



President George W. Bush Oral History Project

Briefing Materials

Elliott Abrams

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Presidential Oral History Program

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ELLIOTT ABRAMS NEWS TIMELINE

PREPARED BY JOEL VOSS AND BRYAN CRAIG

MILLER CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, 09/14/2011

- 1973** Elliott Abrams earns his J.D. from Harvard Law School. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1975** Abrams serves as assistant counsel for the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1975 – 1976** Abrams serves as special counsel to Senator Henry M. Jackson (D-WA). (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1977 – 1979** Abrams works as special counsel and chief of staff for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY). (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1981 – 1989** Abrams serves as assistant secretary of state for international organization, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, and assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1989 – 1996** Abrams serves as a senior fellow for the Hudson Institute. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1996 – 2001** Abrams is president of the Ethics & Public Policy Center. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 1998** Abrams is one of the signatories on a letter to President Bill Clinton urging him to use military action against Iraq. Other signers include Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, John Bolton, and Richard Armitage. (<http://www.newamericancentury.org>)
- 1999 – 2001** Abrams works as a member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and serves as its chairman from 2000 to 2001. (<http://www.cfr.org>)
- 2001**
- June* On the 25th, President George W. Bush appoints Abrams to be senior director of the National Security Council's (NSC) Office for Democracy, Human Rights and International Operations. (*White House Press Releases*, 06/29/2001)
- September* On the 11th, al-Qaeda terrorists strike the United States.
- At a NSC meeting on the 27th, Condoleezza Rice urges a major humanitarian effort in Afghanistan, a policy Bush earlier emphasized. According to Woodward, Abrams helps with the relief effort. (Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002, p. 160)
- 2002**
- April* Congressional Democrats formally request that the Bush Administration prepare a timeline of Administration actions during a failed coup in Venezuela. Reportedly, Democrats are looking into the roles of Assistant Secretary of State Otto Reich

and Abrams, who were both involved in the Iran-Contra affair. (*USA Today*, 04/19/2002)

Spring Interagency tensions reportedly rise over the handling of the detention and prosecution of Guantanamo prisoners. As the Pentagon handles the intelligence gathering and military prosecutions of prisoners, officials in the State Department, Justice Department, and the NSC complain that U.S. policy is ill-conceived and poorly implemented. They contend that their detention is hard to justify, because few are hardened terrorists with valuable information and there is a lack of evidence on their terrorist activities. Responding to persistent criticism, Bush appoints John Bellinger, the NSC's counselor, and Abrams to co-chair a policy coordinating committee on detainee affairs. Meeting twice a week with Defense, State, Justice, and CIA assistants, Abrams would co-chair this group until he is re-assigned in December. (Jane Meyer, *The Dark Side*, New York: Doubleday, 2008, pp. 186-187; *The New York Times*, 10/25/2004)

December Abrams is appointed special assistant to the president and senior director of the NSC for Near East and North African Affairs. (<http://www.cfr.org>)

Secretary of State Colin Powell announces the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). It is a regional program that helps citizens in the Middle East and North Africa develop more pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies. (<http://mepi.state.gov>)

2003

January On the 15th, Abrams and Robin Cleveland, a national security specialist in the budget office, brief Bush on humanitarian efforts in Iraq if the U.S. invades. Abrams states the war might displace two million people. The U.S. is stockpiling medicine, food, water, and other vital supplies, and is lining up funding from the U.N. and other nongovernmental organizations. (George Bush, *Decision Points*, New York: Crown Publishers, 2010, pp. 248-249; Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 276-277; Bob Woodward, *State of Denial*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006, p. 107)

February On the 21st and 22nd, Jay Garner convenes interagency meetings on Iraq. Abrams is present. (Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco*, New York: Penguin, 2006, p. 101)

March Deputy NSC Adviser Stephen Hadley and Abrams meet with Representative Ike Skelton (D-MO), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, about his concerns for the possible aftermath of an Iraqi war should the U.S. invade. (Ricks, p. 108)

April Hadley assigns the Deputies Committee to create an organizational chart for the U.S. administrator for Iraq and how it relates to the Iraqi government. Abrams is reportedly at this meeting. (Woodard, *State of Denial*, p. 177)

On the 30th, Bush announces the road map for Middle East peace, which calls for two states, Israel and Palestine. The same day, Abrams and Hadley visit Jerusalem to meet with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to discuss it. They all take a helicopter flight over Jewish settlements in Gaza and the West Bank to look at possibly halting and dismantling some of them. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>; *The Washington Post*, 05/11/2003; *The New York Times*, 05/21/2003)

June Early in the month, Abrams travels to the Middle East to develop an agenda for a summit among the Israelis, Palestinians, and the Bush Administration. On the 28th, Rice visits the Middle East to meet with Sharon and Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority to announce an Israeli pull-out from the northern part of the Gaza Strip. (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 06/02/2003; *The Washington Post*, 06/30/2003)

July Bush, Dick Cheney, Powell, Rice, and Abrams meet with Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal. Prince Faisal urges Bush to declassify part of a report that might clear Saudi Arabia from accusations that the country helped finance the 9/11 terrorists. Bush declines due to the ongoing investigation of 9/11. (*The New York Times*, 07/30/2003)

October Abrams denies having any involvement in leaking the name of CIA operative Valerie Plame. (*The New York Times*, 10/08/2003)

November Abrams meets secretly with Sharon in Rome. According to Israeli media, Abrams says that Israel "must dismantle illegal settlement outposts in the West Bank and freeze settlement construction." Reportedly, Abrams tells Sharon that the Syrians are ready to enter negotiations, but Sharon refuses to talk to them until they agree to stop Hezbollah guerrilla activity on the Israeli-Lebanese border. (*The New York Post*, 11/23/2003; *The Associated Press*, 11/24/2003; *Voice of America News*, 09/14/2004)

December Rice works with British and Libyan officials in a larger diplomatic effort to get Libya to give up its nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs. (*The New York Times*, 12/21/2003)

2004

February On the 18th, Abrams, Hadley, and Assistant Secretary of State William Burns travel to Israel to discuss Sharon's plan to move settlers and soldiers out of parts of the occupied territories, as well as Israel's plans for a security fence to protect Israelis from Palestinian military groups. (*The Associated Press*, 02/17/2004, 03/11/2004, 04/02/2004)

Mar.-Apr. In March, Sharon suggests Israel is willing to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and up to 24 West Bank settlements. On March 26th, the Bush Administration announces that it will hold a high-level summit with Israel on April 14th. In addition to this announcement, the Administration also says that it will postpone any new additional sanctions on Syria to stabilize the region after a Syrian

political assassination. Sharon's vacillation, along with stiff domestic opposition in Israel, lead to additional meetings on April 1st with Abrams, Hadley, and Burns. (*The Financial Times*-London, 03/27/2004)

July Abrams and Hadley go to the Middle East to meet with Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia. The meetings come as Sharon is having difficulty selling his withdrawal plan to the Labor Party and Israel at large. Later in the month, Israel alters the original plans for a security fence because of a court order requiring Sharon's Administration to decrease potential hardships on Palestinians. During the process, Abrams travels back to Israel to hold talks with Sharon and other officials. (*The Associated Press*, 07/12/2004, 07/26/2004)

August In early August, Abrams travels to Israel to discuss Sharon's plans to create thousands of new Israeli houses in the West Bank area of Maaleh Adumim. Under the road map, the U.S. opposes any new settlements in the occupied territories. (*The Associated Press*, 08/05/2004; *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 08/06/2004)

December Abrams reportedly states that the U.S. does not oppose Israel's construction of a security barrier in order to keep the most populous Jewish settlements on the Israeli side of the fence. According to *Newsday*, "Abrams affirmed Bush's recent policy shift to supporting Israel's retention of some settlements on land captured in the 1967 Middle East War and rejecting Palestinian claims to a right to return to homes in Israel." (*Newsday*, 12/20/2004; *The Frontrunner*, 12/20/2004)

On the 5th, Abrams visits Israel for the first time after Arafat's death in November. He meets with both Israeli and Palestinian Authority officials to discuss Sharon's disengagement plan and Palestinian elections. (*The Jerusalem Post*, 12/05/2004)

2005

January On the 29th, Egypt's opposition candidate Ayman Nour is jailed. Rice reportedly tells Abrams, "They couldn't have picked a worse time to do this." (Glenn Kessler, *The Confidante: Condoleezza Rice and the Creation of the Bush Legacy*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007, p. 92)

February On the 2nd, Abrams is named deputy assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor for global democracy strategy. Rice reportedly tried to find a place for Abrams at State. However, Rice and Hadley agree to keep him at the NSC, but let him travel with Rice anytime she goes to the Middle East. (Kessler, p. 129; *The Associated Press*, 02/03/2005)

On the 15th, Rice meets with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit in Washington. In a reported effort to push for greater democracy in the region, she presses Gheit for the release of Nour. However, Nour is not released, and Rice cancels the Egyptian portion of her Middle East trip scheduled in March. (Kessler, pp. 92-93; *The Washington Post*, 02/16/2005)

March On the 23rd, Abrams and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Welch meet with high-level Israel officials over Sharon's plans to increase

settlements in Maaleh Adumim, which were approved by Israel earlier in the week. (*The Associated Press*, 03/24/2005; *UPI*, 03/24/2005)

June

On the 5th, in a speech at the Organization of American States (OAS), Rice emphasizes that Latin American countries should support democracy. However, the OAS fails to adopt a U.S. proposal to set up a permanent committee to monitor democracy. Many countries reportedly see it as a way to isolate Venezuela. (*The Washington Post*, 06/06/2005; *The New York Times*, 06/06/2005)

On the 14th, Abrams and Welch travel to Israel to help prepare officials for Rice's arrival, which comes just days before a summit between Sharon and Abbas. (*The Associated Press*, 06/14/2005, 06/15/2005)

Rice comes to the Middle East hoping to announce a break-through where Palestinians would have control over their own border crossing near the town of Rafah in Gaza. However, Welch and Abrams tell Rice that problems still exist with the border crossing. On the 20th, Rice gives a speech in Egypt about democracy and women's rights. Rice also meets with Nour. (Kessler, pp. 89, 99, 121)

July

Reportedly, on the 11th, during a meeting between Israeli officials and Abrams, Israel requests U.S. funding to help precipitate a move of settlements from Gaza to Galilee and Negev. However, after the meeting, Abrams denies any request for funding. (*The Financial Times*-London, 07/12/2005)

On the 23rd, Rice meets with Israeli and Palestinian leaders on the Israeli pull-out planned for mid-August. She also visits Lebanon to show support for the new anti-Syrian government. (Kessler, pp. 210-211)

November

Rice conducts all-night negotiations with Sharon and Abbas on the flow of goods in and out of Gaza after the Israeli withdrawal. They agree that the Palestinians would control the border crossing at Rafah and Karni, but have European Union inspectors watch for weapons. (Kessler, pp. 133-134; Elisabeth Bumiller, *Condoleezza Rice: An American Life*, New York: Random House, 2009, p. 276; *The New York Times*, 11/15/2005, 11/16/2005)

December

Abrams and Welch travel to the Palestinian territories to report on how well Hamas, a group the U.S. calls a terrorist organization, is doing against the Fatah Party under Abbas in Palestinian legislative elections. They meet Hanan Ashrawi, a former Palestinian peace negotiator, and she tells them "these guys might win." (Kessler, p. 136)

2006

January

On the 5th and 13th, Abrams and Welch meet with Sharon and Ehud Olmert's aides to discuss the upcoming Hamas and Fatah elections. (*The Atlanta-Journal Constitution*, 01/04/2006; *USA Today*, 01/16/2006)

On the 18th, Rice gives a speech at Georgetown University on “transformational diplomacy,” to help foster the growth of democracy around the world. (*The Washington Post*, 01/19/2006)

On the 26th, Hamas wins the Palestinian legislative elections. Rice and Bush reportedly see this as a disaster as the U.S. contributed millions of dollars toward Abbas’ campaign. (Bumiller, pp. 279-281)

February On the 21st, Rice, Abrams, and Welch go the Middle East. Rice visits Egypt and meets with intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, Gheit, and Hosni Mubarak to discuss Hamas. They urge her to give Hamas more time to accept Israel before stopping its funds, as Arab countries are reluctant to stop their own funding to Hamas. She then goes to Saudi Arabia to meet with Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal and King Abdullah to discuss how the region’s peace process can continue. (Kessler, pp. 140-142; *The Washington Post*, 02/22/2006)

On the 23rd, Rice visits Lebanon to visit with government officials. (Kessler, pp. 212-213)

On the 30th, Abrams and Welch travel to Israel to hold meetings with Olmert after his victory in recent Israeli elections. During the election, Olmert ran on the principle that “Israel would unilaterally withdraw to borders of its own choosing if negotiations proved impossible.” (*The Financial Times*-London, 03/31/2006; *The Associated Press Online*, 03/30/2006)

May On the 8th, Rice presents Bush with a new strategy for the Iranian nuclear program issue. Negotiations have stalled. Iran takes advantage of the divisions between the U.S. on one side, and Russia and Europe, who were not motivated to press for more sanctions, on the other. It includes the U.S. and Europe negotiating with Iran on a package of incentives, but, if Iran refuses to stop the program, sanctions will be imposed. On the Memorial Day weekend, it is reported that Abrams, Hadley, Zoellick, Karen Hughes, J.D. Crouch, and Dan Bartlett meet with Rice at her apartment to work on the final preparations. (Bush, pp. 416-417; Kessler, pp. 196-205; Bumiller, pp. 289-290)

July On the 12th, Hezbollah commandos in Lebanon cross the border and abduct two Israeli soldiers, sparking an Israeli military campaign. The U.S. reportedly delays a diplomatic intervention, so as to weaken Hezbollah. On the 23rd, Rice goes to Lebanon, telling leaders that a cease-fire is not possible without a comprehensive settlement and the disarming of Hezbollah. On the 26th, she goes to Europe to talk with European and Palestinian leaders, calling for an eventual cease-fire. By the 29th, Rice, Abrams, and Welch work out an immediate 48-hour cease-fire after an Israeli missile hits an apartment building. They also work on bringing in an international peace force. (Bumiller, pp. 291-295; Kessler, pp. 214-218, 226; *The Washington Post*, 07/27/2006; *The Jerusalem Post*, 07/11/2006)

On the 20th, Welch and Abrams meet with 30 Iranian opposition leaders to discuss the future of Iran. They do not stress regime change, but hope that the Iranian

people would achieve their goal for a democratic Iran. (*The New York Sun*, 07/21/2006)

- September* On the 20th, Bush meets with Abbas for the first time since the Palestinian elections. After the meeting, Abrams states the international community will end its ban against the Palestinian Authority's new government when it recognizes Israel, renounces terrorism, and accepts previously signed agreements. (*The Jerusalem Post*, 09/21/2006)
- October* From the 1st to the 4th, Rice travels to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and the West Bank to revitalize the peace process. (*Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 2007, p. 124)
- November* Due to decreasing security conditions in Iraq, Abrams argues that increasing security cooperation with Saudi Arabia may help stabilize the region. (*UPI*, 11/27/2006)
- Nov.-Dec.* Rice travels to Jordan to meet with foreign ministers of the Gulf States to promote Palestinian democracy and U.S. support to Mideast peace. The ministers reportedly worry that the U.S. will leave Iraq and abandon the Sunnis. (Bob Woodward, *The War Within*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008, p. 258; *The Washington Post*, 11/29/2006)
- 2007** Rice makes multiple trips to the Middle East to promote peace. Both Rice and Bush exclude Hamas and only deal with Abbas as he solidifies his authority in the West Bank. (Bumiller, pp. 305-306)
- January* On the 10th, Bush announces the surge of five brigades to Iraq. It is a product of an intense strategy review by the NSC. (<http://www.cnn.com>)
- February* Critics see Bush's newest plan for North Korea as a stalling tactic. It is reported that Abrams works with the State Department on its response that as long as North Korea releases information on its nuclear program and allows access to program personnel, Bush will lift some economic sanctions and make a pledge to remove the state from the terrorist list. (*The Voice of America News*, 02/15/2007)
- May* Rice meets with Iranian and Syrian officials at a regional conference on Iraq in Egypt. (Bumiller, p. 308)
- June* Alvaro de Soto, a former UN envoy to the Middle East Quartet (U.S., U.N., E.U., and Russia) and to the Palestinian government, accuses Welch and Abrams of pressuring the U.N. to isolate Hamas. According to de Soto, "I was subjected to a heavy barrage...including ominous innuendos suggesting that if the U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan didn't agree to review international assistance to the Palestinians, Congress would likely review its funding for the United Nations." (*The Washington Times*, 06/14/2007)

- September* On the 21st, Rice attends a conference on Iran's nuclear program. The U.S. and France agree to exert diplomatic and economic pressure, and Rice begins to work with other countries on sanctions. (*The New York Times*, 09/22/2007)
- November* On the 27th, Bush and Rice hold a peace conference at Annapolis with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. They pledge to begin negotiations to reach a possible peace treaty by the end of 2008. (*The Washington Post*, 11/28/2007)
- 2008** Rice continues shuttle diplomacy with multiple trips to the Middle East, including one with Bush to keep the peace process going as violence spreads in Gaza and Israel builds settlements in the West Bank.
- January* On the 9th, Bush and Hadley visit Israel to try to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. (*Federal News Service*, 01/09/2008)
- May* Bush embarks on his second Middle East tour (Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt) in the hopes of continuing the peace process. (*The New York Times*, 05/19/2008)
- June* On the 16th, Rice visits Lebanon in support of a compromise between the government and the Hezbollah-led opposition. Hezbollah received veto power over cabinet choices as part of the power-sharing agreement. A few days later, Israel offers to hold direct peace talks with Lebanon. (*The New York Times*, 06/17/2008, 06/19/2008)
- July* Rice, Bush, Cheney, and Hadley meet to discuss Iran. Rice recommends talks, and they reportedly support her plan. On the 19th, Rice sends Burns to Geneva to talk with Iran's chief negotiator and other European envoys. Although talks are positive, but inconclusive, these overtures are reportedly another sign of a shift in policy to a more diplomatic solution. (*The Washington Post*, 07/17/2008, 07/19/2008, 07/20/2008)
- November* On the 6th, Rice takes her last trip to the Middle East as secretary of state. (*The New York Times*, 11/07/2008)
- 2009**
- January* On the 17th, Israel announces a cease fire in Gaza. Rice worked with Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni in the last days. (*The Washington Post*, 01/16/2009, 01/18/2009)
Abrams leaves office and becomes senior fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. (<http://www.cfr.org>)

TIMELINES

- Elliott Abrams News Timeline, prepared by Joel Voss and Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/14/2011.
- Timeline of the Bush Presidency, prepared by Justin Peck and Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/30/2010.

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- Elliott Abrams, “In the Streets of Cairo, Proof Bush was Right,” *The Washington Post*, 01/30/2011.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

- Brookings Institute, “Bush NSC 2001,”
<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/Projects/nsc/Organizational_Charts_of_the_NSC.pdf> (03/21/2012).
- Fred Barnes, “Mr. Rice Guy,” *The Weekly Standard*, 12/16/2002.

KEY ISSUES AND EVENTS ON NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Detainees

- Tim Golden, "Administration Officials Split Over Stalled Military Tribunals," *The New York Times*, 10/25/2004.

Humanitarian Relief in Iraq

- Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) pp. 276-278.
- Roger Mac Ginty, "The pre-war reconstruction of post-war Iraq," *Third World Quarterly*, 24 (2003): 605-617.

Democracy in the Middle East

- Michele Dunne, "The Baby, the Bathwater, and the Freedom Agenda in the Middle East," *The Washington Quarterly*, 31 (January 2009): 129-141.

Rafah Border Agreement

- *The Journal of Palestine Studies*, 35 (Winter 2006): 184-187.

Middle East Peace Process

- Glen Kessler, "Sleepless in Jerusalem," in *The Confidante: Condoleezza Rice and the Creation of the Bush Legacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007) pp. 120-144.

Israeli Disengagement Plan

- Josef Federman, "U.S. Diplomats Press Palestinians to Crack Down on Terror," *The Associated Press*, 04/01/2004.
- BBC, "Israeli Foreign Minister Renews Commitment to Evacuate Outposts," *BBC*, 08/06/2004.

Palestinian Elections

- Herb Keinon and Khaled Abu Toameh, "US Warns Hamas Win May Imperil Aid; Polls Show Hamas Gaining on Fatah in Run-Up to Elections," *The Jerusalem Post*, 01/15/2006.

2006 Hezbollah/Israel Conflict

- Helene Cooper, "Rice's Hurdles on Middle East Begin at Home," *The New York Times*, 08/10/2006.

Elliott Abrams Suggested Topics

Prepared by Bryan Craig

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/14/2011

Joining the Administration

- When did you first meet George W. Bush? What were your early impressions of him?
- What relationships and career experiences were most valuable to you in preparing for your work in the George W. Bush administration in 2001?

National Security Council

- Discuss your appointments as senior director of the NSC for democracy, human rights, and international organizations, senior director for Near East and North African affairs, and deputy security adviser for global democracy strategy.
- Did you have any discussions with Condoleezza Rice and President Bush about what they expected from you in these positions?
- How did 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq affect the NSC's priorities, especially regarding global democracy initiatives?
- Discuss the president's decision-making style. How did you communicate foreign policy options and advice to the president? Did the president prefer particular briefing formats before making decisions? Was he actively engaged in policy implementation?
- Describe your interaction with Rice and Hadley as NSC advisers. Comment on their respective styles and directing the NSC.
- Discuss the NSC's interaction with other major White House offices (Legislative Affairs, Communications/Speechwriters, Management and Budget, etc.).
- Discuss your relationship with other executive departments (Vice President, State, Defense, Justice, etc.). What were the challenges in coordinating policy among an accomplished group of foreign policy principals?

Foreign Policy Issues

- Describe your role in global democracy initiatives like MEPI and "Transformational Diplomacy." How did you view the Internet and globalization as mechanisms for political change?
- How did you see the role of the U.N. and other NGOs in Bush's foreign policy?
- Discuss the extent to which the Bush administration was committed to multilateralism versus unilateralism. Did this change over time?
- Tell us about your experiences on 9/11 and during other important events such as the Afghan War; run-up to the Iraq War; the execution of the Iraq War; post-war Iraq, and the surge.
- What was your role on the domestic front in the war on terror, particularly your work with John Bellinger and the policy coordinating committee on detainee affairs?
- Tell us about Bush's decision to support openly a Palestinian state and the replacement of Yasser Arafat. Describe your role in creating the "road map."
- Describe the challenges presented by Israel's unilateral withdrawal, the settlement and fence issues, the border crossings (Rafah and Karni), and the violence in Gaza.
- How did the election of Hamas affect U.S. policy?
- Comment on your role in the 2006 Hezbollah/Lebanon/Israeli conflict.

- Tell us about your role in the Annapolis conference. What did the president hope to achieve from this conference?
- Describe Iran's influence on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Discuss your part in changing policy to stop the nuclear programs in Iran?
- What other issues occupied your time, such as Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon?
- Discuss your travels with President Bush and Condoleezza Rice. Describe their styles of face-to-face diplomacy with foreign leaders.

The Bush Presidency in Retrospect

- What do you consider your greatest accomplishments during your tenure? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Bush administration in the realm of foreign affairs and Middle East peace? How would you rate the president as a strategic thinker?
- What features of the Bush administration were misunderstood by the press? How should the Bush administration be viewed by future historians? What is the legacy of President Bush's foreign policy?
- Evaluate President Bush as a world leader. How did foreign diplomats and heads of state view Bush? Were there any common misconceptions?