truly do think he is probably the most qualified person to be UN Ambassador ever of any of us. This is really indiscreet, but I think that what happened was he worked for Gore during the Gore-Dukakis thing. Then he just could not stand the fact that I, especially, who was just his wife's friend, had all of a sudden all this power. During the Dukakis campaign, we made a real point of, once you're the candidate, of bringing people in. So I met with him. I asked for a lot of papers about the UN. All of a sudden I get a call from the agents around Dukakis' house saying there's just been a FedEx package delivered here from Ambassador Gardner.

I said, "Hold it please." I called Dick and I said, "What exactly do you think we were talking about?" He said, "That I'd do papers for the UN?" "Did I not say that they were to come to me?" He said, "Yes, but I know Governor Dukakis. I thought I'd send them to him directly." I said no. So this kind of thing has been going on for quite a while. But I do think that he would have been suited. He however did not think I was suited. I went around afterwards to people in the department and I said, "We have to use Dick Gardner." Warren Christopher said to me, "I don't know why you're being so nice to him, because he's not being nice about you."

So then, in the second term, when we were considering who should be UN Ambassador, we were in an office with Vice President Gore and me and the President and a couple of other people and they said, "Who do you think should be UN Ambassador?" I said Dick Gardner. Vice President Gore said Dick Gardner and the President said no. He didn't explain why. He just said no. We came out of the Oval Office and Gore turns to me and says, "How are we going to explain to Dick Gardner that the Vice President and the Secretary of State think he should be UN Ambassador and he doesn't get the job?"

Anyway, I do think that he is so smart and I think he would have made a brilliant UN Ambassador.

Riley: I appreciate the information. It's a puzzle from the outside.

Albright: I think it's his personality. They have been—he was a brilliant Ambassador in Italy, and then we made him Ambassador to Spain, and I think people there think he was—he's a brilliant man, smarter than most people we all know. I certainly feel very comfortable with the fact that despite all, I tried.

Riley: Let's take a break.

[BREAK]

Riley: There were a couple of things that came up during the break that we might want to get on tape.

Albright: My course. I have developed a course called the National Security Toolbox. I always begin with the fact that foreign policy is just trying to get some other country to do what you want. That's all it is. So what are the tools that exist? The reason that I came up with this goes back to the Carter administration and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

After the Soviets invaded, we had a very large interagency meeting. The various agencies were supposed to put on the table something that—we knew we couldn't push the Soviets back right away, but how to punish them. So people sat around and tried to figure out what to do. It was pretty paltry. I mean, grain embargo, fishing, stopping some fishing, Olympics. I was just stunned. Here we were, the most powerful country in the world. There was a call-up of the reserves. But basically there was not a lot that we could do.

So when I was at Georgetown before, I team-taught a course that was kind of a capstone, an international relations course, and already began to put in certain elements of what the tools were. Then, when I was back in office, it was very evident to me again how few tools this country really has, or any country has. So in this course we start out with diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral, then sticks and carrots, looking at assistance programs and trade and sanctions and embargoes, then the threat of the use of force and the use of force. Intelligence and law enforcement. Then what is a lot of fun, I'm sure you do with your students, is play simulation games. We did North Korea for three years and I got sick of that. Now we've been doing Iran. I have set up a principals meeting. The students take different roles. I'm the President.

Then in another room we have the friends of Iran, who then turn into the Security Council. What I do is—I'm not only President but I'm *deus ex machina*—and whenever they're getting anywhere near something that they agree on, I bomb or something. But it's a great way to teach. So I've enjoyed doing that course. I'll send you the syllabus.

Riley: Did you want to say anything else? There was another comment you made off the tape about making some distinctions between some of your colleagues and their working styles as teachers. If you want to say, fine. If not, we can go on.

Albright: They're interesting issues I think. People who go back and forth into the government from various roles—I think it's interesting to look at the contrast of lawyers. There are a lot of lawyers who come. There are a lot of people who might have worked on the Hill at some time or other, and there are obviously a lot of academics. I think different ones look at it in different ways.

There are certain professors—I said I try very hard to analyze my relationship with Tony because I think that he was surprised that I wrote in my book that he was impatient with me. I think there are at least two kinds of professors. There are some who ask a question of their class and then wait for the students to come up with different views and try to understand where they're coming from. Then there are others who have an answer in their heads and expect the students to guess what it is. Tony was the latter kind.

At times when you were on the wavelength that he wanted in a principals meeting, he encouraged discussion. But if you were not, he was not interested. First of all, this is a female thing. I've talked about this a lot. I get a lot of resonance when I talk to any group that has any women in it. Women in a meeting are quite different from men. Some of it has to do with first getting a sense of the room and knowing who's who, then waiting to see what you might say when you can say it. Most of the time—and I can't tell you how many times I get total agreement and head nodding from women about this—you wait and wait and you think, *I can't say that; that's too stupid*. Then some man says it and everybody thinks it's brilliant. You're really mad at yourself for not having spoken earlier.

Riley: In my case with my wife, she says she has just had a conversation with the man who speaks up on that point who has just told her that that's not a very good idea.

Albright: That happens, too. And women raise their hands. You don't get called on until the point is no longer germane. When I teach, I have to say, my classes are a bit of a zoo. I tell people they can't raise their hands; they have to interrupt. So my motto for women is you have to interrupt because I'm convinced that you listen differently if you're going to interrupt than if you're just—I don't know if there's such a thing as active and passive listening, but I created that.

So here I am, as UN Ambassador. There were no other women on the principals committee. I already had a rather strange experience in New York. It was the first time, and I do write about that, too. I had this real conflict of being a woman and yet also the representative of the United States. I'd go into my first Security Council meeting, which is not in that big room but in a small room, about the size of this, and there are 14 men of different races sitting there like this, looking at me. I think to myself, *Okay, I'm going to wait and figure out where I am*. All of a sudden I realize I can't do that. I'm the United States, and if I don't speak, at some point in this debate, even though it's my first minute there, first day there, our voice will not be heard.

So I got very much used to saying what I had to say. I did feel very strongly about Bosnia. This was an issue that came up very early. In looking at your timeline I can see some of the directions you were going in. As I mentioned, during the campaign I really had a sense that the Clinton campaign people, of which I was not one, were very proactive on Bosnia. They were very critical of the fact that the Bush administration had not done anything about it. There were questions already about why the Germans had been the ones to recognize Croatia, what direction it was going in.

It seemed to me that one of the things we were going to do was be proactive on Bosnia. What happened then was that other issues—I don't know all the aspects of this, but clearly the gays in the military issue had a big effect on how Clinton dealt with the military. Some of the questions that had come up over his draft status in Vietnam played a role. The military, until now, has not particularly liked Democrats. So there was some tension in that regard.

There also was a huge economic agenda, and obviously the campaign had been about "the economy stupid." There were a lot of things that happened. I felt that there was not enough happening on Bosnia. I sat up there every day with different sources of information, one of which was the Bosnians who were up there, [Muhammed] Mo Sacirbey and various people who

were up there, very strongly saying the United States should do something. Then there were other members of the Security Council who felt we should do something. One of them was a very interesting man called Diego Arria from Venezuela, who was very proactive. I was getting a lot of information about what was going on there.

I went to the principals meetings and it did not seem to me that we were where we should have been. I have to admit that at that stage I hadn't learned to argue in a way that didn't strike Tony as being "emotional," which is the best way to put a woman down. I remember one time I said something like, "Gentleman, history is going to judge us very badly if we don't do something." Our main problem, in addition to everything else, was Colin Powell. I say this with a lot of regret, because Colin and I are very good friends.

I had first talked to Colin when he was Deputy National Security Advisor during the Dukakis campaign because the campaign is entitled to an intelligence briefing and I was the one who set it up. So Colin and I started talking at that stage. So here he is. Except for Powell, we were all brand new.

You have a huge agenda at the beginning of an administration, some of which was in the books that we prepared, Rick and I, for the transition. You begin a whole series of principals meetings. It's always the same people. You are working your way through problems and trying to figure out each other's personality and what your job is and everything. Colin was the grownup. Here he was; he'd done it before. There is something about arriving in a meeting with medals from here to here and having just won the Gulf War and having been National Security Advisor and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. If you're going to do military action, you're dependent on the military. You have a new Secretary of Defense who is being mau-maued by the new CIA director, and I mean there are a lot of strange things going on.

So the thing that would happen on a regular basis would be that Tony or Les Aspin would say, "We need a plan from the Joint Chiefs about under what circumstances we could use the military." On a regular basis Colin would come in and do a presentation. He is a brilliant briefer, and the Pentagon is really good at pictures and charts and 3-D things. Colin had a little red pointer and he'd go through this and say, "We can take that hill and we can do that and we can do this. You know we have the best military in the world, but it's going to take 500,000 men and \$500 billion and 50 years. What are you going to say to Sergeant Slepchok's mother when he dies from having stepped on a land mine?" So he'd lead you up the hill of possibilities and then drop you off the other side, and you'd end up with no options.

At one stage I did say, "You know, Colin, what are you saving this incredible military for?" He did get mad at me. But then he reached the end of his term and General [John] Shalikashvili comes in, who is a very different kind of a Chairman, somebody who had worked with the UN and on Operation Provide Comfort in Iraq. Also, he was a European. He just had a different approach. He began to point out what could be done. Also, at that stage, President [Jacques] Chirac was very helpful, and we actually took on a military operation in Bosnia and won.

So when Colin wrote his book, he wrote that I practically gave him an aneurysm when I suggested this, and he had to explain patiently to Ambassador Albright that our military were not toy soldiers. One of the problems with writing a book is it always takes a while to get it out.

Somebody from the *New Yorker* I think called me up and said, “Have you read Colin Powell’s book?” I said no. So I thought, *What the hell*. I called him up and said, “Colin, ‘patiently?’” He said, “I did have to explain it to you patiently. You didn’t understand anything about the military.” So he sent me his book and he signed it, “To Madeleine, with love, admiration, etc.” He signed it, “Patiently, Colin.”

I sent him back a note and said, “Dear Colin, thanks for the book. With love and admiration.” I signed it, “Forcefully, Madeleine.” But he did play this role of somebody who was, as I said, the grownup. So it limited, I think, to a great extent, what we were doing initially in Bosnia. I think Christopher also was slower on it. Tony and I were for it. On that issue, over time, Tony and I were able to develop a good relationship.

Knott: He never really answered your question, What do you have this military for?

Albright: No. He never did. I must say I would have asked him the same question as Secretary of State: What are you saving your political capital for?

Riley: Could you go through person by person? We’ve begun doing this already with Powell, but with each of the members of the foreign policy team? I’m using that term deliberately and certainly stand to be corrected if “team” is not the right term here. But tell us a little bit about what the President saw in each of these people, what he or she would bring to the table in terms of the development of foreign policy. I know this is complicated, because people start developing attachments to where they’re sitting. But it’s also the case that people have different skill sets; they have different sets of visions. We’d be interested in knowing how these pieces of the puzzle fit together.

Albright: I think that they evolve as Clinton gets more and more into being “the President” and develops some of his own views. But I think somebody who was key on the team was Vice President Gore, who I think was, *is*, a truly knowledgeable person on a lot of issues. He was somebody who had been a Senator and had been very involved in arms control issues and obviously had voted in what was viewed as the “right way” on the Iraq war by then. I think Vice President Gore is a really serious student and a very smart man. So he was, I think, the key member. The President really looked to him for a lot of things. When we talked about Bosnia or whatever, there’s no question about that. Gore was very much a partner in all of it. He was not in the principals meetings—the person who was there was his National Security assistant, Leon Fuerth. At that stage I don’t think he was written into the system, but he was in every one of the meetings. Because the Vice President was so respectful of Leon, the President also was.

It was very interesting. Leon is a peculiar human being. He’s exceptionally smart and also somebody who is very interesting in meetings. Either because he’s really like this or he knows it’s a good act, he sits there for a long time and says, “I want to say something.” Then he waits, and you wait. So there’s much more a sense of arrival and anticipation. He thinks in very interesting ways. He began to be absolutely key on issues to do with sanctions because he had done a big study of all the various roles of sanctions. The President liked Leon. Leon wouldn’t often talk, and then the President would call on him. So he had an interesting role to play.

Then Tony, the National Security Advisor—when you go into the meeting with the President, the National Security Advisor is the President’s staffer. He runs the meetings; he sets them up and provides a framework for them. So Tony obviously played a very important role in creating the framework and then calling on people to speak. The President listened to Tony, there’s no question. I don’t know what happened behind the scenes.

Les Aspin, at the beginning—Les also was a really smart guy, but he was a former member of Congress. I don’t think he had an easy time adjusting to the job of an executive, to run a department. I think Bill Perry, as his Deputy, did a lot of hard work on it. People thought that Les was a little—it must have been the same feeling that Brzezinski had about Muskie, something about a former Congressman in this context is different, not being hard-headed enough about decisions, asking more questions—I think people didn’t know what to do with him. At the same time, as I said, Woolsey was on his case all the time, so that dynamic was interesting.

The dynamic also that ended up being interesting was the Sandy-Tony dynamic. I think, don’t know, you’ve had Sandy here, right?

Riley: Yes.

Albright: Have you ever asked him—this is confidential—but anyway, I think that Sandy very soon began to regret his decision, because Tony did not treat him with enough respect. At later stages Sandy and I talked about the fact that I thought Tony always looked at his watch when I started speaking. He said, “You think you felt that way, I certainly felt that way.” So I was not the only one that had this reaction to Tony. But Sandy, ultimately, if you were to talk to Warren Christopher, he would say that Sandy made the system work then through the deputies committee. Christopher and Tony did not get along.

Christopher, who seems like a very quiet soul, actually can get his back up pretty much. I think he felt that Tony didn’t treat him with the proper respect, that he didn’t always have the access he wanted to the President. I don’t know if he did night notes or not. But Christopher is such an incredible gentleman. You could tell when he’d get mad, and later, as he and I have talked, I think he felt that Tony was very controlling. Had it not been for Sandy, there would not have been any possibility at all for really operating. So there really was the system, the teamwork through the deputies as much as anything.

Riley: Your experience with National Security Advisors apart from Lake tells you that it’s not—the National Security Advisor doesn’t have to behave that way. It’s not an institutional necessity that a National Security Advisor be controlling and—

Albright: I think the truth is he doesn’t, or she doesn’t. It’s a fascinating job and a fascinating relationship. It all depends on the President. The President can have whatever he wants. I would say, if I were to write a psychobabble book about National Security Advisors, they react against what their predecessors did, to a great extent. I think [Henry] Kissinger is the prototype National Security Advisor.

What he did was set up a system that he ran totally. The NSC at that stage had six committees that operated and he was chairman of all of them. He really intellectually dominated everybody. As I said, the rumors were that he had a terrible temper. I know this for a fact, that when the

Carter people came in, they deliberately didn't want to have an NSC like Kissinger's. But Kissinger and Brzezinski have always had a competitive relationship from when they were at Harvard, or whatever they do. You could write a book about that.

Even though Carter said he didn't want to have a National Security Advisor like that, Brzezinski was damned if he wasn't going to be the world's greatest National Security Advisor. So he, through the system that was set up, was really the brains of the operation. Vance played into it in some ways. If you go back and look at that period, Vance would come out of meetings and never really discuss substance. It was all about process. The truth is the National Security Advisor should be behind the scenes.

But Vance was not really good on *Meet the Press* or whatever and Brzezinski speaks in perfect paragraphs and never uses a word wrong. So he started taking over more and more of the media role. The question became later, should the National Security Advisor ever be on television? During the Carter administration it was evident that Zbig was doing more and more. Senator [Edward] Zorinsky of Nebraska offered an amendment to get the National Security Advisor to be confirmed, which was anathema, obviously, to the State Department. Zbig thought it was great.

I think in many ways, the ideal National Security Advisor was Brent Scowcroft, who was somebody who felt great confidence and had a close relationship with President Bush. Scowcroft has an ego, but it's not his controlling factor. He was really an honest broker, ran a system that seemed to work, and was not out there all the time. So the question was what Clinton's National Security Advisors would look like.

To some extent, I think the President didn't ask Tony to stay for a second term, so you know something about the system wasn't quite the way he liked it. I think Sandy was some mixture of these things. He clearly was smart; he was really fair in principals meetings. People say there were disagreements. Of course there have to be disagreements. That's what the system is based on. If every Secretary says the same thing, then you're not getting a range of advice.

I always described principals meetings as the National Security Advisor has to make sure that the eggs are broken and then make an omelet out of them. You have to elicit views from all the people, and you have to have a meeting in which there's not personal animosity but you're called on, you state the position of your department and then you have an open discussion. If you can't agree, then it goes to the President, but what you're trying to do is get agreement.

A National Security Advisor, a good one, is somebody who is good at eliciting the views, making people feel comfortable in stating them, not making them think that they've talked too long and allowing some back-channel stuff, obviously at various times. The only problem with Sandy was that he did go operational a number of times. Again, we did argue about this because this was mostly on the Middle East. I went in there and said, "You can't do this." He said, "But Brzezinski went to China." I said, "You're not Brzezinski, and I'm certainly not Vance."

The job of National Security Advisor kept getting bigger and bigger. This has something to do with, as I said earlier, the White House. I think if you talk to any Cabinet Secretary now, they begin to feel that the White House is into too many things.

For instance, my business partner—Carol Browner, who was head of the Environmental Protection Agency, she had problems. You know she had worked for Al Gore. There were real questions about how the White House controlled them, or HHS, whatever the department. There was a sense that the White House, the inner White House, keeps growing, trying to control more and more of everything that goes on in the executive branch. So Sandy would—if I go back and I see what the mistakes were on Camp David, a lot of them were that the White House kept agitating. So that's it.

Riley: Okay, thanks.

Chidester: You said that President Clinton began to develop his own foreign policy vision as the first term progressed. Can you tell us some of the other competing strategies going on within the foreign policy team?

Albright: I think the real question was the same old question, which is how you use force and what America's obligations are. And Somalia, we can talk about that. There were several things going on simultaneously. We had the problem of Bosnia. Somalia had started out as a humanitarian mission and was started during the transition. I think probably, I don't know enough about this story, but the decisions made by Brent Scowcroft, particularly to go into Somalia, how much consultation he actually had with the Clinton people. I was doing process; I wasn't doing that issue as much, but it's a real decision for someone to launch a big thing like that in the middle of a transition.

Then obviously that mission changed. There was a question about what resources one would use for that. Then there was Haiti. Haiti was a very imminent thing because migrants were coming by boat and raft toward our shores. Also, I have always thought this was very interesting—there's a connection between the Mariel boat lift and the Haiti people and Clinton. What happened was when Carter had said in 1979, "You all come" and the Mariel boatlift started, a lot of Haitians who came were picked up and sent into Arkansas. They were at whatever fort—

Riley: Fort Chaffee.

Albright: Were there, and overran the place, and Clinton lost his Governorship over that as much as anything. So he was very sensitive to what was happening when the Haitians started coming in on rafts and how that whole situation should be handled. So to go back—we were out of the Cold War. There were real questions about the size of the defense budget. There were issues about how to get some control over the deficit. There was the fact that "it's the economy, stupid." There was the weird relationship with the military over the gay issue. There was Colin Powell, who was viewed, as I said, as the hero of the western world. There were all these new issues on the table, plus 12 years of a Republican Presidency.

So there were a lot of different things going on, and some of them had to do with the larger issues about the role of the United States. My sense always was that Clinton was somebody who saw a large role for the United States in a kind of principled way, but when it came to trying to figure out what the steps were, he knew, we all began to realize—the difference frankly between being an academic and being a policy maker is you all of a sudden have to put your money where your mouth is.

Moving a process forward is so much harder than anybody thinks. The competing issues were money, budget issues, and the fact that nobody has a military except the Defense Department, and how you deploy that force. Who gives the orders? How do you operate within a peacekeeping operation?

Chidester: You touched on this when you said America's role in the world, more broadly. This is what I was trying to get at. With Reagan you knew exactly where the administration stood as far as strategy. With Bush Senior, he always suffered from this so-called "vision thing." As basically the first post-Cold War Presidency, you could go any number of ways; that was the broader question I was getting at. You can go with enlargement. You can go with this or that. I'm wondering, what ways did different top-level foreign policy members push President Clinton if he doesn't have this—

Albright: I think he did have a vision. We did a lot of kidding about "enlargement" not being a great word. So integration, globalization. I came up with something that he liked, which had to do with the fact that when I came to the UN, there were 183 countries. Being a professor, I had to get an intellectual construct for what I was seeing. I decided in my head that I would divide the countries into four general groups. The largest was countries that believed in an international system of some kind, negotiated treaties, lived up to them, had diplomatic relations, believed in alliances, etc. That was the largest group. While we didn't necessarily agree with everything everybody did, we agreed that there ought to be a system.

The second group was of the newly democratic countries that wanted to be part of the first group but didn't have the infrastructure yet to be a part of it. The third group we called the rogues until we got more polite and started calling them states of concern. They had the opposite view. They wanted to destroy the system. They had no stake in it. The fourth group were the basket cases, the countries that had no infrastructure literally and figuratively. The point of what we were trying to do was to strengthen the first group, which is why you have NATO enlargement and the War Crimes Tribunal, and negotiation on arms control treaties and strengthening an international system.

The second group we decided we needed to help, so there were plans to help in democracy development, economic development. The third group, the rogues, we either wanted to reform or isolate, and the fourth group, such as Somalia and Haiti, we wanted to hold their head above water with the idea that ultimately you want everybody in the first group. That was the so-called "vision thing." Clinton liked that. The only problem was I never could figure out where China fit because it could fit in any one of three groups, and what it left out was the non-state actors who were not really as big at that stage.

I talked about this so much that we started calling it the four food groups. It did present a picture of what we were trying to do. If you follow what we did, it fits in many ways. I don't know to what extent it influenced the President's decision to name me Secretary of State, but what would happen in these meetings, as I said Tony ran the meetings with the President, which he wanted to structure. At various times in the meetings the President would say, "I want to hear what Madeleine has to say." He seemed to like the way that I described choices and framed issues. We had similar views of American's role and the importance of a functioning international system.

I think he had a general view of where he wanted to go, was very well informed about things, but was also unbelievably busy. I think the job of President is unbelievably difficult. I truly do not know how somebody—there are very few people—Clinton is one of them—who can possibly do domestic and foreign policy at the same time. How you can worry about Medicare on one hand and Bosnia on the other on a daily basis—I don't know how people do it.

I want to go back to something with Gore, because this is a very important point. Gore played a fascinating role in the way he almost served as a prime minister. They developed these commissions. There was the Gore-[Viktor] Chernomyrdin Commission. There was a Gore-[Hosni] Mubarak Committee, and one with South Africa in which a lot of foreign policy issues were handled in a way on a more bureaucratic level. Leon played a big role in that. I think it was a very interesting kind of foreign policy mechanism.

Riley: I have a couple of loose ends to tie up. Some of what we picked up in prior interviews is that in the domestic area in particular, there was not a very big effort, to say the least, to bring Carter people into the Clinton White House. Yet in the foreign policy area, that wasn't the case. Was that commented on at the time? Was that something that you paid any attention to? Were there concerns that the Carter people—

Albright: It wasn't so much the Carter people, it was Carter. I think that most of us were Carter people. I mean, if you think about it, Sandy and Tony and Christopher—

Riley: In the foreign policy area.

Albright: In the foreign policy area. I don't know about the domestic area. I think there was a real problem with Carter, which is a whole other subject. Do you want to talk about it?

Riley: That's something we had on our agenda, so let's go ahead and take care of it.

Albright: President Carter is a very interesting human being and very smart, and I wish I truly understood the relationship between him and President Clinton. I mean, clearly, both Southerners, both Governors, both very religious. Carter, who I got to know much better after he was out of office, is unbelievably bitter about not having a second term, there's just no question. He wanted very much to be regarded as the "senior statesman" in many ways and treated as a supra something or other.

For whatever reason, he was not. Some of it, I think, had to do with Warren Christopher, because Carter didn't make Christopher Secretary of State and made Muskie instead. As I said, Christopher looks like a very lovely, calm human being, but I think this was very deeply hurtful to him that he wasn't Secretary of State. He found it very hard after that to deal with Carter. In fact, there were certain times Christopher would call me up and he'd say, "You deal with Carter. I don't want to." Carter is really smart too. I mean very smart.

Riley: But in a different way? Can you think about this? You don't have to deal with it right now, because I'm interrupting.

Albright: I'll get to it. I think Carter expected deference in a way that was not going to come. Some of it may have had to do with the Mariel boatlift. I don't know. I don't know all the

different strains and stresses. Carter had already developed a very full post-Presidential agenda and had made a real name for himself. I'm chair of the Board of the National Democratic Institute. I wasn't at that time, but we honored Carter for things that he had done on human rights and elections and all kinds of things after his Presidency. He had done a lot of diplomatic things and thought that he should be asked to do more.

The first thing that I think he was asked to do was the Haiti thing, going with Powell and Senator Sam Nunn to tell [Raoul] Cedras to get out. It was very evident, already, then, that Carter wanted to do things somewhat differently and did not really take instruction very well. Then there was the whole North Korea episode, where we were all sitting in the Cabinet room ready to make some decisions about North Korea, when all of a sudden we get a phone call from Carter from Pyongyang that he'd worked out the deal. People were kind of in a state of shock about it. So he was very much a loose cannon. There was no other way to describe it, often a useful one, but nevertheless loose.

That relationship was a very peculiar one. Then when I became Secretary—this is very painful. He invited me to come down, or Rosalynn invited me to speak at Emory and then to have a session at the Carter Library. They pulled me aside and said, "Please, please let us do something. We promise you that we will take instruction. We will never do anything that you don't ask us to do." It was really very poignant. But then he got involved in Bosnia on his own with something that he did, whatever he did. I then tried to get him involved in stuff on the Sudan. He disagreed with everything we did. He is who he is.

I have recently been doing stuff with him because I am chairman of NDI [National Democratic Institute]. He has the Carter Center. We did election observing together in Palestine. Nobody was supposed to talk to Hamas, but he wanted to. I think it's a very complex relationship. I think that he's very judgmental. They're very different kinds of people. I think that Carter is more rigid in his thinking than Clinton is. Clinton is such a curious person, and I think much more open to listening to other people's ideas. He's easier to be with. Carter is not easy to be with. He's a little—what's the right word? He's judgmental. I think that's the right word.

Riley: Clinton preferred to have sort of creative chaos presented to him, or is that an overstatement?

Albright: I wouldn't call it chaos, but he loved the idea that one would have really open discussions in front of him. I think that he—he didn't want to terrify—as I said, I was so much lower level with Carter that I can't make a judgment about how somebody like Brzezinski really felt with him. But I think that with Clinton you could—which is why I think some people didn't treat him with the right degree of respect. It's because he liked the kind of discussion and he let you talk and he didn't make you feel like an idiot if you weren't on the right track. I think he liked the melee of it. Whether it's chaos or not. Because ultimately he would sit there with a yellow pad and he'd sort it out.

I don't think it's fair to say that he has a more creative mind than Carter, because Carter really is remarkable in the things that he's done and his dedication to things. I find Carter very difficult, but I really admire him.

Riley: With Carter the preference was more to have things in a disciplined, channeled way?

Albright: In a disciplined way. I had one interchange with Carter that was unbelievable. My job was to take care of Congress. We used to have these meetings with Congressional leaders early in the morning to go over issues. I got so I knew what everybody wanted for breakfast and the whole thing. We'd have these gatherings in the dining room in the residence.

There was one time where for some reason everybody arrived early and was eating breakfast. Carter was supposed to be the first speaker, but for some reason we got ahead of schedule and they were all sitting around. Secretary of the Treasury [William] Miller who had wanted to explain an issue dealing with the IMF [International Monetary Fund] was there. So I made this mega command decision and I said to Secretary Miller, "Why don't you speak and then when President Carter comes then he will take over."

I tried to get a message to President Carter. He gets off the elevator and I said to him what was happening and he said, "I don't like this. I like to speak first." I said, "I'm sorry, Mr. President, blah, blah." He was very tense during the whole time he spoke. Then when the meeting was over, his secretary called me up and she said, "What did you do to make the President of the United States mad?" So it was the kind of thing that he really was rigid. It's just an example of discipline and rigidity and has something to do probably with his life in the Navy and whatever his lifestyle is. So judgmental is the word about Carter. But he really is smart and truly dedicated and works very hard.

Riley: Did you have a piece in the Haiti business in the second year?

Albright: With Carter?

Riley: With Clinton.

Albright: A lot. It was a huge thing. First of all, I was on the principals committee no matter what the subject. That was a very big deal. Then, what we were working on, it had a whole UN angle to it, which was to try to get—I consider this my greatest accomplishment at the UN, in a diplomatic way, as UN Ambassador. We needed to get a multilateral force into Haiti and we needed permission for it ahead of time. In order to get approval for an American-led force in Latin America was a really big deal. So there was a lot of maneuvering to do it. There had been the Governor's Island agreements and various aspects of getting [Jean-Bertrand] Aristide back. So it had a big UN component.

Riley: I guess I was asking more particularly about the mission that went down when Carter went down.

Albright: No, I wasn't with that. That was a Carter-Nunn-Powell mission. I was part of the principals committee that decided they should go.

Riley: Is there anything you can tell us about those discussions?

Albright: No, nothing more specific.

Knott: Did you have any interactions with Bush senior?

Albright: I did.

Knott: Could you tell us a little bit about it?

Albright: I had some funny interactions actually. My first trip outside Washington as Secretary was to Texas. I went to speak at the Baker Institute. Then I went to visit President and Mrs. [Barbara] Bush. They were just lovely, couldn't have been nicer. Then he came out and we were on his driveway. He was in favor of the chemicals weapons convention. It was something that he had negotiated.

My first interaction with him was as UN Ambassador actually, which is much funnier. There was the Declaration of Principles on the Middle East on September 13, 1993. The President had invited all the former Presidents to the White House and we were all upstairs at a dinner afterwards. I had criticized President Bush during the campaign. Then I go up to him and I said, "Hello. President Bush, I now have the job that you had at the UN."

He said, "Yes, and don't you love it?" Then, I don't know what got into me. I said, "You know, Mr. President, I sometimes think about the fact that I'm sleeping in your bed." I mean, it's the same apartment and the same furniture. He looked at me and said, "You are. I have to go tell Bar." [*laughter*]

But when I thought about all the people who had slept in that bed, it was a very funny thought. Then I went down there when I was Secretary. I had several interactions with him, because one of my jobs as Secretary was to keep the former Presidents briefed. I would call him at various times and tell him whatever things were going on. He was always very charming. As I said, I regret many things I ever said about him. Subsequently I've seen him at various things and he couldn't be nicer. He's a very nice man.

Riley: You said part of your job is to keep former Presidents briefed. Did that include the other living former Presidents?

Albright: I briefed President [Gerald] Ford. I also went out to give a speech—President Ford asked me to come and speak at his library. He called me the "Tiger Woods of foreign policy." I was very pleased with that. President Carter, as I said, was my assignment. The other thing that I did on a regular basis was to be in touch with my predecessors. The minute I was named, I called all my predecessors. It was very funny because Henry Kissinger said, "Now you've taken away from me the one thing [being a foreign-born Secretary of State] that I had." I said, "No Henry, I don't have an accent."

But we talked on a regular basis and I considered that very important. I had them each individually to the State Department for lunch and we'd go through things. I'd call them before any particular decision was made, which my successors have not always done, by the way. Also, while I'm venting here, I think that Condi [Condoleezza] Rice was not a successful National Security Advisor. She did not play the role; that is not to say what I think about her as Secretary of State. I think she's doing a fine job. But as National Security Advisor, she either is responsible for the policy in Iraq or she's not. She can't have it both ways. I think that the role she played

was much more the advisor to President Bush than the thing that Sandy did, which was to work the process.

I think a National Security Advisor is an essential part of the system. Unless you have the strength to break the eggs and then make the omelet, it's a system that doesn't work.

Riley: I haven't heard many people offer that opinion of her as the National Security Advisor, and I've floated the idea with folks. Not people in the interview project, but some people overseas in senior positions, and surprisingly, people have risen to her defense.

Albright: As National Security Advisor?

Riley: As National Security Advisor.

Albright: You can't have it both ways. I'm more willing to believe that she actually is an architect of the Iraq policy. In which case people should wonder about what she is doing. I have a very special relationship with her because my father was her professor.

Riley: The [quote from the] book was, "How can you be a Republican when we had the same father?" We got on the subject briefly about the President and the way he likes to get information. Part of the conventional wisdom about the White House staff in the first year was that there was a lot of chaos there. Was that your perception from New York?

Albright: That was harder for me to judge because I spent most of my time in New York. I would fly in to do a principals meeting or when there was a meeting in the Oval Office or something. There was chaos in the following ways, which went on forever. He was very hard to schedule. Most of it had to do—not because he wasn't working—on the contrary. I saw this happen—he would get into discussions and he didn't want to stop them. So then that started the whole thing off wrong.

He was not a morning person, that's for sure. But then, I thought it was congenitally impossible to be late to a meeting at the White House. Then one time I actually was late. There were some cameras in the Cabinet room and Donna Shalala was sitting in my seat. I said to the President, "What, we all look the same?" But basically nothing ever happened on time. I know because I was in the meetings. He would go on and on and on and ask more questions and get totally wrapped up in what he was doing. So there was chaos created in terms of scheduling.

Or they would decide at the last minute. I remember one time in New York we were having a dinner with the King of Spain and I had to be in Washington by 8:00 in the morning. I had to be driven because there were no more shuttles, just to get to a meeting that they called at the last minute. So there was a chaotic atmosphere to that extent.

Riley: Did that change over the course of the administration? Did he get any more disciplined?

Albright: A little bit more. But a lot of it had to do with the fact that he liked the meetings. He really did. What would happen on a regular basis would be you'd go in to get ready for a meeting with X Minister or President or whatever. The NSC person who does the briefings stood around the desk while he worked on a crossword puzzle. You'd think, *God damn it, he's not listening.*

We're trying to tell him about the President of X and he's doing a crossword puzzle. This is the President. You're not going to tell him to stop. Then he'd sit down and start the meeting and he'd say, "Why do I have to have this meeting?"

Then you'd sit down with the President of X and within five minutes you could tell that he had heard every single word and he went beyond whatever it was that anybody had thought about. Then he'd go on. We'd sit there with the President of X half an hour longer than we were supposed to.

Meanwhile, the President of X's Cabinet was sitting in the Cabinet room. Then we'd have to have this other long meeting. So that's what would happen. He was undisciplined in the voracity of his appetite for information and discussions.

Riley: That's something none of the Chiefs of Staff were able to—

Albright: It was hard. I think they probably—I know I had a rather difficult job because the way that the Oval Office—the chairs are here, then there are the sofas. Unless the Vice President was in the meeting, I sat on the sofa. So they would pass little note cards, and whoever was Chief of Staff, or Sandy, would hand a note card. I was supposed to hand it to the President saying, "Time is up." So you pass this note card. You'd try, or somebody would. *The West Wing* is correct. Somebody would come in and say, "Mr. President, your next appointment is outside," or whatever. If he were having an interesting time, he'd say, "I'm having an interesting time."

He was so compelling. The questions he was asking, the President of X would be completely charmed and we were learning things. It was hard. But he loved the whole people part of it and what he learned.

Strong: When you're in the White House in a senior administration position as you said, dozens of things are going on at the same time. But I'm wondering—could you pick a foreign policy issue from the first term that you think is really a good case study about how things worked, and particularly, what kind of role Clinton played? Is there one of those—Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, North Korea, what have you, that we could maybe delve into in some detail that would be illustrative?

Albright: I think all of those. In many ways, Bosnia is one in which—I'm not sure I can do this off the top of my head—basically it was an issue that he felt strongly about, there's no question that something should be done. He did come out of the campaign thinking that mistakes had been made and something needed to be done. What happened was that there was a policy review process that was launched through the NSC. We spent an incredible amount of time on it. There was obviously a group of people in the NSC that worked on this. There was a woman named Jenonne Walker. Then there was the Assistant Secretary on Europe at the State Department. Christopher spent time on it; Tony spent time on it; I spent time on it. It absorbed us.

The thing that I think is very important to keep in mind is it's hard to separate these issues from each other. What I find interesting in studying this period is the effect of one of these peacekeeping decisions on another because they all play together. When people want to know why we didn't do something in Rwanda, they all play together. Plus, something that you may

want to get into is the whole aspect of how we saw peacekeeping operations and what the role of the UN was. So they were all of a piece.

But on the Bosnia thing, I think that the President really did want to do something. Then he did, as I mentioned earlier, feel the constraint that the Defense Department was not very forthcoming on it, or not at all. I talked about Les Aspin having the difficulties that he did and Colin having the influence that he had, and the uniformed military having the view that we were all idiots. I mean they really did have that. They were not friendly towards us.

They took some remark that somebody made—I can't remember where it was—but kind of twisted it to say that we didn't have respect for the military, which simply wasn't true. Those were the things playing with it. But what did happen was that as the President got through the beginning of his domestic agenda, he began to take a bigger and bigger role in trying to figure out why we hadn't moved on Bosnia the way he thought we were going to move coming out of his campaign.

What I remember is that basically our meetings got more intense about where we were going to move on it. Then, as I mentioned earlier, Chirac's role—Chirac was elected and he had a much more forward-leaning position. I think the President began to make more personal telephone calls on this and got more involved in it. I think that he really picked up the pace on it. I think that Gore had a very important role in the Bosnia issue. There was also work with Congress. [Joseph] Biden was very strong on pushing on Bosnia.

So it was an increasing—the problem at the beginning was the President deciding he had been elected on a domestic agenda and spending a lot of time on that. Then having Bob Rubin as head of the NEC and trying to get their hands around the deficit issues, the problems with the military, and thinking that the process was moving, then a sense of disappointment that it had not been moving as fast, then him upping the pace and the ante on it. I think he was disappointed in—I'm sure this is why I became Secretary of State, because I kept agitating and he knew it was something—Hillary [Clinton] told me this afterwards. Hillary was the major reason I was Secretary of State. Hillary told me, and he told me, that Hillary said, "Why wouldn't you name her? She has the same views you do on Bosnia and she has been articulating them very well."

I think he let the system work at the beginning and was disappointed in the direction it was and he picked it up. That was very evident when I was Secretary in Kosovo. I hope we talk about that. For me, Kosovo is the most interesting example of bureaucratic politics. That would be one.

But the interaction of all these things—because Somalia was not something we started. As I said, it was a humanitarian thing. Then it got worse. Then my instructions all the time were to move it to the UN. It was a very badly handled situation, very bad, in terms of pushing the UN to do more with less. I always say in a very simplistic term, the UN is blamed for faults in Somalia, but it was the U.S.'s fault. While it looked like a UN operation, it was headed by Jonathan Howe. He had been Deputy National Security Advisor with Bush, and then he was the Special Representative. So there was an American. The Deputy Military Commander was an American. The top military officer was a Turk. So we were in charge of everything.

Then Colin Powell did not provide the right amount of—when I went to Somalia, this General [Thomas R.] Montgomery said to me, “My worst problems are with the Pentagon. They’re not giving us what we need here.” That was Colin Powell’s last act. Then Les Aspin gets fired over it. Then he dies of a heart attack. But the combination of people saying, “Why are you interested in Bosnia and not as interested in Somalia?”

Then you have Black Hawk Down, which undermined the whole concept—no deaths in any peacekeeping operation—which made it very difficult. Then the *Harlan County* was turned around off the coast of Haiti. A whole host of things that go together. It’s always the same issue about the use of force. Under what circumstances do you use force? Then, when Rwanda happens, and we don’t have the right amount of information, and holding back in getting involved in things in Africa, they all are together.

Strong: Does Rwanda make it easier to act in Kosovo?

Albright: Sort of.

Strong: What about the Christopher trip to Europe and the decision to do “Lift and Strike” and the failure to get European—

Albright: The Christopher trip to Europe was generally regarded as a failure, because rather than going to present what we wanted to do, there’s a line between consultation and just being supine. I think people were really disappointed in that trip.

Strong: Had we decided to do—

Albright: We hadn’t, but there were arguments about “Lift and Strike.” This is where being the UN Ambassador and seeing where others were on it—it’s very hard. The Europeans were not even vaguely helpful on this. They obviously did not want to strike and they didn’t want to lift. So it was a very hard argument in order to show what would happen in the UN on the issue. Ultimately we took it to the UN and they wouldn’t lift the embargo. It was more proof of the fact that we couldn’t get what we wanted on it. But I think there was a lack of—this was the most frustrating time, where we couldn’t get agreement on things.

Strong: Were you working that issue in New York at the same time Christopher is in Europe?

Albright: Yes.

Strong: You weren’t any more successful—

Albright: No, but it goes together in the end because all those Ambassadors were also instructed Ambassadors. So whatever is coming out of their capitals—then there was a real issue that I think was very interesting and should be followed a little more, the whole role of Russia at this point. The Russian Ambassador at the UN was a man called [Yuli] Vorontsov and had been there a long time and had worked for the Communists. They were all of a sudden in this new kind of role. They had clearly cooperated with us on Iraq, and turning to the UN, which is what the first President Bush did, maybe not in consultation but in tandem with [Mikhail] Gorbachev, who went to the UN and began to act as if the UN could be functional.

Having seen what could happen when you had coalition cooperation on the Gulf War, we thought that the Russians would work with us on more and more issues. But their approach to what was happening in the former Yugoslavia was different because they had this kind of alliance with the Serbs. The Russians were protecting [Slobodan] Milosevic to a great extent. They were not particularly helpful in some of the discussions on Bosnia, less and less so in various other aspects on the Balkans. So there was that issue.

The French—that's why I say it made a difference when Chirac was elected. But before he was elected there was a question about what their role was. The British were always helpful. But then there were various—it got so complicated up there in terms of the safe havens that we established and various ways that we were trying to deal with the daily onslaught of information that the Bosnian—he wasn't Ambassador, but the person who was up there, Mo Sacirbey, who kept bringing one horrible story after another and [Alija Ali] Izetbegovic, the Bosnian leader who would come and this constant drumbeat that would make me think that we had to do more. But on the other hand, these Ambassadors were still instructed.

Christopher—I think that he was less eager to be proactive on it. He was the decider. I was not the decider.

Strong: I'm very interested in the things that you're saying about the relationships between the different issues as well. Is it possible to even imagine: Is Bosnia easier if the attack in Somalia doesn't take place and we don't have the casualties and the television coverage and the rest? Was that so important that it significantly delayed our ability to come to terms with Bosnia?

Albright: Yes. I'm just trying to do all the sequencing on it. But there was the following set of issues, even before we came into office. [Boutros] Boutros-Ghali wondered about the importance of Bosnia, period, and was more concerned about issues that were happening in other places. There were always questions about why did we care about something that was happening in white Europe versus issues that were happening in Africa? So there was that kind of a dynamic that was going on. There was then the dynamic that Somalia was inherited by us—on us as Americans and us as Democrats by decisions made by an outgoing administration.

So you had this humanitarian thing that all of a sudden turned into a military operation. Then I had very hard dealings with Boutros on this because I got hourly instructions on changing the U.S. operation to a UN operation. This was the most important thing. We'd have principals meetings and they'd say, "This is your job, you have got to get Boutros to make this a UN operation." I'd go and talk to him and say, "You've got to do—" and he'd ask, "Where are the troops coming from? What is the mandate?" Then the mandate got enlarged in terms of disarming. How could you disarm with fewer people than we had there on the ground as Americans? This was going on constantly.

We finally managed to get it to be a UN operation. Then, as I mentioned, most of it was American, but at least it was a UN operation. And at the same time the Bosnia stuff was going on. As I say, I can't remember the exact sequencing, but one of the real issues that came up is that we were in a mode where there was zero tolerance of American deaths. I'm not sure we ever said it that way. But clearly, once the helicopters went down in Somalia and the dragging of the people through the streets, then people thought, *I thought we were feeding kids. This isn't what*

was supposed to happen. There was just this general questioning about what were we doing there.

Then at the same time there was this whole other bureaucratic process that was going on which had to do with how you decide, under what circumstances, America should support peacekeeping operations. First in terms of votes for a peacekeeping operation, and then in terms of providing troops. It was a process that began under the Bush administration that then was carried on, that ultimately became PDD 25 [Presidential Decision Directive].

Part of it also had to do with funding. Because what had happened was when I became UN Ambassador, we owed a ton of money to the UN in two different ways. One was dues. We helped to create an artificial financial crisis at the UN because we paid according to our fiscal year, which begins in October, and not according to the calendar fiscal year. So we would always pay late. There would be questions about that. Then the peacekeeping budget itself had a balloon in it from various new operations that had been taken up.

When I became UN Ambassador there were something like 70 to 80,000 peacekeepers out in the field, I think, in 14 different operations, much larger than ever before. They were borrowing money from Peter to pay Paul, and we weren't paying. At that stage we had, I think, 32.2 percent of the peacekeeping budget that we had to pay. Congress got fed up with what was going on and they mandated first of all, as I said earlier, that I would have to get permission from them before I voted to support a new operation. You had to notify something like, I can't remember exactly, 30 days ahead of time if you were going to vote on a peacekeeping operation. And you had to have the budget for the peacekeeping operation before you ever began. Then they said that they would only pay 25 percent of the peacekeeping bill.

So there was this question about when we participate and how much we pay. Then Somalia gets into the middle of it and we decide we won't participate unless we have operational control. Since we had this weird relationship with the military, there began to be questions about how could civilians decide, under what circumstances Americans would be under a foreign commander. Somehow people forgot that during World War II we somehow managed to do that.

There began to be this formula, which was the larger the number of American forces, the more likely it would be that we would have operational control, which then gets into a circular argument. If you're not going to operate under somebody else, then you've got to have more forces, and you don't want to commit the forces. So when you get the deaths, it compounds that issue. We turned back the *Harlan County*. All of these issues were playing at the same time.

Then we have a change in the Joint Chiefs and we begin to look more at joint peacekeeping operations. Shali played a huge role in this. He and I were very good friends. We went on all kinds of trips together. We did the Partnership for Peace together. He had a different attitude towards the functioning of multilateral military operations because of the role he played in Iraq. But all of this plays together. So without more notes it's a little hard to keep it all separated, but I think what's interesting is to study them together, because they really do interact in different ways. There's no way to over-emphasize the horror of Somalia. It made people wonder why we were doing this and why were Americans dying in some place that nobody had heard of. It made it much harder to do anything.

Strong: There are scholars who speculate that the Bush commitment to Somalia can't be understood without the pressures that they were also under to do something in Bosnia and that this was Powell and the Joint Chiefs picking the easier mission, believing that doing Somalia would make it less likely that they'd have to do Bosnia.

Albright: I think that's possible. The other part that's very interesting about Yugoslavia is that you had people in positions of power, [Lawrence] Eagleburger and Scowcroft, both of whom had experience in Belgrade, who actually, when they didn't want people to understand them, would speak in Serbian. So they had a different approach to this. I go back in my own mind about a lot of how I felt about Yugoslavia.

My connection with it was very interesting because Carter and Mondale sent me to [Marshal Josef] Tito's funeral. But watching what was going on in Yugoslavia, which I had, a lot of this was a budget issue. The southern republics felt that they weren't getting a fair shake. Tito had kept the place together, and then when he died they had a rotating system.

Milosevic was a terrible person and went to Kosovo and started, for his own career, brandishing the nationalist card. But the big mistake, if you talked to anybody, was the Germans moving to recognize Slovenia without consulting with anybody else and turning an internal issue into an international issue and then expecting everybody to pick up. I think that the Bush administration in the end, whatever Eagleburger's and Scowcroft's influence on this was, they were tired. They were doing the Iraq war. They were on their way out and they weren't going to do something and I think there probably was that kind of an argument.

Riley: We're going to break now for lunch.

[BREAK]

Riley: Bob, did you have any follow-up questions?

Strong: We could follow Bosnia in more detail, but you had also suggested Kosovo as a good case to trace. Even though you do a lot of that in the memoir, maybe that's the better one to look at because in some ways it's the culmination of that issue that is brewing all along. When do we use force, what's the humanitarian American mission and the rest.

Riley: Does it make sense to do that or to ask you about the transition into the State Department first, get you into State?

Albright: Yes.

Riley: That doesn't mean that we can't come back to something in the UN.

Strong: And there were also some interesting things at lunch, particularly about Camp David and negotiations at the end of the administration. We'd certainly like to hear those things.

Riley: Thanks, Bob. The transition into Secretary of State—you deal with this fairly extensively in the book. I was going to ask you one question about that. Was there ever a realistic chance that Dick Holbrooke would have been the preferred candidate for this job by the President?

Albright: I truly don't know. I think that what happened was that there were a number of candidates. At least there was a list somewhere. George Mitchell, I know. What was interesting was that even though I'd spent a lot of time with the President, he asked me to come for an official interview again, which was in the residence. When I came out of that, George Mitchell was waiting to have his interview. I think that Holbrooke was on the short list. So I don't know.

This is something that people will have different recollections of. One of the things that did happen—I talk about this a little bit in the book—it's the most important job in the world except for being President, and you really don't run for it. You don't do anything, and it's a little weird. The way that I think that it's evident, and it reminded me in looking at the clips—it did not occur to me that I would be Secretary of State, ever. But what happened, a couple of years in, when Secretary Christopher—there was some thought that he might resign. Strobe Talbott, who was deputy, asked me to come to his house. He talked about whether I could, or should, be Secretary of State. Then the whole thing went away because Christopher changed his mind.

Some things I've read would indicate that President Clinton was actually thinking of Colin Powell at that stage, but I've only read about that. Nobody ever said that to me. What happened then was that I was really pretty visible in New York. As I said, Christopher was very generous in terms of saying, "Have your own opinion."

The thing that was hard—remember I said that Baker thought that Pickering was showboating up there? The day's news cycle in Washington begins officially with the noon briefing at the State Department. As Secretary—I did this—you have the press spokesman in and other people who have looked at some of the Q and As and gotten ready for a press conference. The Secretary is then brought in to deal with the more difficult issues to make decisions because a lot of it is an action-forcing aspect.

The thing that people didn't understand in Washington is that there would be a ten o'clock meeting of the Security Council many mornings. When I was in office we had more Security Council meetings than ever. It used to be they had to have phony ones to take pictures of whoever had been made President. But we met all the time.

As you crossed over to the UN building there would be a gauntlet of reporters waiting for you to come in and would be yelling at you. I tried never to stop, but sometimes if there was something going on in the Security Council then there would be another group of reporters right outside the Security Council room. Then there really was this funny game of which Ambassador would get on TV first. The British Ambassador was really good about getting up in the middle of a meeting and going outside to make some statement. I got better at that and I'd go out and say something. It often beat the Washington cycle.

So people who were protective of Secretary Christopher would say, "What are you doing? This is not your show." There was a kind of sense that I was out there campaigning to be Secretary? Which I definitely wasn't. In fact, what had happened was that there were a lot of women's

groups who came to my chief of staff and said, “What can we do to help? It would be really great.” We said, “Don’t do anything. I don’t want to do anything.”

Somebody at the White House, I don’t know who it was, was commenting on the list and said, “Well, Madeleine Albright, she’s second tier.” That made the women’s groups crazy mad. At that point they said, “We’re going to do something whether you like it or not.” So there was that dynamic going on. I truly did not know what was going to happen. People who know me understand this completely, but I did not believe I would be Secretary of State until President Clinton called. Even then, I was in New York. Erskine Bowles called me and said, “If the President of the United States were to call you tomorrow morning, would you take the phone call? If he were to ask you to be Secretary of State, would you accept?” I thought, *What lunatic would say no to either of these questions?*

We flew down to Washington as quickly as possible. Then Elaine Shocas, my chief of staff, spent the night at my house. Again, making a mistake, thinking that President Clinton might do something early in the morning, got up and waited and waited and waited, and finally, around 9:45 or something, the phone rings. The operator says—and I kept thinking, *He’s changed his mind. This is why it’s taking so long.* Then they put me on hold and there’s some kind of music playing. The whole time I thought he would say, “You’ve been great, but I changed my mind, it is X.” But the first thing you know, he asked me to be Secretary. So that was the moment.

Riley: That experience with Muskie must have really scarred you.

Albright: It did, aside from being who I am.

Riley: Every call you expect to be a very quick and abrupt no.

Albright: That was in December, and then the transition process begins.

Riley: You mentioned Mrs. Clinton playing what you think was an important role in your receiving the designation. Was she a foreign policy presence in the administration? We talked about the Vice President’s orbit being absolutely crucial to what was going on in the White House, but there was also a First Lady’s orbit.

Albright: She was, in a very different way. First of all, she had taken an interest in the UN when I was up there, even at the beginning. I think there were all the jokes about her channeling with Mrs. [Eleanor] Roosevelt, but Mrs. Roosevelt clearly had a very important role at the UN. Mrs. Clinton came up a couple of times and met with different delegates and was really very interested in it. She then also did quite a lot of traveling as First Lady. Because she never does anything in a half-hearted way, she would have briefings, some of them set up by the NSC, but some of them by the State Department.

Then her big thing was when we went to the Beijing women’s conference. She really blew them away up there. Her statement was stunning. She did a lot of foreign policy things. Sometimes I went to a country with her and we would meet with women’s groups or human rights’ groups. But she was a presence in terms of, not in doing negotiations or anything like that, but she was a very good ambassador. She would travel a lot. Sometimes Chelsea would go with her. She had her agenda in terms of women’s issues and health issues, and generally she was a presence.

She and I had a great trip. We went to Prague in '96. I didn't know her until sometime in the early part of the '92 campaign. She had been president of the Children's Defense Fund and I'd gone to something. We talked about the fact that she went to Wellesley ten years after I did. So we had a bond and we got along. When we went to Prague, we had a great time and we talked a lot. But we never talked about whether or not I should be Secretary of State. We just talked about issues or friendships or professors and things like that.

We all thought she had a role in it. But that was not corroborated until one time we were all together with the President in Barbados in 1997. We were having a meeting. He would always visit our Embassy wherever. We had this routine where I would introduce her and she would introduce him. So after she had introduced him, he said, "Of course, everybody knows that Hillary had a role in having Madeleine becoming Secretary of State," which was the first time that I really flat out heard it—it was confirmed. Since then she has talked to me about it. But at the time she was pretty careful in terms of not talking about it.

Riley: Did her staff have a presence in the national security apparatus at any point?

Albright: No, not sitting in any official meeting. She had a chief of staff, Melanne Verveer, who was somebody I know. She would come to the State Department and have meetings. I think that she clearly met with people in the NSC at a staff level, and I'm sure with Sandy. They had an office in the East Wing and an office also in the West Wing, and Hillary came sometimes to that. They were not part of any official mechanism.

Riley: Not in the way that the Vice President was.

Albright: Definitely not.

Riley: One more question on this. Did you ever get the sense that Mrs. Clinton was, in any detectable way, consulting with the President on these very difficult questions regarding use of force in places?

Albright: No. She never—I have no idea what they talked about in the residence or anything, but never in any meeting.

Strong: A follow-up question. When you were Secretary of State, how active was the President in making personnel decisions about Ambassadorships or—

Albright: He was.

Strong: Or deputy positions and the rest? What kinds of things did he want to know? Did he want to meet these people before announcements were made?

Albright: I can tell you about the following things. In the conversation that we had about his asking me to be Secretary of State, he told me he would like to keep Strobe Talbott as my deputy. Strobe and I, as I said, were very good friends. What had happened before, if I can go back on something—when Cliff Wharton left, there was a discussion about who would be Deputy Secretary of State. As I told you earlier, it was a job that I really wanted.

So then when they were looking again for a deputy, I think it was Tom Donilon or somebody came to me and said, “How would you now like to be Deputy Secretary of State?” I said, “I actually wouldn’t, because I’m now a Cabinet member and UN Ambassador, and so not particularly.” So they were asking me, Christopher asked me, which people I thought would be good deputies. He asked me what I thought about Strobe. I said I thought Strobe would be great. Strobe at that stage had been the Russia person. So when the President said, would I keep Strobe, I said I’d be thrilled to keep Strobe. That was a known person, both to him and to me.

Then the President, I think in a later conversation, asked me who should be the next UN Ambassador. He was very involved, and I thought it was great, in getting Bill Richardson. He also was obviously involved. Later when Bill became Secretary of Energy, he asked me what I thought about Dick Holbrooke, which was when we were doing the Dick Gardner thing, later. I told you how the President really played a role in that.

I said fine; we all agreed with that. The President—we did have meetings in the Oval Office about Ambassadors. The normal structure was that there would be a list sent from the State Department of Foreign Service nominees that would be coupled with lists of political people. Then we would sit in the Oval Office and talk about them.

Strong: The White House generated the list of political people?

Albright: Right, but with input from a lot of us. A man called Bob Nash was in charge of that. We talked about the people on the list. The President pretty much knew who the people were. I don’t know whether he met them separately. He was involved. Not in all of them, but on some of the smaller embassies in various places where the State Department named—there was a system within the State Department, the D Committee that the deputy ran, that went through the list of Foreign Service officers.

One of the things that happens in every administration is you always criticize the previous administration to say that they didn’t have enough Foreign Service officers, too many political appointees. Then you come in and you put in a lot of political appointees. I used to, as a political appointee myself, argue that there is a very good reason to have a mix. Certain countries really want to have a political appointee.

We had a very interesting case with Saudi Arabia, where they have always had high-level political appointees. When the State Department nominated a man named [Edward] Skip Gnehm, a senior and experienced Foreign Service officer, to be Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, the Saudis didn’t want him. I ultimately made him my deputy at the UN. Yes, it’s a complicated process. But I think there’s a real value to political appointees, and just because you’re rich doesn’t mean you’re stupid. *[laughter]* There are a lot of people who actually have a close relationship with the President; that’s something that some countries like.

Riley: Was there any piece of the UN agenda that you felt was left unfinished when you left the UN?

Albright: A lot. First of all, we had not resolved the funding aspect. What was really left unresolved was the reform of the UN. The real issue was—I mean, I was very pro-UN, and yet I could tell that it very badly needed reform. I gave a speech about this. During its paralyzed

period, the bureaucracy had grown to elephantine proportions, and now we were asking that elephant to do gymnastics. So it really needed reforming. It was very hard to do. Security Council reform was not done.

We did begin to get some kind of control over the budget. I got an Inspector General in. That I think was probably the major part. It was linked, because the truth is, people like Jesse Helms, and then Larry Pressler and various people were not willing to do some of the funding if there was not reform. What happened to us—you lack a certain amount of leverage if you're not paying what you're supposed to. It led Malcolm Rifkind, who was the Foreign Secretary of the UK [United Kingdom] to give a speech in the General Assembly and deliver the line they had waited more than 200 years to say, which is to accuse America of wanting, "Representation without taxation." So it was uncomfortable. It made it very hard.

Then there were all the issues to do with sanctions. I think that's another very interesting aspect of our policy. How useful are sanctions? Is it a useful tool? When I was Secretary I actually instituted a study about what you do with sanctions. How do you decide when to end sanctions? How do you lift them? These were all kinds of new tools as one began to look at a functioning international system. It goes back to one of your first questions about what was different in the post-Cold War situation. What were the different ways we could affect policy?

So the whole Iraq question—we were in a very bad way. I managed to hold the coalition for sanctions while I was UN Ambassador. Then it began to unravel. So there was that. There was where we were on finishing up things on Bosnia, everything. It was a very unfinished agenda.

Strong: When you were at the United Nations, what was the speech clearance process you'd go through when you were giving a public presentation, and were there occasions when that led to arguments about constraints that were placed?

Albright: First of all, you do the following thing. You have a statement at the time of the vote. You vote and you give a statement. That all came in—I think the way it was written by a man I work with now, but he was my speechwriter, Bill Woodward, who was officially in the section of IO, International Organizations. He would draft the voting statement. It went through nine zillion clearances in the State Department. Then, I think if we wanted changes—I was just like any other Ambassador.

Strong: The speeches you'd give to public audiences?

Albright: They were all cleared.

Strong: Through the State Department?

Albright: Through State.

Riley: Never the White House?

Albright: I think there might have been times where if I wasn't—I was like a bad child. I played the parents off against each other. If there was something that wasn't coming through State, I

might call the NSC and say, “I’d like to say this.” Then I’d push back. But I can’t remember exact things.

Riley: The Cuba speech?

Albright: Cuba was different—Cuba I played by ear. There were different parts of the Cuba thing. The official statements that I made in the Security Council, a lot of that was cleared. But Cuba—it’s a great story—was something that I did basically by myself because I was president of the Security Council. That’s a very interesting thing, how you play your role as president and how you play your role as the national representative. The most interesting things I said were definitely not cleared.

The Chinese always have a very good excuse for saying they don’t have their instructions, since they’re 12 hours off. So I needed to get condemnation of the Cubans right away and they kept holding off. I finally said, “Okay, we’ll come back at two o’clock in the morning.” You have a right of reply if somebody is attacking you. I said, “I’ll give up my right of reply if you come back here and we do this.”

So the Cuban representative came in and he started attacking me and attacking the United States. It was just horrible. The thing that people don’t know is that although there is a lot of give and take in the informal sessions, the formal sessions are totally scripted. There isn’t one word that you say that hasn’t been written down if you’re president of the Council. The Secretariat has written it all out. The first of the month there is a set speech. Everybody congratulates you for having been elected president because of your diplomatic brilliance, when you know it’s all because it’s alphabetical order.

They say blah-blah and then you say, “I would like to thank the representative of France for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.” This goes on. If somebody has not spoken in the Council at a time that you’ve been president, you say the same thing. So what happened was that the Cuban went on and on and on, how I was an imperialist pig and everything you could think of. I had given up my right of reply. So I said, “I would like to thank the representative of Cuba for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.” The whole place completely broke up.

The thing that happened that was interesting, and this was definitely not cleared, except in the following way, was that, when I was presenting the case to the Security Council, I had the transcript of what the Cuban pilots were saying to each other. It had been translated into English except for this key word, *cojones*. They kept saying, “We have *cojones*.” “They don’t have *cojones*.” Then when they hit the plane, they say, “We get his *cojones*.” You could hear the glee in the whole thing.

I had to give a press conference across the street. I was talking to Jamie Rubin. We were sitting there and I said, “This is a ridiculous statement. How could they have said this? This is outrageous. They are just bloodthirsty. They are cowards. They don’t have *cojones*.” Then I said, “That’s a good line.” So I thought to myself, *I can’t go and say that*.

I called Elaine Shocas, who was my chief of staff and has perfect pitch. I wanted to know if I could say something like that, was it over the top. She said to go ahead. So I go there to the press

conference and there are all these UN press people there and I say, “It’s not *cojones*, it’s cowardice.” I thought that the reporters would die, especially the Latin American reporters. They looked at me as if I were completely crazy. My good friend the Venezuelan Ambassador made a statement saying he’d never heard such barnyard language from a woman. He was highly critical. I got a phone call. The President loved it. He said it was the best line of his administration. It made me instantly popular with the Cuban-American community. Then the President asked me to go down to Miami to represent him at the memorial service there.

I had all these instructions from people saying this is a really serious thing and you have to be serious through the whole thing and you can’t smile at all. We’re riding on the freeway to go to the Orange Bowl where the event is, and all of a sudden there’s all this honking and people getting out of their cars and running up to me and saying “Madame Cojones, Madame Cojones.” To this day, Jamie can testify, in Miami they call me Madame Cojones. So that is my claim to fame. Maybe that is what made me Secretary of State.

Strong: Let me just follow it up. How important are those kinds of phrases and those kinds of news clips that get repeated?

Albright: Very.

Strong: You can’t script all of them. You have to—

Albright: No, you either screw up and say something completely wrong, which happened to me also, which you shouldn’t say, or you hit something. But they get repeated. There’s no question. I got very seriously bitten with something genuinely stupid I said to Lesley Stahl about the Iraqi sanctions and the children, and that still follows me.

Strong: What was that?

Albright: This is a terrible thing, and it’s so embarrassing. When I went to New York, my job mostly was not Bosnia, but to make sure that the sanctions on Iraq—there were like six sanctions resolutions that accompanied the cease-fire. They all kept coming up for review seriatim. So all we did was argue about Iraq.

My instructions were to hold the line very tight. It was already evident that the French and the Russians had different intentions on the sanctions. Then, because Saddam Hussein—most people misunderstand this—there never was an embargo on food and medicine to Iraq, even though it was a very tough sanctions regime. We had a system where a portion of Iraq’s oil would be used to pay for medicine and food. But the system was supposed to ensure that the food and medicine were distributed to the people of Iraq, not to just Saddam’s cronies. He didn’t like that.

Until ’96, he actually refused to allow the UN to go in and supervise the distribution of the food and medicine. What he did was to play the crocodile tears game, saying that we were starving the Iraqis. He was doing it in a way that made it very difficult to maintain the support of Arab countries for the sanctions. So one of the things that I did was to travel around with photographs that we had declassified of all his palaces to show that he had spent, I think it was half a billion dollars, on huge palaces with lots of marble and how he had displaced the gardens of Babylon

and made an artificial lake and all this stuff. I must say it made a big impression on the Arab leaders, including the Sultan of Oman, who said that his palace was not as big. So it helped us.

But then Lesley Stahl, on *60 Minutes*—I still believe this—went to Iraq with a camera crew and I know was led around by the Iraqi information office and shown all these horrible things that had happened because of the sanctions and children starving and bad medicine, etc. I was so stupid and incensed, frankly, that she was played in this particular way. I tried to explain what was going on, and she kept saying, “But what about the children? Are the deaths of all these children worth the sanctions?” I said yes, which I never should have said. I should have said, “That’s not the question,” or things that I would have learned later on. It was totally inappropriate.

So even to this day, if you Google me, I’ll come up as a war criminal because of that statement. It comes up in every audience I ever do, particularly with students, at commencements or whatever. If I get asked the question I always say how stupid it was, that I never should have said it, that I don’t believe it. “If anybody in this audience has never said anything they regret, I wish they’d stand up.”

Knott: Can I ask a question about a statement you made this morning? Actually as we were closing in towards lunch. I think it was in reference to Bosnia. You said, “We were in a mode of zero tolerance for American deaths.” I’m wondering if you were part of the “we.” I don’t think you were.

Albright: The point was we never framed it that way. I’m saying that in retrospect. We never said, “We have a zero tolerance.” I think there was a real question in people’s minds; I think there still is. It goes back to this use of force. To what extent is it appropriate to use force in which innocent people might be killed along with those that you’re trying to push back or punish or something? I’ve said this many times, I am for peace, but I’m not a pacifist. This is where the Munich part comes in.

I believe that you do have to use force in order to stop ethnic cleansing, for instance. You then assume that somebody will die in order to save others. The hardest part—there’s no way to overemphasize this. The idea of sending people to war is really hard and something that I never thought I would do. I went to every peacekeeping operation because I thought that was a very interesting thing the UN was doing and among them there obviously were American troops. I went and I spoke at West Point and at the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy.

I would review troops and I would make it a point to try to get them to have eye contact with me. Of course they never would. I thought, *I have to realize that when I vote or say something that these are real people that I’m sending, that I would be a part of sending to war.* I don’t think we ever said, “We have zero tolerance,” but it was something that was evident with Somalia. We lost pilots and crew; it was tragic. It goes to something that one of you said either at lunch or earlier, that 9/11 really did change things.

I think that it’s very hard to explain to people now who say, “Why didn’t you do more about Osama bin Laden,” or whatever. That when we did do something, in terms of bombing after the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania went down, people thought that Clinton had made it all up, the

wag-the-dog part. So rather than being critical of us for not doing enough, people thought we were using too much force. Somalia had a lot to do with that.

Strong: Was the good fortune of the first Gulf War part of it as well?

Albright: I guess, because it was very quick, basically. I don't know how many were lost.

Strong: One hundred forty-eight. That's 10 percent of the lowest number that the Pentagon projected.

Albright: I'm sure that had—but I remember when we almost lost this pilot over Bosnia, people freaked. It goes also back to the same issue of Jimmy Carter and the hostages. We really do have a different approach to human life. The problem that is always hard when you're trying to explain this internationally is why is it we think American life is worth far more than a foreign life, and why would we not use force to try to save some people from being ethnically cleansed if we have this incredible power?

Riley: I guess I should ask you in that regard then—we haven't really talked about Rwanda and it may be that you said enough. There's an awful lot here.

Albright: I think there's not more. I went through it a lot for the book because we also were accused of all sorts of things. First of all, I know it's very hard, especially after all the information that is out now, to have people—I mean, you make decisions within the timeframe that you have, and not in retrospect. While someone like Samantha Powers or whoever dug up a lot of information—or what's the Canadian general?

Riley: [Romeo] Dallaire?

Albright: At the time, I guarantee you we didn't have the information. I don't know why. I say in the book that it didn't show up in the intelligence.

Something that happened at the UN—mostly we met in this informal room, the Security Council. On a daily basis, some representative of the Secretary General would come in and brief on the events of the day. Most often it was on Bosnia or Haiti or Somalia at that stage. The reports in the early days on Rwanda were unclear and vague.

I had gone to Africa, and one of my deputies was there a lot and we knew there were problems in Rwanda. Then all of a sudden there was the plane crash and the violence began. We did not realize the extent of the horror at first. I write about this. I got these instructions and by then I knew that we were on the wrong path. That was a time I called the White House and not the State Department, and the person I got on the phone was Dick Clarke, who was in charge of peacekeeping. They said, "No, these are your instructions."

Ultimately I got my instructions changed, but it was part of this much larger issue that now looks so cold-blooded. But basically, there were more and more peacekeeping operations being ordered. Nobody was paying for them; nobody wanted to do them. There was no sense of where it was going. There was an attempt to get control over it through this PDD 25. It all looks awful in retrospect.

The question is why there wasn't enough attention paid to this, and I don't know the answer. And the President doesn't know. He asked everybody to look into it. I think people tried to do a tick-tock on it and never really got the story. A lot of people took responsibility for it. But what I say now is even if we had known more, I think we couldn't have gotten troops there fast enough to stop what I call volcanic genocide, after the airplane was shot down. I now publicly always say, because I'm always asked about this, it's a little different from what is going on now, where we're watching "rolling genocide" in Sudan and we're still not doing anything. It's ironic that it is exactly as we're commemorating the tenth anniversary of Rwanda.

I think that it's awful that we're not doing anything, but it also might give people pause in trying to figure out that it's really hard to put these peacekeeping operations together, as we're seeing in Lebanon. The international system is working, trying to find a mechanism to enforce its will, does not want to agree to the UN having a standing army, is not willing, actually, to designate certain forces in advance as being peacekeepers.

One of the things I disagreed with Shalikashvili about, because I went down and looked at joint peacekeeping exercises that we were doing at Fort Hood. Why couldn't we designate a part of our military to do peacekeeping? He said, "Absolutely not. All our military has to be trained to protect and defend the United States. Then, as an additional thing, they can do peacekeeping, but they can't be trained to be peacekeepers."

So we kept trying to figure out if there was a way, some contingencies, ways that people could train together. But just watch what's going on and how hard it is, even with some will, to put these forces together.

Strong: Was there a policy debate about the apology the President gave when he went to Rwanda? Was that his initiative?

Albright: It was his, absolutely.

Knott: I was teaching at the Air Force Academy though the duration of the Clinton administration. I was a civilian, part of a small percentage of civilian faculty. But among my military colleagues I picked up this hostility toward the President that I think you referred to a couple of times today. Would you be willing to talk a little more about that? What you think the sources of that were and the extent to which it may have had an impact on President Clinton himself when he came to—

Albright: I think the source of it was that during the campaign there was so much discussion about what had happened in the past. I think that was the most important part. Then the gays in the military. I think even some people who think of themselves as very respectful and tolerant were opposed to gays in the military. I think that that was very—the don't ask, don't tell policy and all that.

Then I think the thing that is very hard is that people somehow forgot the fact that Ronald Reagan had never served, that he only had pretended as an actor. But we were out of the generation of people that had actually been in the military as President. So the first President Bush was a fighter pilot. Carter had been a submariner. I don't know what Ford did. But here—

Strong: Ford served, so did Nixon, so did Kennedy.

Albright: I think Clinton was probably the first President who not only had not served, but there was this whole issue about the draft. So it was that. You'd have to ask Clinton, but I think it clearly weighed heavily on him. I think you'd have to also ask him about his relationship with Powell. But I didn't have the sense that Powell helped in all of this. There were other generals—Shali was really fabulous, maybe because he was chosen by Clinton, but he was much more a team player and interpreted us to the military. But I think that's what it was.

I think it did weigh on Clinton and made it—it goes back to this issue of how hard it is to decide to send people to war. That's why I'm so surprised at how cavalier these people have been. The current President [George W.] Bush doesn't exactly have a military record. I know. Even I was made fun of for always being willing to use the military. But it's scary when you decide you're going to send people to war.

We'll get to Kosovo, but I think that was the combination of a post-Cold War President who hadn't served in the military.

Strong: Clinton has an excellent political antenna, picks up on things easily. How did he miss gays in the military? How did he not recognize or come to recognize so late what a sensitive issue that was?

Albright: I have no idea. I really don't know. But I would imagine that some of it had to do with gays who had supported him. Also there was nothing wrong with having gays in the military. I think he did the right thing by saying there should be gays in the military.

Riley: We've touched on Kosovo several times. Why don't we go ahead and deal with it now? It seems to be a natural follow-on to the discussions we were having about Rwanda. This might be a point at which, if you could walk us through your high points of recollection—

Albright: I think that first of all, we were generally working, if you think about “the vision” thing, a consistent policy of trying to get a Europe that was whole and free and democratic. That was a continuity thing, because that's something that the first President Bush was involved in with the unification of Germany. He talked about a Europe whole and free. So that left the question of what to do about the Balkans, the horror of Milosevic. This was an open sore.

The Europeans, as we said, weren't doing much. Then there was NATO expansion, which had come also at the same time. So it was a natural policy to work, to try to get the Balkans into a better place. We were doing pretty well in terms of Dayton. By the way, I think that Dick Holbrooke played a huge role in all that. When he came in as Assistant Secretary it was like a breath of fresh air, because there had been a number of different people who had had the job as Assistant Secretary and then as special negotiator. Dick and I worked together truly closely. We used to say we were joined at the hip. Actually he made a huge difference on all of that.

Before leaving office President Bush had issued what was known as the “Christmas warning,” in which he said that if Milosevic touched Kosovo there would be a reaction. I can't remember the exact words.

Riley: Would that be Eagleburger's doing?

Albright: I don't know the answer to that. Probably, or maybe Scowcroft's. I don't know. We had discussions at some stage about whether to stand by it, and we decided to stand by it. There was really not a lot of action going on around Kosovo because Milosevic was occupied with Bosnia.

The whole thing had begun over Kosovo, because that's where Milosevic had first gone to brandish his nationalist credentials. Then after the Bosnia crisis was settled, the problems in Kosovo arose again. So starting sometime in '97 or so, there began to be cases of Serbs going into Muslim communities and killing a few people here and there. So it definitely came up on the radar screen. We were trying to figure out ways to warn Milosevic that this was unacceptable.

We had already established the contact group over Bosnia, which was the British, the French, the Italians, the Russians, the Germans, and us to work on issues in the Balkans. Kosovo began to be a bigger and bigger part of what they were doing. It was now on my watch. I thought that one of the mistakes that had happened in Bosnia was that we hadn't paid enough attention to it at the beginning. We should try to figure out how to stop this earlier rather than later. I spent a lot of time trying to get Milosevic to back off and to get support from the others on pushing him back and warning him that he shouldn't do this.

Riley: Had you met with him personally?

Albright: I did meet with Milosevic.

Riley: Later, or by the time you're talking about?

Albright: Probably about that time. What happened in my meeting with Milosevic was that he started to give me this whole history of the Serbs and I cut him off. I said, "I know your history. Don't tell me all that." Then one of the funnier pictures in the book is where I did not want to have a press conference with him. If there is ever a picture of anybody looking like "Get out of my face!"

Anyway, we kept dealing with Milosevic and letting him know that he couldn't get away with killing people in Kosovo. The other thing that was important was to try to get the Europeans more involved in this than they had been in Bosnia initially. So when they suggested that we have the French—part of the thing was there was a certain amount of jealousy between us and the French about Dayton. Because Chirac had played a bigger role, they had wanted more credit for bringing peace to Bosnia at Dayton. They wanted to have a conference in France about Kosovo. I will not go into all the chronology; you have that. I will just add some color.

So [Hubert] Vedrine and Robin Cook decided to co-chair this conference at Rambouillet. I wasn't there at the beginning. I didn't want to be the person micromanaging it. Then ultimately they called and said I had to get involved in it. There are a lot of people who have different views of Rambouillet. I actually think in the end it was essential in order to clear the underbrush out as to what was going on. I can't remember all the details of this. It was before Rambouillet. People were expecting that something would happen, that there would be a greater campaign of some kind by Milosevic, and that it would happen in the spring of '99, when the weather cleared.

What happened was on January 15 there was a massacre of Kosovars in Racek, and I remember we all said spring came early to Kosovo. Our representative Bill Walker went in and saw all of this killing, really terrible in terms of what was going on. There was no doubt in anybody's mind about what was happening. Part of the problem was we had different Balkan negotiators.

There was a man called Bob Gelbard who—a year earlier—called the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] a terrorist group. That made life a little complicated. The question after Racak was whether the Serbs and Kosovars could agree to a peaceful settlement that would respect the rights of people on all sides. That was what Rambouillet was supposed to determine. We had the Kosovars there and we needed the Serbs to agree to an international force that could monitor the situation and prevent a repetition of Racak. We also had to persuade the Kosovars not to demand immediate independence.

There was this young Kosovar guy, Hashim Thaci, who was a KLA fighter. We said to him, “You’re going to be the Gerry Adams of this operation. You’ll show that there’s a peaceful arm to the KLA and you will be the hero.” He said, “I’ll do everything you want. I really understand this. When we meet with the other members of the contact group, I’ll say that we want the killing to end and we want autonomy but we don’t want independence.”

We went through all of this. In the meantime, there was this man, his name was [Adam] Demaci, who was really controlling things in Kosovo. When I talked to him on the phone and told him to support Thaci, he said, “I don’t care how many people die.” It was the most bloodthirsty conversation I’ve ever had.

Riley: Were you speaking English to him with a translator, or were you—?

Albright: I had a translator. But no matter what language, I always had a translator because I thought as an American I should negotiate in English. Also, you have a team where the other people don’t speak the language.

What happened was the Italians, who were on somewhat different wicket than many of us, Foreign Minister [Lamberto] Dini really pushed Thaci in this meeting about whether he wanted independence or not and he said, “Yes, we want independence.” The whole thing kind of fell apart. It was a long story, but there were a lot of questions about whether Rambouillet was a good idea or not. The truth is, we didn’t have a choice about Rambouillet. So we kept trying. General [Wesley] Clark went to talk to Milosevic, Dick Holbrooke went to talk to him again. We knew from intelligence that they were planning a big spring campaign to come down into Kosovo.

Ultimately it was very interesting in the following way. I talk about this great bureaucratic case study because I feel that I really worked the issue very hard within the administration. The most important thing was that the President was on my side. He felt also that we had not moved on Bosnia fast enough.

Strong: When was he committed to using force, or serious threats of using force?

Albright: I think pretty early on to using force, but the thing that was difficult was that he had indicated—let me back up. Part of the story here—it goes to the military issue again.

Shalikashvili had left. Hugh Shelton was now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Bill Cohen was Secretary of Defense and General Clark was Supreme Allied Commander. Clark had gone through Bosnia and also knew a great deal about how NATO should work. What's also interesting to your military issues, Clark had very strange relationships within the military. He was from Oxford. He was too smart. He had his own views. Shelton didn't like him and Cohen didn't like him.

But I thought I worked the politics and the internal part of this. Sandy was pretty open-minded, but on the whole very careful about using the military. In one meeting I was accused of always wanting to bomb. Shelton and Cohen definitely did not want to do this. So it was a lot of, I can't tell you—endless memos, endless work of trying to hold the whole line together to get the President persuaded that we should do it, or have the President agree that we should do it.

Ultimately, with a combination of Wes and Sandy, who agreed that we should do it—the President decided to go ahead. But what had happened in the course of it was that people very early on said that we would not have ground troops. I thought that was a mistake. But at least we had arrived at a decision to use force, so I was pleased with that. So that was a victory—it's much more complicated than that, but basically I had managed to work the system.

In the State Department I had great allies. We had a very good team. Jim Dobbins was then, for a while, the Balkans coordinator. It was a very forward-leaning team. It was the exact opposite of what happened now in Iraq. You had a Secretary of State who wanted to use force and a Secretary of Defense who didn't. We had endless arguments about this.

Riley: Was Strobe still with you at this time?

Albright: He was deputy and he was for it.

Riley: He was okay, notwithstanding that his portfolio was still principally independent states.

Albright: That was his niche, but he did a lot of other things. One of the things later on, we had to get the Russians to agree on some of this, and Strobe played a very big role in it. So the agreement was that we would use force and we would use NATO. Then there was the outside diplomacy of this. How to get a mandate to actually go into Kosovo.

I held nine zillion meetings with the contact group both individually and as a group. It was very evident that the Russians would veto anything in terms of a UN mandate for this. I went to Moscow to talk to Igor Ivanov. We went to the Bolshoi and argued about Kosovo during the intermission. [Yevgeny] Primakov was the Prime Minister at that time. It was very evident from that conversation that they would veto anything.

I then went back to my room and I called the other members of the contact group, knowing full well that the Russians were listening to the conversation, and made clear to them that the Russians had indicated that they would not allow a UN mandate. Nobody came into the room and said, "You're wrong." We tested every aspect of trying to see whether there would be a UN mandate on it. There wasn't. So we decided that we would have to act through NATO alone. Wes was fantastic because he worked the military committee.

Of course what happened was, and Wes has written about this, Cohen was crazed because Wes talked to me on the telephone. Cohen said that that was breaking the chain of command. Wes was an American general and he should go through his chain of command. Wes now makes a very strong argument. He says, "I was able to talk to every other country's foreign minister, why couldn't I talk to my own?" So they thought we were going around them, which I guess we were a bit. Wes was as committed to doing this as I was and the President was. So the decision is to use force and to have an air campaign.

Riley: Wes is doing this over considerable objections within his own system?

Albright: A lot within his own system. Then there was a question. It was supposed to be not so difficult. When the hostilities began I invented a whole new thing, which was conference-call diplomacy. You would think—this was not brain surgery. I at first called every one of the contact group members individually. I thought, *This is really stupid, I can't do this every day. I'll be on the phone the whole time.*

So we decided that I'd talk only to the British, French, the Italians, and Germans on the phone every single day. Sometimes—it's a great story, in terms of sometimes I would have a conversation with Joschka Fischer first and I'd say, "If I suggest this, this won't work. Why don't you suggest it?" So he'd suggest it. Or Robin Cook would suggest it. So it was a real partnership and it worked very well. We really all worked together. They even wanted to talk about targeting. I said we can't do targeting on an open line. But we did get the sense they all felt that they were involved in it. Then I called the other allies on a regular basis. I talked to the Dutch a lot, then various others in different order, all the time.

Then the problem was that the weather was bad. The Serbs all of a sudden got very smart and they put out a lot of decoys. We weren't hitting their anti-missile guns that well. Then we hit the Chinese embassy by mistake. It was awful. Because that was the stage that people started calling it "Madeleine's war," and it was not a compliment. Then the other part, which was very interesting in terms of policy making. That is, some were arguing internally that this was going to be like Vietnam. I said, "No, it's not going to be like Vietnam. It's not going to be a quagmire. We're going to be able to do this quickly." Relatively quickly, or whatever. It was the argument that we were having internally the whole time.

The night that it began I went on the [James] Lehrer show. He asked me, "How long will this war take?" I was in my mode of arguing with the people that it wasn't Vietnam. I said, "It will be relatively short in relation to Vietnam," and the arguments I was having. That was not the question he asked. When the *Washington Post* reported on it, they left out the word "relatively." So there I am, on record, saying it's going to be short. Of course it went on for 78 days. So people kept saying, "She promised us one thing—" It was a very bad time. I was criticized all the time, internally and externally. Then we won.

But the thing that happened in-between that is very important. It was going very slowly. People were worried, and we were worried it would go into the winter. What is so interesting, that you probably know from being an academic—the role that weather plays in determining operations is so stunning, the window to do things in-between religious holidays and the weather. For instance, on a religious holiday the Italians wanted us to have an Easter pause. Joschka Fischer,

he was the most magnificent at this stuff. He had a very interesting role as a German on these telephone calls. When they took away the Kosovars to camps, he said, “Only the Nazis would do something like that.” Separating the intellectuals, “What are these people? They’re Nazis.”

So when the Italians suggested that we have an Easter pause, he said, “Why should we pause to honor one religion while people from another religion are being killed?” They were really a part of this discussion.

Anyway, the weather. We were afraid that winter was going to start setting in. There were tons of refugees. We would have to do all kinds of things for tents and camps for the winter. I said, “We have got to begin to think about ground troops, because we have to put a stop to this.” The military said, “But it’s not a permissive environment.” I said, “I don’t understand this. We have been bombing for 60 days. Isn’t there something between permissive and non-permissive environment? Isn’t there something—” I did this in front of the President— “like semi-permissive? After all, we’ve been bombing so long. It has got to be different.” I thought the military would kill me. They said, “There is no such thing as semi-permissive. It’s either permissive or non-permissive.”

Then Tony Blair came for a meeting. He had been arguing for ground troops. He actually persuaded the President—we had a meeting in the residence. There were too many people around. Tony Blair says, “I really need to go use the facilities.” The President said, “Let me show you where they are.” They never came back. *[laughter]* It was a great way to get out of talking with all of us. Tony Blair was arguing the same thing I was, that there was something such as semi-permissive. So they began to do some of the planning for ground troops, and then Milosevic capitulated.

Some of that had to do with what we had learned on sanctions, which was that we could apply what we called “smart sanctions,” where we started to put the squeeze on Milosevic specifically and his cronies in terms of limiting travel and freezing their financial assets. In the end, none of us knows why at that exact moment he capitulated, but it was also a combination then of getting the Russians involved. I can’t remember all the details. It was totally consuming. You make a decision and then a lot is out of your control.

To this day—we just met with the Chinese on something else—they fully believe we bombed that embassy on purpose. It’s where our reputation for brilliant military and accuracy was our enemy. They thought, *How could we possibly have made a mistake like that?* The only thing afterwards, we kept thinking, *They must have been doing something in that embassy or they wouldn’t feel that we had reason to do it.* It was very tense and a very interesting case in terms of the internal politics of how you work the bureaucracy.

Strong: Why is this a good case of the internal dynamics of bureaucratic competition when you have the President on your side from early on all the way through?

Albright: I think that there had been—and it goes a little bit to your question—enough question as to how you use the military in our day and age. NATO had never fought as an alliance before in this kind of a full campaign. You had divisions in the military. You had a President who had been criticized for losing troops in Somalia. You had the issue of criticism over shooting missiles

over Osama bin Laden, and you had the Clinton whatever it is with the military. So even though he was for it—and also because he wasn't close-minded, he wanted to hear what others had to say.

When you have the military and the Secretary of Defense telling you this is a lousy idea and you have this woman Secretary of State on the other side, I think he questioned it. I think there was no question he wanted to be assured that this was the right thing to do, which I don't complain about, because it's better than what we have now in terms of a lack of questioning.

I think if you're going to use force, it's actually important to go through this kind of an exercise where you have to prove that this is the right thing to do. So that's what it's about. I think it's a combination of all of those things. Pre-9/11—there's no way to fully explain what a difference 9/11 made in terms of the American—you had the post-Vietnam syndrome that was still going on very much through our military with a President who didn't serve in Vietnam in a place who gave a damn about the Balkans. So Kosovo was even smaller to think about than Bosnia. Besides, it was a part of Serbia. So there were lots of questions.

Here, Vice President Gore was not as helpful as he had been before. He was already in his campaign mode to a great extent. Whereas he'd been a great ally on Bosnia, he was not particularly on Kosovo.

Strong: Should we come away from this and think about President Clinton as a steadfast leader? That's not the first word that comes to mind in lots of the commentary about his Presidency. But given all those pressures and sticking with this, 78 days and even longer, since he was committed to it for that—what is his character on these kinds of issues? Maybe that's the question.

Albright: I think that steadfast is a good word. He's not—

Strong: He's not doctrinaire.

Albright: He's not stubborn, and he has an open mind. He listened. It's a little hard when the people talking are not on your side, as I felt to some extent. But he does listen. What he would do is be very respectful of people's opinions. It's very interesting to watch him in one of these meetings. He'd sit a long time. He would have his Diet Coke, because he would have headaches, and he'd have an ice-cold Diet Coke can up to his head. You'd think, *What is he thinking about?*

He'd listen for a very long time and then begin to ask questions. But he allowed people to state their views and even liked people to argue in front of him. I think that he was not doctrinaire or ideological. I think once he made up his mind, he wanted to follow through. He understood the value of following through. It didn't mean that he didn't go through everything over and over again. He asked us a lot of questions.

For instance, a totally different issue. When we were thinking about bombing in retaliation for the destruction of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, there was a question of targeting in Sudan. We went over that. He was the one who said, "We are not going to bomb this tannery because it's likely to have people in it." It was different about the chemical factory that we had good evidence on. But he was very hands-on on things. Steadfast might be a good word. Not stubborn. Willing to pursue a line.

I don't know what would have happened if—Milosevic did capitulate at a really important time. I can understand why Bush likes having Tony Blair support him. I think that Tony Blair played a very large role. So yes, I think you can tell. I'm very prejudiced about President Clinton and I think he was a fantastic President in every way in terms of understanding the complexity of our own time and society, of his ability to integrate information, his ability to understand how domestic and foreign policy worked together, and his ability to imagine—I mean, we got sick of hearing about the bridge to the 21st century, but basically the future and the importance of intra-dependence. He had a big mind.

I think the thing that is the saddest for me is that in so many ways the Monica [Lewinsky] stuff will hang on when it shouldn't. I did something that isn't in the book, because it got too complicated. But '98 was the Monica year. Yet I did a timeline that showed everything that we did in 1998. It was an unbelievable year and an unbelievable time of decisions that were very hard to make, and a lot of stuff on the Middle East. Somebody who worked through all that and was steadfast in that particular way, in terms of providing foreign policy leadership— whether it was compartmentalization or what, he had this ability. In fact, he probably did more foreign policy than he might have under other circumstances.

He was very active. People ask me how the Lewinsky thing affected me in foreign policy; it didn't at all. Except for people thinking that responding to the embassy bombings was wag the dog. It's the question of how perception becomes reality. The perception was that it was affecting him when it wasn't affecting him. I have to think more about the right word about him, but I think in some ways at the time “underestimated.” People—we have a tendency to criticize our leaders.

Strong: We personify larger things that are going on. We attach to the central—

Albright: I just think that he worked really hard and gave it everything that he had. The thoughtfulness of how he went about things. I might have had a very special relationship with him. I think that some of the domestic staff probably had times when he would scream at them and stuff. I never had that. I saw him a lot, but I didn't go in there every single day because I was on the road. Sandy might have different stuff to say about him in terms of what he was like on a day-to-day basis. But with me, we got through a lot of information. He was very attentive. I couldn't have asked for more in a President.

Knott: You mentioned before, when you said in terms of the internal debate leading to the use of force in the Balkans, that there were people you were debating with who were saying this is going to be Vietnam again. Was Vice President Gore a part of this group?

Albright: Not on the Vietnam part. He thought at a certain stage that we didn't fully understand the roots of the Kosovo issue. I don't know if he thought—Leon didn't feel this way. I was just surprised. I think Gore was concerned that we wouldn't be able to finish it; he'd be President. I don't know all the things that went through his mind. But he wasn't as tuned in on this as he had been on Bosnia. I think part of it was he was on the road a lot. He'd come back for a meeting. I didn't have a sense of the Vietnam thing.

Knott: Who were the people making the Vietnam analogy?

Albright: It was the undertone all the time. I think perhaps Hugh Shelton as much as anybody, Cohen. Wes obviously was not, but there were others—Sandy to some extent. There weren't other people in the room, but that was the tone.

Strong: Was their position partly that this can't be won with air power alone and we don't want to use ground forces? If that's your combination, that's not going to go very far—

Albright: There were some people who said that. There were arguments as to whether air power alone would work. I know that the military people have written a lot about this and have said that you can't possibly win with air power. How would I know? I didn't argue that point. There, Wes was key. But if you remember, there were some horrible moments. There were a bunch of different things. If anything could go wrong, it went wrong.

Knott: They shot down one of the stealth fighters with a lucky shot.

Albright: Right. But at the end, there were some people—I can't remember the names now. Was there a General [George] Keegan or somebody who actually said it could be done through air power? I just saw Wes at something. One of the things we were talking about, there were some Israelis who looked at the Kosovo thing now and thought that they could do the Hezbollah through air power and that they had misunderstood what the air campaign was in Kosovo. I don't know for a fact, though. Mostly people were saying you couldn't do it unless you had ground forces.

Then there were very complicated arguments that some people used, particularly some of the foreigners, that it was immoral for us to use air power while other people were on the ground.

Strong: Was there an argument at some point that you can kill so many civilians in the name of protecting other civilians and human rights, that the balance—

Albright: Milosevic was responsible for the death of thousands and we had intelligence that he was preparing to kill thousands more. We were determined to stop him—but that required using force. There were accidents. That's the terrible part. There were some convoys that were hit. It's one of those discussions that is really hard to have. It's a little bit like the children and the sanctions.

You don't want anybody to die. You don't deliberately hit civilians; we certainly didn't. Then if you go back to link two things, we were criticized for not bombing the compound in which we thought Osama bin Laden might be because we thought there were women and children in it. We didn't want to do that. You never want to have collateral damage or kill civilians. When one of those reports would come in, you would just be appalled. Now, there was the whole other question, which was whether this was all legal, since it hadn't been done through the UN. If we had waited around for the UN, the Kosovars would all be dead by now. Besides, we did do it through a multilateral operation of NATO. There had been a previous UN resolution which said that what was happening in Kosovo was a threat to peace and security.

So it isn't as if it had no UN basis. But having gotten a flat-out answer from the Russians that they were going to veto, what was the point of driving into that blind alley? But those were the questions out there. Then how to get ready for ground troops.

Riley: How do you maintain your own personal equilibrium when you're in the middle of these kinds of decisions? I'm assuming that you're seeing intelligence reports of atrocities when you were at the UN and when you were Secretary of State that come in with photographs and things that most normal human beings would be revulsed by. What are the sources of your own personal resilience when you're trying to work your way through something like this?

Albright: I don't know the answer to that. I learned a lot of things about myself that I didn't know. First of all, that I'm actually much calmer under pressure than I ever thought I would be. I'm pretty balanced. I am very much a people person and a group person. I obviously had people around me who were supportive when we did these various things. One of the most interesting phone calls was the night that the bombing began. President Clinton called me at one or two o'clock and said, "We're doing the right thing, right?" I said, "Yes, Mr. President, we're doing the right thing." So there is this kind of—

Riley: Was he looking to be bucked up, or was he bucking you up?

Albright: I have no idea. It was kind of a combination of the two. But I think that I was much calmer than I thought I would be. I was repulsed in a way. I did things I never, ever thought I would do. Partly, it was because I was so determined. When I went outside of Srebrenica and this Branja field, which was where people were buried and there were bones sticking out of the ground and you think—it's a horrible shock. It was horrible to be in Rwanda and go into the stadium that was still all bloody where people had been, or looking at them dig up bodies.

Somehow, something happens in terms of, you know you're on public display. So I think I was pretty proud of myself for being calm. Where I wasn't calm, which is why I did this, I thought, *This is impossible, I can't be Secretary of State and watch these kinds—*if I can go back to something.

Riley: Sure.

Albright: My initial reaction on Bosnia—this was before I was in office. I saw pictures out of Bosnia of people being loaded onto trucks and driven to concentration camps. It looked like some pictures out of World War II. I couldn't believe that this was happening at that particular time.

Riley: These were publicized pictures, or were you getting these in preparation—

Albright: No, these were publicized. Then one of the things that really moved us on Bosnia were pictures of a woman who was hung upside-down. It was on the front page of the *New York Times*. Somebody had brought that into a principals meeting and said, "We can't put up with these kinds of things going on."

Then, reports from Bill Walker, the inspector in Kosovo who sent back reports about finding all these bodies in trenches. So while you can physically—I looked at things I never thought I would look at physically—it certainly was a motivating factor in thinking, *Did I ever think I would hold one piece of the power of the United States and have some capability of doing something about it, and not doing it?* It certainly was a motivating factor.

I also have a very patriotic and sentimental view of the United States. It's really the theme of my memoirs, which is that the United States was not there during Munich. The British, German, French, and Italians made a deal over the heads of the Czechoslovaks and the country was dismembered. Then the U.S.—I lived in London during the war—came into the war and everything changed. Then the U.S. didn't do anything and let the Soviets occupy all of central and Eastern Europe. So I really do think the U.S. is a very special place, and that we have some responsibilities. We have so much power and we should use it. That's why I'm going so crazy now. The moral authority of the United States has been dissipated. I said over and over again in thousands of speeches that I believed in the goodness of American power and I felt that we should use it. That's why I'm so upset now. I do think we had certain responsibilities, so that was a motivating thing.

The other thing that truly surprised me about myself was that—now, granted, I was protected by all kinds of people, but I ended up not being physically afraid, even though I flew into Mogadishu in a Black Hawk helicopter with guns pointing out, or had to wear a bulletproof raincoat. When I went to Pristina at the end to celebrate all of this, my security people said, "There are snipers out and we'll have the van right behind the podium so if you get hit we can throw you in." I mean, there were really crazy things, being stoned in Vukovar. I wasn't afraid. There was only one time I remember being afraid, and that was at the UN when I went through a revolving door, and all of a sudden the door stopped in front of me and this guy turned around. It was nothing. But it was the only time I can actually remember thinking, "God in heaven, I've had it." But mostly I wasn't. I think the equanimity came—first, I had a job to do. I knew that people were watching me. I'd be damned if I was going to fall apart. Yet there certainly was an emotion that made me stick to what I believed in.

Riley: Were there instances that you can recall where you had to do the reverse, where you would see a picture or you would hear a report and recognize that some kind of atrocity or injustice was being done but your better judgment told you that's not something that we can deal with?

Albright: As it turned out, Rwanda, but I didn't have that thought process. I'm just trying to think of—

Riley: Was there a question about equating your policy response with your personal response, which is sort of the flip side—

Albright: That's an interesting question. I think that what did happen—there were so many—I went to Cambodia and I went to—I think you can't do everything about everything. So on certain—well, unfortunately probably in the Congo or someplace where once the refugees were all in there from Rwanda and it was such a mess and we couldn't get anybody in there. You can't react to everything. I personally would have reacted. First of all, I really did believe in multilateral action and I really did have an agenda to try to make that all work.

I did believe, and do believe, that the U.S. has a capability of doing many things. It then became, in some cases, a matter of the fact that you couldn't do everything. Not so much that we didn't have the power to do it, but that the bureaucratic system—it would be an overload. But most of the problems that I had to deal with when I was UN Ambassador were obviously in Africa,

through the peacekeeping missions. I would go to some that would seem—I was in Angola at a certain point, dealing with [Jonas] Savimbi and thinking, *This guy is not going to give up*. People asked me whether I was an idealist or a pragmatist, and I would always say I'm an idealistic pragmatist, or a pragmatic idealist. I knew there were things we couldn't do.

Strong: When things are open at the Clinton Library, and who knows how long it takes to open all those things, what should scholars pay particular attention to? You've already mentioned that the President had a habit of getting out a legal pad and writing during meetings. If those have been systematically saved, if there's a handwriting file with all of those, certainly you'd want to look at them.

Albright: Except they're illegible. He has the worst handwriting.

Strong: I'm curious—are there other things you would draw people's attention to?

Albright: I don't know whether these things exist or not, but I'd love to know if he made notes out of the books he read.

Strong: Did he mark up—

Albright: I do not know.

Strong: Memos?

Albright: He did mark up some memos.

Strong: And you would get those back?

Albright: They would come back, marginalia. You really needed an interpreter. His handwriting—he was left-handed and it was really, really hard. I think it would also be interesting to see how he edited speeches. Because he would get a speech and he would be working on it until the last minute. I never saw the text when it came back. It would be interesting to see how he did that. But I'd love to know if he marked up the books that he read and whether he made notes off of those.

Strong: What about the notes made of conversations with foreign leaders? Was there a particular set of those that would be worth—?

Albright: Every conversation, all of us, whenever you had a conversation with a foreign leader, somebody's taking notes.

Strong: Was there a foreign leader with whom he had more interesting conversations?

Albright: I think he probably had really interesting conversations with Tony Blair. They talked about not only foreign policy but also domestic issues, and this whole third-way stuff I think would be very interesting.

Another person he liked a lot was Wim Kok, who was the Dutch Prime Minister. I think his conversations with [Boris] Yeltsin—Strobe has a lot of those. His conversations with Israelis would probably be very interesting. He spent a lot of time on the phone, both with [Benjamin] Netanyahu and [Ehud] Barak. Probably some with Chirac would be interesting. I'm sure they were all—Sandy was on all the calls. I was not on all the calls. But in terms of watching his dynamics. Who was also interesting to him was [Fernando] Cardoso of Brazil.

Then I'm sure he had some pretty short conversations with people. I'm not sure he had great conversations with [Gerhard] Schroeder. He loved [Helmut] Kohl. I think Kohl is a good person. They had a very interesting relationship.

Riley: Hold your questions. Let's take a break.

[BREAK]

Albright: Whether I have an overly glowing image of Clinton—but for me, I have to talk about him from my perspective. He was, as I said, the kind of President you would choose to work for because of his intellectual curiosity and his willingness to listen. I can't explain, that was a very—in many ways I was probably lucky because I didn't see any of the everyday White House sausage-making.

Riley: But you said that you thought that it was important, there was sort of an obligation on the part of public officials to record their story. We were talking for a moment off the tape about the conversations that I've had with other Clinton staffers about how important they felt this project was because there often weren't notes made of important meetings. You had indicated people didn't keep journals. I guess you didn't keep a journal—

Albright: No, I didn't keep a journal. I helped Brzezinski on his book. He actually had a journal and he recorded something every night. I think the people were concerned about keeping journals. I can't remember this young guy—

Riley: Josh Steiner.

Albright: Yes, Josh, who actually came from the Dukakis campaign. I knew Josh. He kept a journal, and all of a sudden it's subpoenaed. So I think people—there was kind of a sense—it made it very difficult. I had notes that I'd take in meetings occasionally. But it's very hard to be—it's very different from being somebody who takes notes to somebody who is the principal who has to say things. So they're very sketchy and scattered. Also they were sometimes not in my best handwriting.

I looked at these when I was writing my book. They really looked like hieroglyphics. Then the person who was helping me created a timeline and the line was kind of like the Rosetta Stone.

All of a sudden it began to make sense. That was that meeting, so those four words that I said, yes, that must have been about [Yasser] Arafat or whatever. But I think it's too bad because there's not a record. Also, we didn't write letters to one another. There are a lot of memos. There are memoranda of conversations.

The part that was strange for a person who had not come up through the bureaucracy is that I never had a meeting without somebody in the room, a note taker or something. Occasionally when you told the note taker to leave the room, then you were concerned that you actually would say something that whomever you were talking to would totally misinterpret. So it was better to have a note taker.

I'll tell you a very funny thing. When there was a foreigner, there was always somebody listening in. It was all connected through the operations center. We were dealing with a very complicated issue, Stu Eizenstat and I, over holocaust reparations that the Austrians were supposed to be doing. The plan was that we would talk for a while and then they would bring in Wolfgang Schussel, who was the Chancellor of Austria.

We're talking along and saying what a problem Schussel was—that he really wasn't doing the right thing on this, and all of a sudden he says, "Hello, Wolfgang is here." So you were always counting on the fact that the operations people would do what they were supposed to. *[laughter]*

Riley: Before we broke, you were talking a little bit about the people that Clinton had a good relationship with—conversations with people that would be interesting, if you could find the correspondence or the conversations that they had. I want to ask a little bit more about Clinton's own personal approach to foreign policy, and maybe come at this backwards. Were there any places where you saw he had notable blind spots or where there were particular difficulties that he had more than others, intellectually, in grasping an issue or the politics of a certain area from your perspective?

Albright: We all had, I think, a hard time with the Japanese, not on issues so much as style. They were stiffer in terms of their dealings. It was just harder to develop a personal relationship, but over time we did.

I remember at one point I was sitting next to Clinton, and Japanese takes much longer to translate than the English. So we would sit there and say, "What are they saying? Why does it take so long?" You'd say, "Hello, my name is," and then it seemed to take four sentences for them to say hello. So it created a certain difficulty.

What I think is very interesting is the role of interpreters in foreign policy and how important it is to have somebody who not only does the interpreting, but helps with the nuances, because they are essential in most of these conversations. In some cases for instance, the man who did all the translating on Arabic was Gamal [Helal], an Egyptian, who became a part of the Middle East peace team. He was very knowledgeable, and Clinton really came to like him and they spent a lot of time together so that he became a "substantive" person as well as an interpreter. So the role of the interpreter in creating that kind of relationship between two leaders is very important.

Riley: Was it ever a problem for you? Did you ever detect, because of your own language skills, that you were not getting—

Albright: I was embarrassed about something that I did. I was in the Czech Republic. I should never have done this. I spoke in English, and they translated it in a way that I didn't think was right and I corrected them. I never should have done that.

Riley: Because it showed—

Albright: Right. For the most part, I don't speak Spanish, so that was unfortunate. But I think they did—the people that we had doing Russian and French were pretty good. I don't know about the others.

Strong: Did you usually accompany the President on foreign trips? Was it unusual for you to go together?

Albright: Initially. That's a very good question, too. You think that it's a lot of fun to go on a trip with the President on Air Force One and all that. But it is not always the best use of time. I mean, it's interesting to be on Air Force One and spend time with the President, but in terms of getting anything done, the truth is it was a very funny scene in terms of motorcades because the President has his motorcade and he has nine zillion cars that are his bubble.

There's the Chief of Staff and the National Security Advisor, etc., then somewhere down the line is the Secretary of State. So we would arrive somewhere and I was supposed to be next to the President in order to meet the President and the Foreign Minister of their X country. The President would say, "Where's Madeleine?" I would be running up all out of breath because I was far back in the motorcade since I was not a White House person. But then there were times that going on a Presidential trip was obviously useful, for example, when we had the Helsinki summit with the Russians.

The President was there and then I would have side talks. At that stage, Primakov was Foreign Minister. Then we'd put things together. We each had our various jobs. But on a lot of trips, it really was potted plant time. Because the Secretary of State is not the President's foreign policy staffer—I mean, the National Security Advisor is the staffer who gives the papers to the President and is responsible for various notes and things. So you get wrapped up in this huge mob scene. You think, *I could be doing something on my own*. So I think initially I traveled with him more, and then I decided I really didn't have to do that. It was better to do something else. But there were certain exceptions.

The Russian summits, we would go together. I went when there was the Summit of the Americas. There are so many different things to do, but I began to pick and choose a little bit. I didn't go on the big African trip with him because I had been to Africa so many times. So most I went and some I didn't. But I traveled a lot. I traveled more than a million miles as Secretary of State. I felt that was a very important part of the job. When the Secretary travels, it's an action-forcing mechanism for your own bureaucracy because you have to have something to say when you get there and you have to have what you call deliverables. It's an action-forcing mechanism for the country where you're going. So it puts it on the map.

It isn't just a matter of not being in Washington. Here, I know Powell was criticized for not traveling. I could travel because I knew Sandy had my back. It was not a matter of going out and having somebody stab me, whereas Powell, I think, as is more and more evident, wasn't sure that

somebody would protect him. Condi is out traveling because she's pretty well covered. But I think it's very important for a Secretary to travel.

Strong: Was there a Presidential trip that was more important than the others? The African trip? India-Pakistan?

Albright: Well, India-Pakistan, I went on that trip. That was a very important trip. It was crazy because I also had to go to Geneva to present the case against the Chinese on human rights because if I wasn't there, then it wasn't an issue that was important. So I left India, went to Geneva, flew back and met the President. Then we had this crazy entry into Pakistan where we thought missiles were going to be fired at us. That was a time; it was so interesting. It was the only time that President Clinton—he wasn't nervous, but as we were leaving he said, "There's nobody young on this airplane, because we're on a very dangerous thing." We did this crazy thing where they had a decoy. We looked like we were getting on an airplane. We went behind the airplane and got on a little plane and took off like this [*hand held at high angle*] in order to get out of missile range. The President said, you could tell, it was the only time he thought we were all in danger.

Strong: You were on this plane when there was no one young there?

Albright: Yes. My issue—I have to tell you—this is a strange thing. I have always been chronologically older than my career age, because I didn't go to work for Muskie full-time until I was 39 years old. So I was always ten years older than anybody else. Here I was ten years older than the President of the United States. I would wander up and down the aisles of Air Force One looking for anybody older than I was. There usually wasn't. I'd be glad to see General [Barry] McCaffrey. I was thinking, *These people really look old*. Then they weren't as old—[*laughter*]

Strong: Now, other things that we would be looking for in the Presidential library?

Albright: I don't know what kind of notes he made to himself. That was the part that I truly don't know. I think that definitely the yellow pads from Wye. That was one of the most interesting ones, and from Camp David and also whatever notes he took on trips to get ready for things.

I think that a lot of it is official correspondence that is probably not interesting, but his—I don't know whether he saved any notes that people wrote to him in meetings. You know, "Be sure to say," or "What do you think about," or just informal things. It also would be wonderful to know what books he actually did read.

Riley: It's kind of amazing that a man who has as much to do as he did, how did he find the time to read?

Albright: I don't know. He stayed up during the night to read them. He loved American history and he loved the history of the White House. He knew so much about the history of the White House it was just stunning to be with him. Whenever there was a foreign visitor and we were up in the residence, he could talk about every object in it. When we took Jiang Zemin into the [Abraham] Lincoln bedroom and showed him the Emancipation Proclamation, Clinton knew everything about everything. He loved the history of it. The only other person who was good

about the history of the White House was Newt Gingrich. There were some crazy dinners where they would compare notes about what they knew.

But I think whatever attempts he made—he read biographies of other Presidents, and I think it would be interesting to know what he thought about them. He was very aware, obviously, that here he was in this line. He did read a lot. He got very much into some scientific issues. He got into global warming and various issues. He was voracious in what he read.

The other part, which is at the Clinton Library, and it is a lot of fun, are all his political memorabilia. He was a complete pack rat and he loved to shop. He had all these little things, political buttons, he had the letter that [Harry] Truman wrote to the guy who criticized his daughter, Paul Hume. When you went back, off the Oval Office, the walls were just covered with all this memorabilia because he really is a political junkie.

For instance, sitting here with you, there are the bookshelves in the Oval Office. Early on there was a man I knew who said would I please give a present to the President on his behalf. He wasn't sure he could get it to him. It was a leather-bound copy of [Thomas] Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*. I gave it to the President. He was thrilled to have it. I would always look to see where it was in the library. He reorganized books. Wherever he went, he would begin to reorganize the books, whether they were in his library or somebody else's. [laughter]

There's a house at the Wye plantation that belonged to the people who owned it. We were having a very interesting dinner with Arafat and Netanyahu and Foreign Minister [Shlomo] Ben-Ami and a note taker. There's a library. All of a sudden the President starts reorganizing the books. I said, "Mr. President, this is not your library." He said, "They need reorganizing." Or he'd reorganize his desk. So I think it would be interesting, the personal things to him, the paintings that he liked. Just a very interesting man.

Riley: When you were Secretary of State, did you have the opportunity much to have long conversations with him? When you were traveling would you sit down and just get into expansive sessions?

Albright: Sometimes. Not a lot. On the airplanes we really did play hearts.

Riley: Were you a hearts player?

Albright: No. I was very bad at it. Or something called, what was it, "Go to hell" or "Oh hell." He was one of these people who could keep track. I don't like games, but I do the best I can. He's very competitive. So that would happen a lot. I think one of the best times we ever had, though, was when we went to Prague during the Partnership for Peace thing. What had happened was that Shali and I had been sent to sell the Partnership for Peace to the central and eastern Europeans. He and I got along beautifully on this. We developed this whole routine. We went from one place to another. Then we ended up in Prague.

What was supposed to happen was the President was coming in, but he stopped in Brussels. When I got there, [Vaclav] Havel, who was a good friend, said that the advance people were not even vaguely helpful in terms of what to do with the President. His mother had just died. Havel

had this whole thing planned of giving him a saxophone and having him play in a jazz club. He said, “I don’t know if the President wants to do this. Can you go find out?”

When I went to pick Clinton up, I told him all these things. We had a great talk—Havel and jazz and things like that. That was a very relaxed trip. So when we came down the stairs of Air Force One and Warren Christopher was Secretary, and he was so generous, he basically said, “This is your country. You go down with the President.” So I told Havel that we could do that. That evening was one of those long discussions about Prague and things like that.

Riley: With Havel?

Albright: With Havel also, and Clinton telling stories about when he’d been to Prague as a student. My conversations with him when he was President were usually about some business thing that we had to do. I was invited to Camp David several times. There were nights where we would go see movies or just spend time in a group. That’s why the time that I interviewed him for my book on religion was so special. We had all this time, just us, talking about something I wanted to talk about, not that I had to get a check-off or something like that. In that regard I had that kind of relationship with Hillary, but not so much with him.

Riley: He and Havel had a good relationship?

Albright: Great relationship.

Riley: Can you tell us what the connection was?

Albright: It was very interesting, because he admired what Havel had done as somebody who had stood up for what he believed in. I can’t remember the first time they met, but this trip was really remarkable. This was so funny. Havel, who is an incredible character and who is very modern in his taste of art—I met Havel the first time in January ’90. He had just taken over. There was this castle with all this Communist furniture and paintings in it. When we came back from this trip, all of a sudden there’s all this crazy modern art. Clinton is there.

We go into Havel’s office and there is this painting of this nude couple hanging in the President’s office. Clinton looks at it and says, “Can you imagine what would happen if I brought this in?” But they had a very nice relationship talking about culture, jazz—that was a very big thing. For Havel—you know, music was a major reason that the Czech revolution happened. They had this whole thing, the Plastic People of the Universe. Jazz played a very large role. Clinton loved jazz. So they talked about culture, and music, and obviously about NATO expansion and had a very relaxed relationship. I had all of them to dinner at my house. We’ve done any number of things.

Then Hillary really also got along with Havel, and when we went on this trip in ’96, they spent a lot of time together. When Havel was in the U.S. last year, we got them together again. I think there is a comfort level often—I am friends with people I would have never been friends with before. But there are similarities of experiences, and I think that the Presidents begin to form friendships because they go through the same things. Some of them get along really well, and some you can feel that it is very official. Clearly, Tony Blair is very good at making friends with American Presidents.

Riley: Have you been surprised that Blair—

Albright: Very. I have to say when Blair went to Camp David for that first trip with Bush and they started talking about sharing toothpaste or whatever, I couldn't believe it. I felt that he had betrayed Clinton. I talked to Clinton about it later. He said, of course he's going to be friends. It doesn't mean that we're not friends anymore. Clinton was much more—but I was very surprised because I thought they were really kind of soul mates. I think Clinton made a genuine effort to be friendly with people. When we went for something, I don't even remember where, the Hague I guess, for the 50th anniversary. We were celebrating the 50th anniversary of everything. That was where we were. Kohl was in this cathedral and Clinton paid such homage to him in terms of what he had done. Clinton had the capability of really connecting with people on whatever level; they thought they were important.

Riley: [Nelson] Mandela?

Albright: Mandela was an unbelievable connection. You know what I think would be interesting? Try to find out how Clinton developed his post-Presidential role, when he began to think about that. I don't know how you want to go into that. I think that's interesting because of Mandela and that picture today.

Riley: This is something you can comment on?

Albright: No. The thing that Clinton and I—just to jump around a bit. At the end, Clinton and I talked about the fact that we were the only people who probably would never have their jobs again. Other people could have other jobs, but once you've been President or Secretary of State, there's not a lot better. So he talked about what he would do, that he probably would have some kind of a foundation and trying to figure out where he could do a lot of good. This goes back to the Carter issue, too, because he had seen what an incredible post-Presidential career Carter had.

I don't have any notes for this, but how he assembled a staff, how he decided to have his office in Harlem, how he began to evolve a lot of the things that he worked on and maintained contact with people that he especially liked. Mandela was one of them. I can fully understand that, because the thing that I did was to create a group of former foreign ministers. So these people that I talked to every day during Kosovo, we meet now. We have a great deal in common and a lot of experience. We can talk without benefit of national position, so we do that all the time.

Yesterday I talked to Hubert Vedrine about something, and Joschka Fischer is coming and he's going to be at Princeton. So there is that. Clinton—there is a group of former heads of state, through this Madrid process. Then Clinton has his own relationships with people, and I think those have been very important.

Riley: That can be interesting for us, because one of the original parts of the design of our project was to try to interview some of these foreign leaders about Clinton, and that is something we have not, for a variety of reasons, pursued.

Albright: You might want—Joschka is at Princeton for the academic year.

Riley: I understand Havel is—

Albright: Havel is going to be in New York for two months and then Washington for two months. I think you might have a hard time getting him here, but—

Riley: I'd certainly be willing to travel to New York or Princeton for either of those. If you wouldn't mind my contacting you—

Albright: No, I'd be happy about that. One of the things in life I swore I would not do is be Havel's scheduler, because it never works. I have spent my life trying to—he is fabulous, but you never know what he's going to do. There are wonderful stories. Havel's a fabulous character.

Riley: His English is—

Albright: Good enough, depending on the mood he's in. He has just written a book. I was just reading it. My Czech is a little slow in reading. He was very admiring of my memoirs and he kept saying, "I don't see how you did it. How could you have written all this stuff down?" He was in Washington just now because the Library of Congress gave him a fellowship. He decided to do this very weird book. There are three aspects to it. One is a Czech who asks him a lot of difficult questions about how he saw Charter 77 and what it was like in jail, and did he really see himself as a President, and various things like that.

He then says that he had a laptop computer—actually I gave him a laptop computer at one stage, and that he took notes on it. He discovered that they all were still on the computer. What is so fascinating about it, most of it is about how he writes his own speeches, which is, as I told him, very unusual. I told him that Clinton edits speeches. Havel writes about how he gives his speeches to his staff and how irritated he is when they correct anything and how he worries about why there are so many people traveling with him.

Then there's his journal of what it was like to be in the United States and his feelings about Americans and coming to my house and seeing Clinton. So it's a nice kind of combination. It's going to be translated in English. It depends on the mood he's in, because he can be quite fun.

Riley: Is it better to talk with him one-on-one as we traditionally do it, or is it better to have you in the room or someone like Michal Zantovský?

Albright: Michal is a good person, and there's another person who has done the translation of all his books. It's always in the *New York Review of Books*—Paul Wilson or somebody like that. But when he was here the last time, I went with him to this—Jamie would know, some bar on Fourteenth Street [*laughter*] where they had these Plastic People of the Universe, these old hippies. The Czechs have a real problem because they never got out of the '60s and Havel definitely didn't get out of the '60s.

So they're all there in their black jeans and black turtleneck sweaters and I look like some antediluvian human being. They're all really into the Plastic People of the Universe. Havel—I've had great fun going to jazz clubs with him, both at Blues Alley in Washington and in New York. He really has friends—was friends with Arthur Miller and [William] Styron and Edward Albee. I've had great experiences with him. You might want to talk to some other leaders.

Riley: We may consult with you. We're running a little bit short on time here, and there are some other things—

Albright: Go ahead.

Riley: I was going to ask a general question. You had mentioned that there were a number of things that didn't get into the book, and I thought I ought to throw out a generic question about—are there some bits and pieces of the story that in particular, either because you felt it wasn't the right time or because the editor thought this shouldn't stay—that you wanted to go ahead and speak into the record now?

Albright: Just probably it was too long, not anything—

Riley: Nothing too long for us.

Albright: I think it was a matter of organizing a book that wasn't just a straight chronology. I think frankly what makes my memoir sometimes more interesting than others is that it's pretty honest and open. So I don't think there's anything that I didn't feel like putting in.

Riley: I was going to ask you in that regard about 1998 and the scandals. Anything more that you wanted to talk about with respect to how you and the administration managed to weather the Lewinsky business.

Albright: I think that started in January 1998 and Arafat had been in the White House. We were all there together. Arafat leaves and the President pulls Sandy and me aside and says, "There's nothing to this." I truly did believe him. When he came to the Cabinet and told us there was nothing to it, I really believed it. Sandy believed—I think we all believed it.

So I think to a great extent, we weathered the scandals for two reasons. One is that we really thought that he was being maligned and this was unfair. This is a whole thing we haven't talked about—there really was a sense in the Clinton administration that people were out to get him. I mean Whitewater and various things. To go back to the Carter period, there was a sense among the Carter people that Washington was unkind to them because they were southerners. They felt they were being treated as if they were hayseeds.

Jody Powell and Hamilton and people really were very anti-Washington. I'll never forget this. We were going to somebody's funeral at the National Cathedral. I was in the car with Jody. I've lived in Washington many years now, and I was a carpool mother, so I know everything. I found a way to get to the cathedral faster. Jody said something like, "That's a sign of somebody who has lived here too long," or something like that. To some extent the Clinton people arrived with the same feeling.

I remember at one of the dinners with Havel, Clinton and Hillary were explaining that Washington was not very kind to southerners. So there was that kind of a sense. Then there were questions with whatever happened on Travelgate. There was a sense of being a little bit under siege from Washington, who didn't understand them. It really was strange to come into a system that had had Republicans for 12 years. Part of the things that the Republicans were much better at than we are is that—to use a favorite term these days—they were much more embedded into

the bureaucracy, and many layers down. That was something that the Reagan people systematically did after Carter. So it was harder to figure out who was who.

So with Clinton I think we did all circle the wagons around him and felt that this was unfair. I think that's the time—at least this was true in my case—I was invited to Camp David a lot at that stage. This was a very intense period for foreign policy.

There were a lot of things that just happened. One of things that I think is a very important point on foreign policy—there's an inexorable calendar. There are summits that have been set up a year ahead of time, or bilateral meetings that have been negotiated forever, or some event happens. So you have to keep moving. I think that clearly we are all dedicated to doing that.

We really among ourselves did not talk about it particularly, at least I didn't, and I certainly didn't talk to other people in the State Department about it. So there was a lot of work, a lot of denial, I think, as it turns out, in all of us, and a real hurt that here we had a terrific President who was being badgered all the time.

So the big shock was—the thing that I did—I did this voluntarily. I came out of that Cabinet meeting. I said this for a long time about Washington: Most of the people who work in high-level positions in the government are fungible. We're all pretty smart. There are some people who are brilliant, but mostly it's the same kind of level. The thing that distinguishes one person from another is a sense of loyalty. I felt that when I worked for Muskie. This is somebody that you work for and you don't want to see maligned. I sat next to Clinton in this meeting, as Secretary of State. My seat was next to him. He had told me on the first day that there was nothing to it.

So I voluntarily went out and did something that was probably inappropriate for a Secretary of State to do, to go out and say I believed him and that we should get on with our work. I was definitely in that mode. So as the facts came out—I was so furious. I'll never forgive her for this. Maureen Dowd, as brilliant as she is, I will not forgive her for this. She wrote something like, "Madeleine Albright, of all people, defending him. Her husband left her, so why wouldn't she have some understanding for—" Some really low-blow stupid thing.

I spent quite a lot of time with Hillary. She was fabulous. I mean she really, really was. One of the stranger dinners of all time was Hillary, Queen Noor, and me, each of us connected to a husband who was either dead, divorced, or in a state of dishonor.

All of a sudden more and more facts come out. I describe this in the book pretty much, but this whole thing where I had gone to speak at either Veterans of Foreign Wars or the American Legion and I was so proud of representing America and everything. Then to come back and we had this meeting where he, so to speak, apologized to us. I felt, for whatever reason, some need as the senior member of the Cabinet to be the first one to speak. I was sitting right in front of him. It was really hard.

Here is this man that I admired so much who clearly had done something so patently stupid. I think it was so evident to everybody that this would be one of the things that would affect how people viewed him. He is so much more than that. We didn't spend a lot of time talking legacy, but you clearly want the President you admired to be remembered for something other than this.

I'm not in denial. I have to say that it did not affect how we did foreign policy, except for the perception that it affected us, and that was the very strange part. Certainly, something that came up—I was the lead witness on the 9/11 Commission on had we spent enough time fighting terrorism and, of course, we gave that a top priority.

Riley: Not directly in relation to this—the sequencing of the question is unfortunate—but was there ever a point where you considered resigning?

Albright: No, not in connection with this. Of course, in abstract terms, it is only human to imagine the possibility—I first thought about it when I went to the Carter White House. I told you earlier that there was this weird feeling about how did Watergate happen and how people felt after. You think about under what circumstances would you resign. Then Vance resigned over Iraq. As a matter of fact, when Vance died, after we were all out of office, and I went to his funeral, the speakers—the only thing they had to say about him was that he'd resigned. I thought, *That's kind of weird. Of all the things—*

So I think there was a theoretical question that I had. Would there be any circumstance under which I would resign? I thought theoretically that if there was something I totally disagreed with I would resign, but there was nothing that came up. I can't imagine a Secretary of State would resign over the fact that the President had an affair with somebody.

Strong: Would backing down in Kosovo have been?

Albright: That's so hypothetical. I also do think you can resign only once. Whatever effectiveness you might have in terms of changing something—so you have this great moment, and you resign, and that's what they talk about at your funeral. But you may not have the effect that you need to have.

I think back on the Monica thing. The thing that was really hard was that as Secretary of State you have to sign the impeachment papers. They came from the Senate office. It's your duty to sign.

Riley: Did you keep the pen?

Albright: No. One of the things for me—I don't know why this comes next. I was not in the line of succession, even though by Constitution I was supposed to be, because I wasn't born in the U.S. So they would have these meetings about what to do in case there's an atomic attack, and they wouldn't let me in the room. I would have been dead, but I definitely was not in the line of succession. It was a very funny kind of feeling. *[laughter]*

Strong: At lunch we talked briefly about Middle East negotiations at the end of the administration. Again, it's a topic you have a lot to say about. How should we assess that effort?

Albright: Well, it's also a long story. A lot of it is dictated by various circumstances. I think that when President Clinton came into office—the first Bush administration had moved the process quite far with the Madrid Conference and various things. As I said, Christopher kept Dennis Ross, and Yitzhak Rabin was Prime Minister. So it was very natural, I think, for there to be a big

push on the Middle East with the Oslo Process and the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September '93.

You've got this great photograph. I think that what became so clear was that the U.S. could play a really important role. The picture of Clinton, like this, bringing them to shake hands, is kind of symbolic of the whole thing. It was difficult, because before, they weren't totally sure. Arafat kept hesitating and wasn't sure he was going to sign. They were nervous until the last minute. It was very typical of what would happen with Arafat. You never knew where he was going to go. But that started off a series of attempts on our part to be much more involved.

At the UN my job was to try to work to get the UN to be more Israel-friendly, to stop passing resolutions condemning them, and to ultimately get them into various groups and all that. So there was an ongoing process. I think one of the great historical, political tragedies of all time was Rabin's assassination. Because the whole process was based on Rabin being, as Arafat used to say, "a partner in the peace of the brave." The plan was that there would be these interim issues that they would work on. That would be a process that would allow them to work on the more difficult-permanent status issues, that they would learn to work together.

Rabin was—that was his big thing. The difficulty of watching Rabin shake hands with Arafat—and I have to tell you my own thinking. I was sitting in the audience and Arafat starts coming down off the stage and I think to myself, *Andy Young was fired for talking to the PLO* [Palestine Liberation Organization]. *How can I shake hands with Arafat? My God, you're so stupid, Rabin just shook hands with Arafat. You can shake hands with Arafat.*

There was a momentum that was going with it. Then Rabin gets assassinated. There's a lot of violence, and [Shimon] Peres gets defeated and Netanyahu comes in. Now instead of having a lubricant, like Rabin, you had sandpaper like Netanyahu. Netanyahu was really difficult. We spent an incredible amount of time with him. Clinton was very interesting in this because he is so politically gifted. He understood the politics of Israel very well and had incredible discussions with Netanyahu.

I remember at one stage saying to Clinton, "Just because Netanyahu sounds like an American politician and doesn't have an accent, he's not an American. There is a different mindset on all of this." Netanyahu just drove us crazy. We spent an incredible amount of time, but Clinton was very tuned into the details of his work at Wye. So he proceeds. Netanyahu gets defeated and [Ehud] Barak comes in. I remember so well. I met with Barak as an opposition leader. I thought what bad luck I had that Netanyahu was my first Israeli partner, because he was just unbelievably difficult.

Then when I met with Barak, we'd come out of a meeting with Barak and say, "Wouldn't it be great if he were now Prime Minister?" So he becomes Prime Minister and we spend an incredible amount of time with Barak, who was elected on this peace platform. He decides that he wants to move with the Syria track first. I think we tried to persuade him not to do that, but he said that will help; it will make it easier to do the Palestinian track.

Barak, as I said, turned out to be bold but very difficult in terms of how he negotiated. When we were doing the Syria track in Shepherdstown, he had promised us that he would take a certain set

of steps. Then he gets in and says, “I’m not going to do them,” even though he had been the one who wanted us there. It was like dealing with—I don’t want to be patronizing, but— with children. It was really hard. What was interesting was to have remembered what Wye was like, because the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators actually got along very well.

Then being in Shepherdstown with the Syrians and the Israelis, who wouldn’t even sit at the same tables, so that kind of fell apart. Then we started in on the Palestinian stuff and just spent incalculable hours. Dennis and his team would be in the Middle East a lot of the time. I would go a lot. The President would meet people in different places; I would meet people in different places. It was probably the central theme of everything we did.

Clinton was endlessly innovative and endlessly patient with all of this. So the Camp David aspect of this was one in which it was a matter of the last push on it. I told you one mistake I thought we made, but also I think there was probably a mistake made in acting as if it had failed. If we had just said it was part of the process, we could have picked up the pieces more.

Riley: The other mistake I think you may have addressed at lunch was—

Albright: I’m sorry, I can’t remember where I said that. This was the issue. Arafat—we weren’t there for a legacy, but Barak wanted us to do this. Barak would not give us his bottom line on it at all. Barak actually, as time went on, was very forthcoming in terms of what could be done on Jerusalem and how to move forward. Arafat was perfectly capable of making the decisions about the size of the Palestinian state. He was the leader. But he did not have sole authority about the disposition of the holy places. We were asking him to make some compromises.

The way that we saw Jerusalem was in four concentric circles. The outer circle was the suburbs of Jerusalem that had come after the ’67 war. The next circle were the suburbs of the old city. Then there was the old city within the wall and then within that was this tiny thing, which was the holy places. We had come to agreements on the three outer circles pretty much so that what was Arab would be Palestinian, and what was Jewish would be Jewish. It would be a divided city in a variety of ways. The fact that Barak would even agree to that was important. Then we get to the holy places and we did a lot of discussion about sovereignty. We actually came up with a new term. It didn’t go very far, but “divine sovereignty.” If in fact this was God’s—somebody said this was so complicated that God sent three different messengers. So we tried that, but it came down to who owned the top and who owned the bottom and who would dig up and who would dig down.

We were asking Arafat to make those decisions, and he couldn’t, because for that you needed approval of the other Arabs. Because Barak had not told us his bottom lines, we had not, to use Dennis’s favorite word, “conditioned” the Saudis or various people. When we started calling them, they didn’t know what we were talking about, so time was lost. Then, after Camp David, violence erupted and various things. [Ariel] Sharon went to the Temple Mount. But we continued a lot of negotiations.

Ultimately I met with Arafat in Paris and with Barak. We tried to bring it back together. Chirac played a very unhelpful role, but it went on. There was Sharm el Sheikh and various meetings.

The thing that was truly difficult, it was October 2000. At the same time we had the North Korean stuff going on. We haven't talked about North Korea.

What happened with North Korea was I left the story with Carter in Pyongyang. We did this agreed framework, which I think was generally a pretty good deal in terms of the fact that the North Koreans really do need energy. They needed energy and we would provide them with light-water reactors and heavy fuel in exchange for them freezing their nuclear program and going back into the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty and allowing the inspectors in.

What happened in that deal—I think, I wasn't a part of that—was that there wasn't enough consideration given to the fact that Japan and South Korea, who were supposed to help us pay for the reactors, were democracies and they had to get permission or financial support from their parliaments. Their parliaments were very slow in coming up with the money.

So the North Koreans got very impatient, and after a lot of back and forth in August 1998 they launch missiles over Japan. It made us realize that we had to rethink our whole North Korea policy. So the President put Bill Perry in charge of the negotiations, and they did a whole review. There were meetings that were trilateral with the South Koreans and the Japanese, very careful work. We did a lot of meetings on this. We were at one of those fork-in-the-road times.

Perry said we had this option. We would offer to the North Koreans that we would negotiate, and if they didn't want to then we were in the position to take a military route. They said they wanted to negotiate. So that went on a while. Then all of a sudden—I can't remember the exact date, sometime in September, October—in the meantime, we had a missile moratorium that they agreed to.

Vice Marshall Cho [Myong] Rok, who was the number two person to Kim Jong-Il, came to the United States. He was at the State Department. We negotiated an agreement called the Albright-Cho agreement, in which we determined—I can't remember the exact words—that we had no hostile intent towards them. They had come, Cho had come, in order to invite Clinton to go to North Korea. It was very funny, because when he came to the State Department he was in a pinstripe suit, and then when we got together in the Oval Office he was in uniform, in one of these very peculiar North Korean uniforms and with lots of medals that were for killing Americans in Vietnam. So he comes with this red leather thing and gives the invitation to Clinton. We had some sense that this was going to happen, and we said to Clinton, "You can't accept. You have to say that you're sending the Secretary of State."

So we go through all this and he says, "Thank you very much. I have to think about it. I think I have to send my Secretary of State." They were not at all happy that Clinton did not accept immediately—a dictator thinks he has to deal with the President of a country. So ultimately they said that I should go. I went. We won't go through all this.

Riley: Great picture.

Albright: Yes, great picture. I went and it was truly fascinating. What happened is they wanted Clinton to come. All of a sudden we have the following set of issues. We're still dealing with the Middle East. There is a disputed election in the United States, and there is a possibility of another visit to North Korea. After I had been in North Korea, there were talks going on on a

technical level that were ongoing in Kuala Lumpur. My negotiator on this was Ambassador Wendy Sherman. We were taking our last trip to Africa. She was all packed with hot clothes and cold clothes to go to North Korea the minute they decided that they would receive her. In the meantime we didn't know what was happening with Gore-Bush.

At a certain stage we invited Kim Jong-Il to come to the United States because the President said, "I can't do everything. I can't go there, even if Wendy sets it up. I think I have a better shot at getting something in the Middle East than doing North Korea." So over Christmas that year, it was nonstop Middle East stuff. We were there December 23 or something, putting down the Clinton parameters. In January we kept going. We were doing it until the very last minute.

I think one of the things that Clinton did say, he said it not so long ago, was that maybe he should have gone to North Korea. But it was one of those really hard things where you had two huge issues. Then you had these people who were taking over. Powell and Condi, who said to Sandy and me they would pick up the North Korean thing. And they didn't do that. So both issues were left on the table, things that we had worked very hard on. There's a huge cost to pay for the fact that neither of these things were picked up.

Riley: You said that because of a fundamental commitment, what you called ABC, Anything But Clinton.

Albright: Absolutely. And you should ask Powell, because Powell has said to me that if he hadn't been quoted in the papers saying he would continue Clinton's policy, he might have been able to do it. Instead, they abrogated the Albright-Cho agreement. If it had been called the Smith agreement, they might not have. But there was a deliberate thing about not doing anything that we did. Of course the situation in the Middle East did get more complicated because Sharon—I must say that Sharon's change of heart as he evolved as Prime Minister was quite interesting, but he was horrible to Arafat at Wye and horrible to the Palestinians. So I wasn't surprised when he said he wasn't going to deal with them. As I said earlier, I think that was a mistake.

Riley: I want to ask; we're getting very short on time. I don't recall, maybe it's just because I rushed through the last chapter or two, whether you talked at all about your perceptions of the 2000 campaign. You were somebody who had a long history of being involved in Democratic Presidential politics, electoral politics. You were obviously forbidden and otherwise occupied in 2000, but you must have been a somewhat intimate observer with what was going on. Do you have an explanation for how Al Gore managed not to win that election?

Albright: I think, and this has a lot to do with what I said about Clinton, I think Al Gore managed not to because he tried to disassociate himself from Clinton, which was crazy. He was coming off of a winning economy and a pretty good set of policies. He had too many advisors. I think that not having Clinton help him was certainly a huge part. Then I actually do think the election was stolen. But what should not have happened is that it would be that close. So that was an issue.

I did have one very funny incident. I was giving a speech right around the time that all the stuff was going on in terms of recounts and all of that. If you remember, Secretary Baker and Secretary Christopher were down there, and then there was Katherine Harris. So I went and I

gave a speech and said, “I’m Madeleine Albright and I am the current Secretary of State of the United States of America.” All they were doing was talking about Secretary this, Secretary that, and who was I, because they were so confused. Katherine Harris was the Secretary of State of Florida. Obviously, it was an unbelievably tense time. But I think that there was a sense that he—there’s no question that Gore was very disapproving of what Clinton had done.

I think that their relationship was probably much more complicated than any of us knew. Initially there had been this very strong partnership, and in many ways Gore brought a lot of the Washington experience that Clinton didn’t have. It’s interesting to watch the relationships of Presidents and Vice Presidents. When Carter was President, people said that [Walter] Mondale was the most powerful Vice President ever. Mondale also provided the Washington experience to Carter. Mondale would walk around the White House and be so nice to everybody and be very pleasant, and Carter rarely came out of his office. Mondale was just this sunshine person.

His staff oversaw the legislative strategy for the Carter administration because he really understood how the system worked. So all of a sudden I’m in this other administration where Gore is clearly much more a part of the partnership. But I think over time it became less so. While Gore did these commissions and everything, ultimately Clinton was President. I don’t know Gore well enough, but I think Gore began to think—I mean he had once run for President himself. He thought it was going to be his turn and it would not be marred by the scandal. So I think some of it was moralistic, distancing himself. Some of it was his advisors telling him he should do that. Some of it is that he was lousy in the debates.

But it’s very sad. We would be in a very different place if Gore were President. We definitely would not be in Iraq. I was just with him in Aspen, and whatever he wasn’t in 2000, he is now. He is very passionate on the environment, he’s very good on it, he’s very focused. He has a very interesting mind. He is now writing a book about the neurology of memory, just endlessly interesting. But he became a little suspicious, I think. He didn’t like it when we would all be in a meeting in the Oval Office and the President would signal to me that I should stay behind to talk about something. So as I’d be leaving the White House I’d get a message that the Vice President wanted to see me. He’d say, “What did you and Clinton talk about?” So there was this little bit of a sense toward the end that relationships had changed.

Riley: Sure. We’re very close to our appointed hour. I was going to ask you one final question. You’re very self-critical in the book. There are places where you talk about your big disappointments. What is it that you’re most proud of in your time?

Albright: Kosovo. I was proud of a lot of different things. I first of all loved the job, and I threw myself into it in every single way. But as a case, and I didn’t have enough time to explain it fully, it was a very interesting issue for me. First of all, substantively I thought it was fascinating, and it was an area I really knew.

So much of my story is an accidental story. Why is it that I was Secretary of State when we could bring the country where I was born into NATO? The reason NATO was created was the Czechoslovak coup finally persuaded Americans that they had to do something. So a lot of circular issues. One of these was Yugoslavia. It’s kind of peculiar that my father was

Ambassador to Yugoslavia and Albania, the whole thing. So substantively it was very interesting.

Procedurally, domestically it was interesting, because it was a sign to me that I learned how the system worked and I could control whatever emotions I had better than I did during Bosnia so I could make my points, and had my own department in pretty good shape. I had by then appointed as the Balkans coordinator a man who had worked for me at the UN, Jim O'Brien. He was very loyal to me and I knew what I was doing. So the domestic aspect of it, the bureaucratic politics.

Then I loved the foreign policy part of it, all the relationships and the telephone calls, that I had managed to move a diplomatic process forward. I talked to Kissinger about this afterwards and I told him about this conference call thing and how I did it every day. Kissinger said, "I never heard of this. This is great. What a real innovation." So there was a real sense of accomplishment. I have two signs of this. One is—the more important one—I had gone to a Kosovar refugee camp at a certain stage. Then I went back to Pristina. There were signs all over the place, "Thank you, America" and "Thank you, Madeleine." There is now a whole generation of little girls in Kosovo whose first names are Madeleine. I get letters from people. So I really accomplished something.

As I was leaving, the French Foreign Minister is the one who gave a going away party for me. I loved Hubert Vedrine, but we had had this ridiculous argument as to whether France would sign on to the "Community of Democracies." They were the only country that didn't.

Anyway, the French had been beastly. Hubert Vedrine gives this going-away party for me and Igor Ivanov brings, as his present, a platter out of that Russian china that says, "Madeleine's Dream Team." Then there is a mug with a picture of each of the foreign ministers on it. It was just a sign that we created this diplomatic group that managed to get something done through many, many difficulties and mistakes. So that is the thing I really am proudest of.

Also, I was very upset that as a part of ABC the new administration paid no attention to the Balkans because we had. I was just in Kosovo last summer. Now it's a pretty precarious story again. The saddest part is now the Serbian Orthodox churches are surrounded with barbed wire and are run down. Some little girl started singing some song that I didn't understand a word of, but I knew she was singing about the fact that she wanted to cut the throats of the Serbs. So the bottom line is that nothing ever is totally done and you can't just check off a list that you have agreed. That's going to be the story on Iraq. Foreign policy is a management process as much as anything, and you can't take your eye off the ball.

Riley: I think a lot of what future scholars will judge you on will be what happens on your watch. You're a scholar; you understand. There's a full acknowledgment that there are crossroads at every election and that you can't necessarily be held accountable for what somebody—

Albright: No, but the sad part is things don't stay done at all. The attempt, and I think I was pretty good at this, I must say I'm proud of this. I actually did develop some good bipartisan vibes. The fact that Jesse Helms and I—they gave me a standing ovation when I had my last

testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee. There are some very funny CSPAN tapes of Jesse Helms winking at me. I really worked that issue in many ways. I thought it was very important to do that. So there are some things I feel really good about. But you hate to see things unravel. A lot of it has unraveled.

The thing that I—and this is as good a way as any to close—is that I’m always introduced as the first woman Secretary of State, which I was. But I also, and I can’t believe I actually did this, shortly after the President named me as Secretary of State, I said that I was the last Secretary of State of the 20th century and the first of the 21st. Afterwards I thought how could I have been so presumptuous as to say that. I made it sound as if I knew he was going to keep me four years. Well he did, so I was.

We made a serious effort to change institutions to meet the demands of the 21st century. The problem we did not anticipate is that individuals matter as much as institutions. So we made changes and put people in charge who believed in what they were being asked to do. Then the election happened.

I wanted to make arms control central to American foreign policy. We make John Holum head of ACDA and an Undersecretary of State. Then they put John Bolton in the position. So you take the enemy of arms control and give him this incredible power. It makes you wonder about institutional reform. But we were trying to get ourselves ready for the 21st century. We did care about the environment. We did begin to look at a whole host of new transnational issues and saw that the threats and policies, challenges, etc., would be different in the 21st century. I think we’re not going to be able—maybe we’ll be judged on that or not. But that, for me, was the interesting part, that I’m the first woman. The century thing I found interesting, and mostly as a complete, slobbering sentimentalist about the United States. I am so very proud to be a part of American history and to have the opportunity to talk to you about this. Because I have really loved what I did, and I always love to talk about it.

Riley: It shows through. You commented at one point during the break that you felt you were envious of our jobs, and we understand, although not all the interviews go as swimmingly as the one today. But we’re privileged to have a front-row seat to history. When everything goes right and the stars are aligned perfectly, then we have an occasion like we had today. I think the most remarkable thing is that having spent a great deal of time with this book, that I told you I have a high regard for, we managed to put in a very good day today and add a lot to what you already had here that I think people are going to find useful for a long time.

Albright: Thank you. I just think there are so many fascinating things that happen. It’s a good period. I hope very much that history judges Clinton well. I just think—and it isn’t just by comparison with these people—he really was a remarkable President. His influence continues in a way that is also quite remarkable. People can put up with his being late and they deal with it.

Riley: That’s an unwritten chapter in his life, but don’t stop writing. My guess is that as you continue to see things that are going on in the world, there may be new lessons drawn out of your experience, and we’d like to hear more.

Albright: I will. I think I've got a lot of things I want to say. But the thing that is hard, I have to tell you; I'm such an optimist, and carping all the time is not something that I enjoy. But it's pretty bad out there, pretty bad.

Riley: We'll see what happens in November. It may get better in November.

Albright: The thing that I'm really sorry about, as I said at some point, is that democracy is getting a bad name. Part of the issue is that Democrats are turning away from democracy promotion, so that's the hard part.

Riley: Don't be a stranger. Come see us again. We now know that what it takes to keep you overnight is a dinner up at Monticello.

Albright: That may do it.