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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. KALB: Okay. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Marvin Kalb, the Morro Professor Emeritus at the Shorenstein Center at Harvard. And it is my pleasure to have been asked to moderate this panel, which I assure you, looking at the quality of our panelists, is going to be interesting and spirited.

Our subject is All the President's Advisers. To set the scene, let me just make the following obvious points. Number one, we've got a new, energetic, articulate leader, President; two, a bit like Batman taking on the evil forces in Gotham City, this new President has arrived to find himself faced with an incredible economic challenge, a downturn in the economy that probably parallels what we experienced, at least some of us experienced in the Great Depression in the 1930's; third, the new President faces and picks up responsibilities, though he, himself, never had military experience of any kind, he is Commander in Chief, and he does govern an Armed Forces responsible for the war in Iraq, which we're told is going reasonably well, though, who knows, and the war in Afghanistan, which is definitely not going well; and fourth, he has laid out probably the most eye-catching and ambitious agenda of any president in the last 100 years. He is compared to Roosevelt in that sense, in that he faced – he faces now and Roosevelt faced – this incredible, terrible economic downturn.

But the new President, instead of handling just the economy, has decided to do something well beyond that, and he's laid out an ambitious agenda including energy, health care, education, each one of which could take at least one term to get through successfully, but he's decided to do it all at the same time. So that's a stunning agenda for the country.

Now, once you've got the agenda, you've got to begin to make it happen. That means you've got to have the people. That means you turn to all of the President's advisers and you say, now, what are we supposed to do, and theoretically, they're going to tell you.

Now, just think about this for a sec, there is the – at the very top of this magnificent institution, the White House, there is the Chief of Staff right now, Rahm Emanuel; under him three Senior Advisers, David Axelrod, Valerie Jarrett, and Pete Rouse. Then there is Larry Summers doing the Economic Council, and General Jones doing the National Security Council. Then there are four policy Czars – for health care, energy, Native American Affairs, and Urban Affairs, and then, of course, there's the Vice President. So you've got all of these people in the White House doing their thing led by one person who, no matter how brilliant, how well organized, how disciplined, is going to have to be in charge, he's the middle of that spoke, he's going to have to be in charge of all of these different elements of the White House and of his projected national policy.

And in a recent issue of *The New Yorker* magazine, there was a quote from Joshua Bolten, who was Chief of Staff for President George W. Bush, and he said that the job that Rahm Emanuel now has is like fitting a lot of large personalities and brains and portfolios into a relatively small space.

And in a 24 hour cycle, assuming time for sleep, exercise, family responsibilities, and occasionally watching a basketball game, this President is going to have to run all of these things. So the operating question is, is this a manageable operation or even expectation? But fortunately we have four expert panelists who will explain how it will or perhaps will not work. And we start with I.M Destler, to my immediate right, who is the Saul I. Stern Professor at the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland. Mac, as he's called, is the co-author of a new book, *In the Shadow of the Oval Office: Profiles of the National Security Advisers and the Presidents They Served – From JFK to George W. Bush*.

Next to him, Bill Galston. Bill is a Senior Fellow here at Brookings and is the Ezra K. Zilkha Chair in Governance Studies, the author of eight books, more than 100 articles, and during the Clinton Administration, he worked in the White House as Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy.

Next down the line is Ivo Daalder, who is also a Senior Fellow here at Brookings, co-author of 12 books, including *In the Shadow of the Oval Office*, and he too, worked in President Clinton's White House.

And batting fourth, clean-up, James Pfiffner. Jim is University Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, written or edited a dozen books on the presidency, is widely regarded as the scholar you'd turn to if you have a question about the presidency. So, gentlemen, let us get started. And my first question, and I'll turn to Mac first, is, so what's going on, Mac?

MR. DESTLER: Thank you, Marvin. It's a great pleasure to be here and have such a wonderful panel to work with. I wanted to spend about five minutes on capsule history and five minutes on General Jones, as current National Security Adviser. I have to begin with a slight commercial. The book that Marvin so kindly presented to you is available at a discount which exceeds the discount at amazon.com, but probably for a limited time only, so in any case –

In writing this book and writing our conclusions, Ivo and I concluded that the best National Security advisers have been those who not only responded to presidential needs, but have acted to strengthen the links between the presidency and responsible agencies, or at minimum, the links between the President and the leaders of those agencies.

In other words, as George Bundy, the first modern National Security Adviser once wrote, a good National Security Adviser works for the Secretary of State and other cabinet people, as well as the President. He or she not only protects the President and advances his agenda, but connects him to people whose commitment and energy he needs if he is

to succeed, and whose advice he needs to refine his own work. The person who probably did the job best by these criteria is Brent Scowcroft, who played the role for both President Ford and President George H.W. Bush. And Scowcroft had what we call a formula with – I don't know if he would own up to the formula, but we inferred this formula from his experience and attribute it to him.

The first is, build trust. David Abshire wrote a book about saving the Reagan Administration from Iran-Contra, and he subtitled, trust is the coin of the realm, and he meant it for the sort of overall political process. There has to be trust. We apply this particularly to high level executive branch relations.

And what Brent Scowcroft has said time and time again is, the first thing a National Security Adviser has to do is establish trust, not just for the President, we'll get to that in a minute, but with his senior colleagues, and if he can't do that, the process becomes quickly a competitive mess.

The second principal is, establish a strong multi level policy process at the principal's level, which means the cabinet level, at the Deputy's level, and at the Assistant Secretary level, because there are so many issues, you have to have both a structure and you have to empower people at several levels and connect them to the President via the National Security Adviser, and his Deputy, and the senior members of his staff. And, of course, these committees engage, particularly the State and

Defense Departments, the military, intelligence, and other issues as relevant.

And the third part of this principal, which Brent turned out to be the master at, is, get close to the President and stay close.

Remarkably, the man who came into an administration where the President's best friend was appointed Secretary of State one day after his election in 1988, Brent ends up being so close to Bush that they write an unprecedented joint memoir about their experiences.

Okay. How does this relate to the Obama Administration? As Marvin has pointed out, and as other colleagues will comment on, the President has named at least half a dozen super senior policy aids with overlapping areas of jurisdiction.

It's not clear, with the possible exception of General Jones, it's not clear that any of them was chosen primarily for their ability or experience in managing a policy process. Presumably, Obama thinks of himself as managing the process, much as I think John F. Kennedy thought of himself as managing the process back in 1961. But Obama can't, and Kennedy found he couldn't himself. Overload is inevitable, and some advisers will prevail over others, some issues won't get properly vetted, and policy will suffer, hopefully not on the scale of a Bay of Pigs, but I think we have to expect some rocky paths ahead.

What about General Jones? Let's look at the three Scowcroft principals. Trust, he seems to be good at that, is likely to be

good at that. I know he's a man of integrity, a man who's well respected, he doesn't – he seems to be a straight shooter, I have no reason to believe he cannot gain the trust of his colleagues.

A multi level interagency process, as you probably know, the President has signed on February 13 an executive order fairly – more similar than different, to bear some previous executive orders, structuring the national security process, and this includes a multi level process, principal's committee, deputy's committee, assistant secretary level interagency committee. So the formal structure is in place. Will it work effectively? Well, it's too early to tell. Close to the President? That is the question. He had limited prior contact to – Jones had limited prior contact with Obama. There are no less than four deputies on the National Security Council staff who have had longer standing Obama relationships. Of course, Bundy, Kissinger, and Scowcroft didn't know Kennedy, Nixon, and Ford all that well before they took their jobs, and that didn't keep them from building strong ties and becoming central figures in their administration. But they were aided by compatibility of personal styles.

It's not clear that we have a compatibility of styles in the – between Obama and Jones. Jones comes from the military profession, where the process is shaped by hierarchy, clear channels, lines of command. Obama is an ex-Senator, community organizer, and law professor. He seeks information informally, where he can find it, with



perhaps only secondary interest in the rank and position of the individual providing the advice. Can Jones adapt to this?

And again, I would say that although Obama and others have pointed to Lincoln as the model, I think that for modern presidents, Kennedy is the model here in terms of the style, similarities in terms of the style of the President and his strong intellectual and informal bent. In Bundy – in McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy found a man who could live with the fluid process, who could bring at least the modicum of order out of the disorder in the Kennedy White House by being quicker on his feet than anybody else and who was able to be a process man who was immersed in and on top of the policy substance. Is that what Obama needs? Can Jones meet that need? Stay tuned.

MR. KALB: Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Well, unlike I believe everybody else on this podium, I have not written a book about the White House. And unlike some of them, I actually lived there for two and a half years. And so what I'd like to present you with is four brief points built on my personal experience, supplemented by prior and subsequent observation.

Point number one, especially during the early months of an administration, for all practical purposes, the White House is the government. And the reason for that is that the ever worsening, ever less credible, ever more intrusive and absurd vetting process is stretching out the length of time that it takes to get cabinet departments and agencies up

and running. During that period, for the most part, the White House is the only game in town. Obviously, the routine business of the Executive Branch continues under the direction of able civil servants, but especially when you have a president who is as bold and aspirationally transformative as President Obama, the major changes are not going to be driven out of headless departments functioning on autopilot.

And this is certainly going to be true for the issues that Marvin mentioned, issues like budget and economic policy in general, policies dealing with energy and the environment, where there is a very powerful and unified team ensconced in the White House, they all are true believers, they're all pulling strongly in the same direction, and certainly in the area of health care, where the first HHS nominees insistence on being dual-hatted with the leadership role in the White House, as well as, you know, his secretaryship of the Department of Health and Human Service, showed a very keen appreciation for where health policy was actually going to be made.

And now that those two roles have been separated, you know, I can promise you that health policy will be made in the White House with the participation and assistance of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, but she will be, at best, in the passenger seat, not in the driver's seat. Now, there are some exceptions to this proposition, that the White House will be the government for all practical purposes, especially during the early months. And let me give you two categories of exceptions.

Category one is the area, what I would call second tier issues with first tier secretaries. A good example of that is Arnie Duncan at the Department of Education.

I believe that education policy, which the President cares a lot about, will be driven out of the Department of Education. There is no one I can see of Duncan's stature or proximity to the President in the White House dealing with that issue.

A second category of exceptions, and I advance this very tentatively, and I'm ready to be shot down by my colleagues to my left and to my right, first tier issues with first tier secretaries and more of the departmental team in place.

And I think that Secretary Clinton has done a pretty adept job of getting more people around her than anyone else, faster, and you can already see special envoys going hither, thither, and yon at her direction, people are being dispatched. I mean a couple of State Department people, we learned today or yesterday, depending on how attentive you are, were dispatched to Syria. And so there is a functioning State Department, at least there's a level of big think and high policy which will pose some interesting challenges that I'll get to in a minute.

Point number two, White House government works when three conditions are satisfied; number one, there are clear lines of authority; number two, there is a President who understands and enforces those clear lines of authority; and number three, when senior advisers are

prepared to act as honest brokers and not simply as advocates for their own positions.

A classic example, in my experience, where those three conditions were satisfied and satisfied in spades was the National Economic Council under Bob Rubin, right. I mean everybody knew that Rubin was the go to guy on the economy, a very informal president, at least as informal as the current President, respected the NSC process, and made it very clear to everybody, including the Secretary of the Treasury, that that was going to be the case.

And third, while Bob Rubin was hardly a neutral on economic policy, he was a superb, honest broker. And when there were dissenting views expressed in the NSC, Bob made it his business to make sure that the President knew about those dissenting views, they were summarized accurately and fairly in memoranda, and when Bob thought it was necessary, the dissenters were brought into the Oval Office to state their cases. So a good example of how those conditions were not satisfied, I believe, is the National Security Council under Condi Rice.

And, you know, just to state the obvious, the lines of authority were utterly blurred, you had very important actors in the administration who did not respect them, who arrogantly disregarded them, and you had a president who was unwilling to reinforce the authority of his National Security Adviser, and that led to a pretty – policy process, in my judgment.

Point number three, and Mac has already touched on this to some extent, every White House reflects the character and predispositions of the President in the same way that every presidential campaign reflects the characters and predispositions of the candidate. And what I observed with this President is a hub and spokes strategy for policy, which speaks an enormous confidence that he can make the ultimate judgment, determine the basic policy thrust in administration in one area after another, and that he can deal effectively with large and potentially competing personalities. Foreign policy is an excellent example of that, but by no means the only one. And the fundamental question, which Mac has already stated and which I will restate with some asperity, can he do as much as he thinks he can, and if not, what will the consequences be in the short term, and what will the adjustment strategy be in the intermediate term? I think that is a key question for observers, both formal and informal, of this administration.

And I must say, I share Mac Destler's skepticism, that he can do as much as he thinks he can, and the Kenney example is by no means besides the point, and others could be induced to the same effect.

The fourth and final point that I want to make has to do with the agenda and the interaction between the agenda and White House governance. And in the case of President Obama, there are really two agendas; the first is the agenda that he ran on, and the second is the agenda that circumstances are forced upon him. And his administration

will be defined by the judgments that he makes about the relationship between those two agendas.

We got a big fat clue last week, he doesn't think there are any trade-offs. He thinks that he can do everything. Now, this matters because in my experience in the Clinton Administration, there were two big debates, first, what to do, and second, when to do it. And Bill Clinton reached the judgment that, A, he couldn't do everything, and B, that some things that he wanted to do would have to come after other things that he also wanted to do, that there were sequential priorities.

This administration, as far as I can tell, is taking the position that they will do everything and all at once. And I am skeptical that either the White House process or the congressional process will accommodate that very expansive aspiration. If so, the next stage of adjustment in the White House will involve a no holds barred debate about what comes before what. And it is in that scheduling and sequencing of major initiatives that unified White Houses become significantly less unified, because many people suspect that policy deferred is policy denied, and they're often right about that.

MR. KALB: Thank you very much, Bill. Ivo, please.

MR. DAALDER: Well, one of the disadvantages of sharing a panel with such great observers, commentators, and participants in how the White House is run, and how policy is made, is that everything important has already been said.

MR. GALSTON: But not everybody has said it.

MR. DAALDER: Not everybody has said it; and, in fact, everything I wanted to say has already been said, and some things I didn't want to say have already been said. Let me try to tackle the same set of issues in a slightly different way, which is, try to explain why this White House is organized in the way it is, that it is organized very differently from the past, I think Marvin started us off with is clear, with many czars and councils and strong people sitting around in a very small building, which people tend to forget, the White House actually is a very small building.

The old Executive Office building, as I found out during this transition, is even smaller than one thinks, because a third of it is under renovation, which means there is no one sitting in those offices.

MR. GALSTON: And another third is devoted to useless hallways.

MR. DAALDER: Exactly; there are lots of hallways and some nice other rooms that – which people don't sit in. It seems to me that Obama arrived at the White House structure that he put together on the basis of looking at two realities that he confronted, and responded to that. This is not something that was willy nilly put together, let me just add more people, this was a well thought out process.

We know that Obama was thinking about how to organize his administration well before November 4<sup>th</sup>. In fact, we find out in the *New Yorker* article that Marvin talked about that he was talking to Rahm

Emanuel to be his Chief of Staff back in August of 2008, so he was thinking about this, as I think good candidates who are serious about governing ought to think about it. It's good to have people who think about how to organize their White Houses and their administrations early on.

And I think there were two aspects of the world that Obama confronted that led him to the decisions he made on the organizational site. One was the light motif of his campaign, a belief and an understanding that we live in a very different world, one of complete interconnectedness, one where things very far away can have implications here at home immediately, both bad and good, and that in that world, which had come to America, a phrase that Jim Lindsay and I have often used, the way the government is organized is no longer relevant or no longer right to deal with that world. Our government is organized on the basis of a distinction between foreign and domestic policy, we have domestic departments and foreign national security departments, and within those distinctions of the pillars of the domestic and the pillars of the foreign we have a variety of competencies and functionalities.

So we have a department that deals with the military. We have a department that deals with diplomacy. We have a department that deals with finance. We have a department that deals on the domestic side, with housing and education and energy. So we've divided our government between foreign and domestic institutions, and we have divided those foreign and domestic parts of the government into various stovepipes.



The reality of the world is that the policy, challenges, and the opportunities cut across both the foreign and domestic divide and the functional divide, that the way we organize the U.S. government is not in reality to the world in which we live, and that you have to, therefore, rethink in a quite fundamental way how you do that. Now, in Europe, what you would do is, you would rebuild your department. So if you have a new government, you would get – departments get merged, changed all the time, it happens all the time. We don't do that, in part, because there's a congressional element to it, and legislating changes in departments takes time and is highly disruptive.

So the way we tend to do it is, we'd pull it into the one very flexible instrument that a president has, which is how you organize your own White House. And that, in essence, what he was doing was understanding that the challenges we face require you to organize your White House in a way that dealt with the realities as we confront it in the world, so that you had in the White House someone who not only did energy, but did energy and environment. We have no one else in the U.S. government who does energy and environment. But now in the White House there is a person in an office that is focused on energy and environment.

We've had for a very long time, since 1947, someone in the White House who thinks about national security and all its components, in the component of the military, in the component of the intelligence

community, of diplomacy, economics, and indeed, under the 1947 act that established the National Security Council, the domestic aspect of national security right there in the act, and the National Security Council and the National Security Adviser is supposed to be integrating that part of the policy. So you have it there, you have it on a whole variety of other issues.

Homeland Security, just to – is one of those issues where the domestic foreign divide is breached because terrorists come from overseas to do harm over here, and that you have to organize, as the Bush Administration understood, you have to organize your government to deal with that reality. Whether they did it right or wrong is a different issue. They understand that you have to organize. So that was one reality. The world is no longer in conformity with which – in the way we organize our government.

The other one is the one that both Marvin and Bill touched upon, which is the in box that the President found, and his analysis of that in box, which was that every crisis we confronted in one way or another was interrelated, that if you dealt with one of them effectively, it required you to deal with other parts of the crisis that we face, that, in fact, you didn't have the luxury, this is the analysis, whether right or wrong, but it is the analysis, you didn't have the luxury to deal with the crisis seriatim, you had to deal with them all at the same time, so just think about it. The bank and economic crisis, by definition, are intertwined in a fundamental way.

Credit is the life blood of our economy. You can't just deal with the economic recovery crisis, you have to deal with the banking crisis at the same time.

In order to deal with the recovery, in order to generate a recovery over time, you have to deal with the one aspect, the fastest growing aspect of our economy, which is health care, which is exploding in terms of cost. So you have to reform health care if you hope to get out of this crisis over time.

You have to also deal with the dwindling supply of oil and the reality of what that means to our economic recovery. Our dependence on oil and foreign oil has consequences for our foreign policy, and indeed, has consequences for our environmental policy. So you have to deal with the issue of climate change, and you have to deal with the issue of how do you reduce – of how do you deal with the issue of global warming, and you need to do that through international cooperation. You need to work with other countries if you want to achieve any progress on the issue of climate change. In order to work with other countries, you need to regain trust of other countries to be willing to cooperate. So you have to change your foreign policy in a more fundamental way, for example, by closing down Guantanamo, for example, by putting diplomacy, again, at the center of how you engage the world, and in a variety of other issues from Iraq to Afghanistan.

And you need to do all of those steps on the foreign side in order to start dealing with the economic crisis. So the analysis is one of an interlinked set of problems, that if you really want to deal with economy or whatever crisis you take, whether it's economic, or the banking, or the foreign policy crisis, or the wars, or the energy crisis, that once you seriously tackle any one of them, you have to start tackling all of them. That's I think the way that the administration and this President is looking at it.

And as a result, you have to organize your White House, particularly for the reason that Bill pointed out, which is that in the first six months, first year, let's be honest, the only government that exists are a bunch of secretaries and departments and the White House, so you put all the power in the White House, and that's exactly what he did. He not only has a very powerful National Security Council, with expanded scope and responsibilities, he is an extraordinarily powerful head of the National Economic Council, he has a new economics environment and energy person, he has, as Marvin mentioned, urban health care and other coordinators appointed, and these are people who, in their own right, could be secretaries of any department, and, in fact, some of them were secretaries of departments, like Larry Summers.

I need to wrap up and I will. Here is the question that I think we're all struggling with and that we will have to struggle with, which is, now that we have all these strong coordinators, who is going to coordinate

the coordinators? And the reality is, the coordinators in their own issue areas may be able to help coordinate the government, they may be able to help formulate policy, but who is coordinating the coordinators? And the answer to that is Obama.

He's the only one who has set up a system, who is capable of coordinating the coordinators, but it does require a lot of time. So look at one other person to coordinate the coordinators, a person who has been mentioned, but not in this function, it's the Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff has to play a very fundamental coordinating role. And between the two of them, there is the possibility that they'll succeed. If they don't succeed, the question before us is, can you go back to a more traditional model where you let the departments do what it is that they do, and the answer Obama has given to that is, well, probably not because the departments aren't responsive to the world that we face. So unless you figure out a way to coordinate the coordinators within the White House, you're unlikely to succeed in the long run on your policy set.

MR. KALB: Ivo, thanks very much. Jim, you're batting fourth for a reason, put it all together.

MR. PFIFFNER: Well, I will try. I think coordinating the coordinators is the real problem. I'd like to say a few things about the White House staff and how we got here from there in relationship with the cabinet. It seems to me that the complexity of this White House staff is

only matched by the complexity of the problems that the United States is facing now.

The last president to use the cabinet in a deliberative way, as a deliberative body, and as his major advisers was Dwight D. Eisenhower. When Kennedy came to office, he thought large meetings were just useless, he wanted to be at the center of things, hardly used the cabinet at all, and that changed when Richard Nixon came to office. This was a huge change. And at first he thought that he was going to use his cabinet, he brought them all together, said we're going to work on this stuff together, but pretty soon he came to distrust his own political appointees.

Now, first he started with distrusting the – bureaucracy out there, thought they were all democrats, going to undermine him, drag their feet and so forth, but when he got his own people out here, out in the departments and agencies, his White House staff convinced him that they were not on board either, and so he started to centralize things in the White House, and of course, from the very beginning, Henry Kissinger sucked all the foreign policy operations into the White House, or policy-making, built up a huge staff that hadn't been there before, wanted to do in the White House what ordinarily the State and Defense Departments would be doing.

John Ehrlichman put together the Domestic Policy staff, again, putting together a large staff in the White House to give them the capacity to do what used to have to be done in the departments and

agencies. So Nixon soon became to wall himself off behind what was known as the Berlin Wall of Kissinger, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman, isolated him, in a sense. The White House staff grew to be between 500 and 600, and that's the White House Office.

There are now 20 different units in the White House Office, which is one unit within the Executive Office of the President. So after that, despite promises, you know, for cabinet government and to cut the White House staff and so forth, this did not happen, the White House staff is still large, or White House Office, well over 400, presidents since then have tried to do without out, or have tried to – have promised to cut it back, it did not happen.

So as a result of this centralization in the White House, the functions that used to be performed out in the departments and agencies now are performed in the White House. National Security – National Security Council staff does what State and Defense used to do. Domestic Policy coordinators in the White House do much of the policy development that used to be in HHS, HEW, and so forth. Economic Policy, Treasury used to be the major player, now it's inside the White House. Legal Policy, the President's lawyers used to be in the Justice Department, now the Council's office has a whole passel of lawyers working for the President. Trade Policy used to be done in Commerce, State, Defense, now the U.S. Trade representative in the EOP is running things. Appointments, before 1980, most sub-cabinet appointments were

designated by cabinet secretaries to put together their own teams, since then the Office of Presidential Personnel has brought that carefully into the White House.

Now, this doesn't mean that cabinet secretaries are ciphers, that they don't do anything, it's just that they are no longer the major policy advisers to the President.

Okay. So this brings us to the Obama White House. And as Marvin mentioned, he's got three Senior Counselors, he's got 15 cabinet secretaries of the departments, but he's added six more people to have cabinet status. He's got a Chief of Staff with two deputies. He's got about 900 White House appointments to make. And at the very top, these are, you know, the assistants to the President, there's 25 of those, the deputy assistant to the President, there's 25 of those, special assistants, third level, 50 of those. Czars, he's got at least health care, a new one, and Urban Policy, Economic Policy, Environmental, Global Warming, of course, in Native American Affairs, and the sort of – the template for all of this, the National Security Council staff. So the White House is really crowded, and you need somebody to be a traffic cop, because all White House staffers, they're formidable people, they've got big egos, they guard their turf carefully, which brings me to the coordinator of the coordinators, as Ivo mentioned, Rahm Emanuel.



Now, the lessons from the last 50 years I think of White House organization is that somebody short of the President has got to be in charge, and that person is the White House staff.

Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford both tried to be the center, the spokes of the wheel, they had nine people reporting directly to them, they each gave up and said I give up, I've got to have a White House Chief of Staff. And every president since then has had them. And Rahm Emanuel is a formidable person himself.

Now, what he looks for as a model to be a White House Chief of Staff, on the one hand, there's sort of a spectrum, and on the one hand, you can have a very low key facilitator type, like Mac McLarty in the Clinton Administration. He was such a nice guy, they called him Mac the Nice, because he's a good guy, got along with everybody, but he was not an effective Chief of Staff; it wasn't his fault, it was because Bill Clinton did not want to delegate. Finally Leon Panetta came in, Clinton realized that he did have to delegate, and Panetta was much more effective. Or Andrew Card in the second Bush Administration.

But at the other end of the spectrum, for Chiefs of Staff, are the domineering Chiefs of Staff, and this is a danger. The four major domineering types were Sherman Adams for Eisenhower, H.R. Holloman for Nixon, Don Regan for Reagan, and John Sununu for George H.W. Bush.

Each of these Chiefs of Staff had a short temper, they lacked common civility, they alienated the press, they alienated members of Congress, they denigrated members of their own administration, and each one of them resigned in disgrace after harming his president.

So the best model – but this job can be done. There are some people who did it effectively; James Baker, in the first Reagan term, Dick Cheney, believe it or not, not the Cheney we know now, but in the Ford Administration, was a very good, effective Chief of Staff, firm, but civil. Jack Watson did a good job for Carter, Leon Panetta did a good job for President Clinton. So Rahm Emanuel has his work cut out for him. He's got to corral all these large egos, he's got to guard access to the President, he's got to make the trains run on time, and he's got to take all those separate policy threads and bring them all through the eye of the needle at the same time. Now, this is a formidable task even for Rahm Emanuel.

MR. KALB: Thank you very much, Jim. You know, listening to the four of you, I come away thinking that there is this vast, not vast, there is this larger than usual staff of the White House, they're supposed to do all of this stuff, they're supposed to bring it to the President, he's supposed to make the final call.

But it seems to me the way it is set up and the way you've described it, Obama is right smack in the middle of it all. And what is it

that we know about Obama and his background that gives us a sense of confidence that he's going to be able to handle all of this?

There's a story about Obama as a freshly minted Senator, you know about that story, where he came in and he was sitting there and they said, how do you think you're going to run the office, Senator, he said, well, I think we'll bring about six guys together and we'll have a kind of political seminar, we'll kick the ideas around, and we'll come up with a decision. But he found, after four weeks, that this did not work, so he had to come in with what it is that he set up here at the White House. But at the White House, for obvious reasons, it's infinitely more complex and sophisticated and important, he's President of the United States.

So what is it, I turn to any of you or all of you, what is it that we know about Obama that should give us a sense of confidence that he's the guy who's going to be able to run this well? Bill, do you want to start, or Mac?

MR. DESTLER: Let me just say one thing. I think that some people would put say George W. Bush at one end of the spectrum in the sense of too ready to make a decision on limited information, not wanting to be confused, and maybe, with due respect to Bill Galston, Bill Clinton at the other end is somebody who sort of wanted an endless amount of information, but have great difficulty often getting to the bottom line.

I think Obama seems to be between those two models. He seems to want a lot of information, but to judge from his budget, he's not

averse to making big decisions, and so I think that is a good sign, and I think he seems to lack the personal hang-ups of a Nixon or a Lyndon Johnson or an inattentiveness of a Ronald Reagan, which all caused serious problems for their White House. So I think those are the – that's the positive side; the problem side is, obviously, lack of experience, he hasn't been at this place very long, or at high policy responsibility at all before.

MR. KALB: Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I would – I mean the negatives or the doubts are obvious. I would put three potential positives on the table. First of all, he obviously has a very keen analytical mind, and that is I think a useful trait for an executive, particularly –

MR. KALB: Let's start with that.

MR. GALSTON: -- particularly a president. Secondly, you know, as Mac has indicated, but I'll just expand on it a little bit, he has a good temperament, and that is – I think that quality, as much as any, propelled him to the presidency. People, you know, and especially in those crucial weeks after the September economic collapse, I think that Obama won the presidency largely on the basis of his temperament, and Senator McCain lost it largely on the basis of his, and that matters. I mean I – there is a famous description of Franklin Roosevelt, I think it was by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., you know, that he had a second rate mind

but a first rate temperament. It is very unusual for a president to have a first rate mind and a first rate temperament.

You know, Richard Nixon was a good example of just the other – Roosevelt, with a minus sign, he had a first rate mind, and it would be giving him too much credit to say that he had a second rate temperament, you know. And the, you know, and the third characteristic that strikes me about Obama as being, you know, potentially up to this very difficult task is his modus operandi, one that's been demonstrated since his days, you know, at the head of Harvard Law Review, and that is that he prides himself with justice on his ability to listen to a wide range of competing points of view, to come out with a point of equipoise, synthesis, or a choice that he is comfortable with having sorted through it all, that is very important, too.

I mean I know a lot of people – I heard during the campaign mutterings to the effect that this was a guy who had a hard time making a decision. I didn't see it in the campaign and I sure don't see it now. But, clearly, he's comfortable enough in his own intellectual deliberative skin to be able to work through competing views and come to a conclusion that he's prepared to make his own. Having said that, you know, the down side is, first of all, as Mac said, lack of experience in a number of areas, and secondly, the sheer crushing burden of what he's trying to do all at once which could interfere with the deliberative process on all of the issues.

MR. KALB: You know, we end up, Bill, with a side of theory and practice, theory being before you take office, and practice actually doing it. Before he took office, he ran, we all agree, every political reporter certainly does, that he ran a very effective campaign. He did not have the problems that Hillary Clinton did during the campaign.

Second, during the transition, it was very smooth, a Swiss watch kind of smoothness, get into office, and suddenly all of the – exaggeration, a lot of key people have tax problems. I mean this is such an obvious thing that you would check, which apparently wasn't checked. And so on a very practical level, I go back to the original question, when you're doing it, with all of the pluses that you've ticked off, which I think most of us could agree with, you still then have the question of, okay, buddy, do it, and the rest of the world may not agree to his sequences of events and will do it on its own time schedule. So Ivo, Jim, how do you feel, what do you feel about the structure as you know it now that would give us a sense of confidence that it will be run well and effectively?

MR. DAALDER: Two points, one is that I think he has structured the White House in a way to be responsive to the problems that are out there. So he is getting first rate advice from first rate advisers on first tier issues. And that's true on the cabinet level, but it's particularly true in the White House, so that when you have the modus operandi that I think Bill rightly emphasizes, when you bring these people into the room, and not only these people, but also others who have interest and equities

and competencies on these questions into the room, and you go through the room and ask them for their opinion, and remember what he did during the campaign, as we know, and he, I'm sure, is doing on the inside right now, when you don't speak when you're in the room, he will ask you for your opinion, because he wants everyone to tell him what he thinks he needs to do, but on that basis then to decide himself. It's his decision, he's not taking someone's advice, sometimes he may, but he's making the decision. I mean he has a remarkable ability not only to have a large number of people providing him information, but then himself to move on to making a decision, combining the best of Bush and Clinton in that sense, the decisiveness of Bush with the information gathering of Clinton, as opposed to not getting any information, which was the Bush way of doing business, or only getting information and not making any decisions, which was the Clinton way of doing business.

So if you have the right people in the room, which I think he does, because he's organized this White House, in part, to be responsive to what the issues are, and you have the right modus operandi for making decisions, you have a leg up.

Now, the fundamental question that I don't think we know is, does the crush of the daily business prevent him from doing the analysis that needs to be done for him to make the decisions. We don't have any evidence that in the first six weeks that has happened. And the crush of daily business is pretty darn large. But we don't know, and we don't know

what people who get tired do, and normal people, even when you're 47 years old, maybe more so, you get tired in these kinds of jobs, and it's hard. But so far, this is a man who has run for two and a half years in the most difficult circumstances, is still able to absorb lots of information and make decisions.

And the ability to make decisions is something that, I think in government, tends to be underestimated. It is so easy not to make a decision, but it is very hard to make a decision. And I think what he has shown in the first six weeks, as he did throughout the campaign, he's not afraid of making decisions, including hard ones.

MR. KALB: That's very interesting, Ivo. There was a piece just the other day in the Washington Post which kind of went through the President's day and how incredibly crowded it is, because at both ends, he wants to make sure that he has breakfast with his kids and dinner with his kids, so that gives you the bracket there. And before the breakfast, he puts in an hour in an exercise room.

And he breaks his day down in a very certain way. So the way in which decisions get to him, excuse me, the way in which recommendations get to him becomes crucially important. And, Jim, please add something. And then I'd like to – I have another question, and I'd like to go out into the audience, too. Please.

MR. PFIFFNER: I think you put your finger on it in terms of bracketing and time available. I think the challenge is not so much



analytical, it's managerial. Analytically, he is brilliant. But the confidence comes from the way he ran his campaign, and I think that he's a fast learner, but I think he's going to learn in the White House, it just doesn't look that organized to me.

There's lots of really smart people, and somehow that's got to be narrowed. You can't have a whole group of really smart groups of people coming at you, you've got to somehow narrow that down into some sort of a funnel, and I think he's going to figure that out because he's really smart, and whether it's Rahm Emanuel or somebody else, somebody short of the President I think has to do that narrowing.

And the other piece of it is the relationship with the cabinet. You've got all of these great policy-maker brilliant minds in the White House, but the people who have to actually implement these policies are out in the departments and agencies. And if you make a policy that is too abstracted or far away from the people who actually have to implement it, you may not get the best sort of policy. On the other hand, those people out there are going to be, you know, pounding on the door to get in, to get access to the President also, and so that's why I think this big problem is managerial.

MR. KALB: You know, there's another potential problem which I want to raise. I used the word articulate in describing Obama in my introduction, he is very articulate, and he is marvelous on television,

and I know of no politician who can manage teleprompters in the way that he does. He's extraordinary in that sense.

But I know a little bit about television and the television news room, and I'm telling you that when a face appears too often, it loses some of its luster. And at the moment, in this time when it is the White House and very much the President, the White House being the core of the government, the President being the principal salesman of the government and its policy, the President can get out there and at this point have terrific impact, and the polling data indicates that.

He goes before the Congress, bump, he's up nine points, that's terrific. What happens in June and in September and in December of this year? Who else is going to be laying out the information in a compelling way and selling it so that the public buys into it? I'm taken by a line from David Brooks in a recent column, where he says that he feared "in trying to do everything at once, they will do nothing well. I fear we have a group of people who haven't even learned to use their new phone system trying to redesign half of the U.S. economy. When Treasury Secretary Geitner who goes up on the Hill, my judgment, watching him, I don't know the man, is that he's not selling that point of view terribly effectively. The President can do it, but how often." If you'd like to make a comment on that, please do. Any of you?

MR. DAALDER: Just rearing also Jim's point, I mean the reality is the White House and the President are extraordinarily good and

set up to make decisions on policy. But in the end, it's the U.S. government as a whole that has got to implement it. And the relationship between the White House and that other part of the government is the critical unknown question, and the issue of the financial crisis points that out.

I mean as Volker said, when there is only one person in the Treasury – in the Treasury Department who's actually appointed by this President, and yet you have to rely on that department to implement that much of your policy, it's going to be very different. And I think Bill is right, the one advantage that Hillary Clinton has is that she has appointed a whole slew of people who don't require Senate confirmation in order to start the practice of engaging the world, which is, as we all know, quite necessary.

MR. KALB: Yes, please, Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Let me answer your question with a question.

MR. KALB: Oh, please.

MR. GALSTON: And that is, and I mean this question quite seriously, did the American people grow tired of Franklin Roosevelt's voice? I think not. From the beginning of the Roosevelt Administration until the end, he was the most effective spokesman for his agenda for his way of thinking.

And I could make the case that in periods of peril and uncertainty, there may be more of a public appetite for a chief executive who, through whatever powers of command he commands, is able to explain what's going on, to convey confidence and reassurance that we will get through it, et cetera. So your judgment, which is true in ordinary times, may be less true in extraordinary times.

MR. KALB: Let me try and answer that question because I think it's terribly important. Remember that Roosevelt, during his radio communications with the American people, the fire side chats, was using a relatively new piece of technology to try to convey his attitude to the country, and he was very successful at that, and you're absolutely right that when we went from Depression to World War, his four terms, he only lived through a small part of the fourth, presented the country with huge problems, and they would look naturally toward the president for resolution.

However, we live now at a time of twitters and everything else that goes along with instruments. I haven't a clue as to what they are, but I hear about them from students, and all I know is that the way in which people today get their information and then respect the information that they're getting is crucially important. And they listen as much to Bill O'Reilly. Most people, according to the polling data, the ratings data, listen to people like Bill O'Reilly as much, if not more than they listen to any government official except Obama. And if Obama, in the current

world of technology, comes to be seen simply as the other voice to Rush Limbaugh or Bill O'Reilly and all those others, he is diminished as they rise in public esteem. And I'm raising this simply as a question. I think your general response that the people need the president to explain matters of great importance is absolutely on target, I totally buy that. Yes, sir. We've got a microphone, too; great, thank you. Could you identify yourself and then ask the question?

MR. OGLELANDER: Leonard Oglelander, independent consultant. I would ask a question about your views on three facets of the difference between the Obama Administration and the Nixon Administration, as Jim Pfiffner so well described it. First, in a debate, it may be more important who frames the debate than the actual argument. And it seems that in the Obama Administration, as you had indicated, the press is very dominant and is, to a large degree, framing the debate.

In the Nixon Administration, the – and you said the skills of President Obama is what I want to point out. The skills that he has is allowing his influence to reflect very positively in the press, whereas in the Nixon Administration, he certainly didn't have the press on his side, and he certainly wasn't able to frame the debate as well as President Obama does. Secondly, in the Nixon Administration, Doctor Pfiffner so well described how the policy thrust was brought into the White House. Nevertheless, while the policy thrust was there, the program and project thrust and implementation and feedback came from the agencies. He had

a very strong Office of Management and Budget headed by Roy Ash, which worked with the agencies, and that process that he instituted called management by objectives worked from the bottom up to give the information back to the White House. So while policy was there, programs and projects were implemented below that.

And the third is the radical shift in globalization. During the Nixon Administration, free market capitalism was in Western Europe, the United States western hemisphere. There was no competition with state capitalism from the Soviet Union. The Obama Administration is dealing with government while the private sector, the free market capitalist sector of the west is in partnership and joint ventures and so forth in globalized trade.

MR. KALB: Well, those are three rather large questions, and I will ask Jim to start a response, and then I'm going to look around the room for other hands, as well. Please, Jim.

MR. PFIFFNER: Just a note on OMB, what Nixon wanted to do with that reorganization plan, number one, changing DOB to OMB, was to impose more control from the top, and they used management by objectives to try to do that. Now, there was some resistance out there in the departments and agencies who thought that they were carrying out the law, and Nixon wanted to change that particularly in the Justice Department, HEW, and so forth, so I think that there was a clash there,

but it was an attempt to centralize management, as well as policy-making in the White House.

MR. KALB: Anyone else like to make a contribution on that? Okay, right here, please.

SPEAKER: I'm – I'm here at Brookings. I have a question – a question about foreign policy. You mentioned, Bill, before that – little bit exception, and I wonder if you could elaborate a little bit about the relation between Obama and Clinton? I make one example from yesterday, this big article on the –

MR. KALB: Put the microphone a little –

SPEAKER: Sorry; this article on the – New York Times, where she says that she's dubious about – Iran – to Iran, which clearly contradict what Obama also mentioned in his pitch when he became President. So is there – I mean how does it work? And where the national adviser fits, because it has been rather silent lately.

MR. Destler: Well, certainly the relationship between the President and the Secretary of State is enormously important. Historically, is has frequently not prospered when the Secretary of State had a degree of prominence that rivaled that or sometimes exceeded that of the President. The best recent example is Colin Powell under George W. Bush, but there are other cases going back in history.

So one has to worry about whether they stay on the same page and whether, in particular, Clinton can manage the combination of being

assertive, taking charge, and yet being consistent with responsive to sort of the Obama program or wherever the President is.

Now, I mentioned right at the start of my talk that this is one of the key jobs of a National Security Adviser. Other staff people can help with this. But basically the President and the Secretary of State are sufficiently busy people, so they're not meeting all of the time, hopefully they're communicating on the telephone a lot, hopefully they have face time a couple of times a week at least. Nevertheless, having them stay on the same page, particularly when you have a Secretary of State who is such a news maker and such a figure in her own right, is a real problem. So I think that's something that one has to watch and worry about.

The up side potential is considerable, if they can work together, because she carries her own assets in the world, she's also a very – she's an extremely capable individual, I think she's a wonderful fix between – with policy understanding and practical capacity, and so if it works, it's great, but there are real – and the fact that Obama doesn't seem to be heavily hung up on who gets the credit may be a benefit.

I mean taking the Nixon parallel, the Nixon/Kissinger relationship ultimately began to founder when Kissinger became identified with the policy successes and Nixon was I think incorrectly not given sufficient credit for the successes, and Nixon being excruciatingly concerned with that particular issue, then began to have real tensions with Kissinger. And eventually, if Nixon hadn't been sinking by September –



August of 1973, Kissinger would never have been named Secretary of State. So I think in that case, of course, originally the Secretary did not have great prestige in the public, and it was Nixon who made Kissinger, but at a certain point the Secretary became larger than the president. I think Obama is going to be more relaxed about whether Clinton gets some credit for things as opposed to himself. But in the end, it's the President who has to be deferred to, it's the President who has to call the shots, and even a Secretary of State, say like George Marshall under Truman, who was, you know, a much more respected figure than Harry Truman, recognized this and played the role so as to maintain that presidential relationship.

MR. KALB: Okay. Yes, sir, right there on the aisle.

MR. BETTELHEIM: Hi, Adriel Bettelheim from Congressional Quarterly. In spite of having built up this elaborate brain trust and this top heavy White House apparatus, we're told that the President is very fearful of becoming a victim of the bubble. We see that in him fighting to hang onto his blackberry, taking now weekly trips out, particularly to swing states. And I'm wondering how you think he'll reconcile this tendency to want to engage and process inputs from so called real Americans with gathering all this input from these very smart beltway veterans.

MR. KALB: Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I think that's – I mean that's, you know, that's a very good question. I think, you know, a few points in response. First, I think he may be a little bit too fearful of the bubble. You know, the idea that everything that goes in – goes on inside the beltway is somehow unreal, and it's only when you, you know, you'll breach the 495 cordon sanitaire that, you know, that reality reemerges is, I think, you know, preposterous.

MR. KALB: But it's a good political thing, it's a good political approach.

MR. GALSTON: It is, but not if the President comes to believe it. It's a fine thing to say, but not a good thing to believe.

MR. KALB: Okay.

MR. GALSTON: Secondly, I do think that, for a variety of reasons, it's a good idea for this President right now to be out and about on a fairly regular basis. For example, one of the things that I study is lack of trust in government and the way that lack of trust has deepened with very few interruptions since the 1960's. And people do not believe that government can be an effective and honorable instrument of national purpose. I think the President would be well advised to go out when some of these shovel ready stimulus projects actually begin to move and say, you know, put on a hard hat and say, look, because of what we did together, these people are not only back to work, but they're building something that will help us build our future. I mean he has to sell

government and not just himself, and in the process, he can talk and he can learn.

But third, and I'll refer once again to Franklin Roosevelt, Roosevelt realized that for reasons, including, but extending well beyond his physical infirmities, he could not be out and about gathering information about what real people were thinking and feeling outside the beltway, and he used his wife to do that.

Eleanor Roosevelt became, you know, his eyes and ears. She was the one who went down the coal mine, she was the one who went to Appalachia, she was the one who reported back to him on what people who were not his advisers and who were not elected officials were actually thinking and feeling about the state of the country, and Obama would be very well advised to create a network of people outside the White House on whom he can rely for unvarnished reporting as to what people around the country are actually thinking and feeling, because there's no way that he can use his blackberry and presidential trips to get enough information about that, no way.

MR. DESTLER: There was also a wonderful story about when Eleanor Roosevelt went to pay a visit to some I think military veterans protesting and demanding pensions, the word got out, Hoover sent the Marines, Roosevelt sent his wife.

MR. KALB: Right there on the aisle, yes, please.

MR. POTRY: Thank you. Jason Potry, a graduate policy student at American University. Just to preface a little bit, something that's been brought up several times –

MR. KALB: We don't have much time, so a very brief question, please.

MR. POTRY: FEMA has stated that the White House is kind of the only government in town, as President Obama builds his adviser staff and builds his department heads across town, has the administration put itself in a bit of a pickle with the stimulus package, and now they have these billions of dollars on a time table to push out very quickly without having the departments and the guidance set up and the department heads from the administration to effectively deal with those monies the way that the administration wants to have them spent?

MR. KALB: We've been trying to deal with that. Ivo, why don't you give it another shot?

MR. DAALDER: And then Jim. Well, I think – I mean a lot of this money actually goes beyond federal government into state and local government, and they do exist. I mean part of the reason it went to the mayors, in fact, was both for accountability, but also because the mayors could actually move the money quickly, so part of the answer lies there.

I mean everybody, I'm sure, read the front page story in the Washington Post about the frustration of the people who were being vetted and have to bring in their \$13 receipts, their frustration being that

they're not present at the creation. And there is this huge new era, and you've been selected to be part of the huge new era, and there is this thing happening, and you're not part of it, you're not part of the guidance of that system. Luckily we do have, at least in 13 of the 15 department, heads, who can have – one, know what the priorities are, and two, can start implementing it. But, yes, it is – it's a problem that is out there.

MR. PFIFFNER: I think you put your finger on a very difficult aspect of managing money and getting it out there and the capacity to do that, and some of the departments and agencies do that well, on a regular basis, but this is a huge new push that's got to go through a relatively narrow straights, and we have to have people that have the capacity to write contracts, oversee contracts, oversee what happens at state and local government, and I think that that's a managerial capacity that is going to have to be built up very quickly, and there's no way this can be all done without any corruption, without any problems, so it's – that is a real problem I think that exists and is not easily solvable.

MR. KALB: Bill, did you want to add something?

MR. GALSTON: No.

MR. KALB: Gary.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks; Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report. And I do want to say that, having read this book, I know we're here to talk about other things, it's a superb survey course in a very important subject matter, and I want to sort of address my question to that

subject matter, and make one observation before, if I may, which is that to Bill's list of three things about Obama and whether he can get there, I would add a fourth which is much related to the second, but it comes off of observation that Marvin made, and that is, show me a president who will start his day having breakfast with his kids and end his day having dinner with his kids and I'll show you a president who has a sense of balance.

MR. GALSTON: He then stays up until 1:00 in the morning. Question, can even this energetic man have day after day, week after week, month after month, a day that starts at 6:00 and ends at 1:00 in the morning?

MR. KALB: He better. Go ahead.

MR. MITCHELL: One of the things that we didn't mention, in addition to all the czars, is that there is at least one, and I gather more, special studies going on now, one of which is being conducted by a Brookings Fellow, Bruce Riedel, on foreign policy questions. And my question to Ivo and/or Mac is, when do you think we're going to begin to see the outlines of what we might call a Middle East policy? And I was particularly interested, Ivo, in the way that you sort of knit together all those domestic and financial pieces, health care, et cetera, as being linked. We know that we have Israel and Palestine and Israel and Syria and Afghanistan and Afghanistan and Pakistan and Iran and Iraq; when do you think we're going to begin to see something that looks like the outlines of a policy?

MR. DESTLER: Policy is action, you're already seeing some. I mean you're seeing trips to the region, you're seeing the – mentioned about, you know, visiting people – visiting Syria, there is something going on, we don't know quite what, I think, vis-à-vis, Iran now, and I think the posture of the administration is pretty consistent with what was laid out in the campaign, that there was going to be talking to more people more open to, you know, dealing with people who have been labeled adversaries.

But, of course, if you mean when is there going to be some grand declaration on the one hand, or when is there going to be some big breakthrough on the other, that I think is a work in progress, that would be my read, but Ivo or others may have a better answer.

MR. DAALDER: No, I think – I mean just building on that, just in the Middle East, the most important issue that the administration confronted on day one was the fact that there was a war that had stopped being fought, but hadn't ended, which was the Gaza conflict. There's still no cease fire agreement. So that's the number one focus of how do you move forward on that, and that the critical partner in the Middle East, our one big ally, the Israelis, were first having an election and now forming a government.

And until that's done, which we don't, as the United States, have no equity, the outcome is important to us, but we don't have any equity in it, there's very little you can do on that part of the Middle East, other than, as

the Secretary just did, go over and meet with everybody. But until you have a government in Israel, you then have the problem that there's really no government on the other side of the border either when it comes to the Palestinians, so that in the Israeli/Palestinian angle, having a policy required having partners that, in fact, they're capable of implementing helping to forge that policy, I mean just helping to forge it in the beginning, and it's going to take a while. So I think what you're seeing is, you're seeing action on other parts. I mean it's very important, what happened yesterday with the announcement of Dan Shapiro and Feldman going to Syria. It sends a signal here, we're willing to engage with these people. On Iran, it will take some time to figure out what exactly and how exactly we will do things. And some of that may be announced and some of it may not be announced.

You know, there's lots of – particularly in Iran that's difficult. I mean the Afghanistan/Pakistan issue, the review is ongoing and is supposed to be done in, what, 14 days or so, in the middle of the month, and before the NATO Summit. So the pieces are starting to be put into place.

I don't think that what we're doing here is a review policy announcement move forward, this is not like a budget, it's different. I think part and parcel this policy is doing, and policy is having people, and it's important that on this area of the world, there's no waiting for assistant secretaries being confirmed or whatever, but from Pakistan all the way to



Egypt, there are people in place right now, from Richard Holbrooke, to George Mitchell, to Dennis Ross – and George Mitchell, who are in charge of helping to figure out both the policy and its implementation, and that's where –

MR. KALB: Okay. Bill.

MR. GALSTON: First of all, you know, I think Ivo has given, you know, an impeccable summary of what's actually going on, and it – but it points out something very important, that despite the President's analysis, you know, as Ivo parsed it, that everything is connected to everything else.

In fact, he and we had better hope that he's wrong about that. You know, he and we had better hope that you can do some things even if you can't do other things that are allegedly connected to the things that you can do.

Let me give you another example. The President campaigned on the basis of a making work pay tax cut for the middle class, which he compromised on a little bit in the stimulus negotiations, but he basically got what he campaigned on.

He is proposing to fund that on a permanent basis with most of the proceeds from a cap and trade approach to environmental regulation and climate change. That is a good example of what could turn into dysfunctional linkage, because, in my judgment, it's going to be quite some time before the politics of climate change legislation gets sorted out.

He is betting the credibility of the funding of the centerpiece of his long term economic program, mainly a regigerring of the tax system, on a legislative initiative which I think is a long shot for the first two years and maybe longer than that. So reality is going to thrust upon him, you know, the stubborn fact that not everything is connected to everything else in the sense that it will all move forward simultaneously. And how he and the White House adjust to, you know, that discontinuity in political practice between analysis, indeed, I think will write a lot of the story of this administration.

MR. KALB: And reality will impose itself in the form of time on us because we're running out of it. But I'd like to give this lady here an opportunity to ask a question.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. Deanna Wilson, interested citizen. With all of these strong advisers, what role do you see for the Vice President?

MR. KALB: And to that, I'd like to say, give me an answer, and in summary form, a minute from each of you, starting with Jim, that will leave these people feeling so fully informed that they'll have a wonderful rest of the day. Jim.

MR. PFIFFNER: Vice President Biden is going to have to carve out something for himself that he can do well, because there's lots of other big egos, talented people, that all want a piece of this policy action, and it's going to depend on Obama, how he, you know, which

portion he allocates to Biden and how he separates that from what Secretary Clinton has and so forth.

So I don't know what it is, but he's going to give it a good try, and the bottom line is, whatever Obama allows him to do, he's going to be able to do, but he's going to have lots of opposition.

MR. KALB: Ivo.

MR. DAALDER: I think Biden is going to be the critical extra player who gets put into any issue that is out there that you need someone else. Just to give you an example, he's going to NATO next week in order to talk to the allies about Afghanistan. The Secretary is there this week, she's only going to be there for one day, he's going to go and reinforce the message. He's done that with the middle class task force, he's reinforcing the message on that issue.

So I think rather than having Biden be in charge of a particular area of policy, he is going to be the extra person that can be put in to reinforce the President's priorities and agendas on particular critical issues. And it's just good – and the big problem, it seems to me, that Obama has is, he needs more Biden's, he needs more people like that, particularly in this early stage, but that's what I think is the role, while providing the advice quietly, as every Vice President will do.

MR. KALB: Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I absolutely agree with what Ivo just said, but with a caveat. Joe Biden can be a force multiplier on many

fronts. I mean he has a world of experience. But the President has to be comfortable with the way Joe Biden conducts himself in public, and I've detected some early signs of less than total comfort.

Obama has a very disciplined, almost button down style, traits that nobody has ever accused Joe Biden of possessing. And, you know, there have been some suggestions through the body language on a couple of occasions that the President feels some discomfort at the stylistic discontinuity and some of message indiscipline that it can produce.

And so I think that Biden can be an enormously effective Vice President, but only if he disciplines himself. And I would not describe his performance as adequately disciplined up until now, but I think even someone my age is capable of learning.

MR. KALB: I hope he doesn't discipline himself. Mac.

MR. DESTLER: Five of the last six presidents have come to office with relatively limited Washington experience. Each one of them has chosen a Vice President who had greater Washington experience, including experience in foreign policy. In fact, I have a PhD student who's going to try to write a dissertation on the Vice President's role in foreign policy.

Now, presumably what Biden has in particular is a lot of relationships, a lot of detailed knowledge about what's going on in the world that he can either use for direct action or he can also make the

President privy to that. That, of course, probably is a wasting asset over time because this President will be engaged. So I think what Bill suggested is a critical issue.

I guess the final thing I would, you know, since you asked us to – look at – in terms of sorting out the maze of White House relationships, which all of us on the outside are going to have an incomplete and partial picture of, in any case, just look at how the President behaves. I mean, sure, look at the formal declarations, but also look at the style with which he operates, insofar as one can know, who actually gives the advice, who actually is in the room, and then sort of, from that, you know, try to sort out what, in fact, are the real processes of presidential decision and what staffs, what individuals are.

One thing we haven't mentioned is this economic summit that's coming up in London in April. There is an NSC order that says economics is within the NSC orbit. I would be greatly surprised if – it would certainly vindicate that if the NSC played a major role in developing the U.S. position toward that economic summit.

I rather guess, and it's formally within the NSC, that the NEC, under Larry Summers, will be dominate in doing this, and that will tell us something, but it won't be without the knowledge of the NSC, but it will be that part of the government and not the security part.

MR. DAALDER: Just a footnote on that. I mean –

MR. KALB: I'd like to conclude with just the –

MR. DAALDER: -- just a footnote on that. The person who was in charge on the day-to-day, Mike Crowman –

MR. DESTLER: Fair enough.

MR. DAALDER: -- is dual hatted, as reporting both to the National Security Adviser and Larry Summers. So, yes, on the top we may see who it is, but the person who does it on a day-to-day basis is, again, and here's integration, is integrated within the system in order to bridge the divide as best they can.

MR. DESTLER: Fair enough.

MR. KALB: I just wanted to say, it's a concluding thought, I'm in the middle now of a book on Vietnam, and it has to do with presidents and how they saw the problem. And one of the issues that comes up over and over again with each one of them is ignorance and sort of an arrogance, an assumption that you knew a lot of things, that, in fact, you hadn't a clue about.

And so I feel an upbeat sense, because I think this is a president who probably will read about these issues and know about them before committing the American Forces to fight on behalf of them. But I think that this has been a terrific, and informative, wonderful panel, thank all of them very, very much for joining. Thank you all very much for coming.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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