

**Timothy Naftali**

Hi, I'm Timothy Naftali. I'm Director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. It's December 19, 2007, and I have the honor and privilege to be interviewing Vice President Dick Cheney. Welcome, Mr. Vice President. Thank you for joining us today.

**Dick Cheney**

Well, it's good to have the chance.

**Timothy Naftali**

How was it that you came to join the Nixon administration? Please tell us the story.

**Dick Cheney**

Well, I arrived in Washington in August of 1968 as a Congressional Fellow. I was a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin working on a doctorate in political science and completed my course work and I came down to spend a year on Capitol Hill and a fellowship to do that. And then I planned to go back to Wisconsin, write my dissertation and teach, become a professor. When I got here in the fall of 1968, I got hooked up initially with Congressman Bill Steiger from Wisconsin, who I'd already known. I'd worked for the governor of Wisconsin for a year. And then through Bill I met a guy named Don Rumsfeld and Secretary Rumsfeld at that point was a congressman. And he joined the Nixon administration in the spring of 1969 as the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity and as also an assistant to the President. He always had two hats: running an agency, but he also then had office space in the West Wing. I had interviewed with Rumsfeld earlier trying to get an assignment with him as a Congressional Fellow, and the interview was a disaster. He threw me out of his office. He thought I was some kind of fuzzy-headed academic, and he was probably right. I thought he was about the most arrogant young man I'd ever met, thirty-something Congressman from Chicago. A few months later though when he was named to run OEO, he asked Bill Steiger, a friend of his, who was on the committee that oversaw OEO, the Office of Economic Opportunity, for help in getting ready for his confirmation hearings and so forth. So I sat down one night, unsolicited, and wrote about a 12-page memo to Rumsfeld advising him on how to handle himself in these confirmation hearings, what he should do with the agency once he was sworn in and so forth, gave it to Steiger. Bill liked it and passed it on to Rumsfeld. I didn't hear anymore about it. And then a couple weeks later he was confirmed in the Senate, and I got a phone call that day from Frank Carlucci, and Frank was helping Rumsfeld put together a transition team for OEO. And he invited me to come down and help out, be part of a group of 40 or 50 academics and policy types that were going to be there the next day at the office at OEO. I went down. Rumsfeld came in and spoke to the group for about a half hour and then left. And then his secretary came in said, "Is there somebody here named Cheney?" and I said, "Yes." And she said, "Come with me." Took me into his office, and I walked through the door to his office, and he looked up at me. He said, "You, you're Congressional Relations. Now get the hell out of here." And that's really the way he hired me. He didn't say, "I liked your memo," or "I'm sorry I threw you out the last time you interviewed with me." But he'd read the memo. He obviously liked it. He talked to Bill Steiger about me, and at that point I went out and took over Congressional Relations at the Office of Economic Opportunity.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now Mr. Vice President, there are going to be some aspirants, young people that want jobs.

**Dick Cheney**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

Who are going to hear that you wrote, unsolicited, a memo.

**Dick Cheney**

After he'd rejected me once already.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you remember what, first of all, what possessed you to do this?

**Dick Cheney**

Well I thought I had some pretty good ideas about what he needed to do. I was at the time working for Bill Steiger, assigned to work in the Education and Labor Committee in particular, which had the jurisdiction over the Office of Economic Opportunity. Rumsfeld, I knew, had no background in OEO at all. He'd voted against the agency when it was set up. And I thought I had some useful ideas, and so I sat down one night and cranked them out on the typewriter and gave it to Bill, and Steiger could have taken it and chucked it or kept it and used it himself. He chose to pass it on to Rumsfeld, which was his call to make.

**Timothy Naftali**

Had you been thinking about issues of poverty? Is that something you looked at as a Political Scientist?

**Dick Cheney**

No, not really. It's just what I'd been engaged in for a couple of months in the Steiger office. I'd started with Bill in probably December of '68, and this was probably March/April timeframe of the spring a few months later.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, what were the challenges that OEO faced under Nixon?

**Dick Cheney**

OEO was a -- up till that time had never seen a Republican. It was created, obviously, in the Johnson Administration. The legislation passed as I recall about 1964, part of the war on poverty. It was the heart of the war on poverty really. It had been run by Sarge Shriver, John F. Kennedy's brother-in-law. And when we took over as a Republican administration, there was a certain amount of tension involved. Not everybody in the agency, this agency that was full of people dedicated to eradicating poverty and were I'd say pretty far to the left in terms of their political views, not a lot of sympathy or understanding or Republican leanings. We had the task of coming in and setting up an administration for the agency, filling all of the senior slots. There was a lot of controversy that surrounded OEO, especially in terms of their activities at the local level. This was the agency that had created Legal Services, and they were out suing people all across the country. This is where VISTA came from initially, community organizing a lot of activities that were not without controversy in terms of their impact, especially on state and local government. So there was often times controversies would develop between governors, who had the Office of Economic Opportunity operating in their state, but they got into conflicts of one kind or another and the governors had oftentimes done battle with them in the past. One of the big problems we faced, for example, I can remember that Ronald Reagan was then governor of California. There was a thing called California Rural Legal Assistance and they were literally suing state agencies all the time on the grounds that they weren't doing what they were supposed to be doing in terms of taking care of the poor and so forth. And this would generate great controversy. I remember having to fly to California at one point to negotiate with some of the Reagan staff trying to find a way to get CRLA back on track, still being consistent with its mandate to help the poor, but not quite so eager to bring suits all the time against the governor and the other state officials. We had a big controversy in Kentucky that involved Louie Nunn who was a Republican governor of Kentucky, had been a big supporter of President Nixon, had helped to get him elected. But a controversy arose between Governor Nunn who had the right to veto the anti-property projects in his district and one particular project that was in the district of Carl Perkins who was the democratic chairman of the House Education Labor Committee and jurisdiction over OEO. So, yeah these two political giants, if you will, doing battle in Kentucky over the fate of this one particular project. And Secretary Rumsfeld, Director Rumsfeld, of OEO had the authority to override the governor if the governor vetoed this project. And he obviously was between a rock and a hard place. The White House was heavily involved. John Ehrlichman got involved. Louie Nunn had called the White House and built a fire under everybody. So I was sent to Kentucky to find out whether or not this program was crooked, was it in fact corrupt as had been the allegation. I remember going down and spending a day with Treva Turner Howell, who was a woman maybe five feet tall, looked like your grandmother. She took me through the ills of Kentucky and showed me all the things they were doing in this program. She was a great supporter of Carl Perkins, Senator Perkins, excuse me, Congressman Perkins. And she obviously was a staunch advocate for the program and a serious political enemy of Governor Nunn. At the end of the day she took me back to her house and sat me down at the kitchen table and poured me about a half a glass of bourbon, neat, and then we talked about the program. And my report back to Rumsfeld was that there probably were things going on in the program that weren't entirely appropriate, but you were never going to be able to prove it. And probably the right thing to do was to go ahead and let the program go forward, which was what he did. But it created a real flap. He had to manage those kinds of problems and, as I say, John Ehrlichman got involved.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, Mr. Carlucci told us the story, because he inherits California's problems, there were all kinds of allegations made by the Governor's office that the thing was corrupted.

**Dick Cheney**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Legal Services. So when you went there, did you also have to investigate the extent to which Legal Services was doing what it's supposed to do?

**Dick Cheney**

Well what happened, let's see, I ran the Congressional Liaison shop for a few months and then about the time my fellowship ran out, Rumsfeld had to make a decision about hiring somebody to be his special assistant, his number one assistant. And several of us competed for it, and I basically got the job, which meant I ended up doing a little bit of everything. Sometimes I'd have to do, go deal with a controversy like that, sometimes the CRLA. But we tried to get control of the agency and that was hard to do. One instance I remember again we had the situation where a governor can veto a grant that came into his state he didn't like. And as I recall Wally Hickel in those days was the Governor of Alaska. And there had been a program in Alaska that was very controversial. And I -- this is while I was still in the Congressional shop -- I knew enough that there was a grant package moving through the agency that would get stamped and approved at the various stops and then it would be announced by the White House and the money would go forward to fund the grant. I got a phone call saying I had to stop this, that this was a big problem and that he was going to have to veto it if it got all the way to his state capitol. So I called the staff person down at the agency that was responsible for this program. I said, "Bring me the grant package." He brought me the grant package, and I took it and locked it in my desk so that it could not complete the process. Forty-eight hours later the White House announced the grant. It went absolutely right around me. That's when I learned there were two grant packages, not just one. And of course as soon as I asked for one, he went back down and got the other one and zipped it through the process and got it funded and sent it out. So it was open warfare sometimes. We ended up with a thing we called the Office of Program Development, where we created this brand new office and then we moved all the people in the agency that we'd run into that we'd have trouble with in these various problems and put them all in the Office of Program Development. But then we didn't give it any money. And it was a way to park troublemakers, troublemakers from the standpoint of people who disagree with the administration's policy, so we could run the rest of the department.

**Timothy Naftali**

Where did that idea come from?

**Dick Cheney**

I don't know whether I came up with it or somebody else might have. But it was one of the ways we literally had to segregate that group of people who were just opposed to everything that the President

believed in and that we believed in, and that was one way to do it. We, at one point, you mentioned Legal Services, there was a demonstration. People marched on OEO headquarters because we had made a decision not to fund a particular program at Howard University. And so we ended up that day we had to call in the police, and they arrested about half the graduating class at the Howard University Law School and were sitting-in in our offices. They shut down the place. We weren't able to get any work done. So there was controversy at times.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now when you arrived, that was when the President decided to extend the appropriation for two years. President Nixon had campaigned on closing down.

**Dick Cheney**

Shutting it down, yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you remember, was OEO popular in Congress? I mean, it was a Democratic Congress.

**Dick Cheney**

It was a Democratic Congress and there were a few members of Congress on the Republican side that felt it did some good work in certain areas, somebody like Bill Steiger, for example, or Al Quie. Al Quie from Minnesota was then the ranking Republican on the Education and Labor Committee, and there were programs there that were very popular and that have continued for a long time afterwards to this day for example, the Head Start Program came out of OEO. Legal Services is still alive and well although it tended to be supported primarily by Democrats, not by many Republicans. But it wasn't -- every Republican didn't oppose OEO but, in effect, what happened and Donald Rumsfeld took on the challenge once he decided he was going to take on the agency, that he wasn't going over there to dismantle it or to close it down, that it needed repair, that there was work that needed to be done on it. But he also at the same time had to work the Hill, and he did.

He spent an awful lot of time up on Capitol Hill with his former colleagues and of course, he'd just been serving since 1962 in the House of Representatives and he went up and personally lobbied literally hundreds of members of Congress in order to get them to support the continuation of the agency.

**Timothy Naftali**

President Nixon described OEO as a laboratory --

**Dick Cheney**

Mm-hmm.

**Timothy Naftali**

-- for policy initiatives. What were the philosophical issues that you faced as a Republican Administration, taking over, if you will, the war on poverty?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, there were some things we did that I think were very good. When we got into educational vouchers, for example, and we were doing things in terms of voucher systems for schools on an experimental basis that I think have born fruit in recent years in the No Child Left Behind program that the President has strongly supported. And in the District of Columbia today we have an experimental educational voucher program going forward that allows parents of students who are having difficulties with respect to a particular school, pays the tuition for them to go to private school. So there were worthy causes like that. When it's controversial, the National Education Association was adamantly opposed, American Federation of Teachers and so forth. So there were political battles that surrounded it. There were other things we did, frankly that weren't all that well thought out. I remember the azalea program. It was developed -- somebody came up with the idea that we were going to take migrant laborers and teach them to be azalea growers and put them through the process so they'd be able to go into business for themselves. Now on the surface it seemed like a pretty good idea. The problem was once the program got up and running it turned out that we were going to double the number of azalea growers in the state of South Carolina. And of course from the standpoint of if you are already in the azalea business in South Carolina, to all of a sudden have a doubling of your competition, competitors, clearly we were going to wipe out a lot of the private sector azalea growers that were already in business down there. So we put a stop to that program when it came up. There were problems like that that developed. I came away from the experience at OEO with a general view that the people that had come up with a concept and put it together were sincerely motivated by a desire to try to help deal with poverty. But I also concluded that government's efforts were often misguided, that there were unanticipated consequences with these kinds of programs that oftentimes created more problems than they solved, that the key to ending poverty was a good job and the best way to do that was to stimulate the economy and pursue a set of macro-economic policies that would allow the private sector to create jobs, create businesses, expand businesses and that you were going to solve a larger percentage of the poverty program that way than any other way and in education, in education programs. But the effort in of itself was the Office of Economic Opportunity, I think ultimately, of course was sort of busted up, and some of it was preserved, and some of it went away.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Nixon administration was committed to something called New Federalism, decentralization of government. But it found that because of issues like race, sometimes you couldn't decentralize. And I asked Mr. Rumsfeld about the challenge OEO faced because some of your initiatives actually centralized a little bit of power, or retained power in Washington rather than decentralizing it. Did you find that there were times that however much you wanted to decentralize authority that there were bigger national issues that required that Washington remain in charge?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, in a sense the -- because of the nature of the programs OEO ran, community organizing for example, or local Legal Services programs, you'd end up with a situation where somebody had to fly

top cover for these programs if they were going to survive at all. And if you threw an anti-poverty project into certain communities where there may in fact have been racial bias or the powers that be resisted the kinds of changes that Legal Services represented. If you didn't fly top cover for them, if you didn't have somebody in Washington who had the authority to override the local veto so the program could go forward, those programs would never have survived. So it was almost built into the OEO concept here that there was bound to be a certain amount of friction. And without that guiding hand, if you will, without the authority of the secretary or the director to override those local concerns as expressed, say, by the governor, then the programs would all have been, not all of them but a lot of them would have been halted, would have been stopped. So it was almost, I don't know whether it was by design or not, but the basic fundamental structure of the agency and what it was expected to do was bound to generate friction at the local level with the local establishment. And that was often the case.

**Timothy Naftali**

You are a fine political analyst. You were junior but you were watching some great debates. What do you recall of the struggle between Moynihan and Burns? To what extent did you even see that from where you were?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, I got to know Pat Moynihan fairly well. He was, obviously was a major figure at the beginning of the administration, a Democrat hired to run a lot of the domestic side of the House, and he was a supporter of Rumsfeld's and of what we were trying to do at OEO. There was sort of a natural affinity there. Arthur Burns was sort of the grand old man of Republican economic policy. Of course eventually became chairman of the Federal Reserve. And both of them I think had a fairly significant impact on the administration for a period of time. I didn't always agree with him. I probably agreed with Pat Moynihan more than I did Arthur Burns. I had a great respect and admiration for Arthur Burns, but I always I felt he was one of the big advocates of wage and price controls. And I thought that was a -- I now believe that that was a serious mistake. That was a program I got caught up in obviously that was one of the worst policy mistakes, frankly, that we made in the Nixon administration.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do we have time to ask about --

**Dick Cheney**

Sure.

**Timothy Naftali**

Thank you.

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, I'm just getting started.

**Timothy Naftali**

I know, I want to keep going but I just I know you don't have a lot of time, sir.

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, yeah, we're in good shape.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you work on Indian policy at all? OEO was involved -- I was wondering if you --

**Dick Cheney**

OEO was involved to some extent. What I remember, of course, we're going back over 30 years of some of the train wrecks, and there was -- when we talk about Indian policy, there were significant grants made on several of the reservations around the country by OEO. The project I remember though involved Vice President Agnew. And there was -- he sponsored a conference as I recall out at -- what's it? -- Airlie House out at Warrenton, Virginia, where they brought in representatives of a number of the tribes from around the country for a multi-day conference, three- or four-day conference. But things got out of hand, and there was a party. And it ended up in the, a lot of -- well, Highway Patrol had to be called in to put down the riot that ensued at this OEO-funded project. And the -- for a long time afterwards there was an ongoing debate or dispute inside the administration because the Vice President's office was trying to get OEO to accept responsibility for what had happened at Airlie House and there was damages to be paid and so forth. And the Vice President didn't want to be stuck with the tag of having been responsible for this rather unfortunate event.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now you have a certain sympathy, I guess?

**Dick Cheney**

I do, but I haven't sponsored any conferences like that.

[laughter]

**Timothy Naftali**

But you did, because I know that Mr. Rumsfeld was involved, I mean to some extent in the Indian message, the Indian message of 1970.

**Dick Cheney**

Right.



**Timothy Naftali**

When we ended the policy of termination. The Nixon administration made great strides in Indian policy. I wondered since you were from the west whether you had a particular interest?

**Dick Cheney**

No, I didn't have any special claim or expertise in that area.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you participate at all in the discussions about the Philadelphia Plan?

**Dick Cheney**

I remember discussions about the Philadelphia Plan, Leon Sullivan heavily involved in it, and George Shultz who was then Secretary of Labor. I thought at the time due to the stay that it was a significant contribution by the Nixon administration in the whole area of racial equality and trying to deal with some of the problems of discrimination in the past.

**Timothy Naftali**

But, sir, some people would call that Affirmative Action, though.

**Dick Cheney**

Well, I think it was probably what it was called at the time. But it was a period when -- we've got to remember what 1968 was like. And that first Nixon term was certainly affected by the trauma that we'd gone through as a nation in 1968. Everything from, of course, overseas, Tet, but here at home, assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy and riots in the cities, and there was a -- we still had a school system in the South that was fundamentally segregated. So I think there was a fair amount of sympathy for the notion that there were, in fact, policies that needed to be addressed based upon the extent to which we still had serious problems based on race in this country.

**Timothy Naftali**

For some young Republicans, 1968 was a very influential year because of the riots. It moved some of them further to the right. They began to be concerned about order and issues. Would you say, you were in your late 20s at the time, 27, I guess?

**Dick Cheney**

I was 27 in 1968. We'd just spent two years at Wisconsin and arrived there in January of 1966 and then in '67, '68 Lynn and I were on campus as graduate students at the University of Madison. And this was a period of great unrest and disruption, primarily related to the war in Vietnam. And so there were days when the National Guard would be called out to restore order on campus. You couldn't walk across the campus without being -- suffering the effects of the tear gas that was being used to try to control the crowds. There had been demonstrations and riots a year after we left. They blew up the computer

center with a car bomb at the University of Wisconsin, killed one or two guys. So we'd sort of, you know, been through this process. We were graduate students. We'd started a family, our oldest daughter, Liz, had been born in Madison in 1966 and, you know, we were trying to get on with our lives in terms of getting an education, working part-time to be able to go to school and so forth. And I suppose we were fairly conservative to begin with although both of us had grown up in households where our parents were Democrats in terms of the way they voted. Then we came to Washington and went through things like the Anti-Poverty Program, wage price controls, and I think the sum total of all those experience was to make me a conservative to the extent that I had developed and used during those years. There's no question about what I am conservative. And a lot of it came about as a result of those experiences during the early Nixon years. I remember, for example, some of the demonstrations on Vietnam that occurred in '69 and '70, the days when we would have all the city buses pulled up in a circle around the entire White House grounds, all 18 acres. The buses parked bumper to bumper in order to protect the White House from demonstrations and riots and actually had elements of the 82nd Airborne Division in the basement of the Treasury able to come over if necessary by tunnel in order to secure the White House against those kinds of things. That summer of 1968 when we arrived here, you know, they had machine guns mounted on the Capitol steps to guard against the aftermath of the riots, for example, when Martin Luther King was killed. So it was a time of a lot of unrest. The Democratic convention that year in Chicago was a source of great controversy. So it was a period of time when I think probably a lot of us made judgments or ended up having our political philosophy shaped and developed by what we saw happening in this society. And it certainly moved us in a conservative direction.

**Timothy Naftali**

There was a huge generational change within the 20s, people in their 20s, and I guess Vietnam is what did it.

**Dick Cheney**

I think was in Vietnam. I was born in 1941, and growing up in the 50s when we did in Wyoming, things like drugs, for example, weren't an issue. They weren't around. Nobody knew anything about marijuana and so forth. And if you waited just a few years beyond say those folks who were born late '40s early '50s, were exposed to a very different culture than we'd grown up in. I do think there was sort of a watershed there between -- maybe the post-war baby boom generation was different than those of us who had been born a few years earlier. I think there's probably some truth to that.

**Timothy Naftali**

When you saw the buses, which was after Kent State, but do you remember Kent State?

**Dick Cheney**

I do remember Kent State. The fact that National Guard fired on kids at Kent State and three or four were killed. The same time that that happened, that same week, there was a shooting in Jackson, Mississippi, where a couple of students were killed, and Don Rumsfeld and I went down and visited Jackson, Mississippi, in connection with that shooting. We didn't go to Kent State. There was a lot of focus on that, but I would say there was at the same time a loss of life in Jackson. I can't remember, I guess it was maybe Mississippi State. [Jackson State University]

**Timothy Naftali**

You know that one's always forgotten?

**Dick Cheney**

It's always forgotten, but I've never forgotten it. Don and I went down and visited. One of the things we used to do -- of course when we were at OEO we got out and visited a lot of OEO projects and spent a fair amount of time on the road. But that's one that stood out when we went down. And as I recall it fired on a dorm, and the students had been in the dorm and that some had been killed.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mr. Rumsfeld leaves OEO at the end of 1970.

**Dick Cheney**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

But what happens to Dick Cheney?

**Dick Cheney**

I went with him. The way we were organized starting back in 1969 -- let's say Don had two hats. He was both Director of OEO, but he was also an assistant to the President with an office upstairs in the southwest corner of the West Wing of the White House. And I shared a closet up there with a guy by the name of Don Murdock, great friend of mine, now dead. But Don and I both worked for Don, for Rumsfeld. And the way Rumsfeld and I worked was we'd start out early in the morning at the White House. He'd go to the morning staff meeting and so forth. And then we'd load up and go over to OEO and spend all day long at OEO and then in the evening we'd come back to the White House again. So, we always kept a leg in both camps, if you will. In December of 1970 he gave up the job at OEO and went full time at the White House, and I went with him to the White House full time at that point. So, then we spent most of 1971 in the White House and then that fall -- it was really along August/September timeframe when President Nixon imposed the wage-price freeze. And we took over what was called Phase II of Wage-Price Control, [unintelligible].

**Timothy Naftali**

We'll get to that in a moment because it's -- I mean, we've never had a controlled economy like that since. Tell us about the Nixon White House.

**Dick Cheney**

Well, again, I was a very junior member of the White House staff. And in this timeframe Don was involved. I was involved in whatever he got involved in, basically, as his assistant. I remember we got

involved in something called the Property Review Board where we were out looking at all the real property owned by the United States Government trying to see if some of it couldn't be sort of freed up from whatever its current use was and made available to other agencies or state and local units of government or even released to the private sector. We didn't get very far with that. It turned out those agencies loved those facilities.

**Timothy Naftali**

You were able to do a lot more as secretary of defense...

**Dick Cheney**

Exactly.

**Timothy Naftali**

Thanks to the Soviets later on.

**Dick Cheney**

Thanks to the Soviets when the Soviets went out of business.

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah.

**Dick Cheney**

One of the things we tried to do in 1970-71 timeframe was to put Fort DeRussy on the market. Fort DeRussy is on the beach at Waikiki in Hawai'i. And we didn't get very far with that one. The military had their priorities booked, and one of them was not giving up Fort DeRussy. And it's still owned by the U.S. Army today.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mr. Rumsfeld goes on an 11-country tour...

**Dick Cheney**

Mm-hmm.

**Timothy Naftali**

To -- actually it was part of an anti-drug initiative.

**Dick Cheney**

Mm-hmm.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you go with him?

**Dick Cheney**

I didn't. I think he went with Bob Finch.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mm-hmm.

**Dick Cheney**

Don Murdock, my colleague in the closet, organized that whole thing. That was Don's baby.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you do any foreign policy stuff?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, the one thing we did that I remember from that -- -- this is really 1970, I guess. This is before -- we're still at the White House part of the time, but before we'd moved over there -- was along in the fall when President Nasser of Egypt died. And at the time President Nixon and Henry Kissinger were all in Europe on a major state visit in several countries in Europe. And we had no diplomatic relations with Egypt. This is in the aftermath of the Six Day War in 1967. So they had to cobble together on short notice a delegation to go to the Nasser funeral. And they picked Rumsfeld, Elliot Richardson, who was then I guess the deputy secretary of state, Bob Murphy, who had been ambassador of North Africa --

**Timothy Naftali**

Oh my goodness.

**Dick Cheney**

-- during World War II, and John McCloy, who had been our high commissioner in Berlin. Murphy and McCloy between them had about 70 years of diplomatic experience and a phenomenal couple of individuals. And I went along as Rumsfeld's aide on this trip.

**Timothy Naftali**

You're kidding.

**Dick Cheney**

It sort of came together in just a matter of hours. I didn't even have a passport. I'd never before traveled outside the country. And so the passport I took with me was a letter that we got somebody to sign, somebody in the White House, basically saying what my name was, and my date of birth and that I'd been born in Lincoln, Nebraska. But that was it. I didn't have a passport for this trip. We went anyway. Remarkable part of the trip was 14 or 15 hours over and then another 14 or 15 hours back from Cairo listening to Murphy and McCloy tell war stories.

**Timothy Naftali**

Murphy was with the -- I mean Murphy dealt with the Torch, the North African invasion.

**Dick Cheney**

He did, and Murphy was on the beach when Mark Clark landed ahead of the invasion to try to negotiate with the French. McCloy had a great story told about being with Patton right after the war, right at the end of the war in Germany when, I guess it was Omar Bradley, no it was Bedell Smith called, Eisenhower's chief of staff. And, supposedly, according to McCloy, Patton turned to him and said, you know, "Pick up that phone over there and let's see what this son of a bitch has to say."

[laughter]

**Dick Cheney**

That's the way he told it. And they picked up the telephone and he fired him. That's when he relieved Patton and told him he's not in charge of the 3rd Army.

**Timothy Naftali**

Is that --

**Dick Cheney**

This was after the slapping incident took place in Sicily. This was after the War, but it's in the aftermath, it's probably the fall of '45. And Patton's still there as commander of 3rd Army in Germany as part of the occupation force and that's when he got relieved by "Beetle" Smith. And McCloy was on the other phone listening in to this conversation.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you meet Sadat?

**Dick Cheney**

We did. The funeral itself was a remarkable event because Nasser, of course, had been quite an historic figure and certainly in terms of Egypt. And we stayed in the hotel, a famous hotel, right on the Nile in downtown Cairo. I want to say Shepheard.

**Timothy Naftali**

Shepherd, yes. That's a famous hotel.

**Dick Cheney**

And right in front of us was an island where there was a military school for the Egyptian military. And the service they brought in Nasser's body by helicopter and landed on that island. And I was there as staff where I wasn't part of the official delegation, Rumsfeld went down and was actually on the island. I was on a balcony of the hotel overlooking this whole proceeding. And there were, you know, over a million people that turned out in the streets of Cairo that day to give Nasser his send-off. And you could hear as the helicopter flew over just this wave of sound, this ululating sound that Arab women make when they're grieving. Landed on there and had the ceremony on the island then they loaded him on a caisson, a caisson drawn by a vehicle I guess and pulled him back across the bridge in front of us and then out to the cemetery where they buried him. Took them eight or nine hours to get to the cemetery because the crowds were so horrendous. And I always remember sitting up on that balcony watching them as they came across the bridge people were being pushed off the bridge into the Nile because the crowds were so intense. Anyway, that was my first foreign experience.

**Timothy Naftali**

You must have met King Hussein, too?

**Dick Cheney**

That trip we met Sadat. And I had been advised by the State Department that Sadat would never survive, that he was just an interim temporary vice president to Nasser. And he was a caretaker of no great consequence. And, of course, he played a major historic role until he was assassinated in 1981. Made peace with Israel, went to Jerusalem and so forth. But that was my first exposure to sort of being a participant, if you will, on the international side. And I did it all without a passport.

**Timothy Naftali**

I need to ask for closure on one point. Were you the official delegation to Jackson State after the -- why did you go? Why did the two of you go?

**Dick Cheney**

I don't remember why exactly now what precipitated it. Don obviously made the decision we were going to go, and I usually traveled with him when he did those domestic trips. But I cannot recall who suggested it specifically.

**Timothy Naftali**

What affected -- John Ehrlichman's portfolio grows in '70, changes the way domestic policy is made. To what extent did that affect you?

**Dick Cheney**

It didn't really affect me directly. Moynihan had sort of been the plug in point for Rumsfeld in the early days at OEO. And you remember when Moynihan left, it was about the time Ehrlichman took over as --

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Dick Cheney**

-- as the head of the domestic side, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. My impression was it became a more politically oriented shop than it had been under Moynihan. Moynihan probably more oriented towards policy. Different kinds of people to some extent were working under one of Moynihan's fair-haired boys who was Chris DeMuth, who subsequently went to run American Enterprises, a good friend of mine, worked with Chris all those years since. On the Ehrlichman staff you've got people who have been heavily involved to some extent in the Nixon campaign, more involved and more attuned to what the President's political requirements were. This is my impression from being far down in the bureaucracy. I occasionally would get into the Cabinet room to flip charts, but I wasn't there as a big policy adviser.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now, what is a Republican administration doing establishing wage and price controls?

**Dick Cheney**

I have no idea. My recollection of what happened is -- I recall it was mid-August the President made a speech when he cut loose the dollar from the gold standard and announced a freeze on wages and prices. And that was the last 90 days and then at the end of 90 days Phase II would kick in, whatever that was going to be. And we'd moved to a more flexible system than the absolute freeze. I always felt Arthur Burns was a believer in an incomes policy, which is how it was referred to, I think partly based on his World War II experience. It was the last time we'd had controls on -- that John Connally had a significant impact on it. He was then the Secretary of the Treasury. And I always felt he had great influence with President Nixon, that he and Nixon had a special bond, if you will. So, President Nixon listened to the two of them. I know George Shultz thought it was a terrible idea. I recall -- I will always remember the day after George Shultz was sworn in as secretary of the treasury. This was much later. It was along about 1972 and I'd been working on Wage-Price Controls during that period of time. I was the assistant director in charge of operations and Rumsfeld was the director. And Shultz convened a meeting in his office over at Treasury -- this is, say, the day after he's been sworn in as secretary of the treasury, but in that capacity he was also chairman of the Cost of Living Council overseeing controls. And we gathered in his office and he closed the door and turned around to us and said, "Now gentlemen, what are we going to do to get out of these damn controls?" That was his top priority. He wanted to end those controls. Congress had passed legislation giving the President the authority to do this, I think, expecting he would never use it and just to let them say, "Look, we gave him the authority to control inflation and he hasn't done it." The fact was inflation wasn't all that bad in those days. But the freeze for 90 days was sort of a stopgap measure, but then he had to find some system or



mechanism that you could put in place after that. So, we immediately went to work after he'd announced the freeze, which was managed by a small group headed up by Arnie Weber, University of Chicago. But Rumsfeld and I and the team he'd pulled together went to work, created something called the Pay Board that had labor leaders on it like George Meany, for example, and the Price Commission. And they were supposed to come up with regulations to govern wages and prices and we were going to oversee this whole thing. [Coughs] Excuse me. As I say, I ended up as the assistant director in charge of operations and my job was to oversee 3,000 IRS agents who were trying to enforce these controls. As we got down to the end of the 90-day period, we didn't have any regulations. And we had been cranking away and cranking away and nobody had come up with anything. And we ended up the night before these regulations had to be printed in the Federal Register so that people could start to operate by them pulling an all-nighter in effect, and we cranked out 14 pages of regulations to run the economy, the prices in the economy. I typed them. We didn't have a typist, a secretary, around, couldn't find one. So I literally sat there and typed them. Ended up 14 pages long, and that's what went into the Federal Register the next day and become part of the Wage-Price Control program, and then it just grew by leaps and bounds. And we eventually ended up with in the thousands of pages of rules and regulations. But it was a terrible idea in effect for a lot of reasons. It undermines the whole notion of a free economy. It said to the American voter out there, "If you're not happy with the price of hamburger, it's the government's fault. They're the ones setting those prices." In effect we sort of took this political burden on to our administration by, in effect, establishing these controls. They had had significant unanticipated consequences. I always thought for example that because we ended up with controls on the price of gasoline and petroleum products, which those were enforced for about ten years, that it kept gasoline prices abnormally low. But that meant that American car manufacturers didn't have to make the adjustment to more efficient automobiles. There's no incentive in the marketplace for them to do that so they didn't. And at the end of that time the Japanese had stolen the march on us and gotten very good at producing very efficient smaller cars. And I really think it did serious damage to the American automobile industry in the 1970s for example. In other respects it was -- I just felt it was a big, big mistake. And it became an issue in the '72 election. Of course, we won big anyway. But I always recall one of my favorite stories from that period was the debate. As I recall it was the summer of '72, and we'd had the controls in place then for a little less than a year. But the public was very concerned according to the polls about food prices, convinced food prices were going through the overhead. And the fact of the matter was food prices hadn't gone up at all. You could look at the food component of the Consumer Price Index; it had gone up 0.0 percent. But the perception was there that food prices were climbing. And this was now our problem because we were supposedly controlling those prices. So there was a meeting in the Cabinet Room where this was one of the subjects discussed. The President was there and most of the Cost of Living Council, These would be the Cabinet members who had some role in economic policy. And this debate had gone forward with some arguing like George Shultz, "Don't do anything," as I recall, and I think maybe John Ehrlichman and other more politically attuned members arguing you had to do something. And the something was to refreeze food prices. We thought if we put controls back on food prices that'd convince people everything was okay. And what I recall from the meeting was President Nixon telling a story that he'd heard from President Brezhnev, Soviet Union. And he said Brezhnev had once told him that sometimes in order to go on being a statesman you have to be a politician for a while. And that means if the people see an imaginary river out there, you don't tell them there's no river there, you build an imaginary bridge over the imaginary river. That would be a politically successful strategy. I was always struck by this story that President Nixon claimed he'd heard from Leonid Brezhnev about how to manage this kind of a problem.

**Timothy Naftali**

When you were given, when Mr. Rumsfeld was given the assignment, did you actually think Phase II would work?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, you know I was young, and I hadn't given any thought to wage-price controls. And I had a choice. I had an option. And I was given a choice between going with Rumsfeld to Wage-Price Controls or going to the Committee to Re-Elect the President. Mind you, this is August of 1971. And I'd been doing a little bit of work with some of the guys over there that were trying to get organized for the '72 campaign, and the decision I made, obviously, was a good one when I went to Wage-Price Controls given the alternative, because people that I'd have been working with obviously ended up in an awful lot of trouble a couple of years later.

**Timothy Naftali**

You were going to work with Bart Porter, weren't you?

**Dick Cheney**

Bart Porter and Jeb Magruder and that group that went from the White House over to manage the campaign. Good guys, but they obviously, you know, they all ended up severely damaged in the Watergate process. And I had the good fortune of having gone across the street to the Wage-Price Control Program. So, much as I might despair that I was part of the Wage-Price Control Program, that beat the alternative.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was it a real challenge with so many regulations to try to keep this apolitical, particularly with an election year coming up? Did you have any pressure to politicize? Was there any pressure to politicize the Wage-Price Control regime?

**Dick Cheney**

No, there really wasn't. It was too complicated anyway to try to do that. I do remember, you know, vignettes. I can remember we got into the business of pricing wine. And as I recall it was the Gallo brothers. I don't know if you remember Gallo wine. They sold large quantities of it. But they were able to undersell most of the wineries in the business. And we ended up with a large group of winemakers in the conference room at the Cost of Living Council pleading with us to allow their competition, the Gallo boys, being able to raise their prices so that we didn't drive everybody else out of business. It was difficult enough to do without having any partisan politics entered into it in any way, shape or form. We always laughed about how we were going to control oil prices, and we were -- sometimes it was hard to come up with the people who had the requisite expertise. There was a guy named Chachie Owens [phonetic sp] who ran the voice actuality system in a public affairs shop. He would -- when a new policy was decided upon by the Council or the Price Commissioner Pay Board, they'd put out a public service announcement about it. He was in charge of getting those on the radio. And we were looking for somebody who knew something about the oil business. So I said, "Well, Chachie's from

Texas. He must know something about the oil business." Chachie played football for Darrell Royal at the University of Texas in an earlier incarnation. So, they got Chachie and put him in charge of coming up with the regulations to govern oil prices and energy prices, which he did. And put together a team and did fairly well at it as regulations go. And then he left and went out and set up his own consulting business and did very well on the outside advising people about the control policy that he'd helped put in place.

**Timothy Naftali**

Were you -- did you get involved at all in the '72 campaign?

**Dick Cheney**

Not directly, no. I watched it from afar with Bob Teeter. He and I got to be great friends during this period. And we used to have Bob come over periodically and brief us because he was the pollster with respect to the campaign. So he would come occasionally and brief us on how people perceived what the administration was doing or what was happening in the Wage-Price Control program. And eventually we went on. In '76 when I was Ford's Chief of Staff he was our pollster for the '76 campaign, did all my polling for me when I ran for Congress six times in Wyoming and so forth. That friendship really began in 1972 with Bob while he was working at the Committee to Re-Elect. My only real participation in the campaign that year was to go to the convention in Miami Beach.

**Timothy Naftali**

We interviewed Mr. Ruckelshaus, and he said wonderful things about Bob Teeter.

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, Bob was just -- he and Bob were very close. Great guy, unfortunately passed away a couple of years ago.

**Timothy Naftali**

You did do some work for I guess some other polling work -- you were an intermediary with Gallup at some point weren't you?

**Dick Cheney**

In '72? Not that I recall. Not that I recall.

**Timothy Naftali**

Were you confident the administration would be re-elected?

**Dick Cheney**

Yes, I don't recall ever being in doubt about that. George McGovern as our opponent --

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, before, when Muskie was the opponent, not McGovern.

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, but no, there was -- that '68 election had been very close, obviously. But with respect to '72, I don't recall that we were ever really all that concerned about the outcome. I think most of us were fairly confident we'd win.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us one anecdote about President Nixon. Did you meet President Nixon during this period? Did you interact with him at all?

**Dick Cheney**

Occasionally, in a group. Rumsfeld at one point took several of his senior people over to meet the President, file passed the desk, shake hands, have your picture taken. I can remember going to San Clemente with Don at one point. It would have been in that early timeframe, maybe 1970. The reason we were going out, Rumsfeld had to go to some meetings out there, and I flew out on a plane with George Shultz and his family. And George was then sworn in out there as the new director of OMB. This is when he left the Labor Department job. And I would see him in that kind of a setting, but no, I never sat down and had a one-on-one with him. I was, you know, too junior for that. But we did, after he left office and by the time I was a Congressman in the '80s I can recall meeting with him once when he came back to Washington. [Unintelligible] stayed at the Jefferson Hotel, one of the hotels now in town. And he invited a few of us to come in and talk about the upcoming election. And I was tremendously impressed as he went through almost state by state without a note and called what he thought was going to happen. And it was a very, very good forecast of exactly what did happen in the election.

**Timothy Naftali**

End of 1972, Mr. Rumsfeld is offered the ambassadorship at NATO.

**Dick Cheney**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

What happens to Dick Cheney?

**Dick Cheney**

I went off to private life. What I always remember about that, we had gone through the '72 election, and right after the election, maybe the morning after the election, there was a meeting at the White House I didn't participate in, I heard about later, but that Don participated in where all of the senior

administration people were asked to go back to their agencies and request resignations from all of their political appointees. And Don refused to do that. He said he was prepared to fire anybody that they wanted to have fired.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mm-hmm.

**Dick Cheney**

That was their prerogative. It was probably a request that came from Ehrlichman and Haldeman, but that he wasn't going to go demand resignations. They were going to pick them up and then give most of them back and simply keep a few people they wanted to get rid of, and he refused to do that. And I always felt that might have had an impact on his next job assignment, which was Brussels. He went off as the ambassador to NATO. I had the opportunity to go with him, but I took a pass. I'd been at it at that point for four years in the administration. I had an opportunity in Washington to join a small firm that operated in the financial markets, an investment advisory firm for major institutional investors. And I decided to go that route and go to work at a company called Bradley Woods. This was the end of 1972, beginning of '73, which is what I did and turned out to be a good choice again because over the next 18 months, of course, Watergate hit and dominated. And I sat and watched all of that. And then in August of '74 when Jerry Ford became President, I was asked to go back that day and help with the transition and then eventually as his chief of staff.

**Timothy Naftali**

How much of an issue was Watergate when you left the office, the end of '72?

**Dick Cheney**

It wasn't an issue. I can recall there'd been the news stories running in the Post and elsewhere about it. There had been -- I can remember having discussions with people where we'd say, "Why don't they just sort of dump it all out and get it over with, get it behind us." That was sort of the conventional wisdom in some quarters at the time. It didn't really sort of emerge at least in my consciousness as a problem for the administration until January of '73. It was about the time I was leaving. And that's when the judge sentenced the Watergate burglars. And at that point they began to talk. And in January of '73 is whenever they sort of blew up in terms of the notion that there had been more direct White House involvement in these events than anybody up 'til that point knew.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you think that if they had dumped the information out we wouldn't have had this struggle between Congress and the executive branch, which had historic consequences?

**Dick Cheney**

It did have historic consequences. I don't know. You know, I've looked at that so often and thought about it a lot because I must say I was on the outside looking in as I watched all of this unfold. And over the next 18 months, I then went on the inside with President Ford when he took over. And I can

remember one of the first things I had to do with President Ford was to accompany him to Capitol Hill when he went and testified before the Judiciary Committee about the pardon. This was September/October of '74. And it became just an overwhelming burden, if you will, obviously, until it got resolved, and finally it did get resolved. I always felt it was a great tragedy for the nation, for President Nixon, certainly, and his family. I thought he had done some things very well as President. I was proud to have been part of his administration. I thought a lot of what he accomplished with respect to China and the war in Vietnam and so forth were very, very difficult problems, what he was able to do with the Russians and Soviets, but he'd managed a number of very complicated problems very well. And I thought he was a very good foreign policy President. But obviously in this one area in terms of Iran-Contra, we ended up with...

**Timothy Naftali**

Watergate.

**Dick Cheney**

With Watergate, excuse me. Iran-Contra, I did some years later. But with Watergate it was real trauma for the country.

**Timothy Naftali**

You wrote -- I read your minority report on Iran-Contra.

**Dick Cheney**

On Iran-Contra? Boy, you're a glutton for punishment then.

**Timothy Naftali**

But that's important, I think, to understand.

**Dick Cheney**

I think it is, yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

But it's a product of that era, isn't it?

**Dick Cheney**

It is, clearly shaped my thinking in terms of the fact that Congress, I felt, obviously had legitimate concerns. I mean, nobody can question what Watergate was a major event, a potential constitutional crisis of major significance. And it wasn't unusual that Congress tried to respond to that. But I always felt one of the by-products, both of Vietnam and Watergate, was an assertion by Congress of authority over the executive branch that I thought was excessive, things like the War Powers Act which I think is unconstitutional, the Anti-Budget Impoundment and Control Act and some of those majors that in

effect in my view usurped executive authority. It came at a time when the Presidency had been weakened because of these controversies and scandal and ended up shaping that relationship, and I felt frankly weakening the President in terms of the constitutional authority and prerogatives of the office. And a lot of that's reflected in that Iran-Contra minority report.

**Timothy Naftali**

What lessons, negative and positive, did you implement when you became chief of staff? How would you compare and contrast the Nixon and Ford White Houses?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, it's interesting. When we moved in in the Ford Administration, the conventional wisdom was that somehow the way the Nixon's White House had been organized under Bob Haldeman in particular and John Ehrlichman that the organizational structure itself had caused Watergate. And so the conventional wisdom that President Ford followed initially was that he wasn't going to have a strong chief of staff. He was going to have something called a "spokes of the wheel." "Spokes of the wheel" was nobody was in charge. He had nine or ten senior people all reporting to the President. We tried that for a few months and that didn't work. Nobody was in charge. We'd end up with the President double-scheduled. He'd be in having a meeting with the NSC on Soviet Arms Control issues, and 40 Rotarians from Grand Rapids would show up in the West Wing lobby for their meeting with the President. So we fairly quickly moved back to the chief of staff concept. And that's when I took over after Rumsfeld left after about a year. Now that's certainly the way I operated. The fact of the matter is as I look back on it and reflect now, most administrations sooner or later have come back and adopted what I'd describe as the Haldeman method of organizing the White House. I believe today that's the best way to operate. It was a fascinating conference. This was when I was in Congress, so it'd be probably mid- to late-'80s, out in San Diego, that Jerry Warren organized that had been part of the Nixon operation. And he had at the University of California at San Diego a representative of the White Houses going all the way back to Andy Goodpaster from the Eisenhower days. And I think Ted Sorensen was there from the Kennedy administration and so forth. And I was there representing President Ford. We spent about three days on White House structure and organization and staffing. And Bob Haldeman was there. And it was the only thing I ever saw Bob do after he'd left the White House where he came and participated in one of these conferences. I think he did it because Jerry Warren asked him to. A book was eventually produced on the conference. But it was clear when you sat there and spent a couple of days with Bob Haldeman listening to him talk about the White House and so forth that he had spent an enormous amount of time thinking about it, that he had come up with what I think is still the best way to operate as a White House chief of staff with a strong central staff system, that you need that in order to protect the President, to provide the President with what he needs. You might have some dispute, controversy, over how it was used or how it was applied in specific circumstances. But I think that basic fundamental structure was the right one and that sooner or later all administrations end up with something resembling that organization. And the presentations by Bob Haldeman those few days out in San Diego were just superb.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well that Presidency rested on something called the Brandeis Brief. But doesn't that depend on whether the President likes documents?

**Dick Cheney**

Sure.

**Timothy Naftali**

That system you need a President who absorbs by reading and likes to have things committed to paper.

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, well, Jerry Ford did a lot on paper, but did a lot -- he was a verbal guy. He liked to have meetings where we talked about issues. George Bush does, too. But sooner or later we all end up now - - I think virtually every administration has had a chief of staff sooner or later. I remember when the Carter people took over after we left, Hamilton Jordan moved into the office I had had. And there was a going away party for me as I was departing the job. The staff had a gathering where they gave me a gift. And the gift was a bicycle wheel mounted on a piece of plywood with every single spoke except for one busted. There was only one spoke left connecting the rim and the hub. And they put a tag on the bottom of it said, "The rare form of management artistry." That "the spokes of the wheel were a rare form of management artistry as conceived by Jerry Ford and modified by Dick Cheney." And I left that in that big corner office that the chief of staff occupies on January 20th of '77 setting up there on a table with a note pinned to it to Hamilton Jordan. It said, "Dear Hamilton, beware the spokes of the wheel."

**Timothy Naftali**

Were you the one that changed it then -- it wasn't Rumsfeld?

**Dick Cheney**

Well, Rumsfeld had started it, too. But my staff said that's the way they made the tag out. Don had perceived that we weren't going to get anywhere with the spokes of the wheel so he'd started that process before he left.

**Timothy Naftali**

Is the Presidency the same institution it was 30 years ago when you first started observing it? Or more than 30 years ago?

**Dick Cheney**

I think the answer has to be basically, "Yes." That it differs from administration to administration. I don't think in an institutional sense so much; it differs because the times in which you govern, the kind of problems you have to deal with, because of the nature and the characteristics of the man in the Oval Office. And I think of what George Bush and I campaigned on in 2000 when we ran for election, went through that very close 37-day recount and so forth. But none of that envisioned 9/11 and 9/11 has just dominated our administration ever since for good and legitimate reasons. That's what we've had to respond to. And that's the biggest challenge we faced. I think some administrations may be more



predictable when they run for office what it is they are going to have to deal with. But, certainly, I mean Jerry Ford here's a guy who never sought the office, who was getting ready to retire in Grand Rapids. And in a matter of seven or eight months goes from being Republican leader of the House to Vice President to President of the United States. And did I think a very good job of it, turned out to be a very good President. But you couldn't have predicted any of that, but when he arrived he had the institution of the Presidency. And part of his task was to sort of restore the majesty of the office and restore public confidence in what was happening in the Oval Office. And I'm -- out of all the administrations I've worked in and Presidents I've served, at the end of that time, I'm struck more than anything else by how much the character and qualities of the man, the individual President, affects and shapes things in the way the place works. I think those experiences, and they're so different partly because I held a different post, occupied a different job in each one, partly because the times were different, the challenges were different. But if you think about it as, you know, at the center of our system of government, some very wise people devised it and on the whole it's worked far better, I think, than anybody had any reason to expect.

**Timothy Naftali**

It's an 18th century concept. It's amazing. One person to be commander in chief, head of government and head of state, there are very few individuals in the world that combine those three responsibilities.

**Dick Cheney**

Right, and yet the legislative branch with significant authority and Article 3 in the courts, so it's, I think it's worked remarkably well.

**Timothy Naftali**

Are there any anecdotes you'd like to preserve?

**Dick Cheney**

I've used them all.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, then I have one to ask you about. Frank Gannon says hello.

**Dick Cheney**

Oh yes, Frank's a great guy.

**Timothy Naftali**

And Frank told me that he and Diane Sawyer chatted with you a month or two after you took over the Ford White -- entered the Ford White House, and they asked you if there's any difference between the two White Houses, and you said one: "We don't write things down."

**Dick Cheney**

Yeah, well Frank got a great book out of all the stuff they wrote down, obviously. He was -- the story about Frank is, he was a White House fellow. And I got ahold one year of the list of people who'd been selected as fellows a day or two before it was released and went over their resumes, talked to Don about it. And we looked at this guy named Gannon, and we thought, "That's the guy we want." And so I made a run at Frank and took him up to a place called Nick and Dottie's. It was right there on 17th Street. It's gone now, but it was -- took him up there and bought him several beers and persuaded him he wanted to come to work for Don Rumsfeld, and he did. He became our White House Fellow. Of course, eventually, went to San Clemente with the President when he resigned and helped write his book.

**Timothy Naftali**

I love how memory works. He told me you took him to Sans Souci.

**Dick Cheney**

Nick and Dottie's. It was close to Sans Souci, but I wasn't going to spend that kind of money on a lowly intern, a guy who was a White House Fellow.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mr. Vice President, thank you for your time.

**Dick Cheney**

Well, thank you.

**Timothy Naftali**

You've been great.

**Dick Cheney**

It's a great project.