

White House Interview Program

DATE: November 23, 1999

INTERVIEWEE: FRED MALEK

INTERVIEWER: Martha Kumar

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MK: Our ground rules are that it's on-the-record except where you'd like to go to on-background or off-the-record.

FM: That's fine.

MK: The ways in which the material is going to be used early on—this is our latest. This is a one-pager. It's a group of presidency scholars that are undertaking the project. We will have some "Standards of a Successful Start" that will come out in Spring, which come from the interviews, points that are common to successful transitions. Points such as: planning; the importance of having a chief of staff who is appointed early, what comes from that; the advantage that you can take of that early period when there's this suspension of partisanship, and a public that is watching and interested in what it is the President is doing. Then with the information on the Offices themselves, because we're creating an institutional memory for seven offices, will be provided to people once they're appointed. That will include interviews—they'll get the interviews. But those won't be publicly released until after a new president is sworn in, and then, that material will be released, but according to whatever provisions that you make. It will go into the Presidential Library System. We're working with the National Archives.

FM: Good.

MK: So it will be a good treasure trove for scholars and others to use, which I think has become increasingly important, because notetaking is not something that is done a great deal in a White House. So to document how Offices worked, what people did, what responsibilities they exercised, hopefully a project like this will make a difference.

Can we start off with you talking about: when you came into the White House, and what you came in to do?

FM: I joined the White House staff in October - maybe November - of 1970, as head of White House Personnel. I was Special Assistant to the President for Personnel, which encompassed all career appointees and boards and commissions' appointments.

MK: How many people did that encompass at that point?

FM: On the staff?

MK: No. The number of people that fell into all of those categories.

FM: I don't recall exactly. I think there might have been two thousand, either presidential or Schedule C appointments, that we had responsibility for, and then there were probably several thousand advisory board/commission members.

White House Interview Program, Interview with Fred Malek, Martha Joynt Kumar, Washington, DC., November 23, 1999. Fred Malek served as Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel in the Nixon Administration.

MK: There are more now but it's not that it's hugely different. You created the Office of Presidential Personnel.

FM: Well, I don't know if I created it. There was certainly an office there. What I created that was different is a professional executive search capacity within the White House. I don't know; maybe others have done it to some degree. But we found that most of what we had looked at in the past, and what they were doing then, was more dependent on what came in "over the transom" through the political system. They were not clearly delineating the nature of a job, the requirements of a job, and then going out and searching through society to find the best candidates for that kind of job, to meet the criteria. So we established a professional team of executive recruiters, and endeavored to find the best people. We still had a lot of people coming in through the political process, and oftentimes you would have a politically-sponsored nominee you would have to consider, in conjunction or next to the person we would find, but I think we might have been the first to really bring it to that level of professionalism.

MK: Did that mirror what was going on outside, in industry itself, that the process of getting personnel was becoming more organized and professionalized?

FM: Sure. It was simply bringing to government what was already being done in industry. In an industry, there's a certain amount of what we call BOGAAT: "Bunch Of Guys Around A Table". Conversations where you say: "Who do you know?" "Well, I know so...", so-and-so. There's a certain amount of that that goes on even today but in industry they had long since gone the professional search route where you would cast a much wider net than *who you knew*. I felt it was essential to do that, because a lot of people wanted to come in and serve in Government, but they had to know that these positions were available, and we had to know about them.

MK: In a way, it's interesting the way in which a White House—one thinks of a White House on a cutting edge—but in many ways, they *take* from the outside. For example, technology. The technology of a campaign is way ahead of the technology actually within a White House. Like computers. People are always surprised when they come into a White House, that the computers [are not cutting edge]—it's video; it's everything. So this is sort of another way in which a White House learns from outside.

FM: Yes.

MK: How did the system work?

FM: I think it worked very well.

MK: How did you set it up? How many people were involved in it?

FM: I had kind of two organizations. I had departmental liaison people who would be liaison to a group of Cabinet departments and agencies. I think I had three or four people like that, and they would tend to all appointments within that department or agency. Then I had the recruiting staff that was headed by "Pen" [Pendleton] James. I had recruited Pen James from an executive search firm, Heidrick and Struggles, to come in and head that. Actually, Dick Ferry of Korn, Ferry, came in and helped me initially to plan and model the office. Then he stepped aside when we recruited Pen James. I think we had three additional executive recruiters working with Pen. So the executive search team really focused on presidential appointments, not Schedule C. The departmental liaison people handled most

of the Schedule C, but there it was much more of a sifting through. Recommendations were coming from the Cabinet departments. We didn't feel we could manage the process of searching for all of those people, but we could manage those that were at the presidential appointee level, mainly the assistant secretaries and undersecretaries and [inaudible] secretaries.

MK: Mostly people who went through Senate confirmation?

FM: Yes. Mostly.

MK: Did you take recommendations from, were you interested in recommendations from, the Departments themselves?

FM: Sure. Of course. We always had recommendations from the Departments. The problem you ran into was sometimes the Departments—sometimes they would have absolutely great candidates; sometimes they would be recommending someone who the Secretary just happened to know a long time, and felt comfortable with, even though - in our estimation - that person might not have been the most qualified. So there is always a lot of tugging and pulling, because you can't force someone upon a Cabinet member or agency head. You have to have someone who is going to be compatible, and work together. So there were compromises that you would make.

MK: I assume most of the Cabinet secretaries are political people so they are going to be drawing on some of that political base.

FM: A lot of them. Not the majority were political people. I think our majority—Governor [George] Romney and Governor Volpe, Secretaries of HUD [Housing and Urban Development] and Transportation, for example, were political. But others, Cliff Hardin at that point the Secretary of Agriculture, was a university professor; Maurice Stans was a managing partner at one of the big accounting firms. He was Secretary of Commerce. The Secretary of Defense, Mel [Melvin] Laird had come out of politics. Secretary of State Bill Rogers had been a senior attorney. It was a mix.

MK: When you were recruiting, did you try to find people that complemented the person that they would be working for?

FM: Yes.

MK: Nobody has everything.

FM: Yes, we did. We tried to find people who would shore them up and make for a better overall team.

MK: So, for a political person who maybe was not a good organizer—

FM: Then, the Undersecretary should not be the same type of person, but someone who is really a good overall executive.

MK: What kinds of pools [did you have]? Did you have, like a management pool, a political pool? What were the different matrices there?

FM: Well, the political, we didn't have to go out and cultivate. That was *there* and that was being fed in from the Hill, from the Party, from states, from everywhere.

MK: Like from every door, window, and telephone.

FM: There are a lot of political recommendations. I wouldn't call them *pools* so much. We just endeavored to create a network of relationships throughout the top of business, law, academia, and other fields where we might find fertile ground for finding people. And then we would use those networks to identify candidates.

MK: Say, with business, how would you set something up? Say a new group comes in and they're going to want to have as broad a reach as possible. So, often, when you come in you have those campaign people there who want jobs. In order to get other people you really have to be able to have an operation in place.

FM: You have to have people of *quality*, to put up against people who you don't think have the same *quality*, otherwise you're going to have to take what's there. It's just organized networking is really what recruiting is all about. It's reading; it's studying. It's reading the various periodicals, and getting a sense of "who is who" in various fields and [being] constantly on the phone talking to people, explaining your *objectives*, getting to know them and creating networks in various disciplines. A network that would be strong in, for example, scientific/pharmaceutical company-type industries. Maybe someone who was strong in the area of national defense, a network of people there. So when an opening comes about, you have a network to talk to. You can call them and talk to them and send them the specs and bug them enough, that they'll come up with some candidates for you.

MK: Were the areas that you broke it into pretty much the areas you would have the various people in? Like, you had one for national security.

FM: A little bit of that. But we were really focused a lot in generalists, too. It's hard to find somebody who is pinpointed in the field. Who do you find, for example, for Secretary of HUD? What discipline do you tap? What discipline do you tap for—some of them you can. Like agriculture, you could probably figure out a discipline. But a lot of them, you're really looking for generalists.

MK: Then you have to have a tough pool—like what are you going to get for NASA, how are you going to get a NASA director? Did you have to do that while you were there?

FM: NASA?

MK: Yes. I'm just trying to think of what process you go—or think of another position that—.

FM: Well, for NASA you would go to aerospace companies. You would go to academia. You would learn who some of the leading thinkers and strategists were. You would learn who some of the leading scientists were. You would test whether those scientists also had the managerial capacities and presence to do a job like that. You would tap a number of different sources.

MK: How many people did you have on the recruiting team?

FM: I think there were four, just four.

MK: Were you there for the entire period from—?

FM: I was there from when I joined in 1970—I took four months out from July to November to move over to the campaign in 1972. When the Watergate crew was sort of taken out, I went in with a fellow named Clark MacGregor. Clark was the Campaign Director; I was his Deputy. Then I came back, the day after the election, to help to manage the transition. Then in January of 1973, I became Deputy Director of OMB [Office of Management and Budget]. I still stayed close to the Personnel shop, and my successor was one of the guys who had worked for me.

MK: One of the things that seems to happen in that Office, more than most, is that there are real *rhythms* to it. There are *rhythms* to appointments where you're having to fill the top spots, then you get to the more specialized positions and then vacancies come and you're doing replacements; then deputies seem to come up, particularly in a White House, but in some of the other places, too. Can you talk about some of the rhythms that you see and how the office operations change?

FM: Well, one of the changes is that, the closer you get to an election it's harder to recruit people. Because anybody who is going to come in, is going to know there could be some changes. First of all, you don't know if the President is going to be reelected, in which case they're out of a job.

MK: Although in 1972 it would have been very difficult, in a way.

FM: You look back, and you think that, but it didn't seem that automatic at the time. Also there tends to be—you get more political pressures as you get closer to an election, more pressures to appoint people for the political message they send. And then, early in an administration—like when we started in late 1972 and early 1973—you have a much more pure, idealistic, objective point-of-view as you pursue candidates. I should add, we had two Outreach programs in addition to the four recruiters. We had an additional recruiter who focused on women. We wanted to get more women into top positions. I brought in someone, Barbara Franklin, who, in fact, was the Secretary of Commerce for the last year of [George] Bush, to head up the women's recruiting effort. That was very successful. We brought a lot of women into top positions. And then—just a second, and I'll tell you who it is.

[Interruption]

MK: —in business and your recruiting in the White House, is it pretty much the same?

FM: I think it's the same process, but I think recruiting for a governmental position is more complicated, because in addition to the normal job requirements, you have to have somebody who is going to be able to relate to and sell the Congress. That's going to be one of their major constituents. You have to be aware of the political implications. If you're a Republican administration, you're going to recruit Republicans; if you're Democrat, you're going to recruit Democrats. You don't go beyond that. Within the Republican Party, within a given area, there are constituencies, and you have to pay some attention to their reaction. If we're going to recruit a deputy head of EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], for example, and we brought someone in who is a terrific executive but in a company that does a lot of polluting, that person will never get off the ground. They'd be beat up before they ever got here. That's an easy example, but there are more subtle examples of that. So it's a very, very—

MK: And ones you may not find out about until you go up to the Hill.

FM: Right.

MK: In looking at people that come into a White House, do you look in a way for something that's pretty similar to people that you're putting elsewhere?

FM: You are. You're looking for people—well, you're looking for people of *real excellence*. You're trying to get people who have a combination of skills that enable them to perform at a very high level, a combination of intellectual, inter-personal, organizational skills. In some cases you don't need the organizational skills. An assistant secretary for planning and evaluation, you probably need someone who really knows that particular area, and is really smart and analytical. Somebody who is going to run a bureau has to have some organizational skills.

MK: In a White House itself, what do you think are the qualities that are important for people to have, to really be effective in working in a White House?

FM: In a White House?

MK: Yes. Say, at a senior and a middle level.

FM: You have to have political sensitivity, and you have to have overall people sensitivity, in my view. You're dealing with the body politic. You're dealing with the Congress; you're dealing with governors. You're dealing with political interest groups. You have to have some attunement and sensitivity. Now, you're not born with that and you don't necessarily have that if you're in business or academia. But you have to be the kind of person who has that sensitivity. Secondly, you have to, I think, have a certain amount of empathy, a certain sympathy to people around you. You can't come in and throw your ego around, because your ego is going to get beat up all the time and, if you fight back too much, you're just going to make enemies. You have to be able to subjugate your ego. You have to be able to understand the needs and desires of the people around you, and be able to work in that key. You have to be indefatigable. It's very hard work. The Government works harder than the private sector, without question.

MK: In what ways?

FM: The hours, the demands, the pressures, the frustrations you experience—are greater. So, the *anguish factor* as well as the demands on one's time, and the pressures, are greater in high-level governmental positions, than they are in the private sector.

MK: What was your day? When did you come in?

FM: I don't actually remember, exactly. I don't think we had these real early morning staff meetings. I think I was in before eight, and that was not that unusual. It wasn't like six or seven; it was like seven-thirty, eight o'clock. But we would be late; we would work late.

MK: Like until ten?

FM: Occasionally. That was not the rule. Seven-thirty, eight o'clock was probably more the rule.

MK: And then, did you have social functions, in addition like three nights a week or something like that that you had to—?

FM: Well, when I was in the White House, we really didn't. You were invited to a lot of things, but you didn't go. You just couldn't. You'd go to a few things, but not too often. You're just too tired. After a long day like that, you need to get to bed early. Of course, this is an *early town*. People recognize it's a generally early town. So, it wasn't an overwhelming social schedule.

MK: In terms of the pressures that there are, what are some of them that make it different?

FM: In business, you have to satisfy a CEO [chief executive officer] and, through the CEO, the board of directors. In government, you've got to satisfy - if you're in the White House - the Chief of Staff and the President, but you also have to take into account and satisfy to a certain extent the Congress, the members of Congress who have an interest in the area that you're in. You've got other political figures who you have to take into consideration, various constituent and interest groups, whose impact is going to be felt; and you have to take into consideration their point-of-view, and how to deal with them. So you have a much more complex array of people, whose needs have to be met. Business is complicated. You have customers and business partners and the like. But it's tough[er], more complicated in government.

MK: One of the things, I guess, that you don't have so much of in business [as in Government] —but even there I guess you have today—is the battling out of forces, doing their public battle; this side leaking this, and that side leaking that.

FM: Yes

MK: Is that one of the major sources of frustration?

FM: Absolutely. Particularly, a lot of things come out and get visibility before you really expect them to, or want them to. Then you have to deal with things *prematurely*. That is not helpful. That can be hurtful to the process.

MK: I guess, especially with nominations of people, you must have had a lot of that, where people were trying to sink somebody.

FM: Yes.

MK: So what kind of strategies do you have?

FM: Well, you try to keep it as quiet as you can until you're ready to take it public, and you're prepared for it. It doesn't always work that way, obviously.

MK: Did you go up to the Hill to talk to committee chairs about possible nominees?

FM: Yes. And to get their input on people. There was an awful lot of flow of recommendations from the Hill for different positions.

MK: What do you do about that?

FM: You give them consideration. You try to sort out the ones that are qualified from the ones that are not. You try to sort out ones that are truly *of imperative importance to the Member* and which are not. In some cases, they're sending you a recommendation but it's really not a recommendation; they just have to send it because a constituent wants it. In other cases,

they really have what they consider to be an *obligation* to somebody and really are pushing harder. And, in some cases, they fervently believe this is the right person. You have to find out where they're coming from on it, and deal with it accordingly.

MK: Is that something that you do sort of face-to-face? Did you go up there regularly and talk to people?

FM: I didn't go up to the Hill that much. We did a lot on the phone, I guess. Sometimes, Members would come in; sometimes we would go up there.

MK: Did you find that they were particularly interested in regulatory commissions and places where they thought that their person could—?

FM: I can't remember, but it varied all over the place, I think.

MK: Say you've got a spot on a regulatory commission, and they want to appoint somebody, then they're going to make that person think that they owe the Senator. And that the President in a sense had little to do with it?

FM: Absolutely.

MK: Is there a way that you can—launder is not the right word—where you create a process—?

FM: Yes. *You make them sweat.* You make them go through a process that makes them realize the decision-maker is the President here.

MK: What kind of process do you create for that?

FM: Competition. It's a competitive process; it's an interview process. You just don't look at the piece of paper and sit down. You talk to them. You have to talk to others within the White House. You have to talk to whoever the Domestic Councilperson is for that area, whoever the OMB person is for that area. You kind of move them around. You want to do that anyway, by the way; you don't want to make a judgment just on *personnel guys*. You want to get all the relevant people to review and opine. And you make it clear: you're going to put this altogether, and formulate it into a decision paper for the President.

MK: Were there any kinds of informal groups that you put together, say, for regulatory commissions? A group, say, from your shop and maybe somebody from—like if it was the Fed [Federal Reserve], you might bring in somebody from some other place in the White House, dealing with economic policy.

FM: We would normally seek recommendations from the relevant places in the White House and OMB. But I don't know that we formed any special little task forces or anything, because they had other things to do, too.

MK: Can you talk a bit about the rhythms, what kinds of nominations come up at what time, and the degree to which—at various points—it sucks up the energy of the White House as a whole? Like, for example, the first year?

FM: The first year is obviously—preceding the swearing-in and much of the first year, particularly in the first six months—is largely covered by Personnel, because you've got to get your

people in place and you've got to get them nominated and confirmed. After the first year, it abates a little bit. Turnover starts after about the second year.

MK: In the first year, the president and the Chief of Staff are going to have to spend a considerable amount of time.

FM: Yes. Preferably though, hopefully a lot of that gets done before they even get sworn in. Then, if you pick the right members of the Cabinet and agency heads, they're going to be very helpful in the process, too.

MK: What kind of work do you think—?

FM: How much time do you need on this? We need to set a time frame and make sure we get at what you have to get at. I've got about ten more minutes.

MK: Okay. What realistically can be done prior to coming in?

FM: Isn't that what this Transition Plan is all about?

MK: Yes. Say, for example, if you create an operation, then you're involved in making decisions. When decisions are made, you've got an alternate power center. So does the early work have to be totally under wraps—although press are certainly going to be looking for it—but also be an information gathering—?

[Interruption]

MK: —so it's an information-gathering operation rather than a decision-making [operation]?

FM: Yes. Before the election, I think there should be some activity going on, just gathering information on positions that you need to fill, and developing files of potential reservoirs of talent, so that you hit the ground running, whoever is heading the transition can hit the ground running with that. More than likely, the transition chief is not going to be named until the candidate is elected, but there's nothing wrong with the candidate starting earlier in the year—having somebody, unrelated to the campaign, doing some transitional work, some personnel work.

MK: What people need to be named right off? Say when the President wins, what people on a White House staff are important for its start-up?

FM: I think Chief of Staff, National Security Adviser, head of the Domestic Council, head of OMB, are pretty pivotal. The Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers is good.

MK: What about Personnel Director and Counsel?

FM: Yes. Personnel Director and Counsel, absolutely. The head of Personnel is actually there to help get the rest of this stuff done.

MK: Say if you appoint a chief of staff immediately and then you really almost immediately want to do personnel and counsel, does that mean that the early relationship, that it's going to be hard for the chief of staff to do that, to pick the people? That the personnel person would probably be the person who was gathering information at an earlier point, an earlier stage?

FM: The chief of staff is also—during that period—working on policy issues, working on developing his or her own staff, in addition to reviewing what is being recommended to the President for Cabinet agencies. The chief of staff has his hands full.

MK: So, realistically, it's going to be difficult for the chief of staff to be involved in the selection of the personnel head, because that person is going to have to come on so early, and is going to be a person who has already worked on this stuff during the campaign?

FM: Unless the President-elect has worked with the chief of staff and with the team for some time; he could be involved in the decision. It depends. It's hard to generalize that. I think the chief of staff should be involved in that selection.

MK: And Counsel as well?

FM: Sure.

MK: What other people are important for the start up of a White House?

FM: I think the ones I named, your first tier, you have to have in addition to the counsel and personnel. Your scheduling, appointment person, people like that, that have to do with how the President spends his time. Your press secretary. You need a press secretary pretty quick.

MK: What about management, the management and administration office?

FM: Sure.

MK: Here you've got to determine slots, salaries, office space, and all of those things.

FM: Yes. You've got the career people that can help you, too, with administration. Honestly, I don't honestly know how it's exactly organized now, but I know there are some senior career people who stay in place who you can—

MK: For each of those jobs. But for that overall position that's going to make the decisions on what kind of slots—

FM: You want to get somebody in there as soon as you can but, in the meantime, the senior career person can be pretty helpful to you.

MK: Can function in that.

FM: Sure.

MK: Because this Administration [Clinton] had so much trouble at the beginning with that particular spot, having a campaign person in.

FM: Too many administrations, *too many* administrations, get staffed by the campaign. The qualities that make for excellence in a campaign are not necessarily the same as make for excellence in governing. There are some that are similar, but for the most part they're not.

MK: Can you talk about those, too? For a campaign, what do you need? What's the kind of person that's going to function well in the campaign?

FM: Someone who [has] an awful lot of political experience and has knowledge about how the political system works, and an ability to react quickly to political crises. To govern you need, I think, people who are of a somewhat more strategic and substantive bent than you necessarily need in a campaign. Campaigns are more tactical. You have that overall campaign strategy, but then - within that - it's more tactical. In governing, I think you need a better sense of strategy and a better sense of management.

MK: Because there's so much pressure to *take* those campaign people, how do you make certain that you get those governing people? Is that where your recruitment operation comes in? Do you do that within a White House as well?

FM: Sure. You've got to have the President's support on what you're trying to do. Clearly, the pivotal consideration is the President's support. And you've got to—if the President is aware of that and wants to make that distinction and understands the need, which for the most part I think they do understand, that's a big leg up.

MK: In your case, what kind of discussions did you have with [Richard] Nixon about personnel?

FM: In the transition or earlier on?

MK: Early. Say, when you came in to the office?

FM: I didn't have much of a conversation with him early on. [H. R.] Haldeman really ran the White House for him. He was not that interested in managing the White House. He was interested in making the selections, and he made it clear that he wanted people involved and he wanted people who were loyal to him. My argument was always on that score, agreed, but: *don't assume somebody who hadn't worked for you in the past isn't loyal to you*. Maybe they didn't know they could work for you. Maybe they haven't been involved in politics, but there can be developed loyalty; it doesn't have to be proven loyalty. I feel that was accepted.

MK: Isn't that a tough thing and a persistent problem that people come into a White House and think that everybody in the Federal government is their enemy?

FM: Yes.

MK: And it takes them a long time to recognize what a resource OMB is, and career people.

FM: Right.

MK: How do those lessons get learned? Is it just one event at a time or one incident at a time when they learn?

FM: It's one incident at a time adding up to an aggregate that provides him with a sense of comfort.

MK: You can watch it from outside; you must see it. How long does it usually take?

FM: I don't know. I don't think you can generalize on that.

MK: When you came in, did you read anything about White House operations or your job or anything else?

FM: No. There was nothing to read, as far as I could tell.

MK: How much time was there from the time when you got hired to when you actually began working?

FM: I actually had about three or four weeks, so I had time to do some serious planning. I came in with a plan, and with approval of the plan, from the President and the Chief of Staff. I had the slots to hire recruiters. My plan was pretty well developed when I got there.

MK: Did they want it because they thought that things had not gone well before that, and they needed to do something that was more expansive, professional or whatever?

FM: Yes. I think they believed that the Personnel Office, while there were some skilled people there, was a little more *reactive* than *proactive* and probably not as—it could have been better managed.

MK: In looking at the Nixon White House, it seems in that White House—you could say the modern White House begins there, because of all the institutions that were created that reached out to the various parts of the country. For example, the Office of Communications, the beginnings of the Public Liaison operation and the beginnings of Political Affairs. In a sense this was part of that. Was that something that was peculiar to Nixon, that he was interested in that? Where did it come from?

FM: I don't know. I don't know where it came from. It just sort of seemed natural to me.

MK: If you look at it, it's really different from what had existed earlier.

FM: I think you have to give some credit to Bob Haldeman. Haldeman gets kind of beat up because of all the Watergate stuff, and he was kind of autocratic. But he was one hell of a Chief of Staff. I think he really understood what needed to be done, and he was a terrific boss. He really was a good boss. [Inaudible] really was Haldeman. He had us all toeing the line and he got the most out of us. I think he did believe in organization and management and quality and he did believe in some of the outreach kind of things we did.

MK: People that I have talked to have said much the same thing, how good he was as a Chief of Staff. It's just difficult to reconcile how he could have been such a good Chief of Staff but also gotten into the difficulty that he did.

FM: Well, he got into difficulty *because he wasn't good at the technical aspects of the job* but because he was put in a position where *his loyalty was tested in a very undesirable way*. He was put in a position where he had to break the law in order to protect the President. Unfortunately, he did.

MK One last question. Could you give me what you think are say three or four elements that are common to successful transitions?

FM: The appointment of quality transition heads who have the support of the President. Early appointment of competent senior White House people, including - but not limited to - the chief of staff and head of personnel. A president-elect who really stays involved, very much involved, in the details of the transition and provides support to those who are carrying it out.

MK: When you say provide support, what does that entail?

FM: Supporting their decisions, making it clear he's going to support their decisions versus the competing interests of the *body politic*, not bending to try to please everybody. Again, I guess a final thing would be to *stay on plan*; develop a set of objectives and a plan and stay on it. Don't get distracted from it. Don't get distracted from it because it might be politically advantageous to do this right now because the political advantage you gain today is going to be lost six months from now when you're paying the price for having the wrong person in the job. Get the right people. You can't be totally oblivious to the political process. Obviously you have to pay attention to it, but get the right people in place. Otherwise, you're going to get killed.

MK: When does that plan get developed, and by whom?

FM: In the first two weeks of the transition.

MK: And the president himself would be involved in it?

FM: Involved in approving it. The transition chairs or chair, and the chief of staff, all would be very much involved in it of course.

MK: Part of what needs to be done, say for the chief of staff and the kind of support you're talking about, is making sure that there's a process that has discipline and that a president is committed to the chief of staff to not let people bypass him, bypass the chief—

FM: Yes.

MK: —and he supports the chief. So whenever anybody comes to the president with something, the president says go to the chief; got to go through a process.

FM: Yes.

MK: Thank you very much.

[End of Disc 1 of 1 and Interview I]