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ORAL HISTORY ROUNDTABLES

The Role of the National Security Adviser

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INTRODUCTION

Since the Kennedy administration, the assistant to the president for national security affairs (a.k.a. "the national security adviser") has played two roles: manager ("honest broker") of the day-to-day policy process and substantive policy adviser. Presidents clearly want both, but the roles are in tension. Specifically, an assistant who pushes his own views too strongly risks losing the trust of a secretary of state (or defense) who has a different opinion. Some national security advisers have balanced these roles adroitly. Others have not, generating discord within the president's senior advisory team.

In this NSC oral history roundtable, five former national security advisers, serving six presidents from Lyndon Johnson to Bill Clinton, discuss how they personally dealt with this tension, how they played the role more generally, and how (with the benefit of hindsight) they think it should be performed. The discussion, chaired by Brookings Institution President Michael Armacost, addressed a set of questions (Appendix A) circulated in advance. But the discussion also ranged well beyond the questions themselves, as the participants offered a wide range of insights. In addition to the roundtable, we were able to interview, for this record, three national security advisers who were unable to participate. These interviews are reprinted as appendices.

This roundtable is the fourth in a series held by the National Security Council Project, co-sponsored by the Center for International and Security Studies at the Maryland School of Public Affairs and the Foreign Policy Studies Program of the Brookings Institution. Transcripts of three previous roundtables – on the Nixon NSC, on the role of the NSC in international economic policymaking, and on the Bush NSC – have been published previously and are available on the Internet at http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/nsc.htm. Two additional transcripts – on the NSC and U.S. Policy toward China and on the NSC and arms control policy – will be published in the near future. Other roundtables are planned for the fall of 2000. These seminars have been conducted for their own independent value. They also will provide useful input to a report on the NSC we plan to publish in the fall of 2000 and a book to be published in 2001.

We are grateful to the participants for coming and talking with candor and insight. We would also particularly like to thank Karla Nieting for her help in organizing the roundtable and her work with the participants in bringing this edited version of the proceedings to publication. Responsibility for any remaining errors rests with us.

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PARTICIPANTS

RICHARD V. ALLEN served as national security adviser from January 21, 1981, to January 4, 1982.

FRANK C. CARLUCCI served as national security adviser from December 2, 1986, to November 23, 1987.

W. ANTHONY LAKE served as national security adviser from January 20, 1993, to March 14, 1997.

WALT W. ROSTOW served as national security adviser from April 1, 1966, to January 20, 1969.

BRENT SCOWCROFT served as national security adviser from November 3, 1975, to January 20, 1977, and from January 20, 1989, to January 20, 1993.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

MICHAEL H. ARMACOST served as the undersecretary of state for political affairs from 1984 to 1989 and is currently the president of the Brookings Institution.

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I. M. DESTLER served as a consultant on the reorganization of the executive office of the president for the Carter administration in 1977.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE ROUNDTABLE

ARMACOST: I would like to thank you for taking the time today to join us. We have embarked on a project looking at the past, present, and future of the National Security Council and the national security adviser's job and the interactions with other members of the foreign policy community. Mac Destler and Ivo Daalder are providing the leadership on this project.

Mac, as you know, was previously a Brookings senior fellow. He is at the University of Maryland now, and his work has been at the intersection of policy process and politics on national security, trade, and other issues. Ivo has come to us more recently. He is a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Program. He has done a stint on the National Security Council as, among other things, the Bosnia policy staffer.

Our expectation is that by the time of the next election we will publish at least preliminary conclusions to contribute to the next president's tailoring of the system to his own purposes. We know that the institution of the NSC reflects the personal inclinations and policy aspirations of the incumbent, so the recommendation would likely be directional rather than taken as a whole by a new president. But we think it's a timely moment for this kind of study, and we can think of no better way to focus our efforts than by securing the recommendations and thoughts of people who have actually been in the job and have had to wrestle with the pressures of the assignment personally.

So we are pleased that you are here. We have outlined some questions for discussion, though we need not limit the discussion to them.[1] Above all, we are eager to have your thoughts. Mac and Ivo will take the lead in keeping the questions moving and ensuring that you all get an equitable chance to offer your recommendations and thoughts.

DESTLER: You could have probably written as good or better a set of questions as we wrote, and you know the questions well enough so we hardly have to spend time spelling them out. I would suggest that we start with the first question about how the national security adviser balances the role of honest broker, or manager of the policy process, and the role of substantive policy adviser to the president.

As we talk about that, we would particularly appreciate it if you would address the problem as it exists day-to-day as opposed to giving a grand prescription. One possible assessment would be that the pressures are roughly equally balanced. There are pressures on you to be an adviser but also pressure to be a broker. Another possibility would be that the pressures are overwhelmingly on the advising side and that there are, in fact, pressures to take the lead, to be the president's main man across the board, to be the authoritative voice to foreign governments, etc. It would require a substantial act of will to lean against that. I suspect the answer is not entirely the same for all historical periods and for all combinations

[1] See Appendix A.

of personalities. It would be interesting if you could talk about that. And if you had more than one experience at different periods in your experience, then talk about it as it changed over time or on different issues.

SCOWCROFT: I'll start. First, some general remarks. Mine would be that it's always more exciting to be the adviser, but if you are not the honest broker, you don't have the confidence of the other members of the NSC. If you don't have their confidence, then the system doesn't work, because they will go around you to get to the president and then you fracture the system.

My sense is that in order for the system to work, you first have to establish yourself in the confidence of your colleagues to convince them you are not going to pull fast ones on them. That means when you are in there with the president alone, which you are more than anybody else, that you will represent them fairly.

And if you begin with that, I don't know that there is much conflict. It seems to me that the first responsibility is to present what you know of the community views. And after you have done that, then you are free to be an adviser.

CARLUCCI: Let me start off with a story. When Ronald Reagan asked me to be national security adviser, he didn't say he was asking me because he had confidence in me or I knew something about foreign policy. He said, "I am asking you, Frank, because you're the only person that Cap and George can agree on."[2] And I had the Cap Weinberger/George Shultz feud to deal with, particularly on a whole series of backlogged arms control decisions.

Colin Powell, my deputy at the time, made me sit down and go through these arms control decisions, and the minor ones we decided ourselves, particularly where Cap and George could agree, but the large ones inevitably had to go to the president.[3] I can remember sitting in a steamy Miami hotel room waiting for the Pope with Howard Baker and the president going through maybe fifty of these esoteric decisions.[4]

I would present George's position and then Cap's position. Then I would say what I thought was the better position and the position the president ought to take, although George or Cap might want to appeal. They always had the right to appeal and they exercised that right.

It's terribly important that you make sure that all points of view are presented to the president. But at the end of presenting them, I think it's fair enough to state where you think the president ought to come out, with the understanding that the participating parties have the right to appeal. I think this is very similar to what Brent was saying.

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[2] Caspar W. Weinberger was secretary of defense from 1981 to 1987. George P. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989.

[3] General Colin L. Powell was deputy national security adviser from 1986 to 1987 and national security adviser from 1987-1989.

[4] Pope John Paul II visited Miami on September 10, 1987. Howard Baker was President Reagan's chief of staff from 1987 to 1988.

If the job is to be done right, I also think it's important that the National Security Council not be in an operational role, a problem that the Tower Commission pointed out.[5] What I found when I came in was that Oliver North was quite operational.[6] We had to back the NSC out of that role because, once you became operational, you couldn't be the honest broker.

ALLEN: Maybe it would be useful to reflect on the huge shift that took place from the Johnson administration to the Nixon administration in the role of the national security adviser. It relates to a story that I want to tell either now or a little bit later about how Reagan approached this problem in the 1980 campaign. I think the shift was profound, and I was on board as decisions were made. Frank was there, of course, and Tony.[7]

Basic decisions were made that isolated the State Department bureaucracy and, ultimately, some would say, humiliated the secretary of state. That was fine as long as it worked, but it led to tremendous problems that continued well into the Carter administration. From my point of view, that was not very useful or productive.

Coming to the story, a couple of weeks before the 1980 election, Reagan was going to give one last speech on foreign policy and national security matters. I presented to him the idea that he should make a commitment then and there to return the task of the national security adviser to that of an honest broker and a staff position. And he incorporated that in the speech that he gave.

Thereafter it was much misinterpreted. But the objective, for example, was embraced by the symbolism of moving back down to the basement. It later became identified as being relegated to the basement, but it was an honest place where Walt had held down the fort and I thought it was a nice little office. I took it back down because it symbolized the notion that the national security adviser should be an honest broker and that it was a staff position. The national security adviser is not a member of the National Security Council, but he does present arguments and positions. So that shift made a huge difference. We became operational in the Nixon administration almost immediately by swamping the bureaucracy with an impossible series of tasks to keep it immobilized over a period of time and so that decisions could be made in the White House. There is no softer way to say that. That is the great divide that the people who look at this job must recognize.

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[5] The Tower Commission was set up in 1987 to investigate the Iran-Contra affair as well as the activities and structure of the National Security Council. It consisted of Senator John Tower, Senator Edmund S. Muskie and Lt. General Brent Scowcroft. See *Report of the President's Special Review Board* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987).

[6] Lt. Colonel Oliver L. North was director for political-military affairs on the National Security Council from 1981 to 1986.

[7] Allen was chief foreign policy coordinator to the Nixon campaign in 1968, senior staff member on the National Security Council from 1969 to 1970, deputy assistant to the president and deputy executive director of the Council on International Economic Policy from 1971 to 1972, and foreign policy adviser to Ronald Reagan from 1977 to 1980. Frank C. Carlucci joined the Office of Economic Opportunity as assistant director in 1969 and director late in 1970 and then became associate director and deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget from 1971 to 1972 and undersecretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1972 to 1974. Anthony Lake was special assistant to the national security adviser from 1969 to 1970.

ROSTOW: You're quite right about it having been a collegial job in the 1960s. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson were very different. There was a very sharp distinction between advice and responsibility. You were conscious that there were only two people who had been elected – the president and the vice president.

The NSC was very much the same, strangely enough, under Kennedy and Johnson, although their human styles were very different. The president would ask you not as an honest broker but as the national security adviser to state the position of the various departments. They both did this and that was a very important exercise.

One day President Johnson left the Cabinet Room for something he had to do and Rusk looked at the paper I had sent the president.[8] He said, "There's nobody in the State Department who can state the position of the State Department better." And I was very pleased that I had answered it sympathetically in the view of the department.

But the other side of that was that I started off sending the memoranda to Johnson without any recommendations by myself. After three weeks he said, "I don't want you ever to send me a piece of paper without your own view. I'll expect you to represent the departments fairly when they have differences of opinion." And the importance of the national security adviser, in my time at least, was this dual one that was very much as you described it. The view was that you had to lean over backwards to get a kind of historical objectivity on the views of the various departments and what they were concerned about, state those rather sharply so the president can see what he has to deal with, and then give your own view very tersely at the bottom of the memo. That's how we dealt with it in the Kennedy and the Johnson administrations.

LAKE: Just to make a historical point. I think the break in the adviser's job came after the Bay of Pigs, not in the Nixon administration. Since then, there has been a progression of increasing power in the NSC and the White House for structural reasons more than for reasons of personality, although personality always plays a role.

I remember as a very junior Foreign Service officer, after the Bay of Pigs and after I joined, hearing the story of a psychiatrist who goes to heaven and St. Peter says to him, "Thank God, you're here." And he whisks him right through the pearly gates to a room where he looks down through a glass window to a large room where a bearded gentleman is walking back and forth saying, "Do this, do that, do this, do that." The psychiatrist says, "What's the matter with him?" And St. Peter says, "It's God. We're terribly worried. He thinks he's McGeorge Bundy!"[9]

ROSTOW: I'll tell you what happened with McGeorge. He had a beautiful office with a high ceiling on the second floor in the old State Department.[10] Kennedy said to him, "Get your ass down here in the basement right next to the situation room."

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[8] Dean Rusk was secretary of state from 1961 to 1969.
[9] McGeorge Bundy was national security adviser from 1961 to 1966.
[10] Before moving to its present location at Foggy Bottom in 1947, the State Department was situated in what is now known as the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, located directly west of the White House.

One of the things that is continuous is that the national security adviser has as his number one duty to give the president the facts. Before I moved over to that job, I had had very good ties with the National Security Agency. I had been in intelligence as an officer and a planner for the Air Force. I felt that if I didn't get the president a cable or a piece of intelligence before it was seen by the secretary of state and the secretary of defense, I'd be in terrible trouble. The president, at Tuesday lunches, would go around the table, the secretary of state or the secretary of defense would tell him about the visit of an ambassador or a cable coming in, and he would nod very knowingly and so on.[11] If I had slipped him the advice, as I better have, he would wink at me down the table. He was compulsive about the information. So was Kennedy after his experience with the Bay of Pigs. He had not been informed of the change in location of the Bay of Pigs, and it was terrible news to get after the capture.

LAKE: I think that I certainly made a mistake the first six months in office when I tried too much to be just an honest broker. I remember Colin Powell coming to me and saying that I needed to give my own views more push, etc. I knew he was right and I started to do so. That was a good thing and a bad thing, but I think it was necessary.

I would disagree though slightly with what was said before. As adviser, you have to do three things. First, you have to give your views, as Brent was saying, but you also have to make sure that the others know what the views are so there are no surprises.

SCOWCROFT: I agree with that.

LAKE: Second, you have to drive the process, and you have to understand that only the NSC can do that. You recall that for years – it has been abandoned more recently – every president said that the State Department would be in charge of the process when he came in. It never happened for a combination of political-cultural or just cultural reasons – the bureaucratic culture of the State Department. Even more it was because there was only one place that had the clout to drive the other departments. That was the White House. Increasingly foreign policy issues involve cross-cutting issues, economic, military, etc., so only the national security adviser can do it. That's the kind of the structural reason I was referring to.

Third, the NSC does have to play an operational role, not necessarily along the lines of the early 1980s. But I think the national security adviser plays a diplomatic role that he or she didn't have to before. This is simply because of the complexity of the world in the post-cold war era. There are so many issues out there. If you want senior officials weighing in and other governments playing a role, you've got to use the national security adviser as well as the secretary of state, secretary of the treasury, and others.

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[11] President Johnson met every Tuesday over lunch at the White House with his senior national security advisers, including Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy/Walt Rostow, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and the director of central intelligence.

It's also necessary because of the way other governments are structured. For the same reasons it's happening here, other governments more and more are revolving around presidencies, prime ministers, etc., and the international contacts between them. As Brent knows, I inherited his phone with the direct lines to our counterparts all around the world who simply had to be engaged.

On special occasions – whether it means going off to Beijing to start a strategic dialogue, or to Bosnia, or to other places – you can speak for the president in a personal way that perhaps others can't. For all these reasons, I think that it is inevitable that national security advisers will become more involved diplomatically. This doesn't mean running operations separate from the embassies. That's an important distinction.

CARLUCCI: That is an important distinction. You're not talking about the kinds of things Oliver North did.

LAKE: No. This is the policy.

DAALDER: Tony, are you distinguishing between the national security adviser and the staff?

LAKE: Not completely, but I would to some degree. It certainly includes the deputy, again, just for reasons of time. To the degree that the national security adviser is very activist, it's important, as others have been saying, that you make sure others' views are represented and that you never twist or block intelligence. In the end if the president acts on bad intelligence, he's the one that will pay the price. It would be an act of disloyalty to block it. And increasingly in modern Washington you have to make sure that you act as nonpolitically as possible and keep your distance from the political side of the White House.

I do want to raise one last issue, and it's one that I'm open on. And that is, the degree to which you're activist means you should be all the more behind the scenes so that you don't openly challenge the secretary of state and others. I'm not sure whether that's sustainable or not, and I'm not sure whether it was the right call.

SCOWCROFT: Well, somebody, I don't remember who, said it's not personality. I think it is heavily personality that determines how this works.

LAKE: Both.

SCOWCROFT: Both the personality of the president and the personalities of the principals. In some cases what you say works well and in some cases it doesn't. Ideally, from the country's standpoint, diplomats ought to use the national security adviser when it is useful to use him. Sometimes you want to be able to call an ambassador into the White House, not the State Department, if you really want to nail something down. But the problem arises if the national security adviser does that on his own and the secretary of state thinks he ought to be the one to do it. That's where personality comes in.

You have to look at different administrations. I'm sorry Zbig isn't here because his term was one in which there was conflict. Kissinger-Rogers and Brzezinski-Vance were the two cases where things really got crossed.[12]

ALLEN: But you notice how it changed when Muskie became secretary of state and things calmed down.[13]

The structure comes into it as well. There is one aspect that is worth mentioning about the Reagan administration. When Marty Anderson, on the domestic side, and I, on the national security side, were appointed, we thought that we were going to just continue the same way we had with Reagan over a long period of time.[14] That was four years in my case. So we were surprised when we came to the White House with this new weird structure that eventually came to be called a troika. The troika was an idea that Deaver had in order to head off Meese from becoming chief of staff.[15] So he assayed forth with the proposal for Baker to serve as chief of staff though he was an unknown quantity at the time to the Reagan side.[16] And that saddled Reagan with the most incredibly jury-rigged system. Instead of having Ed Meese, the counselor to the president, as a two-ton running and blocking back, it turned out he was a two-ton elephant in the middle of the door. And a stand-off developed in which policy simply didn't move unless it moved through Ed who considered himself to be the czar of all policy. And so Anderson and I found ourselves frustrated with the tremendous backlog.

Secondly, there were other circumstances involved that made it structurally very interesting. No foreign policy initiative was to be undertaken until the domestic economic reform was passed, so that such things as AWACS [airborne warning and control system], which had been inherited from the previous administration, could not get underway. There was no briefing or contact allowed on Capitol Hill. And then, of course, the domestic economic package was delayed and it didn't go through until September. The clock was already ticking on AWACS, and we had about 35 days to go from 13 senators in favor to 51. It was really quite a formidable task. Then Jim Baker stepped in and took the credit for having done it.

But this was a trilateral sort of stand-off. Everything seemed paralyzed. It came to be a situation in which I had at least twenty separate issues for full National Security Council consideration which could not be touched. It also was complicated by the fact that the secretary of state suspected everyone plotted against him at all times.

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[12] Henry A. Kissinger served as the national security adviser from 1969 to 1975 and secretary of state from 1973 to 1977. William P. Rogers was secretary of state from 1969 to 1973. Zbigniew Brzezinski was the national security adviser from 1977 to 1981. Cyrus Vance served as secretary of state from 1977 to 1980.
[13] Edmund S. Muskie was secretary of state from 1980 to 1981.
[14] Martin Anderson was assistant to the president for policy development from 1981 to 1982.
[15] Michael K. Deaver was deputy of chief of staff to President Reagan from 1981 to 1985. Edwin Meese, III was counselor to President Reagan from 1981 to 1985 and the attorney general of the United States from 1985 to 1988.
[16] James A. Baker, III was chairman of the George Bush presidential campaign from 1979 to 1980, senior adviser to the Reagan/Bush campaign in 1980, chief of staff to President Reagan from 1981 to 1985, secretary of the treasury from 1985 to 1988, and secretary of state from 1989 to 1992.

Just to give you one vignette. The State Department material comes over wall-to-wall on a piece of paper. It's typed in courier font and it goes all the way across; there's hardly any white space on the side. President Reagan didn't like to read that way. So Al would send over these papers and I would have them re-typed.[17] In this case it was a particularly important decision-making paper on the zero-option debate. I had it proofread four times to make sure that there wasn't even a comma out of place, but it was in a format that the president could read.

As you know, the secretary of state sits to the right of the president at Cabinet meetings. I was watching the president as he was reading through the paper and suddenly Al leaned over. He said, "Wait a minute. Someone has changed my paper." And the president looked across at me and said, "Did someone change his paper?" And I said, "Mr. President, no one changed the paper. We simply retyped it in the format that you like." Al said, "No, someone has changed my paper." And we went through this incredible scene. Later there were some very harsh words in the hallway outside.

It shows that personality and structure play roles at the same time. It was a situation totally unlike what we started out with in the Nixon administration where you had a president who had forgotten more than most people knew and who was a teacher in the process as opposed to a student.

SCOWCROFT: But there you had a president who wanted to run foreign policy from the White House, not the State Department.

ALLEN: He intended to do just that.

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

ALLEN: I think he was led into temptation ultimately on his treatment of Rogers.

DESTLER: Brent, I wonder if you could respond to a couple of things that Tony said. He was saying that a lot of the consensus that many of us believed to exist in the 1970s and 1980s was either wrong or out of date. There needs to be more of an operational role, at least in terms of communication between senior players.

LAKE: If I could amend what I said.

DESTLER: Yes.

LAKE: I agree with Brent. Personality, obviously, plays a huge role. And presidents should decide how to organize the structure within the bounds of reason.

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[17] General Alexander M. Haig, Jr. served as senior military adviser to Henry Kissinger from 1969 to 1970, deputy national security adviser from 1970 to 1973, White House chief of staff from 1973 to 1974, and secretary of state from 1981 to 1982.

But what I was trying to argue, Brent, is that there are structural reasons why increasingly in a complicated economics world such decisionmaking has to be in the White House. And one key issue is how to relate that economics to the NSC.

SCOWCROFT: Well, I think it depends a lot on what you mean by operational. It goes all the way from talking to foreign ambassadors to going on diplomatic missions or, in the extreme, running things like Ollie North did.

But I take a broader view of the term operational. I think it is useful for the national security adviser to do some kinds of operational things like receiving ambassadors at times when you want the White House kind of clout. But in my own situation I think Jim Baker was very uneasy at the outset of the administration. I had had the job before, and he was not deeply versed in foreign policy. He never said anything to me, but my sense is that he was very ill at ease. So I never went on a television talk show, always told him when I was going to ask an ambassador in, and so on.

That happened for the first year. After that, it was fine. He didn't have a problem. But I bent over backwards not to appear to be repeating, frankly, what Henry Kissinger did. And it principally was a matter of personality.

LAKE: And I think you did it wonderfully.

DAALDER: The issue then is that you need to have trust among principals.

SCOWCROFT: Yes, the first thing you need to establish is trust.

DAALDER: So it is trust rather than operations that drives the process.

LAKE: It's complicated by two institutional problems. The first is trust. Warren Christopher and I established that trust quite early.[18] There was one time when he didn't get invited to a meeting because I thought he was going to be traveling. It was infuriating to him and humiliating to me. With other people around him in the State Department, every time I would do something, they would push him to block it. It was because in the earlier years there was a rivalry in the mid-levels of the two institutions that was hard to deal with.

That, in turn, plays into the role of the press, especially because of the history of rivalry. Reporters are always looking for it, and if they don't find it, they invent it and then go back and forth to create a rivalry that may or may not exist at the personal level.

ALLEN: I guess the adviser has a press function, but I tried not to have press spokesmen. I found out that was a very big mistake. I had a person who received incoming press calls and sifted them but was not authorized to speak or respond in any way. This only intensified the suspicion of Al Haig.

[18] Warren Christopher served as secretary of state from 1993 to 1997.

I might add, on the other hand, that with Bill Casey and Cap Weinberger, I had a perfectly open, normal, cooperative, and collegial relationship.[19] What made it so unwieldy was the structure that I mentioned, plus Al's constant suspicions that he was being undercut. That really was just a suspicion that others were doing precisely what he did to people in more or less the same position when he was in the White House.

SCOWCROFT: I was just going to say that Al Haig had proposed a new structure for the NSC which would have put him in the driver's seat.

ALLEN: He was worried about that. During the transition Larry Eagleburger had helped him with this construct.[20] Al came to me and said he needed to have a meeting with the president at four or five o'clock on the day of the inauguration. And I said, "No, no, we're going to do this first by sitting down. We'll talk to Ed Meese and Jim Baker about it and we'll see." Of course, they took one look at it and said it was utterly preposterous. As a result, we didn't get a structural memorandum out for nine months.

CARLUCCI: I think I helped you on that.

ALLEN: Yes, you did.

CARLUCCI: Al handed this "vicar" paper to Cap Weinberger at the inaugural ceremony.[21] And Cap came back and said to me, "This looks pretty good to me." And I said, "Cap, it's terrible."

ALLEN: But the thing is that the "vicar" concept is absolutely fitting because Al decided to try to enforce the mechanism that he had proposed and which had been rejected in the interim period before we even had structural memos. So it looked from the outside as if we were absolutely inefficient and nothing was getting done. Actually, things were getting done because we figured a way around the structural and personal impediments after a while.

LAKE: I remember the following incident and heard about the other one soon after I joined the NSC. The first was the Kissinger strike in the opening days of the Nixon administration in designing the structure and just pushing it through the State Department without it understanding what was happening. And then I remember at the beginning of the Carter administration when the White House had such a scheme. I'm sure both of these things were on Al's mind when he did that. And Vance agreed to a structure that both Phil Habib and I

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[19] William J. Casey was director of central intelligence from 1981 until his death in 1987.

[20] Lawrence S. Eagleburger was a member of the National Security Council staff in 1969 and from 1973 to 1975, ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1977 to 1981; assistant secretary of state for European affairs from 1981 to 1982, undersecretary of state for political affairs from 1982 to 1984; career ambassador from 1984 to 1989; deputy secretary of state from 1989 to 1992, and secretary of state from 1992 to 1993.

[21] Haig presented a paper to President Reagan on inauguration day (January 20, 1981) which laid out his concept of the foreign policy process. He claims he first publicly used the term "vicar" at his first State Department press briefing on January 28, 1991, stating: "When I accepted this position, I was assured by President Reagan personally that I will be his chief administrator, if you will, and I will use the term 'vicar.'" Alexander M. Haig, Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984), pp. 52-55.

had been arguing with him about.[22] I said, "This is not going to work. You are giving too much away." And Vance replied, "No, this is going to be collegial. We all trust each other." And the problem was that it was a very flexible structure in which almost issue by issue you would decide who chaired the committee. It was a recipe for struggles.

With Clinton, we all sat down, more or less collegially, during the transition after the appointments to work out what the structure would be in one meeting so that there were no surprises. And I think that helped.

ARMACOST: Brent, can you go back to the differences between your tenure in the NSC under an activist president with a very jealous secretary and then under a passive president with a new foreign policy primacy in the State Department? Did the job change for you under those two different circumstances?

SCOWCROFT: In the Nixon-Ford period there was a unique aspect, which is that Henry Kissinger held both the secretary of state and national security adviser roles for a couple of years. That made things very different and lopsided. I was, for all practical purposes, national security adviser, but not for structural purposes. So in a way I had to lean over backwards with Defense to make sure that the system ran in a more or less balanced way.

It's hard to compare that with anything else. I inherited Henry's job in a vast reorganization by President Ford. I had worked with Henry as his deputy when he was national security adviser and then when he was both secretary of state and national security adviser, so it was a fairly seamless transition. But in the Ford administration, I stayed much more behind the scenes than I did later on.

LAKE: Your Ford role was my model for the first months. I discovered simply that it didn't work because Washington had changed so much.

SCOWCROFT: There were a lot of people in the Ford White House who objected to my model, because Henry Kissinger was relatively unpopular at the time and they wanted me to speak out. I talked to President Ford about it, and I said, "Look, I work for you. I'll do whatever you want. Let me show you what the consequences are if we do that." And he said, "No, I want you to stay behind the scenes where you are now."

CARLUCCI: These tensions between the national security adviser and the secretary of state seem to run through every administration.

SCOWCROFT: They're inevitable in a way, much more so than with Defense.

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[22] Philip C. Habib was assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs from 1974 to1976; undersecretary of state for political affairs from 1976 to 1978, and senior advisor to the secretary of state from 1979 to 1980.

CARLUCCI: When I replaced John Poindexter, George Shultz had been traumatized by the National Security Council.[23] He wanted it to be an executive secretariat. So I had an early meeting with him, and he said, "You shouldn't meet with foreign ambassadors; you shouldn't travel; you can't chair meetings. And State has to know everything you are doing." I replied, "Well, I'm just not going to do that. I am going to see ambassadors. I am going to travel. If you don't want me to chair meetings, I'll get Colin Powell to chair them instead." That worked out fine. And I said, "State will not know everything I do but you will. I want to make that distinction between your institution and you as an individual."

The tension existed for a while. George once went to the president and said he was going to resign because of me. After that he went to the president every other week and said he was going to resign. I finally went to Ronald Reagan and said, "Well, what do you want?" And he said, "I'd like you to get along."

ALLEN: On that particular note, there was a moment of great tension with Al Haig when something was leaked. Al went ballistic and was absolutely certain it came from me. It didn't. So I said to the president, "Why don't you bring Al over here and take us, so to speak, to the woodshed, and we'll sit there and see if we can't sort this thing out." So he said, "Would you do that?" I said, "Of course, I would."

So he brought over Al. We sat down on either side of the desk for an hour and he vented whatever grievances he had. We put out the story that we had both been taken to the woodshed, and there were some funny stories about the two of us being spanked and disciplined like children.[24] I think it helped for a period of time because he went away vastly reassured for a time that he had gotten his licks in. I took copious notes of that meeting, and it will all be made available eventually.

DESTLER: The sooner the better.

CARLUCCI: Mac, you asked for examples and I'll give one that I'm sure Mike is familiar with. It's when George [Shultz] was coming back from a major negotiation on the INF Treaty in Moscow before the treaty was signed.[25] I think he may have stopped in Brussels to brief the ambassador, but I thought it was important for him to stop in Germany. I had gotten word through Horst Teltschik that Kohl was very unhappy.[26] He thought he was being rolled so I suggested to Ronald Reagan that he call Kohl and assure him that we were going to take into account inequities in this process. That didn't seem to be sufficient, so I made a trip to Bonn to reassure Kohl. That infuriated George. But what do you do when faced with that

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[23] Vice Admiral John M. Poindexter was national security adviser from 1985 to 1986. See Appendix D for interview with Poindexter on his role as adviser.

[24] See, for example, Lee Lescaze, "Reagan Talks to Haig, Allen on Ending Feud," *Washington Post*, November 6, 1981, p. A1.

[25] The INF Treaty is the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. It was signed on December 8, 1987.

[26] Helmut Kohl was chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1982 to 1998. Horst Teltschik was Kohl's national security adviser in the federal chancellery.

kind of a dilemma? I said, "Well, I work for the president and the president's interests are at stake here. I know how he feels about Helmut Kohl and I needed to do something."

ALLEN: Could I make another remark? I want to hear Walt on this. I have been listening to these fascinating Saturday afternoon replays of the Johnson tapes and it casts a whole new light on the way President Johnson operated.[27] He had his fingers into every nook and cranny of the bureaucracy.

DESTLER: It's incredible how detailed he was.

ALLEN: I wonder how many presidents have done that. Certainly Richard Nixon did not. President Reagan did not. But President Johnson seemed to know everything.

ROSTOW: I'll tell you very quickly about it. Only rarely have you lived without conflict between the secretary of state and the national security adviser, or some other sort of conflict. It happened in the Truman period, too, when Truman's pal was in the Pentagon and didn't get access. The president had a terrible relationship with [Louis] Johnson until we replaced him with this fellow from New York who was part of the same class as Acheson in the First World War.[28] Then they did fine.

DESTLER: It was Lovett.[29]

ROSTOW: With both Kennedy and Johnson there was a distinction between responsibility and advice. Only one man was responsible for the lead. The vice president certainly didn't count. There was one person that Johnson sought advice from, and Kennedy sought advice from Bundy, who was very impersonal, take charge, and did an awful lot of briefings.

But Johnson was so involved in the details I don't know how he survived. He had three days: he'd wake up in the morning and be very active; then he'd nap and have a second life with a party or something in the White House; and then he had a third life reading until three in the morning. And he'd even read the appendices.

DESTLER: That was a bureaucratic disaster by the end.

ROSTOW: Kennedy would do the same on weekends.

The national security adviser does have an extremely privileged role because he knows what the anxieties are of the secretary of state or defense or treasury. He is the bridge between the president and the secretary of state, in particular. But that only works well if the president is going to make the decision with the secretary of state, and the secretary of state

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[27] Reference is to the LBJ White House tapes heard on C-SPAN Radio 90, an archive of which may be found at http://www.c-span.org/lbj/ (accessed May 2000).
[28] Louis A. Johnson was secretary of defense from 1949 to 1950. He was followed in the position by George C. Marshall from 1950 to 1951. Dean G. Acheson was secretary of state from 1949 to 1953.
[29] Robert A. Lovett was secretary of defense from 1951 to 1953.

regards himself as a hired hand in the best sense. Rusk was very cognizant of this. He would give his advice and then the president would make the decision.

And McGeorge Bundy, to his great credit, worked very hard to bring the president and the secretary of state together, especially in Kennedy's time.

My point is that it takes a very strong president to insist that these people get along. It's only with a very strong president that these clashes you have described can't happen.

SCOWCROFT: But I think some presidents almost encourage them.

ROSTOW: They do. They may get very comfortable with this.

SCOWCROFT: Again, it is personality.

LAKE: I remember Louis Johnson refused to allow anybody from the State Department to talk to anybody in the Pentagon except with his knowledge.

CARLUCCI: Cap Weinberger wouldn't let George Shultz talk with the chairman of the joint chiefs.

LAKE: I recall that as an FSO-7 my career flashed before my eyes when I got a call from William Rogers saying that never again could I call anybody in the State Department on behalf of Henry Kissinger. I could call him if I wanted to issue instructions to anybody in the State Department. I remember thinking to myself, "Yeah, right."

I would like to come back to how you deal with the press and how visible the national security adviser is. I think we are generally in agreement that it is becoming increasingly operational with the kinds of distinctions we were making about the kinds of operations.

As I said, I don't think in the end Christopher ever objected to any of the operational things I did because we would work it out in common and discuss what I was going to say. He didn't like it much when I did public work, and that was one of the reasons I didn't. But I think the president and I probably paid a price for how little I did. With the increasing range of talk shows, news channels, and so on, you especially need all the voices you can get when you're trying to explain a policy.

The question that interests me is what the ground rules should be for dealing with that. I would think one of them ought to be that the NSC staff should not be on the record, even if the national security adviser or the deputy is. They should talk though to reporters on background, on facts, etc.

A second rule would be that the national security adviser should not get involved in political arguments and should just duck when asked about them during a campaign.

ALLEN: Or pre-campaign.

LAKE: Or pre-campaign. I walked over this line once. I remember giving a speech in which I referred to those who were cutting our budgets in unflattering terms. I got a call from a member of Congress saying, "If you meant me, wait until you see what I do to the NSC budget next year." And, of course, I said, "No, it was not you at all." I do think you've got to be out there. But, again, I feel passionately that it's all becoming too politicized. Yet it's a fine line how you define what is politics and what isn't.

CARLUCCI: If the adviser becomes too visible, the position will eventually become a confirmable one.

DAALDER: Can I add another item on the press side to Tony's two other ones? That is, we have had under this administration press officers who make official statements on behalf of the National Security Council.

SCOWCROFT: It has varied over the years.

DAALDER: It has varied. And some view of whether that is appropriate or not would be helpful.

ALLEN: Let me just comment on something that Tony said. I had the case of General Bob Schweitzer, who was on my staff and whom I had fired.[30]

SCOWCROFT: Rightly so.

ALLEN: He went out and gave a speech without any clearance. It wasn't a grievous offense the first time, but I said not to do it ever again. And, sure enough, he did it, so I fired him on the spot. There was a great hullabaloo about it. He had been one of Haig's deputies, or at some point close to Haig, and it raised quite a stink. We let him down as gently as we could. He was a fine man, but the necessity to take action was clear. Staff people shouldn't make speeches.

One other note. I had close ties with Germany over many years and was close to Helmut Kohl. I had introduced Reagan to Kohl and to Helmut Schmidt.[31] Schmidt was still chancellor in 1981 when I went to a conference at the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, the CDU [Christian Democratic Union] foundation. I had been habitually attending it, and Schmidt called me on this occasion. I had no intention of calling upon Schmidt, but I was scheduled to speak at the conference. I had no choice. When Genscher learned I was there, he called me, too, so I talked to him.[32] That sent the secretary of state utterly ballistic and contaminated all the remarks I made at the conference, which were public remarks. Again, the personality problem intervened and spoiled a perfectly reasonable statement.

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[30] Maj. General Robert L. Schweitzer was chief military adviser on the National Security Council from 1980 to 1981. For more information on his departure from the NSC, see David Shribman, "Security Adviser Ousted for Talk Hinting at War," *New York Times*, October 21, 1981, p. A1.

[31] Helmut Schmidt was the chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1974 to 1982.

[32] Hans-Dietrich Genscher was the foreign minister of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1974 to 1992.

SCOWCROFT: I also would like to comment on what Tony said. I don't think it's quite so simple about partisanship and nonpartisanship. I took the view that I worked for the president and my job was to explain, support, and defend the president. I wouldn't say those damn Democrats or anything, but neither would I shy from giving a position which was the president's position, even though it was a highly partisan debate. You are not like the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

CARLUCCI: Let me pose a case to you, Brent, which I faced when I came in. It was eroding public support for the Contras. I began to worry about how to develop public support, and I talked to some people who could have organized a grass roots campaign. I decided that was not an appropriate role for the NSC and took it to Howard Baker. I said, "If anybody is going to do it, it's going to be your side of the White House." And, in fact, it was done to some extent on that side.

You have to draw the line somewhere. I think defending the president's position is perfectly legitimate, but actively engaging in and organizing political activity is inappropriate.

LAKE: Brent, I must say I disagree with you. I think defending the president's position is absolutely necessary, but to do it in a specifically partisan context, I disagree with. I remember when you did it once, because I was there and you did it very well. And I think you got away with it because of the way you had managed your job previously. I think Washington unhappily has become more and more partisan since then. To the degree the national security adviser is perceived as being political, he undercuts his ability to work on the Hill and undercuts the confidence of the other agencies.

DESTLER: We are being a little bit oblique here. Are you talking about directly making accusations about the president?

LAKE: No. I don't mean to be oblique. I guess it was the Michigan State debate which I went to with Clinton.[33] Brent was there explaining the president's policies and I hung in the back of one of the groups listening. And Brent did it perfectly in that he did not attack the Democrats, as I recall, but was explaining the president's policies. Yet it was in the context of the debate. I refused to let anybody be there at the 1996 debates, not because of some high principle (although I do believe we're getting too political), but because it would have killed us if we had done that.

SCOWCROFT: But there's another interesting aspect, and that is when you get into campaigns and platforms for parties. The national security adviser is the only one who can participate. All the rest are barred by the Hatch Act.[34]

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[33] The debate between President George Bush and Governor Bill Clinton took place on October 19, 1992, at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.

[34] The Hatch Act was originally passed in 1939 (P.L. 76-252; August 2, 1939) and amended in 1993 (P.L. 103-94; October 6, 1993). It limits the kinds of political activities in which federal employees may engage.

LAKE: I sent a subordinate to be there to do factual work behind the scenes at the platform committee, but we did not have somebody actually sit there. Now it's just pouring gasoline on a raging fire in Washington.

SCOWCROFT: Maybe you didn't have a problem with some of the platform. I thought it was important for the country to have the platform accurate.

ALLEN: Which year did you have in mind? 1976?

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

ALLEN: Well, you may not recall that I wrote the draft of that platform.

SCOWCROFT: Yes. But you and I didn't have a problem.

ALLEN: No, but I came to you. Actually, Bryce Harlow had called me a couple weeks before because there was a stand-off between Reagan and Ford about who should write the first draft.[35] I wrote the draft but not before I went to you and said I would like to ask you to convey to Henry that if he tries to touch this, there will be hell to pay. And Henry stayed away. I guess it was through your good offices. As a result, the platform became very difficult for Henry at Kansas City. It almost came to a point where the secretary of state could not attend.

SCOWCROFT: If I had just said that I didn't want to have anything to do with the platform, that would not have been useful to the whole process.

LAKE: That's why I had somebody there.

ALLEN: I think you can do that.

LAKE: You can watch and be ready to provide facts off camera. You need to watch it very carefully so that if there is a problem, you can come down on them through the White House – not in the hearings in front of an audience.

ALLEN: You are speaking of 1996?

LAKE: Yes, 1996.

SCOWCROFT: There is also the issue of calling on the Hill to support the president's legislation. Would you say that's partisan?

LAKE: No, I don't think so.

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[35] Bryce A. Harlow was deputy assistant to the president for congressional affairs during the Eisenhower administration and later a senior adviser and counselor to President Nixon. He was well known for his corporate representation and relations with Congress.

SCOWCROFT: Well, I don't know. I think it's an important part. When you say the national security adviser has to be nonpartisan, I'm not sure what that means.

LAKE: I would say you have to be public but you shouldn't do it in a way that's attacking. If it causes the Hill to call and say, "Those damn Republicans, those damn Democrats, they're doing X, Y, or Z," it's stupid.

SCOWCROFT: You need to be judicious.

ALLEN: Tony, how do you get around this?

LAKE: You have to call all the time defending the president's legislation, consulting, informing, all of that.

ALLEN: How do you view Sandy Berger's speech of last week?[36] I didn't hear it, but when I read it, I was somewhat stunned by it. I think it is a major challenge to the Congress which tends to ruin rather than enhance the chances of dialogue for the balance of this administration. Do you suspect Sandy will be able to get along with the Congress after making these remarks?

LAKE: I think it is going to be a tough year, not simply because of that speech.

ALLEN: I didn't say because of the speech.

LAKE: I haven't read the speech, but I'm sure it's fine.

CARLUCCI: Have we finished with the relationship between the national security adviser and the secretary of state? Because I've got a question I would like to pose.

DAALDER: I think it would be appropriate to go to that.

CARLUCCI: Should the national security adviser participate in negotiations with the secretary of state? When I had my contretemps with George, his solution was to bring me along on the INF negotiations. And I thought long and hard before doing this. I finally agreed to do it. In fact, the final agreement was negotiated, as you may recall, Mike, with just George, Shevardnadze and me sitting in George's office.[37] But the argument was that if you participated in negotiations, you couldn't give objective advice to the president; you become an advocate for the treaty. Did I do right or did I do wrong?

LAKE: You did right.

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[36] Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger has served as the national security adviser since 1997. The speech referred to is "American Power: Hegemony, Isolationism or Engagement" (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, October 21, 1999).

[37] Eduard Shevardnadze was the foreign minister of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1990.

ARMACOST: Colin Powell extended that practice, too, in the management of the U.S.-Soviet relationships in a very intimate way. He went on all the trips and participated as part of the managing group.

LAKE: We did it all the time. I think it sends a useful message.

CARLUCCI: You don't think it contorts your ability to give objective advice?

SCOWCROFT: It depends. It could.

ALLEN: But when the National Security Council was very strong, as in the Nixon administration, I had the impression that senior staff members played that role as well.

CARLUCCI: Yes, but I think there's a difference between senior staff members and the national security adviser.

ALLEN: But they had plenty of power.

LAKE: I can't think of a negotiation since 1992 in which an NSC person has not been involved. Fairly often Christopher and I would go to them together.

SCOWCROFT: That's different. I thought we were talking about you being personally there.

LAKE: Yes.

SCOWCROFT: Well, I didn't travel with the secretary of state to any meetings.

LAKE: I never traveled with him but attended meetings here in Washington.

SCOWCROFT: That's what you were talking about? Somebody from the NSC always traveled with the secretary of state or the secretary of defense. That's different.

LAKE: Christopher and I met with people all the time together in Washington, and I think it sent a very useful message. You're putting out an American position that has been agreed in advance so you are not losing objectivity.

ROSTOW: Could I throw something on the table, which wasn't included in these queries. We have been talking about how the job is conducted. Really it is very intimately connected with the operations of the bureaucracy and its implicit notion that the struggle over policy is wrong.

In my experience, including the Eisenhower administration to which I was consultant, as well as the Kennedy and Johnson administrations of which I was a part, the president is constantly being pushed up against the long-range positions of the country in which he can only move a little, though he wants to move in the right direction. There's a part of his mind

that is taken up with his place in history, and more than that, the role of his administration in history.

To what extent does the national security adviser have a role in dealing with the president as he talks about these implicit long-range objectives? I think of Eisenhower and nuclear weapons, for example, about which he felt very deeply. The phrase he used was, "I have all the golf clubs in my bag." And he admitted that open skies wasn't a given at all.[38]

This was also true of Kennedy and Johnson. They were constantly giving the short-range position but they had this other dimension which the bureaucracies don't have.

CARLUCCI: Whether you like it or not, it was Ronald Reagan's vision and his sense of timing for when the U.S.-Soviet relationship should shift from confrontation to negotiation that made a difference.

ALLEN: Edmund Morris notwithstanding, it is true that there was a plan.[39] And he executed it, however rough around the edges it may have been at times.

SCOWCROFT: Well, it is my sense that he talked long-range. His long-range vision was to get rid of nuclear weapons.

ALLEN: He was probably the most dangerous disarmer ever to occupy the Oval Office.

SCOWCROFT: All of us had the experience of talking about it. You saw Reykjavik.[40]

ALLEN: Even before that. When the SDI concept was generated, it was the result of Reagan's visit to NORAD [North American Aerospace Defense Command].

LAKE: I remember taking out of a draft of a speech for President Clinton a reference to complete nuclear disarmament and saying that's not going to happen. And then they ran in some Reagan folks on me.

CARLUCCI: We wrote memo after memo on why you needed nuclear weapons.

SCOWCROFT: You raised an interesting point, Walt. I always thought that the NSC, as the agent of the president, ought to have a long-range planning function. I tried it both times and it never worked satisfactorily. Either nobody had time to pay attention to it or you had to grab them when a fire broke out. That was one of the most frustrating things to me. Nobody

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[38] "Open skies" refers to a proposal made by President Eisenhower at the Geneva summit of the "Big Four" – United States, Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France – in July 1955. Based on recommendations made by a panel of experts led by Nelson Rockefeller based at Quantico, Virginia, Eisenhower proposed U.S.-Soviet mutual aerial inspections of facilities and mutual information exchanges.

[39] Reference is to a biography of Ronald Reagan. See Edmund Morris, *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan* (Random House, 1999).

[40] At an October 1986 summit in Reykjavik, Iceland, President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev considered elimination of all nuclear missiles in ten years. They could not agree, due in large part to differences over Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

else is in a position to do the broad, long-range thinking that the NSC is, but I don't know how you do it.

ALLEN: That's why Andy Goodpaster was brought on board early on in the Nixon administration.[41] I think that President Nixon had in mind a very clear role in that regard.

LAKE: I think it's almost a rule that the limit of time is the enemy of all of us in the government. If you do interesting long-term papers, they go to the bottom of the pile, almost inevitably. So you have to hook it to some active issue and then put that in the larger perspective and gain a president's attention or secretary of state's attention that way. For example, with NATO enlargement. Once it became an operational issue, you could put in the broader question of what the future of Europe is.

ROSTOW: Another way to get at that is to bring it to your colleagues in the operational part of the department. We did that with the viability program on Berlin when the Wall went up. Nikita Khrushchev said it would drop like a ripe apple from a tree once the Wall was up.[42] It had no mission. And we said the hell with it, and we got Bill Jorden to go to Germany.[43] He brought the mayor of Hamburg, I believe, and sat on hold, and Bonn played a big part in getting money to Berlin. At the time, we had a whole lot tied up with bringing students to Berlin to study there and so on. It was a whole operation. But the point was that it was long-run. How do you keep West Berlin from violating the long-run goal until you get the Wall to come down. But Bill Jorden and the Germans really got on to this program. It was not inevitable that it would take hold.[44]

LAKE: As I remember, Secretary Rusk said his ambition for Berlin was to turn it over to his successor in the same fashion.

ALLEN: He succeeded.

DESTLER: It seems to me we have considered to a substantial degree all of our questions except the fourth one on staffing.

ARMACOST: Before you move on, Mac, one relationship that hasn't been mentioned particularly is the one with the Central Intelligence Agency. The Agency and the NSC always have had a kind of special role, and I would think some comments on that would be helpful.

CARLUCCI: What we haven't discussed as well is this relationship with the economic agencies. How does the National Security Council coordinate them?

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[41] General Andrew Goodpaster was transition adviser to president-elect Nixon. He also served during the Eisenhower administration as staff secretary, responsible for the president's day-to-day engagement in national security issues.

[42] Nikita Khrushchev was leader of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964.

[43] William J. Jorden was a member of the Policy Planning Council in the Department of State during the Kennedy administration.

[44] Rostow refers to this in his memoirs. See W.W. Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power: An Essay in Recent History* (Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 232.

ALLEN: Yes, that's also something that needs to be considered. Just to make a remark on that, you may recall that there was in the Nixon administration something called the Williams Commission, which was the president's Commission on International Trade and Industrial Policy, of which I was a member. It came up with a recommendation to create the position of assistant for President Ford for international economic policy, a function that Peter Peterson took over.[45] I became the deputy in that operation. That was really a very tough assignment because as soon as it was established, few paid attention to it. We began to move into areas that overlapped with foreign policy and national security considerations and, finally, Henry – who used to go to sleep during discussions where the word economics was mentioned – became alert to the fact that there was territory being invaded, so to speak. It got worse and worse to the point where Pete Peterson went to the president and said there's got to be a decision made here. Then he went to Henry and had a Saturday morning face-down – and won that.

At that point, the Council on International Economic Policy was an integrated agency. Everyone in the bureaucracy loved it, including the Commerce Department and USTR [United States Trade Representative]. Everyone loved it because it was a friend in court to all of those agencies which had been given short shrift in the years immediately preceding.

Also intriguing, it was one of the first things that President Carter abolished, along with the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. I think Peter Flanigan took it over, and then it trailed off into virtual nonexistence.[46] But such a function is absolutely needed. It was recreated in the Clinton administration under another name.[47]

LAKE: I think analytically the heart of the problem is you've got to both integrate the foreign economic and the domestic economic because there is almost no distinction anymore between the two. You also have to integrate the foreign political and the foreign economic. And if you give the foreign political and economic to the NSC staff, then you have broken the link to the domestic economics. If you do it the other way, then you get an economist doing one thing and a Kissinger doing the other and that doesn't work. During the transition, I can't remember where the idea came from for the NEC. There were precedents for it though.

CARLUCCI: It was the Holbrooke Commission.[48]

DESTLER: There were a lot of recommendations.

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[45] Peter G. Peterson was assistant for international economic affairs and then executive director of the Council on International Economic Policy during the Nixon administration.

[46] Peter M. Flanigan was executive director of the Council on International Economic Policy during the Nixon administration.

[47] It was the National Economic Council, which was formally established on January 25, 1993.

[48] Richard C. Holbrooke chaired the Commission on Government Renewal. See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Institute for International Economics, *Memorandum to The President-Elect: Subject Harnessing Process to Purpose* (Washington, D.C.: 1992).

LAKE: I suggested to Bob Rubin, who was the new National Economic Council person, that we share staff and that the same staff person report to both of us or have people report to both of us on these issues which would require them to integrate views in their own minds on both axes and then send their memos to both of us.[49] That required Bob and me to work together. When I suggested this to him and we pursued it, I said to him that this has never been done right and that some day graduate students were going to write doctoral dissertations on how we had gotten it wrong. But I think it worked fairly well in part because anybody can get along with Bob Rubin and we were able to work closely together.

ALLEN: Does it still work?

LAKE: I don't know how it's worked in the last few years, but it really did work well in my experience – in bureaucratic terms and in terms of forcing that kind of integration. I think it's necessary because you really can't make a distinction between national security policy and economic policy. To an ever increasing degree, they're interrelated.

CARLUCCI: In the purest of all worlds, the National Security Council should coordinate both the economic and political, but in the real world it doesn't work that way.

SCOWCROFT: We had a problem, as every administration does, with economic policy. President Bush said to me, "Why don't you take it over and appoint a deputy for economics?" And I said, "I can't do it. I can't stretch myself that thin." Every agency in the government thinks it has a role in economics, and it's a very different process than national security.

DESTLER: We had a very good workshop here earlier on international economic policy in which we had everybody from Carl Kaysen to Bo Cutter talking about the experience and the dilemmas.[50]

One of the general conclusions – which supports Brent's view – was that you cannot do such policy under the NSC in a simple way because as the United States economy becomes more internationalized, the politics of international economics becomes more connected to all of the domestic issues. And, therefore, you really have to have a strong economic staff which is not predominantly international but which regards it as important. And then the problem, as Tony said, is how to connect them.

LAKE: Let me go farther.

DESTLER: Go ahead, but we would also like to get the NSC staff question.

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[49] Robert E. Rubin was assistant to the president for economic policy from 1993 to 1995 and secretary of the treasury from 1995 to 1999.

[50] See National Security Council Project, "The National Security Council and International Economic Policy," *Oral History Roundtable* (Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland and the Brookings Institution, February 11, 1999). Carl Kaysen was deputy national security adviser from 1961 to 1963. W. Bowman Cutter was deputy assistant to the president for economic policy from 1993 to 1996.

LAKE: I think joint staffing works so well that it should be looked at for other cross-cutting issues, whether it's the environment or issues of terrorism, crime, etc.

CARLUCCI: Mac, before you get to staffing, Mike asked about the Agency. My experience is that the Agency is very responsive to the national security adviser. The only problem I had with the Agency was when it would circulate drafts to the Hill before I saw them. I can remember taking a real strip off of Bill Webster for it.[51]

ALLEN: Let me say this on the role of the Agency. In l981 Bill Casey came to me. We had known each other for a long time and were quite collegial. He said, "Would you mind if I see the president from time to time alone?" And I said, "Absolutely not." I didn't mind at all because it was Casey. With another director, I may have minded.

I think the Casey-Reagan relationship was quite productive. I learned everything that went on because both Casey and the president told me what went on in the meetings. It was them being alone that was not always welcome.

CARLUCCI: I took the position that I couldn't be national security adviser if Webster was holding meetings on national security issues where I was not present.

DAALDER: Can we try to come to the staff issue? The issue has to do with staffing in general, also the matter of size, where we have exponential growth these days, and the kind of people you want on your staff?

LAKE: Obviously you want to be efficient, and one of the great advantages the NSC staff has over the State Department and the other agencies is that it's smaller. On the other hand, I thought that President Clinton made a terrible mistake in proclaiming that he was going to cut the size of the staff.

DESTLER: He wanted to cut it overall.

LAKE: Yes, overall, but I include cutting the NSC staff as a mistake because people work so hard there that you fry them after a while if you don't have a staff of sufficient size. A more important issue is whether they're career or non-career and the percentage of political appointees on the staff. In the 1950s it was, as I recall, all career.

DESTLER: Except for the top person.

LAKE: I think there's much to be said for having as high a percentage of career people as possible. I know a number of the people, Brent, that I kept on were among the most effective people on the staff, partly because they had institutional memory that was very valuable.

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

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[51] William H. Webster was director of central intelligence from 1987 to 1991.

LAKE: On the other hand, you've got to have some political appointees who are brought in because they may be the best people. You want a mix of ideas, so you are not asserting partisan views, although that is what happens when new presidents come in anyway.

ALLEN: Does partisan mean in this case fealty to the president's agenda?

LAKE: No, of course not. But I would expect any career person or non-career person to have absolute fealty to the president in general.

ALLEN: Really?

LAKE: Publicly, at least. It's a matter of challenging ideas on the inside and then pushing them within the bureaucracy. But my point is not only that a significant percentage of career people should be there but that it's an issue that needs to be pushed. Because, again, the trend in Washington is toward more partisanship, making the NSC staff itself more and more partisan. That needs to be resisted just as strongly as possible.

ROSTOW: The only thing I've got to say to this is twelve is the magic number. The Catholic Church had a twelfth fellow. There should be twelve fellows with secretaries helping them cover everything.

LAKE: I don't think you can do that anymore.

DESTLER: But the world is easier now than it was with Vietnam and other issues.

ROSTOW: With Vietnam we dealt with everything.

CARLUCCI: You do have the demand on you, for example, that you produce a strategic plan every year.[52]

SCOWCROFT: God-awful thing.

ALLEN: One of the great exercises was the Nixon foreign policy report.[53] I don't recall when it ceased to exist – probably with the demise of the administration.

DESTLER: There was three reports.

SCOWCROFT: The reports tapered off.

ALLEN: They tapered off, but the documents themselves were in a sense a challenge to long-range planning.

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[52] The president is required to submit a national security strategy report to Congress as set forth in Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-433; October 1, 1986).

[53] There were three reports. See Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1970); Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Building for Peace* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1971); Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: The Emerging Structure of Peace* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972).

SCOWCROFT: Yes, they were.

ALLEN: The last part of the long-range planning process. And I tried to get Charles Percy to do something about this.[54] It was basically what Scoop Jackson had done.[55] Organizing for national security was the last really long-range, bipartisan, long-term planning report.

SCOWCROFT: When was that?

ALLEN: 1956 to 1961.

SCOWCROFT: That was a blast at the Eisenhower administration, but a lot of it was actually good.

CARLUCCI: I tend to agree with Tony that it's good to have a substantial number of career people. The thing you want to get, obviously, is quality, and if you can get some outside people with quality – for example, from the RAND Corporation or the Brookings Institution – they add perspective.

The other point I would say is that organizational structure is quite important. One problem – and, Dick, I hope you don't take offense if you created it – is that when I got to the NSC, I looked at the boxes for the National Security Council staff. There was one for Ollie North that said political-military affairs, which essentially gave him a license to do anything he wanted. I said, "That's what the whole institution is about – political-military affairs. Eliminate that box." And the general counsel was the special assistant to John Poindexter. I said that you have to have a general counsel that's independent. So how you structure the boxes is important.

ALLEN: I would say that in our case we were accused of having an overly ideological staff. That was reflected by Richard Pipes, for example.[56] Frankly, everyone around thought he was a good idea at the time. I still believe it was a good idea that Dick Pipes was there. But I think everyone makes choices that are considered infelicitous.

SCOWCROFT: Well, I wanted to cut the NSC staff, and I did. I took twenty percent out when I came in because I thought it was too big.

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[54] Senator Charles H. Percy served in the U.S. Senate from 1967 to 1985 and was chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations from 1981 to 1984.

[55] Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson chaired the subcommittee which conducted a major review of the National Security Act of 1947 from 1959 to 1961. See *Organizing for National Security*, Inquiry of the Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, 86 Cong. 2 sess. (GPO, 1961), vols. I-III; and *Administration of National Security*, Subcommittee on National Security Staffing and Operations of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Staff Reports and Hearings (GPO, 1965). Excerpts and conclusions are in Senator Henry M. Jackson, ed., *The National Security Council: Jackson Subcommittee Papers on Policy-Making at the Presidential Level* (Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966).

[56] Richard Pipes was director of East European and Soviet affairs on the National Security Council during the Reagan administration.

LAKE: When?

SCOWCROFT: With Bush.

DAALDER: Twenty percent. You took it down from 50 to 40? Is that about right?

SCOWCROFT: Yes. I'm talking in terms of professionals. It creeps back up. The basic rule is that you shouldn't have so many people that you can duplicate the work of the departments. I would say each of your geographic or functional areas ought to have one or two people – rarely more. They ought to get the work from the departments, massage the work, keep you informed, and so on. I think there is a real danger in turning the NSC into another large bureaucracy, and I think it really needs to keep flexibility.

DESTLER: Does that happen because the assistant wants it or because the staff wants deputies?

SCOWCROFT: No. The work is terrible. I told everybody I hired I would be amazed if they could stay longer than two years, because I was going to work them seven days a week, sixteen hours a day.

LAKE: But, Brent, it is getting harder because the issues are getting harder.

SCOWCROFT: Everybody says that.

CARLUCCI: It is getting harder. There are more issues.

SCOWCROFT: It depends on what you do.

LAKE: One other factor. The Congress is making it harder, because the Congress is making more demands.

SCOWCROFT: Congress is also making it harder to hire outsiders because of budgets. I had a terrible time with the budget.

CARLUCCI: Yes, though that's another question.

LAKE: The volume of make-work has gone up.

CARLUCCI: Should the National Security Council have independent staffing? Right now you're highly dependent on loans.

SCOWCROFT: That's what I mean. It's because Congress won't fund it.

ALLEN: How large is staffing at present? What is the number of professional people, not support?

DAALDER: Professional staff is now close to 100.

ALLEN: That's, in fact, way above what it was.

DAALDER: Tony, it's twice as large as when you were there.

LAKE: It's doubled since I was there?

DAALDER: Yes.

SCOWCROFT: Henry got up to 50.

CARLUCCI: Does the current number include people on loan?

DAALDER: Yes. I'm told there are only about four or five payroll lines left.

CARLUCCI: The question in my mind is whether you should be dependent on other agencies to loan you personnel.

LAKE: How did they get the extra bodies?

DAALDER: They're all on loan.

ALLEN: Sometimes that's very dangerous.

ROSTOW: Let me tell you the history of the cut-down in staff. Scoop Jackson did the report of the Eisenhower administration when the size ballooned. It almost drove Eisenhower crazy at the NSC meetings.

Scoop Jackson held his hearings on this, and Kennedy was all for reducing the size. I recommended the cut-back after bringing the NSC fellows in and asking them what the case was for a big staff. None of them produced an answer. It could be that it wasn't working well in the Eisenhower administration, and Eisenhower had made his decisions with a very small group which he picked even though we later had to cut it back. The reason I think it's a good idea to cut back is not because we did it but because the NSC should only have first class men or women. And if you can get twelve who should be ambassadors some day, that's plenty.

LAKE: As you recall, the good Lord only got eleven out of twelve.

ALLEN: Well, one repented by hanging himself.

ROSTOW: So, in any case, there is a case for having a smaller number. And we could do much more interdepartmental work by bringing together two, three, or four people.

LAKE: Something occurred to me that I only briefly mentioned. That is one of the reasons for staffs getting larger and frying people after a year as a fellow is the congressional demand and its requirement for reports and its subpoenaing of documents. To the degree that lawyers are now involved in all of this, the size of the NSC staff grows and detracts from its essential function, which is taking the work of the departments, getting rid of the first and last options, going back to them with the middle options and getting to the real issues, etc. That's getting harder and harder in modern Washington.

SCOWCROFT: I think one of the keys is whether the national security adviser can run the show himself. Now there are two deputies instead of one. And as soon as you get a hierarchy of people who report to people who report to the national security adviser, you change the character of the staff. The national security adviser ought to have personal contact with each member of his staff.

ALLEN: How would you do that? I had Friday night reports and Saturday reports. What did you use, Brent? That is, in addition to face-to-face meetings.

SCOWCROFT: You mean with the staff?

ALLEN: Yes.

SCOWCROFT: Face-to-face meetings.

LAKE: I don't think deputies are a barrier to that, depending on how you use them.

SCOWCROFT: One deputy certainly may not be enough.

CARLUCCI: I abolished several deputies.

ALLEN: I had one, and eventually added another.

LAKE: I can remember under Kissinger the huge battle over whether there would be any deputies and the people vying for that position.

SCOWCROFT: He had about five, but none of them had anything to do.

LAKE: Right. But I think you can use the second deputy as the winnower of the chaff.

SCOWCROFT: That's what the executive secretary is supposed to do.

LAKE: Well, anyway, that's an argument. I don't feel strongly about it one way or the other.

There is another issue here, though, and it is that not only should the senior directors work closely with the national security adviser but they should work closely with the president.

DESTLER: Under the Bundy and the Rostow regime the deputies did, or at least the senior people did.

LAKE: It was the first thing you did.

DESTLER: It has been less regular since then.

CARLUCCI: I used to make it a point of taking members of my staff to the meetings.

ALLEN: That's right.

SCOWCROFT: I did, too. I don't disagree with the two of you. I think the national security adviser needs to fight every day to keep the size of the staff down, since the natural tendency is to expand because the work never ends. You can take on any work you want, but you have to decide what you're going to do and what you're not going to do.

LAKE: Let me run up my white flag. I agree with that. The NSC needs to be as small as possible. But the number is increasing for reasons beyond the control of any national security adviser.

SCOWCROFT: I don't disagree with that.

ALLEN: Efficiency would mean putting more work out into the bureaucracy. That's actually what happened at the beginning of the Nixon administration – why we spoke of the paralysis. But what really happened was that the work and the studies were done by the bureaucracy and they were damn good.

ARMACOST: How about the issue of having appointed coordinators with particular bits of business and locating them in the White House. Dick Clarke's role on terrorism is an example.[57] That could be located in the executive department or it could be put in the NSC staff. How do you feel about that?

ROSTOW: It's a big operation.

SCOWCROFT: If it's operational, it should be in the departments.

CARLUCCI: Yes.

LAKE: I think there may be some issues that need to be in the White House. Only the White House can coordinate, for example, on some of the terrorist and other issues. But I would not necessarily put it in the NSC staff because that makes the staff operational. But

[57] Richard A. Clarke has been senior director for global issues and multilateral affairs on the National Security Council since 1993, where his responsibilities included interagency coordination of counterrorism. In 1998, Clarke also became the national coordinator for infrastructure protection and counter-terrorism on the National Security Council.

you may want joint staffing to make sure that if there's an operational coordinator in the White House, it's jointly staffed with the NSC and they can see what is going on.

ALLEN: There comes a time when there's a bulge when you bring someone in on TDY [temporary duty]. That's the problem. You never want to lose the staffers that you've got. They somehow justify their existence.

CARLUCCI: There's always this theory that you can have pure agency coordination by putting something in the White House. When I was director of OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity], the idea was that you should be on call in the White House so that it can direct the other agencies. Yet the Federal Emergency Management Agency has functioned perfectly well outside the White House. It had started off as the Office of Emergency Preparedness with Lincoln.[58]

DESTLER: He was a member of the National Security Council.

CARLUCCI: I helped create it as a separate agency and it functioned very well.

SCOWCROFT: That's a tough question when you set up things like this. If it's a regular operation, as Dick Clarke's is getting to be, I think it's a mistake. Policy can be kept in the NSC but the things that Dick Clarke is doing now are better done outside.

ARMACOST: It always raises a constitutional issue about testimony up on the Hill.

SCOWCROFT: Well, that's another problem. I think you need to protect that.

ALLEN: That's been a cyclical threat.

SCOWCROFT: And it comes up every time somebody does something Congress doesn't like.

ALLEN: It depends on the political bias at the time.

We have been talking about the Congress with a great deal of passion. Congress increasingly becomes part of the life of a National Security Council, and it seems to me that maintaining good relations is important no matter who is in charge. Brent, you had the job of maintaining relations in an essentially hostile environment the first time around, not the second time.

SCOWCROFT: Yes, the second time, but I was never in that job when the Congress was from the same party.

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[58] Emergency preparedness functions were granted to the White House with the National Security Act of 1947. The office went through a series of modifications and name changes from 1947 to 1961. The Office of Emergency Planning (1961-68) was redesignated as the Office of Emergency Preparedness in 1968 and existed until 1973. From 1966 to 1973, it was directed by General George A. Lincoln. In 1973, its functions were transferred to the General Services Administration. In 1979 FEMA was established as an independent agency.

ALLEN: We had the Senate.

SCOWCROFT: Well, we did for a while.

CARLUCCI: Isn't the director of OMB now a confirmable position?

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

ALLEN: It has been there forever.

SCOWCROFT: It started out otherwise. I can't remember who gave in.

ALLEN: Certainly by the time we were around. Stockman was confirmed.[59]

SCOWCROFT: No. It goes back before that.

CARLUCCI: When I was in OMB in 1971-72, it was non-confirmable.

ALLEN: You would know if it changed.

CARLUCCI: The precedent had been set for confirming White House staff.

DESTLER: The only real exceptions now are the national security assistant and the national economic assistant.

DAALDER: The drug czar is confirmable.

DESTLER: Yes, the drug czar is confirmable. Of course, the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers has always been confirmable because that was originally structured as sort of a congressional as well as an executive position.

SCOWCROFT: That's another reason not to get the NSC into operations, because that's the argument for congressional oversight.

CARLUCCI: If it becomes confirmable, the NSC becomes useless.

SCOWCROFT: Absolutely.

DESTLER: One of the things the NSC benefits from is the fact that its statute was written in 1947, and there have not been a lot of amendments or rewritings of that specific statute.[60] One of the questions, when I looked at the National Economic Council, was whether it should be statutory. And the answer may be yes, if we could write the statute. But we can't.

ALLEN: Even without a statute, a president is able to determine the shape.

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[59] David A. Stockman was director of the Office of Management and Budget from 1981 to 1985.
[60] The National Security Act of 1947 (P.L. 80-253; July 26, 1947) established the National Security Council.

DESTLER: Much more so if it's not spelled out.

SCOWCROFT: If you set it out by statute in specific terms and the president doesn't like it, he's going to set up something else and the old one becomes a dinosaur.

DESTLER: You're right.

SCOWCROFT: He needs to have it the way he wants it, and that's the joy of the 1947 language.

CARLUCCI: The argument that you hear, of course, is that this is a cold war relic.

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

CARLUCCI: My judgment is that it's one of the institutions that works well and is very germane to the kind of world in which we live where interagency coordination is even more important. You need to reinforce it in order not to slay it.

SCOWCROFT: If you imagine that the NSC disappeared today leaving the president with the job of coordinating policy with the secretary, it would not be possible.

DAALDER: Nor if any of the department secretaries took on that job.

ROSTOW: It seems to me that the trouble with this whole arrangement is that actual meetings of the NSC are pretty idle. They don't do much. There are too many fellows against the wall, and they leak like a sieve.

DESTLER: They hardly happen anymore.

CARLUCCI: We used to hold them for "show-and-tell." The actual business was done in the National Security Council planning group which was a much smaller group that I managed to control. You have to form some sub-group; you can't have the whole group.

SCOWCROFT: Not the Council itself.

DESTLER: What about the group of top advisers to the president – the secretary of state, secretary of defense, national security adviser – meeting as a group either among themselves or with the president? One of the things we haven't talked about is the interplay between cooperation at the top level and the next level and the demands on the staff. It seems that increasingly you have more effective cooperation.

CARLUCCI: I used to have fun lunches once a week with Cap and George. It was like watching ping-pong.

DESTLER: You had a special challenge, yes.

SCOWCROFT: I established what I called a principals committee, which was the NSC without the president or the vice president, and I chaired it. And it worked well, partly because everybody got along. It saved a lot of the president's time, because some issues were able to be resolved, and some could be refined so the president just had to approve them.

DESTLER: That was you, Brent, and then Baker, Cheney, Powell, and the CIA director.[61]

SCOWCROFT: Yes.

CARLUCCI: I think it is important that the national security adviser be allowed to chair such meetings. George recalled this in his book about how I shouldn't have chaired a meeting because I was not confirmed.[62]

SCOWCROFT: It's a big problem. The trouble is that the only neutral is the national security adviser or his staff person. If State chairs them all, then everybody else thinks they're left out.

ARMACOST: Who chaired the BVB meetings during the Carter administration? That is, the Brown, Vance, and Brzezinski meetings.[63] They used to meet once a week generally.

CARLUCCI: Brzezinski chaired. David Aaron chaired the undersecretary's weekly meeting.[64]

ALLEN: I don't know if it existed before me, but I tried to improve the situation by putting a red phone on my desk and Al's, and it would ring when you picked up without having to dial. The idea was that only he or only I would be on the end of it, but it broke down after a while when I started talking to his assistant on it more than with Al so I stopped using it. There are ways to communicate, and I don't know how and when it has ever worked in an idyllic way. But I had the impression it worked very well for Brent, especially the second time.

SCOWCROFT: Yes, it did. But, again, it was personalities.

ALLEN: You come back to the question of whether the job description should be changed. I don't think you should mess with it at all. I think you should just leave it to the president to shape because that's exactly what he'll do. He won't disregard the language of the statute, but he will ultimately shape it the way he wants.

I had the impression that President Clinton handicapped himself horribly by the gender and race question. They were going to have balance, and they wanted a certain

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[61] Richard B. Cheney was the secretary of defense from 1989 to 1993.
[62] George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), especially pp. 902-904.
[63] Harold Brown was secretary of defense from 1977 to 1981.
[64] David L. Aaron was deputy national security adviser to President Carter from 1977 to 1981.

number of groups throughout the whole administration. I had the impression that he handicapped himself unnecessarily for at least a year when a lot of spots went unfilled.

SCOWCROFT: I have the sense that there's another problem. That is that the NSC system was really developed to serve an activist president in foreign policy, and the current president is not by nature an activist in foreign policy. He deals with it when he has to. I don't know that the system works all that well when you don't have the president there all the time, because by himself the national security adviser can't really do it. He's junior to all the other people. He needs that moral authority. If we're moving into a period now where we have presidents less interested in foreign policy, I don't know that we will have an effective one.

CARLUCCI: It depends on who you elect next time.

SCOWCROFT: That's right.

DAALDER: I think it is true that episodic attention by the president means that the national security adviser becomes a consensus builder and provides the limited information necessary upward. That's exactly what is happening now.

DESTLER: It also drives what I think Dick Allen was describing. The adviser needs to be on top of that if he wants to be with the president.

SCOWCROFT: I don't know how to change it.

CARLUCCI: There was a period after Iran-Contra when Ronald Reagan just completely stopped. You have to be very careful with the president's authority in those kind of situations.

SCOWCROFT: In a way that's true. It's important the way you say something to the president.

CARLUCCI: I did not expect to have the amount of responsibility that was put on me. Brent, you saw it.

SCOWCROFT: I did see it on the Iran-Contra committee.

DESTLER: Well, we want to thank you for your time and input on this project.

DAALDER: We do want to thank you for helping us out.

APPENDIX A: AGENDA

The agenda consisted of the following list of questions, distributed to the participants in advance of the meeting:

1. How can the national security adviser best balance his role as honest broker of the interagency process and policy adviser to the president?

2. To what degree should the national security adviser have a public persona by briefing reporters, making speeches, and appearing for interviews on television and other media?

3. What is the appropriate relationship between the national security adviser and the secretary of state?

4. How should the National Security Council be staffed in terms of the kind of people appointed and the type of functions they fulfill?

5. Is the long-accepted job description of the national security adviser obsolete and, if so, how should it be changed?

APPENDIX B:
INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT C. MCFARLANE[1]

This interview was conducted on November 1, 1999, by Ivo H. Daalder and I. M. Destler.

DESTLER: We want to thank you for meeting with us. Can you start by saying when you served on the NSC staff?

McFARLANE: I had been a White House Fellow in 1971-1972. I formally joined the NSC staff as military assistant to Henry [Kissinger] on July 1, 1973, and I served until President Ford was defeated in January 1977.[2] I came back to the NSC in January of 1982.

DESTLER: To be deputy to Judge Clark?[3]

McFARLANE: That's right. I departed in December of 1985.

DESTLER: Let me start out by asking you the same first question that we asked at the roundtable. We asked about the tension in the role of the national security adviser between being an honest broker, who channels advice to the president and makes sure all the options are fairly treated, and being a presidential adviser, who has his own views. We asked people to talk about what that tension was like and how you dealt with it.

McFARLANE: I think the established reliance on the cabinet is the preferred model. The basis for choosing cabinet officers, their established position vis-à-vis the Congress, accountability, and so forth, are reasons which justify them being both proponents of new policy and executors of established policy. The introduction of a coordinator in 1947, and its development in the Eisenhower and later administrations, was conceived with that tension in mind.[4] What tends to broaden that role are the inherent access and proximity of the adviser.

A second thing, which is not a predictable constant, is the failure of the cabinet to meet the politician president's need for accomplishment within a four-year period of time. To go from the general to the specific, it was this latter more than the former, which was a present factor in the Reagan years.

I wouldn't pretend President Reagan came to town with a foreign policy agenda on his mind. But he came to realize that he had an obligation not to simply seek peace in our time and not to let the huge investment that the country was willing to make in national

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[1] McFarlane served as national security adviser from October 17, 1983 to December 4, 1985.
[2] Henry A. Kissinger served as the national security adviser from 1969 to 1975 and secretary of state from 1973 to 1977.
[3] Judge William P. Clark was national security adviser from 1982 to 1983. McFarlane served as his deputy during the same time period.
[4] The National Security Act of 1947 (P.L. 80-253; July 26, 1947) established the National Security Council.

security just be an ephemeral investment that would be wasted, but translate it into treaties, into relationships, and into binding obligations that would transcend his administration. That argument was a telling one for him, and he came to develop a substantial interest in engaging in the treaty negotiating process, primarily focused on the cold war agenda with the Soviet Union.

He began to fear, toward the end of the first term in 1984, that the persistent rancor between his secretary of state and secretary of defense would likely foreclose viable policy initiatives that would advance the national interest. And in that situation, he inevitably – and as someone who did not enjoy conflict with close friends – looked to the national security adviser to try both to sort it out but also to be a source of new ideas.

DAALDER: How did he think that would resolve the conflict between the secretary of defense and secretary of state? Was he looking to the national security adviser to become, in effect, the honest broker, by coming up with new ideas in the hope of thereby transcending the conflict and having a policy that then would be implemented by the departments? Or was he looking for something different, a more operational role for the NSC?

McFARLANE: He was looking for ideas and for insulation from the conflict between the two cabinet officers. Your wording is better though. He did not want the national security adviser to be the arbiter but rather the manager of this conflict. He was quite willing to have the basis for the dissenting arguments presented to him and then make a decision, especially if he didn't have to be in the same room. He would have the cover provided by a memo from me that said, "The president has considered your points of view and concluded Option A or B." He provided the very essential support on each occasion when that pattern was followed, and he would back me up when they called, as they did.

DAALDER: So he was looking to you as a manager of their differences?

McFARLANE: Yes.

DESTLER: And to advise him on which one to support on which issue or how to strike a balance. But you also suggested that a way for him to insulate himself from that fight was to have some issues that didn't involve either one of them.

McFARLANE: I should have said that he wanted whatever idea the U.S. government was going to ultimately pursue to have had the criticism of his cabinet. And for nothing to be done that was contrary to his wishes. He intended for his cabinet to be informed and engaged. He did expect that the adviser would, however, ensure that the cabinet system continued to move. He expected me to focus on the east-west agenda. Had it been up to Cap, for example, there would have been paralysis.[5] George Shultz and Cap were always at odds over each of the four parts of the agenda: arms control, human rights, regional disagreements, bilateral programs.[6] As you know, they almost never agreed.

[5] Caspar W. Weinberger was secretary of defense from 1981 to 1987.
[6] George P. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989.

Reagan didn't want or intend paralysis. He wanted each of these areas of disagreement to be brought up to him for him to decide and policy to be established. I don't mean to imply that was a reliance upon the security adviser for policy initiatives. It was meant, however, to keep the train moving. And in each finite case to say, "I think this one's better than that one."

DESTLER: Right. Obviously this was a unique situation, but there are a lot of other unique situations that national security advisers face. We find this comes up frequently – having to deal with a given situation and trying to figure out how you get movement.

McFARLANE: It wasn't that he always would agree with one or the other. He would often agree with Cap on matters of verification, and then he would agree with George on other issues.

DAALDER: Is the fact that there wasn't one clear person between the two to whom he looked for advice and that he would shift back and forth between them one of the reasons he kept both of them on? For somebody who didn't like conflict, to be constantly presented with conflict among the senior advisers on foreign policy was a management nightmare for the national security adviser and also created the danger of policy paralysis. And obviously one option, at least in theory, for a president is to get rid of one of them. Tell him his service has been very fine but it's time to move on.

McFARLANE: Yes. The president was given that option right after the 1984 election, and perhaps at another time. George and I both went to the president. I approached him on the plane coming back from Santa Barbara in November of 1984. I had gone to the president earlier that year and said that in the event he was reelected, he ought to have some notion of what the second term agenda ought to be. And I proposed to him that we have a series of NSSDs [National Security Study Directives] to tackle the possibilities: east-west relations, the Middle East, and so forth. He liked the idea and so I talked to George about it, and George said, "Well, why don't we have a kind of a Team A, Team B kind of thing." I had told him we ought to get the advice of some outsiders. George said, "Well, I'd rather have the policy planning staff do it." Fair enough. At any rate, those studies produced a somewhat predictable agenda, but with some remarkable originality.

After Reagan was reelected, he stayed in Santa Barbara. I had sent the book that synthesized twelve possibilities up to him with a short note on top that said, "This is good work and warrants being read thoroughly. No president can do more than one or two significant new policy initiatives in a four-year term, and so I recommend that you set some priorities here." Well, he called me up to the ranch, and we had a very nice session, but he said, "I want to do them all!"

DESTLER: Not unique, either.

McFARLANE: On the way back to Washington I told him that I admired his enthusiasm, but I didn't think that was a prudent course and he wouldn't achieve very much at all if he didn't rationalize his decision-making system. And in that context the very dissimilar views

of Shultz and Weinberger could lead to paralysis unless he was willing to play a greater role in intervening between them or unless he built his team around one or the other and tried to rely on this "healthy" tension. He said, "Bud, I know what you're describing, and I don't disagree with the description." He said, "These are my friends. I'm not going to fire either one. And I know that if Cap were secretary of state, I would get very bad policy advice. But he's my friend, and I'm not going to change that." He said, "I'm going to look to you to manage the relationship, and to bring the disagreements to me, with your own advice on how it ought to be resolved in each case." After we got back, George came to see me. I'd meet him every Wednesday, and occasionally Friday for about an hour, and he and I would go and see the president. George said much the same thing. He offered his resignation because he said the president would do better to build a second term team around Cap, or himself, but that it was intolerable to try and work together. But Reagan had the same answer: "I want you to stay, work with Bud, and let's try to find a way to minimize these confrontations."

DAALDER: Two things you said caught my attention in this story. First, the NSSDs that you worked on in 1984. You said that Shultz wanted the policy planning staff to do these. Was your staff involved in the drafting at all? Or were other agencies? Or was it all done by the State Department?

McFARLANE: I had wanted originally in January to have the whole establishment work on them. George said, "No, let's not do that. It'll just get me in a confrontation with Cap. Let me do an in-house series of analyses for the president, and you do whatever you'd like to do." So we did. And his were done in policy planning. My process was managed by Don Fortier, and there were no NSSDs.[7] It was all done externally. We sent letters to perhaps a dozen respected people in academe as well as industry who were recognized experts on the Middle East, north-south issues, trade, and east-west issues. We got back a series of really very impressive papers. Shultz did, too, and Don packaged up what we had done. I sent ours over to George, but I never got back any comment from him. He, in turn, sent what S/P had over to me, and they were included in the book that I ultimately sent to the president in California.[8]

DAALDER: The second thing you mentioned was that you had Wednesday meetings with George Shultz. Were those just the two of you, or was Weinberger a part of them? Did you have regular meetings among the three of you?

McFARLANE: Shultz asked for, and was given, I think, by Jim Baker, the two meetings with the president a week, which were supposed to be for a half hour. They were Wednesday and Friday afternoons. And I was to be there.

DAALDER: These were with the president?

McFARLANE: Yes, right. The president, myself, and Shultz. Separately, to try to reduce tensions and harmonize views, we would get together for breakfast every Wednesday morning – Shultz, Weinberger, myself, and deputies.

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[7] Donald R. Fortier was deputy national security adviser from 1983 to 1986.
[8] S/P is the designation within the Department of State for the Office of Policy Planning.

And then finally an activity that began in the second term in early 1985, at George's suggestion to try to overcome the current disagreements with Cap, was what was called a family lunch. It was called that because he got the president's permission to convene a lunch ad hoc, with no predictable schedule, in the family dining room of the White House residence. It involved Cap, Shultz, Casey and me.[9] It did facilitate a very candid dialogue, more so than the breakfasts, because there were too many staff at those. But the family lunches were quite candid, and sometimes bitter, but led to some resolution of disagreements here and there. The trouble was they weren't regular enough. We just didn't insist that there be a pattern or discipline to them.

DESTLER: What did adding Casey to the mix do?

McFARLANE: Well, it led to a little more acerbity. Bill was not shy and he was less diplomatic than Cap. And it got out in the open that we had fundamental disagreements. But the government had to function and we couldn't be subverting each other. At the end of these things, we would usually reach a point on a given issue where we might disagree on this or that, but we'd agree that we would try X for a certain amount of time.

DESTLER: Right.

McFARLANE: I would call it analogous to the disagreements between President Eisenhower and Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson.[10] They might disagree, but they would go ahead and give it a shot. That's the way we used to end these lunches.

DAALDER: At those kinds of meetings, did you tend to agree more with one side or the other? Were you like President Reagan – depending on the issue you were sometimes with Cap, sometimes with Shultz?

McFARLANE: I think it probably came down 60-40 on George's side, but it was motivated not by George himself, but by what seemed to me to be what the president would support.

DESTLER: How did they feel about your efforts to be an honest broker? One of the things that came up during our roundtable was the need to balance this role. Brent Scowcroft emphasized the need to establish himself in the first year as a credible and reliable balancer.[11] He said that once you established that, then there was more flexibility in the role. If you can't establish that, then you've got a messy process, because everything goes around you, nobody trusts you, and it's hard to keep things together.

You had a particularly difficult time because of the substantive and personal differences between the two secretaries. And Casey wasn't a picnic either. I wonder

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[9] William J. Casey was director of central intelligence from 1981 to 1987.

[10] Congressman Sam Rayburn from Texas was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1913 until his death in 1961. From 1940 he served either as the speaker of the U.S. House or leader of the minority and was the speaker in 1955 when Senator Lyndon B. Johnson became the Senate majority leader.

[11] Lt. General Brent Scowcroft served as deputy national security adviser from 1973 to 1975, national security adviser to President Nixon from 1975 to 1977, and national security adviser to President Bush from 1989 to 1993. During the Reagan administration, he was vice chairman of Kissinger Associates, Inc.

whether you felt you were doing a fair job of presenting their views to the president? Or did they feel they had to do that themselves?

McFARLANE: I think that George did. When I made the decision to resign in December of 1985, George and I had become reasonably close socially and I invited him to my log cabin in the Shenandoah Valley. He seemed genuinely distraught about the resignation, and he asked what would it take to keep me. I told George that this was not a negotiation but he was my friend. And he said he thought I'd make a very good secretary of defense. I said, "George, I'm flattered, but I need to leave the government now." I think that he had been satisfied with the work I had done. And if he hadn't been, he wouldn't have said something like that.

Cap, I think, was not nearly as happy with the outcomes, because, it's true, at least 60 percent of the time he would lose. His subordinates and I got along quite well though, and we worked pretty well together. Quite often, in things that mattered to them, they would win – with my help.

DAALDER: Moving on to a slightly different topic of conversation. Its relates to the dealings of the national security adviser with the press and the public persona that the adviser can or cannot, or should or should not, take on. What are your views on the degree to which there should be a direct relationship with the press, either on background or on the talk shows, and whether or not the adviser is an appropriate person to make speeches? These are issues that are becoming more and more central to defining the role of the national security adviser, and we'd be interested in hearing your perceptions.

McFARLANE: As you know, these are interrelated with the former question. If you've got a harmonious cabinet, as a source of policy and of advocacy, you don't need to have somebody from the White House other than the president doing it.

One of the lessons I learned in Vietnam was that the president ought not undertake major policy initiatives without thoroughly explaining it to the people. It doesn't require the security adviser to do it, because the president gives speeches, white papers, and so forth. And the cabinet ought to be able to back up what he says. On a number of issues under President Reagan, you had a situation in which the secretaries of state and defense were often either against the policy, or only superficially able to present it well. I think normally the cabinet officers ought to be the explicators and advocates of our policy, but that they have to agree with it and be good at it.

DAALDER: So you found yourself having to move out because they could not do that?

McFARLANE: Yes. In the first year or so, I did most of the press dealings on background, and without any visibility. But then I began to be more visible – to a fault.

DAALDER: Did the president encourage you to do it because his case was not being made?

McFARLANE: Only once. I think it was a mistake because it was bound not to undermine but to attenuate the jealousies that are always latent in these kinds of relationships. And it was a mistake for me to appear on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine* one weekend in 1985. George was in a white knuckle rage about that.[12]

DAALDER: Because he wasn't on it?

McFARLANE: Because Les Gelb wrote in the article that the locus of power was in my office, not his.

DAALDER: What about the relationship with the Hill? How out front should the national security adviser be in principle, and how much in practice, given the same kind of situation?

McFARLANE: In theory, when you have strong cabinet officers who are agreeable, there's no need for a national security adviser to get involved. And in fact, he probably shouldn't, because it does undermine this principle of executive privilege. Personally, I liked working with the Congress. I was always willing to do whatever they said needed to be done to get a problem solved on the Hill.

DAALDER: There is also the question of the operational role of the national security adviser, particularly in terms of conducting diplomacy, either with or without the State Department or others. What's the balance between, on the one hand, needing things to get done which otherwise don't get done or the president wanting something to happen for political or policy reasons but the cabinet just doesn't deliver, and, on the other hand, making sure that the government functions in a balanced way?

McFARLANE: Part of the need for the national security adviser to have a role is inspired by the foreign governments' preference. In the cold war years, not only Henry but his predecessors and successors accepted and encouraged the Soviet insistence that the only authority that they would accept would be the president. They clearly attributed more credibility to whatever came from the White House.

And so the dialogue with security adviser was a matter of insistence. It doesn't need, however, to be disruptive, but it requires that you have a very mature secretary of state who is party to whatever you have to say in that channel. I always made George fully aware of anything I was saying. Indeed, I didn't meet with the Russian ambassador more than three or four times. And on those occasions, it was not unless George and I got together beforehand and talked about what to say. And then afterwards, I would debrief him. It advanced the policy process.

We had faced this early on, after Shultz came into office. After talking about whether there ought to be a private channel or not, he and I got together with the president. We went up the stairs into the private part of the residence. Shultz had the floor and explained that the Russians had asked for a private channel. The president was supportive and said it was a

[12] Leslie H. Gelb, "Taking Charge: The Rising Power of National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane," *New York Times Magazine*, May 26, 1985, pp. 20-31, 63, 70.

great idea. And I said that I was, too, but that George had to be a key and fully informed participant in it. Well, the means chosen to tell the Russians we were willing to do that was to use a secret emissary. And it was Brent. He was going on a Dartmouth [College] group meeting to Moscow about that time. So George and I got together and gave Brent a letter from the president to deliver to Gromyko saying we were open to a private channel.[13] And, of course, we had to find a way for Gromyko to be aware that Scowcroft had a letter. And so I said, "George, would you please call Dobrynin, and tell him that Brent is going there, and he's going to have a letter for Gromyko."[14] Shultz never made the call. And Brent was never contacted by Gromyko. I think it was that George had second thoughts and he didn't really want this to happen.

DESTLER: With China, there seems to be a pattern of national security advisers recurrently playing a very important role, including high level negotiations and strategizing.

McFARLANE: Well, I must say I support the notion that China is one of the unique cases, where it would not have otherwise succeeded.

DESTLER: In 1971, you mean?

McFARLANE: Yes. Here was a country with an abysmal human rights record. To have put out a NSDD [National Security Decision Directive], and to have gone to the Congress and held hearings on whether or not we ought to restore relations with China might have evoked some interesting debate, but it would have killed any notion that we really could do it. It was out of the question. And you had to be able to find out if the Chinese were even interested – secretly. Once we confirmed that they were, if you had brought in Democrats and bureaucrats throughout the government, it would have leaked and quickly been aborted.

Today, I don't think it's essential any longer. This is something that's established. But it works when you're trying to take the country in a fundamentally new direction, in which you, first, you don't know whether the other party will even entertain the idea. And, second, you need to establish your bona fides with that government.

DESTLER: Right.

McFARLANE: You have to show that we are serious, and they would only take it seriously if the president of the United States said so. That's when you have to do it.

DESTLER: The NSC didn't have a special role vis-à-vis China when you were the deputy or adviser?

McFARLANE: No.

DAALDER: Now you find that Lake and Berger were and have been trying to figure out whether there is something special in the U.S.-China relationship, whether it's what the

[13] Andrei Gromyko was the foreign minister of the Soviet Union from 1957 to 1985.
[14] Anatoly Dobrynin was the Soviet ambassador to the United States from 1962 to 1986.

Chinese want, or whether there are just people who think that they ought to do China policy. It could be any or all of that. It was clearly the case for Kissinger, and, to a certain extent, Brzezinski with the normalization of relations.[15] Tiananmen [Square] was different, because it was important for the Bush administration to send a message. You can argue in all these cases that U.S.-China relations were really in bad shape, and you needed to do something.

McFARLANE: There's also the vanity of the people involved. The French, the British, the Germans have all occasionally wanted to have a White House channel. When the situations arose and Thatcher, Mitterrand, or Kohl, or somebody would come in through a back channel, I'd always share that with George.[16]

DAALDER: Did you have direct and, if so, frequent contact with your British and French counterparts?

McFARLANE: We did have direct contact, but the contacts were not used very often.

DAALDER: They weren't on your speed dial then as they were in the 1990s.

DESTLER: I wonder if you'd mind if we backed up a little bit in time to when you came to the White House in January of 1982, and you were deputy to Judge Clark. It was clearly an unusual period in that Clark was clearly not a national security expert. At the same time, the NSC was reestablishing its role, which had languished in the previous year. I wonder if you could talk about your memories of that.

McFARLANE: The Reagan administration began with a framework for making policy, and it was called cabinet council and at least was in charge in 1981. The idea was that there would be a cabinet council on urban development, foreign and national security matters, and various other things. And it had not been supported very much by Haig or Weinberger, who were both veterans of the National Security Council. It simply didn't function.

By the time Judge Clark came over, we had had a lot of talks about this. And I said that he really needed to have a coherent system where specific people or the president can task the government, the government can advise him, he can make decisions, and then he can tell them how he's decided and oversee the results. That's what the NSC was designed to do in 1947. And the Judge agreed, so he asked me to come and put that kind of system in place. He was quite supportive. I told him that there was no policy written down yet for the Reagan administration – a year into it. And we needed to start from scratch and establish what U.S. policy was, what our goals are, what our interests are, what our strategy is, and what resources we would put behind it.

There was an equivalent series of questions for a dozen other issues. He said that was fine. So I got together with the staff and did what every other adviser has ever done – told

[15] Zbigniew Brzezinski was national security adviser from 1977 to 1981.
[16] Margaret Thatcher was prime minister of Great Britain from 1979 to 1990. François Mitterrand was the president of France from 1981 to 1995. Helmut Kohl was chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1982 to 1998.

them to look into their policy areas and give me draft NSSDs that will task the government to study what our goals ought to be. They should indicate the risks, the interests, the threats, and so forth. We would put in place a process of defining policy options that the president would review, and we'd have a chance to comment and criticize, but then the president would decide the issue.

That's what we began to do. The first one was kind of the equivalent of NSSM-3, although on a less grand scale.[17] It was to identify U.S. security interests by region, and it ended up taking over a year's time. By the time I left, I guess we had over a hundred of these. One of the reasons for them, obviously, is to get ideas, and the other one is to get your bureaucracy to feel like it's part of the team. It shows that the White House is not sitting over here in an ivory palace, running things. If you don't do that, you're going to have everybody with a vested interest, leaking and criticizing whatever you're trying to do.

DAALDER: Imagine you were asked by whoever is the president-elect in November 2000 to design a NSC system. How would you do it today, given the different world from the one in which you were the adviser? What kind of advice would you give on how to set it up in terms of the team and the structure?

McFARLANE: Well, I think that the Nixon NSC is a good model. That is, the White House staff is responsible for the management of a process, and the president's bureaucrats launch studies, organize the results, issue decisions after they're made, and oversee implementation. That system is a good one. To make it functional, the president should choose a secretary of state and a secretary of defense that give their views. He should ask if they think it is sensible or not, and if they do, they should come along. If they don't, then he doesn't want them around. I don't think it is healthy for a president to have people who think they know more than the president about the job. So pick cabinet officers that have a harmonious view with yours, and make them understand who's responsible. And have a relatively obscure national security adviser to manage the policy process. Even that's no guarantee that it's going to be entirely functional.

Inevitably, every president is going to fall into the habit of relying upon the national security adviser, beyond the managerial role, and asking him what he thinks about X, Y, and Z. It is inherent in the role. But it doesn't need to be dominant. You have to choose a very mature, seasoned veteran of government, who is loyal to you and will respect your judgment that this should be a cabinet-dominated process. And I think there are people like that around.

DESTLER: How large should the staff be?

McFARLANE: Forty-four professionals, regionally and functionally organized to interface with their counterparts in the State Department, Defense Department, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

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[17] National Security Study Memorandum 3 (January 21, 1969) called for a comprehensive examination of the American military posture and the implications for foreign policy of various strategies and budgets.

DAALDER: What kind of people would you look for as staff people?

McFARLANE: For originality you need outsiders. Nobody from inside is going to be very original. I think that the mix should be about one-third from what I'd call senior private life: old professors, who've been in government before and who would run the Latin American, African, Asian shops. Then you ought to have about one-third from the career services – the military, the foreign service, the Agency, and Treasury. And the balance ought to be junior people from outside, who are good journeyman staff people, can write a memo, and have some depth. These are people that are not yet tenured but are competent people. They ought to include people who have been on the Hill and understand governance.

DAALDER: I like that idea. I've always strongly felt that the top people should come from outside, because they have more power over the direction of policy. But then you have to combine that with people who really know how the government works, and you also need a bunch of really good writers. That's about the right combination of talent.

DESTLER: You mentioned the early Kissinger period as a model for how the process ought to be structured. Do you have any models for how the process should operate in the broad sense?

McFARLANE: I think Henry's idea that the paper description of how it's supposed to work was pretty good. That is that the first year of your administration, you've got to establish policy, build interdepartmental groups, and create the habit of coordinating the processes put in place. That gives you a set of NSDDs on the shelf, which you enunciate to the Congress, to the allies, and to the American people. Those three constituencies, at the end of the first year, ought to be pretty well informed about what the administration thinks about foreign policy.

DESTLER: At our roundtable, Carlucci said he knew why he was chosen national security adviser. He was the only person that George and Cap could agree on.

McFARLANE: A very fair statement. Frank is a veteran of every agency of this government and was a very good choice.

DESTLER: You've been very helpful, and we appreciate your straightforwardness.

McFARLANE: I wish you well.

APPENDIX C:
INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL COLIN L. POWELL[1]

This interview was conducted on November 23, 1999, by Ivo H. Daalder.

DAALDER: The most important issue we are considering is the problem of how, in theory, the national security adviser balances the honest broker role with the adviser role. How do you do that, in practice, on a day-to-day basis, on issue after issue? That is one of the questions that only people like yourself can answer. In materials you sent before this interview, you write that there is a potential for conflict in these two roles and how to resolve that conflict each day.[2]

POWELL: Well, if there wasn't a potential for conflict, there wouldn't be a need for a national security adviser. The national security adviser is the conflict resolver, and he or she brings a unique perspective to the task as the person in the White House who has the president's interest uppermost in mind. This is not to say that the cabinet officers don't have the president's interest in mind. The cabinet officers always are carrying the hopes, aspirations, and views of the bureaucracies that they represent, and very often these forces, principally the State and Defense Departments, are in opposition or disagree on a particular issue.

It is the role of the national security adviser to get it all out – all the agendas, all the facts, all the opinions, all of the gray and white and black areas written down – and to use a highly qualified staff, the National Security Council staff, to put all of these agreements and disagreements into a form that can be sent back to the two cabinet officers, or however many people are debating the issue, and say: "this is the issue as we understand it. These are the points of agreement and disagreement. We agree and we disagree. So let's have a meeting. Let's fight about it." And at some point it's up to the national security adviser to take all of those points, to do an integral calculus of the whole thing – the area under the curve – and to say to the president: "Mr. President, we have heard all these points of view and, by the way, I've also gotten your White House advisers – your chief and your domestic policy adviser and the legislative guy – on this now. This is what I think and this is my recommendation to you." You make that recommendation, with both the secretaries of state and defense and all the other cabinet officers and agencies involved knowing what you're going to recommend. And then the president decides. Now I think that's how the process should be followed. The national security adviser may well bring a point of view that is not just the result of his staff work but are his own personal feelings about it. "Yes, my staff's wrong and so are these other guys. And this is what you ought to do." Put it in there.

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[1] General Powell served as national security adviser from November 23, 1987 to January 20, 1989. He also served as deputy national security adviser from 1986 until becoming national security adviser.

[2] Colin L. Powell, "The NSC Advisor: Process Manager and More," *The Bureaucrat*, vol. 18 (Summer 1989), pp. 45-47; and Colin L. Powell, "The NSC System in the Last Two Years of the Reagan Administration," unpublished article.

But there are three points I would make about this. The first point is that the national security adviser should have a very high quality, competent staff of foreign service officers, political people, military people, and intelligence people. I am one of those national security advisers who never apologized for the size of my staff. I had something like fifty professionals, as did Carlucci before I took it over from him.[3] People have said it was too big, and everybody wanted to cut it. That would have been a mistake. We're talking about the president's staff and the difference between thirty and fifty is irrelevant in the scheme of the size of the United States government. I would never, on some budgetary basis, cut the size and the competence of the National Security Council staff, because it's the quality of that staff that gets you the kind of analysis you need so that everybody believes his or her interest has been properly represented.

The second point I would make is not to let the National Security Council with this great staff, with this interesting group of people that you assign to it, be too ideological or carry a lot of separate agendas. Once the two departments, and I use that as a surrogate for all of the departments, sense the staff has its own agenda, then all kinds of funny things start to happen and cooperation breaks down.

And the third point is that this has to be as open a process as possible. You can't stiff the Pentagon, or the military in the Pentagon, because you don't like what they're going to say. And you can't stiff the old USIA [United States Information Agency] because you don't want them in the room with you.[4] And you can't keep things from one or more of the cabinet officers because it's going to produce a collision. Let collisions take place. As I said in one of my articles, the day I went home without somebody being unhappy with me or mad about me would be the day I hadn't done my job.[5] By and large, my experience was that you were able to grind the issue down and get it into a form so that you could present the president with two acceptable alternatives. Either one of these would probably work, and you had already dumped out three or four multiple-choice that wouldn't work.

Another point I would add is that the model I've just described worked well for me and I think for Carlucci. I think it's a pretty good, objective model. At the end of the day, the duty of the National Security Council staff and the assistant is to mold themselves to the personality of the president. And that is why it has to remain a flexible organization with no statutory organization or devices in it, with no requirement for the adviser to have to appear before congressional hearings, and with no other congressional strictures on it other than designating that there will be an executive secretary or secretary of the National Security Council staff. The NSC has to mold itself to the will and desire and feelings of the president. And if the president wants to stiff the Pentagon from time to time, then he ought to do it. He's the president.

I don't get anxious and bent out of shape when people say it isn't working the way it's supposed to. Yes, it is. It's working exactly the way the president wants it. In fact, if he's satisfied, that's all that counts. And so for people to argue that it isn't working because it didn't provide the president this particular kind of insight, it's up to the president to decide whether he

[3] Frank C. Carlucci was national security adviser from 1986 to 1987, and secretary of defense from 1987 to 1989.
[4] The United States Information Agency was merged into the Department of State on October 1, 1999.
[5] Powell, "The NSC System in the Last Two Years of the Reagan Administration," p. 4.

wanted it or not. If he finds himself not getting the right advice, then he ought to fix the people or the processes that are at work.

I have not seen an administration come in which did not find the need to change its processes as a group. In the Bush years, they initially walked away from what we called the Policy Review Group in the Carlucci/Powell years. But they had to reinvent it within a few months, calling it the deputies committee. And they always changed the name of the documents from NSDD [National Security Decision Directive] to NSD [National Security Directive] and the this, that, and the other. But they tend to all sort of go back to that model that says you need to have enough competent people to weigh these issues as they come in from the departments and to put them in a way so that the president can make an informed decision.

My sense of the current administration is that it makes use of this model less than previous administrations. They don't spend a lot of time reading tea leaves.

DAALDER: It's difficult to do that.

POWELL: I think if you don't follow a model somewhat similar to the one I described, you're not getting the best results out of the National Security Council process.

DAALDER: I think that's right, but it may well be what the president wants, as you say, because he is the president.

Two things you mentioned caught my attention. One is that you said that the national security adviser, of course, must have his own opinions and provide his own recommendations, but the other people should know them before the president. Does that mean that you actually talked through your own recommendations with Shultz and Weinberger or Shultz and Carlucci?[6]

POWELL: Shultz and Carlucci mostly. Before I became national security adviser, Frank made me the head of that Policy Review Group and so I was using that very talented organization. Are you familiar with that period and who we had?

DAALDER: Yes.

POWELL: It was Oakley, Ross, Peter Rodman, Bob Linhard, José Sorzano.[7] This was a hell of a group. I had some real characters in that outfit and it was wonderful. I had a great time. And

[6] George P. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989. Caspar W. Weinberger was secretary of defense from 1981 to 1987.

[7] Robert B. Oakley held the positions of coordinator for counter-terrorism at the Department of State from 1984 to 1986 and senior director for Near East and South Asia affairs on the National Security Council from 1986 to 1988. Dennis B. Ross was director and then senior director for Near East and South Asia affairs on the National Security Council from 1986 to 1988 and served as director of policy planning at the Department of State from 1989 to 1992. Peter W. Rodman was director of policy planning at the Department of State from 1984 to 1986, deputy national security adviser (foreign policy) on the National Security Council from 1986 to 1987, and National Security Council counselor and special assistant from 1987 to 1990. Major General Robert E. Linhard was a National Security Council staff member for arms control from 1982 to 1983, director for arms control and defense programs from 1983 to 1986, and senior director for arms control and defense programs from 1986 to 1988. José S. Sorzano held the position of senior director for Latin American affairs on the National Security Council from 1985 to 1987.

Frank gave me a lot of license to fight these issues out in a very well-defined process with State and the Pentagon. My God, there was Perle, Gaffney.[8] We're talking about the evil empire incarnate. They were all my friends. We had a wonderful time. Nitze, Rowny, Kampelman.[9] I don't think there's ever been such a gathering in the two departments and the White House like that. Frank gave me a lot of latitude to run that Policy Review Group. When we ended our meetings on a particular issue, they could sense where the NSC staff was, what my thinking was, and what Frank's thinking was. So we may not, in every instance, have called them up and said what I thought. But remember that we met every morning. During my watch, Shultz, Carlucci, and I met every morning when we were all in town. Alone. Every single morning. It was Shultz's idea.

When Weinberger left and Carlucci took over, Shultz marched in and said, "We ought to get together every morning." Frank and I said, "We come in enough, George." It was harder for Frank, and they decided to meet in my office – neutral ground and convenient. And so every morning before either one of them went to his office – before George went to C Street or Frank went across the river – they came to the West Wing in the White House. We had coffee at my table at seven o'clock and we discussed everything. And I think that practice is still in place.

DAALDER: It's not every morning. It's once a week.

POWELL: Well, in my day it was every morning and if one of us was out of town, we didn't do it.

DAALDER: Right, no substitutions?

POWELL: No substitutes, no aides, no note takers. And it was designed to be from fifteen to thirty minutes long – seldom longer – because we all had to go to work.

But the beauty of it was, George would come in and tell me what evil he had perpetrated at the State Department. Frank would scream at George, George would scream at Frank. We would leave at about 7:30 a.m. What it allowed me to do was have my staff downstairs in the situation room waiting for my morning staff meetings. When I went down there, I knew the views of the two cabinet officers and myself. And so we started off the day with the three principals kind of knowing what each was thinking and what we were going to do. Then we communicated it to the staff and it usually flowed from the NSC staff out, because we were the first ones off the mark. We were all a team talking and there was a level of cooperation that I think was quite excellent. So it was not just the Policy Review Group and not just the paper process but the three guys talking to each other every single morning. George traveled a lot and Frank traveled a lot, but I will bet you we met about sixty or seventy percent of the time. It was religious and nothing interfered with it. It was an excellent idea. We also had the weekly

[8] Richard N. Perle was assistant secretary of defense for international security policy from 1981 to 1987. Frank J. Gaffney, Jr. served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear forces and arms control policy from 1983 to 1987 and as acting assistant secretary of defense for international security policy from 1987 to 1989.

[9] Paul H. Nitze served as an arms control negotiator during the Reagan administration. Edward L. Rowny was an adviser to the president and secretary of state for arms control during the Reagan administration. Max M. Kampelman served as head of the U.S. delegation to the negotiations on nuclear and space arms in Geneva from 1985 to 1989.

breakfasts where everybody met. All the assistant secretaries came and included each other. But that was more pro forma when you do it only once a week. This was a daily part of our lives. This was a day's work.

DAALDER: And that's how you could make sure that everybody knew where each sat.

POWELL: Yeah. And everybody came armed with their bureaucracy.

My favorite story is George came in one morning mad. Reagan had just decided to start supporting the United Nations and to pay our arrears. A big story. He'd come to understand that we just couldn't sit there without trying to fix this problem. We were going to make the announcement on a Tuesday and we were going to start backgrounding the press on Monday. On Monday morning George comes in kind of mad. And he's upset because what they wanted to do was send the deputy secretary of state, John Whitehead, a wonderful man, up to the UN on Tuesday to tell the UN secretary general all about it.[10] They didn't want the White House briefing it on Monday. So George unloaded on me and I listened carefully. And I said, "George, here's why we want to do it today and not have John doing it tomorrow. John did all the work on this; John gets to take credit. And we're very proud of that. But the headline I want tomorrow morning is on page one, above the fold, right side, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*. Reagan – not the State Department, not Powell, not Shultz, not Whitehead – decides ta-da-ta-da-ta-da." Shultz looked at me and then a big smile came across his face. He said, "Thanks for reminding me who we work for."

Very rare that I ever had to do that. George wouldn't mind this story because he was one of the greatest advocates of the president. It was just a little vignette to show you that the White House national security adviser does what you will not really get from the departments all the time and how. When you had guys like Shultz, Powell and Carlucci working together, you can have this. This is the way you've got to do it.

DAALDER: The key is I know that your secretary knows and he approves it.

POWELL: It was also interesting and different in that I had a president who was not so enmeshed in the details of things that he wanted to plug in all of these decisions. In fact, that was Reagan's great skill, which some people saw as a weakness. It was a weakness only if he had the wrong people around him. But it was a great skill in that if you guys can solve this, why bother me with it as long as it's consistent with my principles, my views and what I'm trying to accomplish.

And so I'd finish with George and Frank. I'd finish with my staff in the morning, go to the White House staff meeting, and then go in to see the president and tell him what we'd done. "Mr. President, we've decided that we're going to make this UN announcement background here at White House this afternoon. And then John Whitehead can go tomorrow morning and discuss it in detail." He never knew there was a debate on that. Why should he care?

[10] John C. Whitehead served as deputy secretary of state from 1985 to 1989.

The thing about any study or discussion of these kinds of issues, either for the National Security Council or the discussions people get me into about Goldwater-Nichols, is that it is secondary to the kinds of people and personalities involved.[11] The greatest designed NSC system or military system doesn't mean as much as the people who are involved.

To take you off on a tangent, I was considered a very active, aggressive chairman using the powers of Goldwater-Nichols. That's what it said in the literature. What thinking people sometimes don't understand is that Goldwater-Nichols gave me nothing that Cheney didn't want me to have.[12] And so I was empowered not by Goldwater and Nichols but by Dick Cheney to be his partner in helping him run the Pentagon. Nothing in the law said he had to listen to my advice, had to hear it if he didn't want to, or couldn't take his advice from the guard at the desk. So it created a process for what really makes the process work – this personal relationship between the people.

DAALDER: Considering the relationship you described between Carlucci/Shultz/Powell, was a similar process possible under Carlucci/Weinberger/Shultz, given the differences between Weinberger and Shultz?

POWELL: Yeah, but it was a little more work. The first nine months of the Carlucci/Powell regime at the NSC worked the way I just described it, except we didn't have the breakfast meetings. We had weekly meetings.

DAALDER: Was most of the work done by you because that's the way it worked on a personal basis?

POWELL: Yeah, one level below the principals because it was easier to have me work it with Armacost, Armitage, and Bob Gates at CIA.[13] It was a little easier for us to work it one level below the top and then bring it to the top.

Weinberger had confidence in his seconds. Shultz had confidence in his seconds; Carlucci had confidence in his seconds. And so we generally could fight out most of this stuff and then bring it up. And that didn't mean that Shultz and Weinberger weren't going to have a duel over it. Invariably they did, but that was the nature of those personalities and there was a long history between those three gentlemen.

DAALDER: There were many people trying to manage that one.

POWELL: Everybody found a way to use the conflict that existed between the two of them as a way to foster his or her agenda. When there are fewer conflicts between the two top fellows,

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[11] The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-433; October 1, 1986) strengthened the role of the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. Powell served as chairman of the joint chiefs from 1989 to 1993 (in both the Bush and Clinton administrations).

[12] Richard B. Cheney was the secretary of defense from 1989 to 1993.

[13] Michael H. Armacost was the undersecretary of state for political affairs from 1984 to 1989. Richard L. Armitage was assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs from 1983 to 1989. Robert M. Gates was deputy director of central intelligence from late 1986 to 1989.

there are fewer opportunities for their subordinates to foster an agenda that tries to get through that wedge.

DAALDER: You saw the same process from a different perspective working in the two next administrations. The presidents were different, but Scowcroft had a very similar ideology.[14]

POWELL: The Scowcroft model is not terribly different.

DAALDER: But you had a president much more involved in decisionmaking.

POWELL: President Bush was much more involved than President Reagan. He wanted to hear the fights; he wanted to hear the debates. But look at the team that came in – Scowcroft, Cheney, Baker, Powell, and Bob Gates.[15] We had all worked for or with each other in some capacity before; we were all the best of friends and the best of adversaries. By that I mean that we all knew each other, we knew how we fought, and we knew each other's strengths and weaknesses. Bush very much enjoyed listening to us all bat away. And it was never personal. We would have meetings in the Oval Office where I would say something and Scowcroft would say, "You know you got your head up your butt." In front of the president of the United States!

Cheney was my boss, but we were very close personal friends. When we disagreed on something, even though I went to meetings with him as his adviser and his subordinate, if he knew my disagreement was pretty serious, he never failed to say, "Mr. President, here's what I think. This is the Pentagon's view on it." He would present it: "Colin has a different view, and I want you to hear it. Colin, tell the president why you're all screwed up." And I'd say, "Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. President, the Secretary and I are in slight disagreement." But Cheney was so secure in who he was and what he was and with his own series of checks and balances on the issue and his own staff that he gave me pretty clear rein to speak my mind.

As chairman of the joint chiefs, I would avoid political discussions unless asked directly by somebody. "Colin, I had a complaint on the Hill. Have you talked to so and so about it?" They understood that I'd been a national security adviser so I was in a unique position having had the job and not wanting it right now. "Scowcroft is the national security adviser; I'm not going to play national security adviser." Brent used that model where you could have these kinds of open debates and discussions.

My experience with the Clinton administration was just the first nine months when it was very much an unformed, unstructured kind of process. They finally gave it more structure and had very long meetings with everybody involved. It was a different model. I was the last of the Mohicans – the last guy left over from the Bush/Reagan years – and now suddenly I was in the Clinton administration. The vice president and his principal advisers always extended me the greatest courtesy and always allowed me to speak my mind, and I felt as welcome in their deliberations as I ever was in the other two. But they also recognized that much of what I had to offer was not always well received. But that never stopped the president from inviting me to

[14] Lt. General Brent Scowcroft was national security adviser from 1989 to 1993. (He also served as national security adviser to President Ford from 1975 to 1977.)
[15] James A. Baker, III was secretary of state from 1989 to 1992.

speak or listening carefully to what I had to say. Scarily he remembered everything. That was the frightening part. He'd say, "Colin was telling me about that four months ago."

DAALDER: Tony Lake mentioned at the roundtable that he made a mistake in being too reticent as a national security adviser the first six months.[16] And, in fact, you told him, "You ought to speak up and tell us more of what you think."

POWELL: Sometimes the national security adviser has got to be the tiebreaker and you just can't keep rambling. Very often we'd go into these meetings where everybody was waiting for somebody to decide something. And the president just wanted to chat forever and you had two cabinet officers that were quite different – Cheney/Baker, Weinberger/Shultz, and Warren Christopher/Les Aspin.[17] Tony had to expedite. I'm glad he remembered that because he had Les who was a very political figure and academic and who was constantly searching for congressional committee solutions. And Warren who is one of the great public servants of our time but was not always leaping out there with a leading position. And so, yes, I did encourage Tony to be more "let's end this thing and decide where we are going." And Tony should have. He said the same thing to me himself many years ago. He should have been more forthcoming in terms of trying to impose answers when nobody else would. Sooner or later, somebody's got to decide something. I think Sandy [Berger] has taken on that role more.[18] Some would say too much. But if the president is happy. . . .

DAALDER: We have noticed a couple of specific things. For some reason, Republican administrations tend to have a national security adviser or a deputy who has a military background and usually, in fact, is a military officer. Democrats never. Strange, but I don't think there's necessarily a correlation here.

POWELL: A mixed record on the Republicans.

DAALDER: Very much so. But it does raise the question about the value of somebody not just having had a military service but actually being a high ranking officer. It could be either active duty or, in the case of Scowcroft, not active duty. All other things being equal, is this something that is helpful?

POWELL: Well, let's test this proposition. I didn't have a military deputy.

DAALDER: No, but you were yourself. It's one or the other.

POWELL: Scowcroft didn't.

DAALDER: Scowcroft was a three-star general himself.

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[16] Anthony Lake was national security adviser from 1993 to 1997.
[17] Warren M. Christopher was secretary of state from 1993 to 1997. Les Aspin was secretary of defense from 1993 to 1994.
[18] Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger has served as the national security adviser since 1997.

POWELL: He was a very distinguished officer. Frank picked me. I don't know if you could call us military officers – it might be a bit adverse to him. He thought I had skills in organizing people and getting them to act.

DAALDER: Which is a military skill to a certain extent.

POWELL: I accept that. I don't know if there's an explanation for it. Didn't Sandy have a military deputy at one point? Didn't he have two deputies?

DAALDER: He had two deputies. The second deputy started off as a one star, then became a two star.[19] But he really became the old executive secretary in terms of being a person and not really a policy adviser. He was supposed to run the staff but then wasn't allowed to put his iron in the fire. So I wouldn't call that the same. It wasn't the same kind of mold as Carlucci/Powell, Poindexter/McFarlane, or Haig/Kissinger.[20]

POWELL: Interesting. I hadn't thought of that. As you know, when I became deputy national security adviser, it was a condition that I was the only deputy. It was readily granted by Carlucci.

It's probably not a bad idea to balance somebody having a political/State Department background with somebody having a military background. You don't need me to take you through the whole history of active duty officers. That would not be a good idea. I got called on it when I became national security adviser, having publicly said I didn't think it was a good idea for an active duty officer to be national security adviser. They said, "How can you reconcile what you said and what you are doing." I just took the best excuse and said, "Well, it's up to the president. He has no problem. Why should I have a problem?" And then, "But why don't you resign?" I said, "Because I'd planned to go back to the army. I didn't ask for this job and I really don't particularly want it." And I did go back to the army.

DAALDER: Well, I know you have to go. Thanks very much. It was an excellent and very useful conversation.

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[19] Brigadier (later Major) General Donald L. Kerrick was deputy national security adviser from 1997 to 1999.

[20] Vice Admiral John M. Poindexter was deputy national security adviser from 1983 to 1985 and national security adviser from 1985 to 1986. Robert C. "Bud" McFarlane was national security adviser from 1983 to 1985. (He also served as deputy national security adviser from 1982 to 1983.) Colonel (later General) Alexander M. Haig, Jr. served as deputy national security adviser from 1970 to 1973. Henry A. Kissinger served as the national security adviser from 1969 to 1975 and secretary of state from 1973 to 1977.

APPENDIX D:
INTERVIEW WITH VICE ADMIRAL JOHN M. POINDEXTER[1]

This interview was conducted on March 29, 2000, by Ivo H. Daalder and I. M. Destler.

DESTLER: Thank you for agreeing to meet with us. Could you start by stating for the record when you joined the NSC staff?

POINDEXTER: I came to the White House in May of 1981. I first came as military assistant to Richard Allen.[2] It was kind of a peculiar time period. Then he left and Bill Clark came.[3] Then when Bill went to Interior in October of 1983, Bud [McFarlane] moved up to be the national security adviser.[4] I moved up to be his deputy.

DAALDER: You had been Judge Clark's military assistant?

POINDEXTER: Yes, both. I had been there practically since the beginning when they were only a few months into the administration. I arrived just after the president had been shot.[5] One of the reasons that I came was that [Richard] Allen and [Jim] Baker and [Ed] Meese were concerned about the performance of the situation room in the aftermath of that shooting.[6] As you recall, Al Haig . . .

DESTLER: It was a famous meeting, yes.

POINDEXTER: . . . made a statement.[7] So I was asked to come to the staff to be the military assistant. Specifically to look at the situation room and if changes were needed, make recommendations for those changes, and improve the ability to respond in a crisis. I spent six months or so looking at the history of the situation room. I think there was a clear misunderstanding at the beginning of the administration as to what the situation room was capable of doing and what it should have been doing. Basically, at that point it was, and I think still is, a message-switching center without any policy input or any command and control. But that wasn't recognized.

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[1] Admiral Poindexter was national security adviser from December 4, 1985, to November 25, 1986.
[2] Richard V. Allen was national security adviser from 1981 to 1982.
[3] Judge William P. Clark served as national security adviser from 1982 to 1983 and secretary of the interior from 1983 to 1985.
[4] Robert C. "Bud" McFarlane served as deputy national security adviser from 1982 to 1983 and national security adviser from 1983 to 1985.
[5] President Ronald Reagan was shot on March 31, 1981.
[6] Edwin Meese, III was counselor to President Reagan from 1981 to 1985 and attorney general of the United States from 1985 to 1988. James A. Baker, III was chief of staff to President Reagan from 1981 to 1985 and secretary of the treasury from 1985 to 1988.
[7] General Alexander M. Haig, Jr. served as secretary of state from 1981 to 1982. After President Reagan was shot, Haig stated, "I am in control here."

DAALDER: What did they think the situation room was?

POINDEXTER: Well, I think they thought it was more of a command center.

DESTLER: An early command center, the place where you could run operations?

POINDEXTER: Right.

DESTLER: And there would be voice communications?

POINDEXTER: Right. And they had more experienced people there rather than just watch officers.

DESTLER: Watch officers, who processed and sorted messages?

POINDEXTER: Right. But it was interesting. I sometimes thought about it in terms of the Navy commissioning a ship the very first time without ever having done it before and with no fixed standard operating procedures. There were the turf battles that went on, the uncertainty as to what resources were available, the mixed up missions and charters of the various offices in the White House. I'm sure this happens every time there's a change in administration, especially a change in party.

DESTLER: After that you became deputy when McFarlane became the assistant.

POINDEXTER: Right. As I recall, it was October of 1983.

DESTLER: Did you have any special mandate while you were deputy?

POINDEXTER: At the beginning in October of 1983, I think I was the only deputy. Later on, Don Fortier came on board and was another one.[8] I remained the principal deputy. Bud and I divided up responsibilities so that he pretty much looked outside and I looked inside. I managed the staff and he managed relations with the president, the cabinet officers, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and so on. He was Mr. Outside and I was Mr. Inside, and I think that worked reasonably well.

DAALDER: When Fortier came in, how did you divide the responsibility between the two of you?

POINDEXTER: Well, Don primarily focused on particular problem areas. He focused generally on the Middle East, Iran, etc. and worked with the staff, rather than across the board, in those very specific areas.

DAALDER: Did you, as the principal deputy, chair interagency committees?

[8] Donald R. Fortier was deputy national security adviser from 1983 until his death in August 1986.

POINDEXTER: Yes.

DAALDER: But not like the structure of the deputies committee?[9] Was there its equivalent?

POINDEXTER: I've forgotten all of the acronyms, but, for instance, I chaired an interagency committee that reviewed proposed covert actions before findings were generated. I led a committee on arms control that developed administration positions. Then I guess it was the CPPG, the Crisis Pre-Planning Group, which I chaired as deputy.[10] At that time, what's now called the deputies committee didn't really exist.

DAALDER: But there were its equivalents in certain particular areas?

POINDEXTER: In certain particular areas, right.

DESTLER: So to that extent, you were doing work outside.

POINDEXTER: Yes, to that extent.

DESTLER: But obviously you couldn't just do inside stuff.

POINDEXTER: I suppose that fifty percent of the time was spent on interagency activities and fifty percent on the internal staffs.

DESTLER: Just a final question about your deputy time. Were there any things that particularly come to mind about changes in the process that you engineered such as restructuring of the staff, beefing up particular components, beefing down other components, or anything else?

POINDEXTER: Well, the formation of the CPPG was one of the things that I brought about. From a total systems point of view, I was behind Room 208, the Crisis Management Center, over in the old EOB [Executive Office Building].[11] The idea for having it there was that we simply did not think we had the physical space back in the situation room. At the end of my tour, we had started construction in the west wing of the White House that added the extra room in the basement that houses the secure video teleconferencing systems.

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[9] The deputies committee was established in the Bush administration and continued in the Clinton administration. Its members include the deputies of the principals, who are the national security adviser, the secretary of state, the secretary of defense, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and the director of central intelligence (as well as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in the Clinton administration).

[10] The function of the CPPG was to consider what crises might arise and what to do about them. Its members included the deputy-level cabinet officers.

[11] The Crisis Management Center was set up to serve as the focus of all crisis management; it worked with a staff separate from the National Security Council. Its purpose was also to conduct "pre-crisis collection and analysis of information about likely crisis areas in an effort to anticipate events and to provide extensive background information to decision makers as a crisis preventive" and to become the "institutional memory for the policy makers." See Robert C. McFarlane, Richard Saunders, and Thomas C. Shull, "The National Security Council: Organization for Policy Making," in R. Gordon Hoxie, ed., *The Presidency and National Security Policy* (New York: Center for the Study of the Presidency, 1987), p. 271. The CMC was disbanded in 1987.

The reason that I wanted a secure video teleconferencing system was from my experience with the situation room a long time ago. When I was a captain, I was the executive assistant to the chief of naval operations, Jim Holloway, and this was in the days when George Brown was the chairman of the JCS.[12] There was no vice chairman at the time. (This was obviously before Goldwater-Nichols.[13]) When the chairman was out of town, the acting chairman would be one of the chiefs and it was rotated up until sometime about 1975. Rumsfeld was the secretary of defense at the time, and he decided that when George Brown was out of town, Jim Holloway would be the acting chairman all the time.[14]

And since I was Jim Holloway's executive assistant, I got dragged into the situation room operations. In those years – I guess it really hasn't changed that much – it seemed like every week there'd be some incident. Like the Korea tree chopping.[15] That's the one that probably sticks in my mind because it was such a crazy thing. What would happen was that Jim, as the acting chairman, would go to the situation room for a meeting. He would be isolated from his staff and his resources. They'd ask some question or they would discuss some proposal that needed to be fleshed out so he'd go back over to the Pentagon, the JCS staff would work the issue, and then he'd pack the stuff up and go back to the situation room. I thought this is kind of nonsense. Why not have a secure video teleconferencing system? He can stay at the Pentagon where he's got all the resources he needs. It would make for a much more efficient handling of the process.

The other problem was that every time you had an unscheduled meeting, the principals would come through the White House gate with the press out there. Immediately the press would begin to ask questions and so you had to start publicly addressing a problem before you were ready. I thought how much better it would be if these initial meetings and such at the working level could be done through secure video teleconferencing. So we developed that system and put it in.

DESTLER: And that was done in the context of the Pre-Planning Group?

POINDEXTER: That's right. I left before it was completed. But I have talked with people that were in the White House during the Gulf War and asked them how it worked. Did it serve its purpose? And it was kind of interesting because one of the people I talked to was on the deputies committee during that period of time. He had also been a nonbeliever in the system when I wanted to build it. He said, "John, you were actually right. We couldn't have run the war the way we did without it." And he talked about the way it was used every morning by the deputies committee and I understand today it's hard to have a meeting via that system because of scheduling. The demand for it is so high.

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[12] Admiral James L. Holloway, III served as chief of naval operations from 1974 to 1978. General George S. Brown was chairman of the joint chiefs of staff from 1974 to 1978.

[13] The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-433; October 1, 1986) created the position of the vice chairman of the JCS and strengthened the overall power of the chairman of the JCS.

[14] Donald H. Rumsfeld was secretary of defense from 1975 to 1977.

[15] The reference is to an incident in the Demilitarized Zone in Korea on August 18, 1976. On that date, two U.S. officers and a South Korean work force entered the DMZ to trim a poplar tree that was blocking their line of sight toward the north; the two U.S. officers were axed to death by North Korean soldiers. In response, President Ford ordered the tree to be chopped down three days later in Operation Paul Bunyan.

DAALDER: It's in constant use, especially if the deputies want to get it.

POINDEXTER: But anyway that's an accomplishment during the time that I was the deputy that I'm very proud of.

DAALDER: It was a very important innovation.

DESTLER: If we could move on to talk about how you handled matters later on when you became the national security adviser. When McFarlane left, do you remember that being sudden or surprising. Or were you expecting it? How did you know it? And who asked you to be his successor? Obviously the president did formally.

POINDEXTER: Actually, formally and informally it was the president. I suppose Bud recommended it. Don Regan was the chief of staff at the time and I got along better with Don Regan than Bud did.[16] So I don't know what discussions took place before the president decided that I should relieve Bud, but it all happened so fast. I think there was general agreement that this was the thing to do. In hindsight, I think Bud was pretty sick, but at the time it was a little bit of a surprise. I could see that he was getting very frustrated. And he clearly favored Shultz over Weinberger, which caused problems.[17] He didn't talk to me about his decision before he made it. So, I guess I was, at the time, a bit surprised. But after thinking about it for awhile it became clear what was happening.

DAALDER: Talk a bit, if you will, how as national security adviser you managed one of the big tensions in that position – between being an honest broker, which in that particular administration with the particular individuals involved was 150 percent of your time, with at the same time also serving the president as one of his advisers.

POINDEXTER: Let me confirm that I agree with you that the major role of the national security adviser is honest broker. And in answer to one of the other questions you've posed, I think it is one of the ways that you reduce the tension that is likely to exist between the major players – the president, secretary of state, secretary of defense, the director of central intelligence, and national security adviser.[18] For me, the relationship with the DCI [director of central intelligence] was not an issue. I had a very good relationship with Bill Casey, probably better than any of the other players.[19] With those five people, there obviously can be an enormous amount of tension. One of the ways I think you reduce that is for the national security adviser to not be a public spokesman. In my case, that annoyed the press to no small amount.

DESTLER: The press likes the national security adviser to be a public spokesman. And they'd like to be able to publish an article about how the national security adviser is usurping the role from the secretary of state.

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[16] Donald T. Regan served as President Reagan's chief of staff from 1985 to 1987. Prior to that, he served as the secretary of the treasury from 1981 to 1985.

[17] Caspar W. Weinberger was secretary of defense from 1981 to 1987, and George P. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989.

[18] See Appendix A for the questions.

[19] William J. Casey was director of central intelligence from 1981 until his death in 1987.

POINDEXTER: Precisely, and I must say that I think that I stuck to it pretty well. I ignored the press and they were not my friends.

DESTLER: We actually have some data on that. One of the things we have done in our research is to monitor mentions of the national security adviser versus the secretary of state in the press. The data support your statement.

POINDEXTER: I think I spoke to the White House press corps in the briefing room the whole time I was at the White House maybe a total of two or three times. I don't think many more than that.

DESTLER: And this includes off the record?

POINDEXTER: This includes off the record. Let me just say some of my predecessors would also take the position that the national security adviser should not be the public spokesman.

DESTLER: Right.

POINDEXTER: They would accept it if it were on the record, but would not accept that position off the record.

DAALDER: And what you're saying is that you did both.

POINDEXTER: I did both. I just thought that generally I don't like off-the-record background types of things, because in my opinion very little, if anything you say, is really off the record. Eventually it comes out. And so I'm still cautious to this day about what I say to anybody.

As I said before, Bill Casey and I had a very good relationship though we didn't in the beginning when I was deputy. And Bill told me one day, "John, if more than one person knows something, it's not a secret." I'm convinced that that's absolutely correct.

Periodically when we would have leaks of very sensitive information, we'd ask the FBI to look into it. We thought that maybe four or five people knew something and when the FBI would come back, it'd turn out to be maybe 200 people. The four or five that we knew of and then secretaries and assistants and messengers.

One of the things that I tried hard to do was to treat everybody evenhandedly. Bud had arranged for Shultz to see the president at a regular weekly meeting. It would be his agenda, i.e., Shultz's agenda, and Bud used to sit in. So it would just be Bud and Shultz and the president.

DESTLER: And not the chief of staff?

POINDEXTER: He may or may not have been there. But the chief of staff really didn't play a major role in the foreign policy stuff. He was usually kept informed, but he really didn't play much of a role. Shultz' weekly meeting with the president annoyed Weinberger the most. And

so the first thing I did was to institute a weekly meeting for Weinberger so we treated him exactly the same as Shultz. They had the same amount of time, and it seemed to me the only fair way of doing it. We didn't have a regular Bill Casey meeting, but Bill could come in whenever he wanted. Bill was not really an issue, but Shultz and Weinberger were.

DAALDER: Did you have meetings with just the three of you – Shultz, Weinberger, and yourself – on a regular basis?

POINDEXTER: We tried to have a lunch maybe once a month or once every two weeks. I've frankly forgotten. My recollection is that Bud started that shortly before he left, and I made a few changes in the way it was done, but in my opinion it worked extremely well. We had this regularly scheduled lunch and it involved Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, and me. And the ground rule was that we wouldn't have it if all of us couldn't be there.

DESTLER: You didn't take deputies?

POINDEXTER: We didn't take deputies.

DAALDER: No substitutions?

POINDEXTER: No substitutions and all four had to be there. We held it over in the family dining room off of the State Dining Room in the White House residence. And, in my opinion, it was a very effective mechanism for discussing issues and avoiding surprises and moving toward what I hoped would be a team effort.

We also used to have breakfasts that alternated between the State and Defense. I guess these were every other week. One week Bud and I and later on. . .

DAALDER: These were with the deputies?

POINDEXTER: Yes, these were with the deputies. For instance, the one at Defense would be with the SecDef [secretary of defense] and his deputy and, I think, even the secretary's EA [executive assistant].

DESTLER: Was the chairman there?

POINDEXTER: The chairman was not there. I'm trying to remember whether Shultz came to Defense and Weinberger came to State or not and frankly I can't remember.

DAALDER: So they might be, in fact, bilateral as opposed to trilateral?

POINDEXTER: Right. I just can't remember that.

DESTLER: There were other meetings?

DAALDER: There were also bilateral meetings between Shultz and Weinberger.

POINDEXTER: Probably, yes.

DAALDER: So it may be that you had a triangular relationship that was bilateral.

POINDEXTER: But all of these things were mechanisms to try to improve the teamwork and to dispel problems that existed.

DESTLER: You were in a particularly difficult situation. First of all, you had this well-known gap, even at the time, between Shultz and Weinberger on the question of the use of military power around the world. Shultz, who didn't have it and wanting to use it lots of places, and Weinberger, who did have it but not wanting to use it anywhere. You also had a situation in which there seemed to be great needs, pressures, problems. The Nicaragua stuff has become famous. And there's Libya. There was just a bunch of issues. The people who had the instruments didn't want to use them, but there was pressure to do so. Essentially that created a very difficult and complicated situation.

POINDEXTER: It was very complicated but by the time that I became the national security adviser I think relationships were beginning to improve. There were several reasons for that. One was that General Vessey, who had been the chairman, was very much opposed to use of the military force and had a very big influence on Weinberger.[20]

When did Crowe become the chairman?[21]

DAALDER: In 1985.

POINDEXTER: So, by the time I was the national security adviser, Crowe was the chairman. And Bill was a different person from Jack Vessey. Different background, different view of the world. And frankly, in my opinion, Bill was a lot easier to work with. So things had begun to settle down a little bit by the time I became national security adviser. And I like to think that the evenhanded treatment that I tried to provide both secretaries was helpful in making the process work better.

DAALDER: I think you've described well how you were the honest broker by being evenhanded and open to both sides and increasing communication. How did you combine that with at the same time being an adviser to the president? Or did you view your role more on the honest broker side, less on the advising side?

POINDEXTER: No, I tried to keep it balanced because I think that you can't be a good adviser without being an honest broker. They go hand in hand. We worked very hard on decision memoranda to make sure that the cabinet positions were clearly laid out. My honest broker role was to make sure that all those positions were there and that their ideas were included in the list of options. But in the adviser's role, invariably, in my opinion and/or the opinion of the NSC staff, those positions and options were not all-inclusive. They wouldn't be sufficient and so we

[20] General John W. Vessey, Jr. was the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff from 1982 to 1985.
[21] Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr. served as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff from 1985 to 1989.

were not at all hesitant to put our own, the NSC staff position, in memoranda along with options that maybe were completely different or were some combination of options that had come from the departments.

DAALDER: Did you make recommendations?

POINDEXTER: I made recommendations at the end. Now, usually those were verbal recommendations as opposed to written. And we'd have all the positions laid out and usually I would make a recommendation to the president about which option I thought he ought to take.

DESTLER: The president would get the paper, but then you, in the course of your daily meeting or in a special meeting, would be with the president and talk it over.

DAALDER: Did other members of the principals know your views? Did you share your recommendation or views with them in most cases or was this something that you felt only the president needed to know?

POINDEXTER: No, it might differ from case-to-case but I think they generally would be aware of the position that we were taking. And often the position would be some compromise between the two where neither side – neither Defense nor State – got all of what it wanted. I'm sure it's always a tough job, but at the time it seemed like it was exceptionally hard.

DAALDER: Well, you had some strong people to deal with. Talk a little bit now about the staff and the structuring of the staff in terms of what kind of people you think ought to be on it, how it ought to be organized, whether hierarchically or not. It's an important but not well understood part of the process.

POINDEXTER: The people are by far the most important part of the consideration. I'm not sure the organizational structure makes a whole lot of difference, but having the right people is absolutely critical. And I like the idea of having a mix of people from academia, from the foreign service, from the military service, from government careers, and from the intelligence community. The work that I have done since leaving government clearly shows that humans have failure in their wetware, in the way the brain operates. But in the end, even though the human reasoning process is faulty, it's the best that we have. And the only way to compensate for the weaknesses and the failures is to get diverse viewpoints from people that have had diverse experiences. I think it would be a mistake to say the NSC staff should only be populated by people that come from the outside, and, on the other hand, it would be wrong to say that they should come only from the inside.

You've got to have some kind of organizational structure and, I said it earlier, I don't think the particular structure makes a lot of difference. But I think the structure today is probably similar to what it was when I was there in that you had regional directorates. You need this mix, this diversity in all of those directorates. And you've got to make sure that even if you have a hierarchical structure, anybody on the staff still can get a message or information up to the national security adviser. That's the ideal situation. Sometimes it's hard. Eventually I got to the point where I had to provide a filter between me and the rest of the staff.

One of the other things I did was establish the e-mail system, which has come back to bite, but I'm convinced it was the right way to go.

DAALDER: Did you communicate by e-mail yourself?

POINDEXTER: Oh, yes.

DAALDER: None of your successors have.

POINDEXTER: Is that right?

DAALDER: Up to this day. It's remarkable but true.

POINDEXTER: Well, I started thinking about this when I was a military assistant. It was to try to improve the operations in the office. This was in the very early days of network mail and IBM had an internal system that they used in the company called PROFS.[22]

DAALDER: Right. It's the one that you eventually got.

POINDEXTER: In those years, IBM had people on-site. This was in the days when they really provided fantastic support. And so I said to the senior IBM representative, "We have to do better than playing telephone tag all the time. It's just ridiculous." And he said, "Well, we have this internal system call PROFS." And I said, "Well, how about letting us be a beta test site and let us use the system here." They finally agreed to do that. And that was the beginning of e-mail in the White House.

In the early 1980's, we really were probably about fifteen to twenty years ahead of our time in that we desperately wanted to improve the methodology and the systematic approach to addressing problems. Among other things, that led to the development of the Crisis Management Center over in the old EOB, which no longer exists today. We tried to get the Defense Department interested because they had the money for R&D, and I finally convinced Frank Carlucci to provide some money for it.[23] But we were really ahead of the technology. We had a vision of what needed to be done, but the technology to support it simply wasn't there. At that time, we even thought about local area networks (LANS) and nobody knew what we were talking about. That was in 1982 – eighteen years ago.

But back to my earlier point. Before I became national security adviser, I could keep up with messages pretty well. As I said earlier, in the deputy's job a large part of my time was focused internally. But then when I became national security adviser, I simply could not keep up with the messages. I worked without a deputy for a good many months because Don Fortier

[22] The IBM Professional Office System (PROFS) is an e-mail messaging system.
[23] Frank C. Carlucci served as deputy secretary of defense from 1981 to 1983. He replaced Poindexter as national security adviser in December 1986. In November 1987 he left the NSC to become the secretary of defense and served in that position until January of 1989.

became ill and eventually died. Finally we brought on Al Keel.[24] But there was a period of time there, it must have been six months or more, when I didn't have a deputy. And I had convinced Rod McDaniel, who was an old friend of mine to come over to be the executive secretary.[25] You probably know that's the only statutory position.

DESTLER: Right. It's in the National Security Act of 1947.[26]

POINDEXTER: So Rod was the executive secretary, and even though he remained executive secretary, in the months when there was no deputy Rod essentially acted more or less as the deputy. So the mail from Rod and the office directors came straight through to me. All the other mail would first go to Rod and Rod would filter it out and send it up. I simply could not keep up with all the outside work and the message traffic.

But back to the way you organize. I think it's this diversity idea – the diversity of experience, the diversity of viewpoints – that is important. And it's important to let everybody on the staff be heard.

There is another thing about the kind of people needed. I remember I had one person, who was on the staff, who was actually brilliant, had a very good memory, and was very intellectually creative. He had such a memory that if you asked him about something, he could tell you the date it happened. He knew exactly who was involved. And I'm not talking just about internal Washington stuff. I'm talking about stuff in country. He was very much an expert but an absolutely horrible staff officer. He would sit in an interagency meeting and within the first five minutes he had everybody so ticked off that nothing useful happened after that.

DAALDER: So you had him as a library that you could use to listen in from the outside.

POINDEXTER: He was one of the office directors and eventually I had to move him out of that position, which annoyed him to no end but nothing was happening. Even though he had excellent ideas, I just could not get across to him that we could not do this job on our own, and we had to have interagency help and cooperation and input.

Another big role of the adviser, it seems to me, is to follow up on implementation to make sure that the decisions actually get implemented.

DESTLER: Of course, as you know better than we, one of the prominent criticisms of the NSC, including the period under your watch, was that some people became quite operational. Sometimes it was in ways that didn't engage the agencies. Oliver North was the prominent example of that, but there were others.[27] What is your take on that?

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[24] Alton G. Keel, Jr. acted as the deputy national security adviser after Fortier's death in 1986.
[25] Rodney B. McDaniel served as the executive secretary on the National Security Council from 1986 to 1987.
[26] The National Security Act of 1947 (P.L. 80-253; July 26, 1947) established the National Security Council. The statutory membership includes the president, vice president, and the secretaries of state and defense. The chairman of the JCS and the director of central intelligence are statutory advisers. The act allowed for a small, permanent staff directed by an executive secretary.
[27] Lt. Colonel Oliver L. North was a director for political-military affairs on the National Security Council from 1981 to 1986.

POINDEXTER: I think it's a mistake to rule it out just as I think it's a mistake for there to be an executive order that says that we won't assassinate bad actors. I'm not suggesting that we should, but I think it's always a mistake to say that you're not going to do something. You need to leave the question mark out there. It provides you much more leverage. I think the same thing is true of a more operational role for the NSC staff than is sometimes traditional. Sometimes there are circumstances when you're dealing with very complex problems where there are seldom right answers and the issues are all shades of gray – not black or white. And so you want to preserve for the president the maximum amount of flexibility so that he's got lots of options to address all kinds of problems. And I think if that means, as we thought it did during our time, that somebody on the NSC staff has to take a more operational role then I don't see any problem with that.

In my opinion, there has yet to be a really definitive story written about Iran-Contra. Constantly the authors that write about it say that we violated the law. That has never been charged. It has never been proven; it's never been tried. In fact, we wanted to make that an issue in all of the activity that followed, but the government was never willing to make it one. And to this day, I do not believe that we violated the law. We were very careful not to. It's that the law had some loopholes in it and I think those loopholes were deliberate. For instance, when Ollie would be on the Hill, he would have congressman come up to him and ask him how things were going. In my opinion, the congressional Democratic leadership at the time did not want to be put in a position of being held responsible for the loss of Central America. And so they deliberately left some loopholes in there that obviously could be used to beat us about the head and shoulders later. But, in my opinion, they were very deliberate.

DESTLER: It was the question of whether the National Security Council was an agency that was the loophole?

POINDEXTER: Yes. In our view and in the view of the two intelligence boards at the time. There was the president's foreign intelligence [advisory] board, PFIAB, and another one -- [28]

DAALDER: The Oversight Board?

POINDEXTER: The Intelligence Oversight Board. And in their opinion, which we asked for and got, the NSC was not an intelligence agency. And I think that that is correct and so the Boland amendments did not fly.[29]

DESTLER: It said any agency, didn't it?

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[28] The PFIAB is a separate, non-partisan White House entity that provides the president with advice on the conduct of U.S. intelligence. The Intelligence Oversight Board also provided advice on intelligence matters.

[29] The first Boland amendment (1982) restricted U.S. activities in assisting rebels in Nicaragua. The second Boland amendment (1984) went further. Boland II (P.L. 98-473, Title I, sec. 8066) stated: "During fiscal year 1985, no funds available to the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, or any other agency or entity of the United States involved in intelligence activities may be obligated or expended for the purpose or which would have the effect of supporting, directly or indirectly, military or paramilitary operations in Nicaragua by any nation, group, organization, movement, or individual." Reprinted in Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, eds., *The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History* (New York: The New Press, 1993), p. 20.

POINDEXTER: No, I think it said an intelligence agency (in other words an agency involved in intelligence activities).

DESTLER: So in your view, what you were doing was legal?

POINDEXTER: Absolutely.

DESTLER: In retrospect, was it wise operationally or in substantive terms?

POINDEXTER: On balance, it would seem to me that it's better if the NSC staff does not have to get operational. For one thing, the infrastructure to support it just is not there. And so it means that everything is done on a shoestring, which opens up the possibility for mistakes. On the other hand, if you have some objective to accomplish, and that's the only way to do it, I don't have a problem with that. And I think that was the situation at that time.

DAALDER: I think that the "never say never" rule, which the president probably made use of more often than not, makes a lot of sense. Having the ability to become operational becomes a way out of a problem.

But just to be clear about the nature of the problem: The problem was Congress prohibiting others, but not the NSC specifically, from doing what was widely believed within the government to be the right thing to do. As opposed to the Central America issue, in the Iran case the problem was that other parts of the government didn't want to do what the president wanted to do. Would that be a correct way to characterize it? That the reason why the NSC became operational is because the State Department wouldn't do it and the secretary of state disagreed with the policy? Because you need the flexibility at times for the NSC to become operational and because the president is the president. Is that a fair way of saying it? It's a shorthand way of putting it.

POINDEXTER: It is a shorthand way. It's not quite right but it's close. And the reason it's not quite right, with respect to Iran, is that Shultz was supportive of some aspects and not supportive of other aspects.

DAALDER: And the same is true for Weinberger?

POINDEXTER: And the same is true of Weinberger. In the finding on Iran – there are actually a couple of findings involved – the first one, in my opinion, was not material, but the second one was. The second one made the DCI the agent to carry this out and in that case, the DCI decided to use a third party, a private individual, as the agent – Dick Secord.[30] In that respect, the NSC was not operational. The DCI had the responsibility for carrying out the finding and he chose to use a third independent party.

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[30] Richard V. Secord, a retired air force major general and private citizen, worked as a conduit between Iranian businessman Albert Hakim and Oliver North in the secret arms transfers to Iran and to the Contras. Kornbluh and Byrne, eds., *The Iran-Contra Scandal*, p. xxix.

Now, the complication arose because that third party was the same as the one that was being used in Central America. But I, and the NSC staff, didn't have anything to do with it. The decision for Bill to use Dick Secord was Bill's decision. One of the problems in the aftermath of all of this was that Bill died. I think there are some missing links that he could have made clear but unfortunately he was sick and then eventually died and so you don't have a good record of that.

Bill probably knew that Dick was involved in supporting the Contras. I don't recall, and I'm not sure that he fully understood that. We deliberately didn't give Bill the details of what was happening in Central America because he wasn't supposed to be involved, by law. So, it was a very complex mixture. But later on, with regard to Shultz, Shultz and Weinberger were very much opposed to the Iran business in the beginning when Bud was still there and then later on.

DESTLER: This deals particularly with the questions about arms sales, hostages, and that sort of thing.

POINDEXTER: That's right. I could spend a long time talking about this. But I'm not sure how much is really relevant.

DAALDER: The issue is the question of the problem that making the NSC operational is trying to solve. One possible problem with the Contra business was a legal prohibition that applied to other parts of the government but you believed did not apply to the NSC. And the second potential problem was that the president had a particular policy that other parts of the government refused or were reluctant to implement. And I think your argument is that that's not quite correct because you had the DCI doing it.

POINDEXTER: Yes, but I wouldn't want to say that the secretary of state or the secretary of defense refused.

DAALDER: It ought to be an option. But is it a legitimate use of the NSC for the president to say the national security adviser ought to do something if for some reason the State Department doesn't do it? Like a secret mission to Beijing?

POINDEXTER: I think that's a legitimate use and in fact, you know, I did go on a couple of missions that were not so much . . .

DAALDER: They weren't meant to cut out the State Department.

POINDEXTER: They weren't meant to cut out the State Department, but they were done.

DAALDER: We want to thank you for your time.

DESTLER: Thank you very much, Admiral.

APPENDIX E:
INTERVIEW WITH SAMUEL R. BERGER[1]

This interview was conducted on April 13, 2001, by Ivo H. Daalder and I. M. Destler.

DAALDER: Thank you for seeing us. Let's start with the first question – the fundamental tension between being the honest broker and being a policy adviser. How did you, in your day-to-day activities, as you approached your job from early in the morning to late at night, confront those two roles and try to mesh them in the best way possible?

BERGER: First of all, there are two different senses in which the term "honest broker" is applicable here. One is honest broker in terms of conveying the opinions of your colleagues to the president. And the other is honest broker between your colleagues. Let's take them separately. I think it's very important. You spend a fair amount of time as an honest broker within the world of the principals. That may mean trying to find common ground on an issue that you do not want to present to the president with State or Defense conspicuously dissenting. So, on something like national missile defense, I tried to work toward a position at various stages in the process that would, in fact, bring to the president a united view of his advisers. I had some sense of what the president's predelictions were, but I wanted to avoid putting the president in a situation where he had to do something that overruled the Pentagon, overruled the military.

So part of being an honest broker is trying to find what I call a "highest common denominator." If you can't find the highest common denominator, however, you shouldn't force it. You should take two starkly different choices to the president, in my judgment. But if you can find the highest common denominator, number one, you clear the underbrush of a lot of issues so you can take only the most important issues to the president. And, second of all, you can avoid putting the president in a spot where he's boxed in or exposed. That's a very big part of the national security adviser's role. A very big part of the role also is shuttle diplomacy in which you're one of the participants and you've got your own views, but you're trying to bring all the principals together. The notional architecture on NMD, for example, that we took to the Russians is something that derived from what the Pentagon was doing, what the State Department was doing. But working with Bob Bell, I wanted to develop an architecture that was conceivably negotiable with the Russians and which met the threat as defined by the [Central Intelligence] Agency.[2] So that's one sense of honest brokering.

DAALDER: Just on that point. Is it important to present both? There were two reasons you said why you needed the highest common denominator. One was to preserve time for the president so he doesn't have to switch gears which is always an important political consideration.

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[1] Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger was national security adviser to President Clinton from 1997 to 2001. Prior to that he served as deputy national security adviser from 1993 to 1997 and as deputy director of policy planning at the Department of State from 1977 to 1980.

[2] Robert G. Bell was senior director for arms control and defense policy on the National Security Council from 1993 to 1999.

The second was so he didn't have to overrule "A" or "B." Does that particularly occur when you already have a sense of where he's going to be at?

BERGER: Well, it helps, I think. And there are not a lot of issues that are like that. But there are issues that are particularly charged politically and where you would not want to have a misalignment between the secretary of state and the president or the secretary of defense and the president, which would put either in an awkward position of being overruled or, conversely, put the president in a similar position.

DESTLER: Just further on this and this may lead to your second sense of honest broker. Is it important for the president to know, or is it important that the president not know, that, for example on NMD, the secretary of defense is a reluctant party?

BERGER: Oh, it's absolutely important for the president to know. That gets to the second point. I'm not discussing the presidential level here. I'm talking about the other aspect of honest broker, which is simply being a conciliator among principals, keeping people moving in the same direction. You've got very high-powered people. At any given time, they could be in five different places around the world in five different time zones dealing with the same issue with five different press corps. And so it's impossible, for example, to do Sunday shows before you have a conference call and get a common language. Or else, you wake up and you read the press, and you see Secretary "X" said, "a-b-c," which was slightly off message. It's slightly more forward-leaning in the decisionmaking process, or backward-leaning in the decisionmaking process. Well, Secretary "Y" then would think it may be a kind of deliberate way to push the process forward.

DESTLER: Secretary "Y" wants to go the other way.

BERGER: Usually, I would get those calls saying: "What in the world was Cohen saying?", "What in the world was Albright saying?", "What in the world was Summers saying?"[3] It's just easier to come to the national security adviser in that situation than to have a confrontation between them. Ninety-nine percent of the time, it's easier. We had quite a collegial group of people, and usually it was not any kind of deliberate effort to move the goal post. But you're just out of sync. That's being an honest broker among your colleagues.

The second part of being an honest broker is between your colleagues and the president. And as Zbig said yesterday, you have to be a fool not to represent the views of your colleagues accurately.[4] First of all, there's the memo that goes to the president. Generally, my practice was not to show the options memo to the various agencies because then you get into a process of negotiating the language. Generally, there's been a deputies meeting. There's been a principals

[3] William S. Cohen served as secretary of defense from 1997 to 2001. Madeleine K. Albright was secretary of state from 1997 to 2001, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations from 1993 to 1997, and a member of the National Security Council staff responsible for legislative affairs from 1978 to 1981.

[4] Zbigniew Brzezinski served as national security adviser from 1977 to 1981. The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars held a forum on April 12, 2001, on the role of the national security adviser. Participants included six former national security advisers including Samuel R. Berger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Frank C. Carlucci, Andrew Goodpaster, Robert C. McFarlane, and Walt W. Rostow. A transcript and rapporteur's report are available on the Internet at http://wwics.si.edu/NEWS/nsaforum.htm.

meeting. There's been an interagency process. There's a Defense option; there's a State option; there's a Treasury option; there's a Justice option, etc. I expected the NSC drafters to write those options as if they were advocating that position.

DESTLER: So Defense doesn't see the Defense option.

BERGER: With a few exceptions. There are some things where feelings are so strong that I would say, "I'll show you before it goes to the president," or, I would say, "You write the section on the State option." But in general, I tried to avoid that because what we're trying to do is present the president with a coherent picture: "Here are the options." So, number one, you have to represent them accurately.

Number two, many times the principals would be with the president, so they would have their own shot. But that's not obviously possible in all cases.

Number three, I would almost invariably say to the president, if he was about to go against one of his major advisers on a really important issue, particularly if one of the principals was pretty highly identified with a particular position, for example, on Bosnia or on NMD: "I think you need to talk directly to Bill or Madeleine or George or Hugh."[5] That is, talk to the person who you are going against and hear it directly from them. Most of the time, the president did that if there was time. If he was going to go in a direction that the secretary of defense disagreed with, he'd call him first. And sometimes that would affect the decision. He'd say that it was really a pretty good argument that he made. It was important for them to have their shot at the president.

But, listen, you can't escape the fact that you're there with the president more often than your colleagues, although I think the people in the Cabinet think that the people in the White House spend all day in the Oval Office with their feet up, schmoozing with the president, and conspiring against them. In fact, the time I would get with the president would never be enough to go over what I had to go over. But you do have that daily contact, and there are informal conversations. And he does ask your view, and you do express your view.

I worked for a president who, as Ivo knows, was an insatiable reader. And he read outside of what we sent him because he never quite trusted that what he got was sufficiently out of the box. So I'd get something from *The Economist* or from *Der Spiegel* with a notation on the side saying, "What's wrong with this argument?" or "Why can't we do that?" But even in those informal conversations with the president on a subject, I tried to always say, "Bill really feels very strongly on the other side of this," or "Madeleine does," or "The intelligence community thinks this is a lot more serious than I do."

I'd like to believe that if you went and asked Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, Tenet, Shelton, Fuerth, they would say that they trusted me to represent their views accurately with the president.[6] And I think once you lose that trust, the whole system breaks down as it has in the

[5] George J. Tenet has served as director of central intelligence since 1997. General Henry H. "Hugh" Shelton has been chairman of the joint chiefs of staff since 1997.
[6] Leon Fuerth was Vice President Al Gore's national security adviser from 1993 to 2001.

past. Working for Secretary Vance, I did see the Zbig-Vance drama from Vance's perspective.[7] Zbig tended to understate the level of hostility yesterday. And that system didn't work.

DESTLER: Whether or not he was representing Vance, he wasn't perceived to be. This may lead to the policy adviser role question. How important is it for your senior colleagues either to know or not to know what views you are expressing to the president?

BERGER: Very few important decisions went to the president that hadn't been reviewed by the principals committee. At a different level of centrality, there are fifteen things a day that you tell the president you're doing or asking someone to do like: "We're doing a NEO [non-combatant evacuation operation] in Sierra Leone, and here are the risks."

But on major policy issues, there usually would've been at least one principals meeting. I expressed my views at those points. In fact, I tried to use those meetings, again, to find the highest common denominator, to see whether or not I could get a high-level, non-institutional consensus. But the objective is not consensus; the objective is good decisionmaking. A kind of lowest common denominator consensus is a big disservice to the president. But if you can get eighty percent of it done at that level and just isolate the one issue where there's disagreement, or if you can get to agreement by some compromise and each side just gives ten percent, I felt it was part of my job to try to get as much of that resolved as possible. But generally people knew my views from the principals meetings, or from informal discussions – on the phone, at our weekly lunch, or at breakfast.

DAALDER: Was there a difference in the principal meetings in how open you were with your views versus Wednesday lunches or a lot of the informal meetings?

BERGER: There were three formal mechanisms: There were the principals meetings. There was a weekly ABC [Albright-Berger-Cohen] lunch. And then there was a weekly breakfast, which also included Leon, George, and Hugh, and the UN ambassador. So there were all the principals involved. There's a question of leaks. It's a lot easier to talk among the three of you – even in the principals meeting. What happens is that the principals in foreign policymaking become very snakebitten because they take a position in a principals meeting, which is a pretty small group of about eight people at the table and nine people behind it. Two days later, it's in the paper that Secretary Albright argued "X," and it happened to all of us. What happens is that people tend to get a little gun-shy in terms of expressing their views very candidly.

I would not have a meeting that was too big to fit in the Situation Room. There are about twenty-two people who can sit in the Situation Room. There was obviously more candor when the group was smaller. Somebody at *The Washington Post* once asked me early on, "What do you spend most of your time on?" I said, "I spend most of my time deciding who goes to what meetings." It would be a constant struggle to keep the meetings small, but, of course, the more important the subject, the more everybody wanted to be in on it – even your own staff, *e.g.*, the two different NSC senior directors who were working on this. If you have three NSC people there, the State Department would say, "If you've got three NSC people, why shouldn't there be

[7] Cyrus Vance served as secretary of state from 1977 to 1980.

three State Department people." And before long you have too many people there for people to feel comfortable speaking candidly, and decisionmaking is hurt.

There were some issues, particularly where it involved the use of force, where we would be in my office in an informal group that would generally be principals only, plus one or two people. It may have been Dick Clarke and whoever who was doing terrorism at State, but a fairly small group of people.[8]

DESTLER: I don't know if you want to say anything more about advice, about how much you were called on to give your own views. It's different obviously for every president.

BERGER: The president wanted to know my views, but he wanted to know everybody's views. If we were in his office and somebody hadn't spoken, he would say, "Leon, what do you think about this?" It was hard to get out of that office without expressing your views. I think he wanted to take roll in terms of where people were. And also he respected each person in that room and understood where they were coming from and what their general framework was. Therefore, if the person he thought was most hawkish gave him a dovish answer, it had more credibility in some ways. There are probably more instances in which I gave my advice to the president than others, but, again, in any kind of major decision, he would want to know where everybody was.

DAALDER: Let's move on to the next issue – the public persona of the national security adviser.

BERGER: I think that this has become more difficult with the explosion of media outlets, with the virtual real-time news cycle, and with the need continually to try and explain what you're doing to the public through the media. I think the secretary of state should be the primary spokesman for the president on foreign policy and the authoritative voice on it. But I think you've got to put as many players as you have on the field in order to penetrate. I probably was out there more than most; I was certainly out there more than Tony and maybe more than some of my other predecessors.[9] But I never went out without checking with the State Department and seeing whether or not the secretary of state wanted to do this or had an objection to my doing it. I think the secretary of state should have the right of first refusal on the public role. But there were times when it was important for more than one of us to be out there, and so I was.

I think that there is a separate function, which is dealing with the press every day. I think we did a lot of that. We did it between me and Jim Steinberg, and Jim did a fair amount of it on background.[10] A lot of reporters had a lot of confidence in Jim, and they would call him just to

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[8] Richard A. Clarke was the senior director for multilateral and humanitarian affairs on the National Security Council throughout the entire Clinton administration. In 1998, Clarke was also appointed the national coordinator for infrastructure protection and counterterrorism on the National Security Council.

[9] W. Anthony Lake was national security adviser during the first term of the Clinton administration from 1993 to 1997.

[10] James B. Steinberg served as deputy national security adviser on National Security Council from 1996 to 2000, chief of staff at the State Department in 1996, director of policy planning at the Department of State from 1994 to 1996, and as deputy assistant secretary for analysis in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the Department of State from 1993 to 1994.

get an understanding of what it was we were doing. Obviously, Jamie Rubin and Tom Donilon were doing this daily at State, and others at Defense.[11] He would spend probably at least an hour a day on the phone with those folks. I would do it less frequently, but more strategically. My press secretary would say to me, "I think you ought to talk to David Sanger, who's doing a piece on something. He seems to be going off in this direction. We haven't been able to pull him off that. Can you try?"[12] Most of that I did on background.

DAALDER: Did you talk to Madeleine about this as well?

BERGER: That was kind of a Jamie Rubin-Jim Steinberg axis, and they would talk frequently during the day. And they would decide on it.

DAALDER: So Jamie was doing a lot of this, too.

BERGER: Yeah, Jamie was doing a lot of this, too. They would decide on the basic approach, and so that was the linkage. Jamie was very directly connected to Madeleine; Jim was very directly connected to me.

Madeleine and Bill or I would not talk that much about the press line unless we were all going out together. If we were all going out together on Sunday, we would have conference calls generally on Saturday that would last about an hour.

DESTLER: On the issues?

BERGER: The press people would take us through the issues. Someone would take a crack at it, and we'd refine it a little bit, not so that we were all saying exactly the same thing, but so that we were all on the same page. And then we'd have a second phone call at 7:00 on Sunday morning based on the morning papers. All these shows are trying to make news and they key off the morning papers.

I know that there are some people who don't agree with having an active press operation at the NSC. But the fact of the matter is the press wants to know the White House's viewpoint and the president's viewpoint. And they don't feel they will get that from the Defense Department or the State Department. That's not on all issues, but on issues that are at the highest level of presidential engagement. And you're going to get those calls.

DESTLER: I've got a couple questions I want to ask you. One is just on that point: What's the trade-off between having that press operation as part of the NSC and having it as a foreign policy operation within the press secretary's office?

BERGER: Well, we had kind of a hybrid. Whoever was the NSC senior press spokesman also was the deputy press secretary. And the fact of the matter is that those people spent more time

[11] James P. Rubin was assistant secretary of state for public affairs from 1997 to 2000. Thomas E. Donilon served as assistant secretary of state for public affairs and chief of staff to Secretary of State Warren Christopher from 1993 to 1996.

[12] David Sanger is a reporter with the *New York Times*.

with McCurry and with Joe Lockhart than with me because their primary function was to help the president's spokesman get ready for the noon briefing.[13] They had to make sure that he was on target in terms of the foreign policy questions he was going to get, and then, of course, the press secretary worked with me and Jim.

But I think we had a very integrated operation. I prefer to have that housed at the NSC rather than the office of the press spokesman. It's easy when the White House press operation is focused on Medicare and whatever else is going on to pull the foreign policy person into other things. With press in the NSC, I knew that there were usually two NSC people who were totally dedicated to the foreign policy issues, not only the top issues, but also the second-level, third-level issues. They would be answering the calls from the Dallas paper and from the Cleveland paper. We all think in terms of *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, the three networks, and CNN. There's a whole other cadre out there that wants to talk to somebody. So they would take care of that. My own view organizationally was this kind of double-hatted press secretary was the best way to do it.

DESTLER: On the question of the adviser himself as spokesman. There are two reasons why people are critical of this. One of the most blatant is when the national security adviser is publicly pushing a different line than the secretary of state. But the other is the perception that if the national security adviser is a regular public spokesman, it inevitably weakens the secretary of state. People think, "Well, that's the NSC speaking so that must be what the president thinks." The argument would be that it tends to undercut the secretary, even with coordination. Would you agree with this?

BERGER: I'm sure secretaries of state often feel that way. I'm sure there is, to some degree, that risk. I think a strong national security adviser wants a strong secretary of state, and a strong secretary of state should want a strong national security adviser. I don't think that dichotomy needs to be the case. The secretary of state is traveling; he or she is doing negotiating; he is out there almost everyday. I don't think the national security adviser should be out that frequently, but there were some times where we were about to bomb Iraq, or we were about do something major in Bosnia, or we were trying to build support for Kosovo when I think you needed all the players on the field. And I think we had an administration where the principals were pretty effective in their public roles. I do think you have to be conscious of not trying to undermine the secretary, but I think there's a way to strike a balance.

DAALDER: I'll take two specific issues. One issue is, particularly in the second half of the second term, the big speeches on foreign policy, for example, the isolation speech immediately after the CTBT defeat and the last speech you gave on foreign policy in a global age at the Council on Foreign Relations.[14] As you said, I think you gave a speech before, or immediately after, each major crisis – the National Press Club speech after the Iraq bombing.[15] I seem to remember those more than Madeleine's speeches. I had a sense that there was a shift from who

[13] Michael D. McCurry was the White House press secretary from 1995 to 1998. Joseph Lockhart succeeded him as press secretary, serving in that position from 1998 to 2000.

[14] Samuel R. Berger, "American Power: Hegemony, Isolationism or Engagement," Remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations (Washington, D.C.: October 21, 1999); and Berger, "A Foreign Policy for a Global Age," Remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations (New York: January 11, 2001).

[15] Samuel R. Berger, "Remarks at the National Press Club" (Washington, D.C.: December 23, 1998).

was going to give the big speech, if it wasn't the president, who also gave a number of big speeches as he should. But when it was a principal, over time you started doing more of the important ones. That's one aspect.

The other one is the on-the-record or background briefing prior to and after the president's involvement in foreign affairs, which, I think, was more mixed in the first term. Tony didn't do it all the time. He did it sometimes, but sometimes you did it.

BERGER: I don't think that was a deliberate situation. I think Madeleine gave some very important speeches during the second term on Iran, the Middle East, Kosovo, Iraq. I think if you look at it, her speeches were more often cutting new policy ground. My speeches tended to be more thematic, conceptual. I was trying in those last eighteen months to pull together the disparate elements of policy over the preceding six and a half years. There was no blueprint when we arrived at the end of the cold war. And I think one way to look at the Clinton administration is that it was the first administration that had to shape America's role under very different post-cold war circumstances. And we developed a common law of foreign policy through a series of decisions that were generally consistent and had some sense of the world and sense of direction. And I think it wasn't until probably year six or seven that we were able to articulate it more clearly and coherently. I know there was a great frustration with the president in the beginning because America was in a period of transition and a coherent, post-containment role for the country was not pre-figured. I did spend a fair amount of time on that. I did give three or four speeches toward the end which were part of an effort to articulate what the Clinton foreign policy was about and what America's role was going forward.

DAALDER: The relationship between the national security adviser and the secretary of state?

BERGER: Well, I think the national security adviser needs to recognize that the secretary of state is the first among equals in the process. That's true in terms of advice to the president; it's true in terms of the public role that we talked about.

Madeleine and I had a very close relationship. We had been friends for twenty years. We genuinely like and respect each other. We got angry at each other from time to time, but sort of like a spring shower, it would pass quickly. We talked to each other probably four or five times a day, sometimes more. I think we tried to be mutually supportive. I think I had a similar relationship with Bill Cohen, although there's less daily occasion to interact with the secretary of defense than with the secretary of state. But I think we tried to get on the same page every day.

There is an inherent tension in the relationship; there's no question about it. The secretary of state is the first among equals, but the national security adviser sits sixty feet from the president. There's no getting around that. But I would argue that we had probably among the best relationships between national security advisers and secretaries of state. I don't want to characterize others; you know as much as I do about them. There were times when she got enormously frustrated with me because of something I'd said. At times, we'd disagree, and sometimes intensely. Ten minutes later, one of us would pick up the phone and start talking about something else. So there was a tremendous reservoir of good will and affection that I think gave the relationship a lot of lubrication. That's not an institutional point, but I thought about

this yesterday during the panel. So much of this depends in all these things on the personalities. You've got a different configuration now. In this [Bush] administration, how are they all going to get together? Where's the fulcrum going to be? What role is [Vice President] Cheney going to play? No matter how you draw the diagram, in the final analysis, personalities are going to kind of shape their own sculpture.

DESTLER: The personal relationship between these two people is appreciable.

BERGER: Can I say one last thing? The problem is that – and I tried to say this yesterday – the system has a proclivity to intensify conflict rather than the other way around. Let's just take the public arena. You start with a press that wants to write about divisions. So they find something that the secretary of state said that is somewhat at odds with what the president said or that I said. You start there. Then you have the next step, the loyal aides, who work for you and are there to protect your behind, who tend to spin things up a little bit. "Did you see what Berger said about the State Department in the *Post*?" So you take a quote that's probably out of context or inaccurate. Sometimes the principal hasn't even seen it. It's been characterized by an aide who's got a hyperactive thyroid. You've got things spinning pretty tight right from the beginning. Early on Madeleine and I recognized that there was this kind of competitiveness among our staff sometimes. We just made a rule that we would not fire the gun until we talked to each other. Most often, there was a more benign explanation; also your threshold of pain goes up over eight years in terms of what you tolerate.

DESTLER: Is there an obvious division of labor between the national security adviser and the secretary of state?

BERGER: Yes. The secretary of state should be the chief diplomat, the chief negotiator. And the State Department should be where all operations take place. I did very little abroad; I stayed at home except when the president traveled. I did probably less than some of my colleagues – and less than Tony. I made one trip to try to convince the Chinese that we shouldn't have the opening ceremony of the president's state visit at Tiananmen Square, which failed, and one trip to Moscow. I did very little travelling on my own. That's where I think wires get crossed. The public arena is, of course, the most sensitive one, but you've got to have one diplomatic channel available. So that's one aspect.

Two, I don't think the NSC should be doing operations. I think, as I look back, the one place where we were more operational was in the terrorism area. It is worth re-examining because, on the one hand, I believe this whole area has to be elevated. I would have a deputy national security adviser for WMD [weapons of mass destruction], proliferation, terrorism – at a level that integrates all that inside the NSC system and not outside the NSC system. With Dick [Clarke] chairing the Counter-Terrorism Security Group, that was fairly operational. I think that has to be coordinated, but I don't think maybe so much of that should've been done in the NSC.

So the answer would be operations, diplomacy, negotiations, State should do this, not the NSC.

DESTLER: Did you yourself engage operationally, meeting, for example, with foreign leaders?

BERGER: The only foreign leader with whom I would talk often would be Barak because Barak was his own one-man band.[16] He would call Madeleine; he would call me; he'd call Dennis.[17] And he would very frequently call the president. And often I was calling Barak back because I was trying to avoid having the president call back, or Madeleine was calling Barak back.

Meetings are difficult because there are a lot of people who come here who want to meet with the president. And, of course, you try to accommodate as many leaders as you can. Then you get to the foreign ministers, and some foreign ministers you want to give a little face time with the president. But generally you can't get the president down to that level because it was all I could do to get all the leader meetings scheduled. But they want to be able to say they were at the White House. So it's really more for their optics than for anything else. There would always be a State Department person there. And those meetings were always sort of supplementary to the meeting that took place at the State Department, which I considered to be the principle working meeting that they had. And there were a few exceptions. When we were dealing with Khobar, for example, Bandar would come in and we would talk and that was a channel communication because it was something that was very closely held.[18]

But generally, I did not conduct foreign policy. It seems to me that in the media age the distinction is a little bit less on who talks than who does. My job was a policy job, a coordinating job not a conducting foreign policy job. And there were times when, quite honestly, I would've liked to have gone off to the Middle East and taken a crack at it.

DESTLER: On the secretary's relationship with the national security adviser. I remember an instance twenty years ago in a meeting with McGeorge Bundy on the subject.[19] One of Bundy's observations was that, first of all, what the national security adviser ought to do was to help nurture the relationship between the secretary and the president. He also said that there were different ways of doing that. Rusk didn't always make that easy.[20] How much can the national security adviser affect that? How much does that really depend on the secretary?

BERGER: The problem is one of time. The hardest job on the NSC is the job of the executive secretary who fights with the schedulers. There are ten things that we want the president to do. These are all things that have all come in from Madeleine or generally come in from State. We all agree the president should see the President of Estonia when he's here because he didn't see him last time. And you have a White House which thinks foreign policy ought to go away generally, and the president is spending too damn much time on it. You had a president who actually liked foreign policy – actually from the beginning, contrary to public perceptions. So there was a constant tension to get his time. I'm sure that the secretary of state and the secretary of defense and all the other principals would've liked to have more informal time with the president to talk. It's just very hard to do as a practical matter. There were some days that I couldn't get in to see the president myself unless it was really an emergency. I felt it was part of

[16] Ehud Barak was prime minister of Israel from 1999 to 2001.
[17] Dennis Ross was the special Middle East coordinator at the Department of State from 1993 to 2001.
[18] On June 25, 1996, 19 servicemen were killed in a bombing at U.S. Air Force Barracks Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. Prince Bandar bin Sultan is the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States.
[19] McGeorge Bundy was national security adviser from 1961 to 1966.
[20] Dean Rusk was secretary of state from 1961 to 1969.

my job to protect and advance the secretary of state. As a practical matter, it's hard to schedule something which is not urgently needed.

DAALDER: The staffing? People?

BERGER: Somebody said it and maybe it was Zbig who said it yesterday. I thought it was a good observation. Everybody believes how they did it was the right way.

DAALDER: Actually, it was unfortunate that it didn't come up yesterday. I thought that one of the issues that could've been discussed was how the NSC did change over eight years in response to the kinds of pressures in the new world that we're living in. And those were deliberate decisions. You have the whole transnational threat issue emerging. The whole international economic issues was dealt with in a very new way. Nobody had ever done it this way, and they're not doing it now. But those were very deliberate decisions – taking out parts of Europe and putting them in separate issue directorates that were linked.

BERGER: I think there ought to be some degree of congruence between how State and the NSC are organized, but the NSC can change more easily than the State Department. To create a new bureau, you have to get an act of Congress. So it's a little easier to reorganize the pieces and to be a little more in front of the curve in the NSC, by creating an "Office of Transnational Threats," for example, to deal with issues that are organizationally diffuse in the State Department.

I actually recommended to Condi during the transition that she reconsolidate the Europe directorates.[21] I'm not sure I would've reconsolidated Russia into Europe as I think they've done. But three Europe offices had evolved. First, we had the Central/Eastern Europe office really, in a sense, as a political statement to the central and eastern Europeans that they were getting serious treatment during a period when they were feeling very, very vulnerable during the early 1990s. And then, of course, we created a Balkan operation, because it really just became the eggplant that swallowed Chicago. I think that Rice made the right decision in reconsolidating at least Western Europe. I think Russia, as I understand it, and all of that will be put into one office. I'm not sure what that means because I suspect you have sub-directors and lieutenants; it may be just moving boxes on a chart.

DAALDER: Well, in part, they haven't been able to find a very senior Russia person because he or she doesn't want to be just a director.

BERGER: In general, there ought to be some congruence. I do think that the NSC, because it's small and not subject to congressional oversight in the same way, can more easily reorganize than the State Department. I think that needs to be constantly re-examined.

I think the one area where there is legitimate difference is in the functional offices – press, communications, speechwriting, and congressional. There are three views: The NSC shouldn't do any of that stuff, which is generally the State Department view instinctively. Those operations ought to be integrated into the White House operation and they ought not to be at the

[21] Condoleezza Rice is national security adviser to President George W. Bush.

NSC. I don't think those offices should be large, but I do think there is a value to having them. And the legal office, that's the fourth one.

DAALDER: The legal office came out of the Tower Commission as a very strong recommendation.[22]

BERGER: I wouldn't touch it. The fact of the matter is that Jamie Baker or Alan Kreczko probably would not logically be deputy counsels to the president.[23] And if they were, there was a danger that they would get pulled into other things. And the fact is you can't get somebody of that caliber, and I think those are two absolutely first-rate people, unless they have a discreet operation. So, that's the legal office.

I think press worked extremely well in each incarnation, whether it was Leavy or P.J. or whoever was the press secretary.[24] They really worked double-hatted, not only on paper, but every day. I'm sure that if you had to do time charts, they spent more time working with McCurry or working with Joe than with me. But they're in the NSC. They come to the senior directors meetings. They're interacting with NSC directors. And it's just a lot easier for them. And I'm able to say to senior directors in the senior staff meetings that there's nothing more important than getting press guidance to the press secretary quickly and well. It's worth just staying a second on this point.

Serious policy people tend to think that doing press guidance is beneath them until they think about the fact that they can have eighteen meetings and write sixteen memos and what the president or McCurry actually says when they go out is the most important thing they can help do. So the value, I think, of having press in the NSC is that it just gets more high-quality attention.

Congressional. I do think that, again, it could be part of the White House congressional office, but I think that there are just so many second- and third-level issues that the Congressional Affairs Office just is not going to deal with, for example, certain legislation. It's mostly stopping bad things from happening in Congress. The language of a resolution on Bosnia. Again, I think that it is more effective to have people who come from a foreign policy background and believe they're part of an institution called the NSC. Their job basically is coordinating. They've got a State Department congressional army and a huge Defense Department congressional army, and they've got to have the same talking points. They can't be going to see the same people.

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[22] The Tower Commission was set up in 1987 to investigate the Iran-Contra affair as well as the activities and structure of the National Security Council. It consisted of Senator John Tower, Senator Edmund S. Muskie and Lt. General Brent Scowcroft. See *Report of the President's Special Review Board* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987).

[23] James E. Baker held the position of legal adviser on the National Security Council from 1997 to 2001 and deputy legal adviser from 1993 to 1997. Alan J. Kreczko was legal adviser on the National Security Council from 1993 to 1997.

[24] David C. Leavy was director for communications on the National Security Council from 1997 to 1998 and senior director for public affairs on the NSC and deputy press security for foreign affairs from 1998 to 1999. Phillip J. Crowley served as the deputy press secretary for foreign affairs and director of public affairs on the NSC from 1998 to 2001.

Communications. The president gives speeches; he needs speechwriters. I think it's important for the national security adviser to control that process. These are statements of policy. I'm prejudiced toward a model which has those things inside the NSC – not large but part of the institution.

DAALDER: The interesting thing is that when Condi came in, she wanted to cut all that out. It's all back by March 21st in the NSC, even legislative affairs. They just hired Mike Andricos back.[25] Press never left. The speechwriter is there. The legal adviser is always there. She's coming to the conclusion that you need all of this. She'll have the communication strategy soon after the first crisis. Once you have a crisis, you need a communication strategy. The logic is there.

BERGER: The more interesting thing is how you now deal within the White House not only with the economics, but as Jim Steinberg has pointed out, also with the science and technology. I continue to be biased in favor of keeping it within the NSC, not as an aggrandizement of the national security adviser's power, but because I think it is more effective. If you take the drug czar – I think this is a good example – Barry McCaffrey, a smart, hard driving, good guy. He is as effective as one can be who's out there in his own orbit. He's dealing with Colombia and Colombia policy; he's dealing with all sorts of issues that have broader implications. But he can't bring those people to the table at the right level. I think the tendency to create a czar for WMD and a czar for drugs and a czar for terrorism is counter-productive. I do think that you have to elevate that cluster of issues in the decisionmaking process – WMD, terrorism, proliferation. I haven't quite figured out how you stitch that together. But I would do it, as I said before, by giving one of the NSC deputies that set of issues, not by going outside the structure.

DESTLER: What do you think about this step that Rice took to have a joint deputy for international economics? Moving the integrative standpoint one level up?

BERGER: I think that's good, if it works. The NSC-NEC thing worked better the first term than the second term. The NEC was created primarily for coordinating domestic economic policy – the budget, for example. But there's overlap on the international economics side. There were trade and global financial issues, which turned out to be pretty darn important. Again, it comes down to personality. There was a kind of parallelism in the first term. I was deputy at the NSC; Bo Cutter was deputy at the NEC [with a dual-hatted staff].[26] I was interested in those issues personally; Bo was also. And we had one NSC/NEC international economic office, and it was kind of a nice pyramid. We had two senior directors, one for trade and one for international finance. We really worked together.

What happened the second term was the NEC structure became flatter rather than more horizontal. It was always a little bit difficult to mesh gears. I think maybe having a common deputy would work – I don't know how many deputies you can have before it becomes dysfunctional. But I think we integrated it in the first term by having two deputies who got along

[25] George Michael "Mike" Andricos was director for legislative affairs on the NSC from 1993 to 1995.
[26] W. Bowman Cutter served as deputy assistant to the president for economic policy from 1993 to 1996.

well, who worked well together, who the staff could easily work with. In the second term it moved over more to the NEC. Lael became the NEC deputy and did a very good job as the chief international economic person.[27] But I don't think the NSC-NEC process worked quite as well.

DESTLER: Some of the trade issues were very hard.

BERGER: I think Lael did a great job. I don't think the process worked. More of it gravitated to the NEC, which is fine. But at some point, it has to link up with the regional perspectives as well.

DAALDER: What about people? Detailees versus outsiders? Assuming budgets were not an issue.

BERGER: I wish that the NSC had more budget to hire people from the outside for this reason: Just like the policy planning staff at the State Department needs to be – and to some degree, still is – one place where you can bring people in from outside the government for a while, who then leave. The NSC is another potential place but even if I had unlimited budget, I'm sure that more than half the people would be from State. But there are holes; there are places where there's not depth. I will say that on China, for example, there's some very, very good people – Jeff Bader, Jim Keith, and the former DCM at the embassy in China.[28] But for some reason that I'm not clear about – which would be an interesting article to do some day, whether it's still the legacy from McCarthy or not – there is not depth on China in this government. And, therefore, I went out and I got Ken Lieberthal, and Ken was invaluable.[29]

Let me back up a step. This is an aggregate of the larger point. Somehow we have to create more porousness between outside expertise and the government, because issues have become more complex. Specialization has become more important. The ten people who know the most about Turkey are not in the government. They're in universities; they may be in corporations; they may be in think tanks. Maybe one in ten is a former ambassador and is still at the State Department. But there's more expertise now out there than there is inside.

The National Intelligence Council is one place where there is some expertise. Ezra Vogel came in for a couple of years.[30] He came to meetings on Japan. He did not offer his version of policy, but his analysis of the problem or the context or the government and what was going on there had such depth that it totally changed the contour of the decisionmaking process. We started from a much more sophisticated base. Sometimes you have those people at the Agency;

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[27] Lael Brainard was deputy assistant to the president for international economics and deputy national economic adviser on National Economic Council from 1998 to 2000, G7/8 Sherpa in 2000, and assistant to the president for international economic policy and senior director from 1995 to 1997.

[28] Jeffrey Bader was deputy assistant secretary for East Asian affairs at the Department of State before serving as director for Asian affairs on the National Security Council in 1998. James R. Keith served as director for Asian affairs on the National Security Council in 1999 and currently serves as director of the Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs at the Department of State.

[29] Kenneth Lieberthal is a professor of political science at the University of Michigan and served as special assistant to the president and senior director for Asian affairs on the National Security Council from 1998 to 2000.

[30] Ezra F. Vogel was the national intelligence officer for Asia on the National Intelligence Council from 1993 to 1995.

sometimes you don't. In general, I think there needs to be more places where you can bring an Ivo Daalder or a Mac Destler or other people into the government who aren't going to be in there for their careers. I wish there was more opportunity to do that at NSC, but you can't do it because of the budget.

DAALDER: Did that issue ever come up to you? Did you ever think, "I want to fight for more budget?" Of course, you didn't have the most friendly Congress.

BERGER: In fact, we had two problems with the NSC. We had numbers capped, and we had a budget problem. The president during the campaign in 1992 promised to cut the White House staff by 25%. For some reason, this was one campaign promise he absolutely could not get them to move off of. Initially, Tony and I cut the NSC staff. It crept up by virtue of having Council on Foreign Relations and other short-term fellows. We had some fairly sophisticated devices for not counting people. I think our staff was probably on the outer edge of what it ought to be in terms of size.

But I wish we could bring more people just in places it would be really good to have someone who's spent twenty years studying the Caucasus or Central Asia.

DAALDER: One issue is expertise. Another is political. In the first NSC that you and Tony put together, I think every senior director was a political appointee. I think that's right.

BERGER: Vershbow?[31]

DAALDER: He wasn't the first one. Jenonne was.[32]

BERGER: Feinberg in Latin America.[33]

DAALDER: Tobi Gati in Russia in 1993 for four months. Jenonne in Europe.

BERGER: Africa was Foreign Service.

DAALDER: Don Steinberg was Foreign Service, but Jennifer Ward came before Don.[34]

BERGER: Randy Beers was there.[35] Dick Clarke was there. Mark Parris was there.[36]

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[31] Alexander R. Vershbow was senior director for European affairs from 1994 to 1997.
[32] Jenonne R. Walker served as senior director for European affairs from 1993 to 1994.
[33] Richard E. Feinberg was senior director for Inter-American affairs from 1993 to 1996.
[34] Donald K. Steinberg served as deputy press secretary for national security affairs and senior director for public affairs on the National Security Council from 1993 to 1994 and senior director for African Affairs on the NSC from 1994 to 1995. Jennifer C. Ward was senior director for African affairs on the NSC from 1993 to 1994.
[35] R. Rand Beers was director for multilateral affairs on the National Security Council from 1993 to 1995 and senior director for intelligence on the NSC from 1995 to 1998. He has served as assistant secretary for international narcotics and law enforcement affairs at the Department of State since 1998.
[36] Mark R. Parris served as senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs on the National Security Council from 1995 to 1997.

DAALDER: Martin Indyk was there before Mark.[37]

BERGER: It's interesting. I never thought about it.

DAALDER: You come in as a new administration. You want your people to be there. Dan Poneman was lifted up from inside.[38]

BERGER: I often would think about the match-ups. How does this staff compare with the staff of six or eight years ago? The NSC constantly turns over, as people's tenure ends, and you are constantly trying to maintain or improve quality.

DAALDER: No, I'm not saying that. But when you do bring in people from the outside, they are less captured, at least initially, by where they come from in a bureaucratic sense so they are more important at the beginning than at the end of the administration.

BERGER: Yes, a lot of those people had either worked with Tony or me before on the policy planning staff.

DAALDER: Or on the campaign.

BERGER: On the campaign.

DAALDER: You want to have outside expertise as opposed to having your senior people closely politically aligned with the president.

BERGER: I'm less concerned about the second, Ivo. I'm more concerned that you have an increasingly complex world, which requires increasingly sophisticated people. We have, I think, a very good Foreign Service, but they have decided that they're not going to have specialists. They're going to send you from Africa to South Africa to Russia to Canada. And, therefore, in some places the depth of knowledge is just thin. Central Asia is a good example. We've had some terrific ambassadors out there that you can bring in. But if you want to go through the bibliography or the Web and find the ten articles that are most interesting about Central Asia, they will all be written by people on the outside. Not all those people work out when they come in. Sometimes they don't know how to operate; they're not suited to an interagency process and moving the ball down the field. But I wish there was more of it.

DAALDER: The final issue. Let me put it this way: What advice did you give Condi in terms of how to do the role differently than you? What would you change about it, if there's anything to change? It's the same question that somebody asked yesterday.

DESTLER: To put it more generally: What are people going to tell you about the role that is part of the conventional wisdom that doesn't really work?

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[37] Martin S. Indyk was senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs on the National Security Council from 1993 to 1995.

[38] Daniel B. Poneman served as senior director for nonproliferation and export controls on the NSC from 1993 to 1996 and director for defense policy and arms control on the National Security Council from 1990 to 1993.

BERGER: Well, I'm not quite sure.

DAALDER: Let me put it slightly differently then. Jim Steinberg came out earlier than you did – spent three, four, five months sitting back – and he's come up with this new idea of basically four people interacting with a single staff?[39] A single policy staff.

BERGER: My thoughts relate a little bit less to the vertical structure than the horizontal structure. I think that we have not figured that out. There are two sets of issues that are not well addressed now by the government. And I don't quite know what the organizational solution is. One is terrorism, which I believe is the most serious threat to America's security. More Americans have died at the hands of terrorists than in all the wars since Vietnam. And if you put the overlay of WMD on it, because the fact is that the chance that there will be a biological or chemical or even a nuclear device introduced in the United States over the next ten years, I think, is quite high. So the next level is the general WMD proliferation issue. I think we haven't got that quite right. I don't think we have the right sense of urgency within the government for those problems, and I don't think we have the right structure within the government. And I don't know quite what the solution is. As I said earlier, I think if you have depth in the National Security Council, you can define that set of issues in eighteen different ways. It cuts across all sorts of things. I think it's the biggest dysfunction that we have.

Clearly the point that was made yesterday that there is not a mechanism for long-term planning is true. Even when I was in the policy planning staff, we didn't do too much long-term planning. The fact is that we would do these studies and Tony was very conscientious about this. He would ask somebody to do a paper about Islamic fundamentalism over the next decade. Someone would go off and write a really good thirty-page memo, which would go to a secretary. It would sit indefinitely on the pile of "really want to read."

DESTLER: But what do we have to read today?

BERGER: So the file stands on your desk. In another two weeks you pull it, and then finally you throw it all away. Sooner or later people say, "Wait a minute now. Why am I doing this?"

I do think that long-term planning is something that the foreign policy apparatus does not do well. I think that integrating these new global issues into the policymaking process is something that we haven't quite figured out. Jim's got one model. I haven't thought through that model. But I have a conviction about a model. I have a conviction that duplicating the NSC – creating parallel structures in the White House or Executive Office of the President – is a mistake. I think there's a tension here because you could wind up having a national security operation which is too big and too focused in the NSC.

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[39] For Steinberg's comments on a model for the NSC, see National Security Council Project, "The Clinton Administration National Security Council," *Oral History Roundtable* (Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland and the Brookings Institution, September 27, 2000), pp. 44-45; and James Steinberg, "Foreign Policy: Time to Regroup," *Washington Post*, January 2, 2001, p. A15.

The best thing is to find a way that they really can be coordinated out of State. How do we bring global warming into a discussion of, for example, South America policies or China policy? How do you assign a greater value to these issues in the overall scheme of things. They often tend not to be at the table. So you have to somehow bring those things to the table. I don't really have a structural solution, except that I don't think putting czars all over the place is the answer, because these are integrative issues. Just take one example – terrorism. That's really also integral to our Pakistan policy. Whatever we do about the Taliban, about Osama bin Laden, and about Afghanistan is inextricably linked to our policy toward Pakistan. So it's hard to not do that in some institution that brings the country perspective together with the functional perspective.

DAALDER: Thank you, sir.

ABOUT THE CO-DIRECTORS

Ivo H. Daalder is a senior fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution. A specialist in American foreign policy, European security, and national security affairs, Daalder is the author and co-editor of eight books, including *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (forthcoming); *Force, Order, and Global Governance* (forthcoming); *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (2000); *The United States and Europe in the Global Arena* (1999); *Rethinking the Unthinkable: New Dimensions for Nuclear Arms Control* (1993); *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces since 1967* (1991); and *Strategic Defenses in the 1990s: Criteria for Deployment* (1991). Along with this project on the National Security Council, he is co-authoring another book on the politics and policy of missile defense.

Prior to joining Brookings, Daalder was associate professor at the University of Maryland's School of Public Affairs, where he was also director of research at the Center for International and Security Studies. In 1995-96, he served as director for European Affairs on President Clinton's National Security Council staff, where he was responsible for coordinating U.S. policy toward Bosnia. Daalder currently serves as a member of the Study Group of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, an examination of U.S. national security requirements and institutions. He has been a fellow at Harvard University's Center for Science and International Affairs and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He is the recipient of a Pew Faculty Fellowship in International Affairs and an International Affairs Fellowship of the Council on Foreign Relations.

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Professor Destler has held senior research positions at the Institute for International Economics (1983-87), the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (1977-83), and the Brookings Institution (1972-77). He served as a consultant to the President's Task Force on Government Organization in 1967 and on the reorganization of the executive office of the president in 1977. His other books include: *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy* (1972), *The Textile Wrangle: Conflict in Japanese-American Relations, 1969-71* (co-authored, 1979); *Making Foreign Economic Policy* (1980). *Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy* (co-authored, 1984); and *Beyond the Beltway: Engaging the Public in U.S. Foreign Policy* (co-edited, 1994).