



News Release

*EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY 2/21

Contact: Rayne Pollack
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The Nixon interview is only the fourth expanded version of the series since its inception. Neil Sheehan's book "A Bright and Shining Lie" on the war in Vietnam, Lou Cannon's book "President Reagan: A Role of a Lifetime," and Germond and Witcover's book "Whose Broad Stripes and Bright Stars -- The Trivial Pursuit of the Presidency 1988" were the three previous instances.

The program debuted on C-SPAN on April 2, 1989 with Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski discussing his book, "The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the 20th Century." Since then the program has spanned a wide spectrum of issues and perspectives. C-SPAN is currently available in 55 million households nationwide.



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C-SPAN TELECASTS TWO HOUR-LONG INTERVIEWS
WITH FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

-Nixon Offers His View of New World Order in Special Two-Part Edition of "Booknotes"-

Washington D.C., February 14, 1992 -- The 150th edition of C-SPAN'S "Booknotes" program will feature Former President Richard Nixon in a special two-part series which airs Sunday, February 23 and Sunday, March 1 at 8:00 and 11:00 PM/ET (5:00 and 8:00 PM/PT).

"Booknotes" is C-SPAN's weekly hour-long interview program featuring authors of public policy, political and historic books. The series airs Sundays at 8:00 and 11:00 PM/ET (5:00 and 8:00 PM/PT).

Mr. Nixon discusses his new book, "Seize the Moment: America's Challenge in a One Superpower World," in which he argues that the United States must play an active leading role in the post-Cold War geopolitical arena. He maintains that the United States, as the world's only "complete" superpower in political, military, and economic terms, should reject calls from the right and left to retreat into isolation.

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C-SPAN'S "BOOKNOTES" INTERVIEW WITH FMR. PRESIDENT NIXON

Various Highlights From the Interview:
Quotes From Former President Richard Nixon

"When I meet people, I don't judge them in terms of whether they have a firm handshake . . . what I try to do . . . is to listen to what they say. You don't learn anything when you're talking."

"I think this book sounds like me, for better or for worse."

"People are aware of the fact that I'm sort of a connoisseur of good Bordeaux. A Bordeaux should never be drunk until it's at least 50 years old. It takes 50 years before you're able to come back and evaluate a man or a period of time."

"I don't relish . . . the personal battle of personalities. But the running for a post, the competing in a great cause, that to me has always been very fascinating . . . When the odds are great, I think I do the best."

On the Democrats: "I think that the Democratic candidates are missing an opportunity . . . in their criticism of the incumbent president . . . When I see them bogged down . . . in protectionism and bashing the Japanese . . . I know exactly what's going through their minds. They read the polls which show that foreign policy is of very little interest to the American people today, and so they virtually ignore it and what they say about it is usually wrong."

On George Bush: "People underestimate him and think, 'Well, this is just a nice guy.' Well, he is a nice guy and he's a fair guy, but he is a competitor. Whenever the chips are down, don't figure that you're going to have a pushover with him. He's always best when he's behind. That's why at the present time when some of the polls indicate that he has a tough race or might even be behind, that's when he's most dangerous. They'd better watch out."

On Boris Yeltsin: "Yeltsin (isn't) in Gorbachev's league as far as style, but let me tell you, Yeltsin may not know what fork to use at a State dinner, but he has a very sharp mind."

On the former Soviet Union: "We must help them develop a management class. Rather than a Peace Corps . . . a Democracy Corps, what we need is an 'Enterprise Corps'."

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-TRANSCRIPT-

**"BOOKNOTES" INTERVIEW
WITH FORMER PRESIDENT
RICHARD NIXON**

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EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY 2/21/92

Taped Tuesday, February 4, 1992 at C-SPAN
Airing Sunday, February 23 & Sunday, March 1, 1992 at 8:00 PM (ET)

C-SPAN

400 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite #650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Transcript by TAPEWRITER, INC.

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"Booknotes"

Seize the Moment by Richard Nixon

PART I

Q: Former President Richard Nixon, in your new book *Seize the Moment*, on Page 105 you ask the question, "Who is the real Gorbachev?". Who do you think the real Gorbachev is?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I would say based on knowing him, having met with him twice—that is not a great deal, but it is enough to make an appraisal—and read a lot about him, I would make these observations: First, he is a man who made a difference. Therefore, he will be remembered in history as one of the major leaders—perhaps one of the greatest leaders—of the 20th century. He is the man who also has made it possible for [Boris] Yeltsin, his great rival to be president of Russia today. Without Gorbachev, Yeltsin could not have been on the scene as he is. Now, how did he do that? First, Gorbachev is a Communist. He has been and still is. He is a Russian nationalist. In addition to that, he's a brilliant, pragmatic politician. What happened to him and why he failed was that he was so sincerely a Communist and a Marxist that he couldn't make the basic decision, which was absolutely essential, to abandon doctrinaire Marxism, to allow private property and to go forward with economic reforms which

could match his political reforms. He deserves credit for his political reforms--for some free elections, for some free press and for freedom in other areas. He failed when he did not combine that with economic reforms, with free markets and the rest, and that is why the Russian economy, the Soviet economy, was a disaster at the end of his tenure. The final thing I would say with regard to him is that he is one who became a world figure, but in becoming a world figure and dazzling the world, he lost touch with his own people. That is why I think he failed. But all in all, he will be remembered, as I have indicated, in a very positive way because he made possible what has happened today, although I must indicate that his reforms had the objective not of getting rid of communism, but of saving it, and in trying to save it, he lost his position.

Q: In this paragraph here where you talk about him you say, "He is a highly intelligent, sophisticated and supremely self-confident leader with the great ego characteristic of most successful statesmen." What's the ego characteristic you're talking about?

PRESIDENT NIXON: By the ego characteristic I mean that he believes sincerely that he is the man best qualified to lead his country. And, incidentally, it happens that in his case the ego went a bit too far. The mark, in my view, of a great leader is one who is so confident of his own abilities that he's not afraid

to have people who are brighter than he is around him. Gorbachev, except for [Eduard] Shevardnadze and two or three others who eventually deserted him, surrounded himself particularly at the last by second-rate people—I would say first-rate second-rate men—and, as a result, he didn't have the kind of advice that he should have had. He rejected those who could have given him the best kind of advice. But, on the other hand, the ego served him well in that it allowed him to reach the top in the Soviet hierarchy. He couldn't have done that unless he had great self-confidence.

Q: How did you approach this book? I know it's all about the world; it's called *Seize the Moment*. First of all, why the title?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the title comes out of a recollection that I had of my visit to China, which, incidentally, took place just 20 years ago as we are sitting here. And on that occasion I quoted from a poem that Mao Zedong had written in a toast that I gave there in the Great Hall of the People in which he said, "Seize the day, seize the hour, because many things urgently remain to be done." Mao Zedong was talking about seizing the day and seizing the hour in order to serve the interests of communism. I feel that at the present time we must also recognize a sense of urgency. We should seize the moment, but not for the communism, but for the victory of freedom, and that is what this book is all about. Communism as an idea has been defeated all over the world

except for China and a few other smaller countries like in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. But freedom has not yet won. It has not won in the sense that it has not yet proved itself. Until it proves itself, there's always a chance we will revert or some of the countries will revert to an authoritarian leadership.

Q: The last word you wrote was Sept. 11, 1991--after the coup, but before Mr. Gorbachev left. Are you surprised at how accurate this chapter is? You make all the predictions.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes. Well, I must say that I feel rather fortunate--lucky, I would say--and there's a lot of luck in politics as in anything anyplace else, although you do make your luck to an extent. But in this instance, I tried to evaluate Gorbachev and Yeltsin and the forces that were in play in the Soviet Union based on my experience there, which goes back quite a few years, as you know, but also on a trip that I took there in March of last year when I met Gorbachev and Yeltsin and, frankly, all of the members of the so-called Gang of Four--all of them except one, one of whom has committed suicide and the other three are sitting in jail at the present time. Based on that trip and based on a visit to Ukraine and Lithuania and other countries, I reached the conclusion that Gorbachev, even after he returned, would not last. I reached the conclusion that Yeltsin was the man of the future; Gorbachev was the man of the past. I must say, when I submitted the manuscript to the publishers on Sept. 11th, I kept wondering,

by the time this book comes out, will it be overtaken by events? It has not been, but I wouldn't give myself a lot of credit for being so perceptive in that respect. A lot of luck was involved, too.

Q: Let me read you another line. "Yeltsin's resolute leadership of the democratic revolution after the coup made him a world figure and exposed his critics in Western diplomatic and media circles as political amateurs." Who are you talking about?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I suppose I'm talking about those who were so impressed by style. I'm speaking of those who evaluated Gorbachev, who was a man who dazzled people with his intelligence, with his grace, with his reforms--his political reforms particularly--and who then jumped to the conclusion that he was the only one that the West could rely upon and that we had to go with him; going with Yeltsin would be a great mistake. Now, who are these people? Well, they are people I greatly respect; we should all greatly respect. They have studied foreign affairs, they have studied foreign policy, they have studied the Soviet Union for many, many years. But they have a tendency--I'm referring now to people in the diplomatic corps; I'm referring to many columnists and others--they have a tendency to be overcome by and impressed by style rather than by substance. And Gorbachev had style. On the other hand, Yeltsin was one who came across in their view as being boorish. He drank too much; he was a womanizer--at least these

were some of the stories that came out. He was one that wasn't in Gorbachev's league so far as style is concerned. For example, I remember one columnist, who's an expert in this field, after Yeltsin had made one of his trips over here, derided him on the ground that he had such poor table manners because he licked caviar and butter off of his fingers at a state dinner. Well, let me tell you, Yeltsin may not know what fork to use at a state dinner, but he has a very sharp knife. As I looked at the two, I realized that Yeltsin was one who was a political heavyweight, and some of the experts just couldn't see that because they were blinded by style and couldn't see the real man who was beneath.

Q: You talk a lot from time to time in the book about intellectuals and professors. Here's another line from this chapter on the Soviet Union. You say here, "I tend to agree with the observation of the 18th century European king who said, 'The cruelest way to punish a province is to have it governed by professors.' With notable exceptions such as Woodrow Wilson, great professors are seldom good executives."

PRESIDENT NIXON: That is true, and, incidentally, I am one who admires professors. I admire them for their intelligence, and, frankly, I admire them for just doing the job--just teaching must be a tremendous ordeal these days or at any time--and I learned so much from my professors. But generally speaking, you will find that they are not comfortable when they are in positions where

they have to make tough decisions. Woodrow Wilson is an example of one who was not only a great professor, but he was also a great leader. But he himself made a very famous speech long before he became president. It was entitled "Men of Thought and Men of Action." He said that generally the man of thought is not a man of action; the man of action is not one of thought. Wilson was both. When you can find a professor who can be a man of action as Wilson was in his first term, you have a very great leader.

Q: You did a book on leadership and leaders. Who are your favorites?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Among the leaders?

Q: Among the leaders. And what do you look for in a leader?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, when you talk about favorites, I think we have to separate whether you agree with them or not or whether you disagree. You have to--when I look at leaders, my test is, did they make a difference, for better or for worse, and particularly, of course, for better. And among the great leaders--well, I could tick off a number. I had the privilege of knowing Churchill--when he was past his prime, but past his prime, he was ahead of almost any other leader you could possibly know. I knew President Eisenhower. Despite the early evaluations of his presidency, which were negative, he was without question a great leader. He

said he didn't know much about politics. Believe me, he knew a great deal and handled himself extremely well. But let's leave out the Americans and look particularly abroad. I would rate de Gaulle in that category. He was a great leader. I would rate Zhou Enlai in China, Yoshida [Shigeru] of Japan. I think, too, [Konrad] Adenaur in Germany, De Gaspari in Italy, Golda Meir in a smaller country, Israel. These were all great leaders--Ramón Magsaysay in the Philippines. If they only had a Magsaysay today, what he could do for that country. These are all people who rose above the level of events, and, as a result, they made a difference in their countries--not only for their own countries, but for the cause of peace in the world. You say, how do you rate Zhou Enlai in that respect? Zhou Enlai was a Communist, as was Mao Zedong, but he was able to reach above his ideology and do what was necessary to open a new relationship with the United States, which helped his own country, and, in my view, in the long will lead China--after its economic reforms, which are succeeding--to join the world of free nations.

Q: In the history of your career, you have been observed--probably as many words have been written, at least by the contemporary writers, as anybody in the country. You seem to enjoy observing others, and if you read your books, there's constantly little remarks about how you have gone beyond just the obvious--tall, thin. Do you observe people closely when you meet them?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes. I'm not one of those who believes in the psychiatric examination of people, you know. I believe that most of these people, these psycho-historians, should be on the couch themselves rather than to psychoanalyze people they have never met. On the other hand, when I meet people, I don't judge them in terms of whether they have a firm handshake or whether they have eye contact, all of these things. These are things you learn, things that you do, things that come naturally to you, or if they don't come naturally you do it even though they become unnatural. But what I try to do when I meet people is to listen to what they say. You don't learn anything when you're talking. You learn a great deal when they are talking. And under the circumstances, if you listen to what they say and then evaluate what they have been, you can reach some conclusions. Another thing I do is this: I never take the view simply of--particularly when I travel abroad--of the foreign service, the State Department, the CIA. They have their views. But I try to get a broad spectrum of views. I believe in reading everything about a person's background before I ever met them, and that way I can make my own evaluation a little better.

Q: This is, what, the ninth book you've written?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes, it is.

Q: The eighth since you left the presidency.

PRESIDENT NIXON: The eighth since I left the presidency. The first book I wrote was *Six Crises*, and I must say that this book, the ninth, was my ninth crisis. Writing a book is very, very hard work. I know you interview people on your program—I've seen them on occasion—and I must say I admire authors. I'm not saying that in terms of myself, but it is a great ordeal for me. I don't write easily. I see you've got some yellow notes there—I mean notes on a yellow pad. I write outline after outline, then I dictate into a machine after I've done the whole thing so that it is the spoken word rather than the—the written word, as you know, is very formal. And then I have good people that work with me. But when I finally get down to crafting the final product, it is a great, great burden, ordeal, for me.

Q: Let me ask you the same question I always . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: Every time I finish a book I say never again.

Q: Did you write this book?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes, I would say unfortunately. Those who criticize the style—and it certainly justifies criticism—generally say that it sounds like me. The reason it sounds like me is that after I take all of the—and I point out in the author's note that I had some excellent people working with me. Marin Strmecki, who was my chief editor on this book who made a great contribution,

and Monica Crowley, who is in my office now, Joe Marx. They were two full-time assistants. Then a number of others wrote various papers on the various subjects. But when it finally came down to the final product, then I had to not just do the editing, but I also had to get it my words so that it sounded like me. As I often said to people working with me, when I would rewrite something I'd say, "The trouble is, everybody knows my style so well that if I leave it like this, it isn't going to sound like me." I think this book sounds like me, for better or for worse.

Q: Let me just ask you about the title *Seize the Moment*. Is this country, in your opinion, seizing the moment?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I think if I may be not partisan but political to an extent, which will not surprise you since you have covered the Hill to an extent, I think that the Democratic candidates are missing an opportunity here--missing an opportunity in their criticism of the incumbent president of not seizing the moment. When I see them getting bogged down, for example--bogged down in protectionism and bashing the Japanese and that sort of thing--I realize that they aren't on the mountaintop. For example, I know exactly what's going through their minds. They read the polls which show that foreign policy is of very little interest to the American people today, and so they virtually ignore it and what they say about it is usually wrong. Now, if they were really seizing the moment, they would look ahead and they would take the

American people on the mountaintop and point out that how America leads, what we do at home and what we do abroad, will determine whether in the 21st century it will be a century not of war, as was the 20th century, but a century of peace; the 21st century will be a century not of dictatorship, but one of freedom, and a century not of poverty, as was the 20th century for most people in the world, but one of progress. This can all happen, but it's going to require that we inspire the American people and not just limit the debate to, frankly, very petty issues. In my view they are petty in some cases.

Q: Let me ask you again about some of things you say, and this pops up on every other page--little references to things that I want to ask you about. "Gorbachev captures the elite in Georgetown drawing rooms, Yeltsin the workers at Sverdlovsk factory gates. Gorbachev appeals to the head, Yeltsin to the heart. Gorbachev dazzles a crowd; Yeltsin moves a crowd." "The elite in Georgetown drawing rooms"--who are those folks and how much impact do they have on the system here in the United States?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, let me say, I know both Georgetown and Sverdlovsk. I visited Sverdlovsk when I was there in 1959 when I had the so-called "kitchen debate" with Khrushchev, and, of course, I've been to many Georgetown dinner parties. Georgetown is, of course, where people who have the money live, who can afford it, because it is a very--it's a nice section of the city.

It has all these old homes and so forth, these landmark homes. And a Georgetown dinner party is one of the most delightful things you can possibly attend. But it is a place, if I may be very direct, where a lot of intellectual incest goes on. I think as you look at the Beltway, the Washington Beltway, it's what I would call sort of the modern version of Plato's cave. We talk to each other and we think, well, this is the world. We don't break out and see what the world really is. So, Gorbachev can dazzle that crowd, whereas Yeltsin is much more at home out there at a factory gate--as Gorbachev tried to be, but he was uncomfortable doing it--than would be the case with Gorbachev. I would say, too, that another point I would make with regard to the two--I think this captures it better than those phrases; it's in the book, I think--is this: that Gorbachev was a man of the world, Yeltsin was a man of the people. And a great mistake that Yeltsin will make is, if he becomes so enamored with this reception he gets as he travels around the world that he becomes a man of the world and doesn't spend his time as he should on the problems of the people, because what happens in Russia today is what is important, and he must not, as Gorbachev did, not pay enough attention to the problems at home in attempting to be a world figure abroad and winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Q: "It was ironic that many Americans, particularly within the foreign policy elite, viewed the new nationalists in the Soviet Union with disdain or contempt." What is it about the--I get the

sense that the elite and you don't get along or that you have a--you say it.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes.

Q: I mean, you mention it so often that . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, let me say that it isn't that I have anything against the elite. I mean, I admire them. If you want to spend an evening with the group, go to a Georgetown dinner party and the rest. But my point is that in terms of seeing the real world they are blinded too much by style and, frankly, by their own prejudices and misconceptions, rather than opening their minds and seeing the world as it really is. By the elite, I don't mean to put them down. They are certainly superior to me, I would say most of them, in intellect, etc. But insofar as knowing people, knowing what moves people, they simply aren't there. They support a lot of losers.

Q: *Seize the Moment* is this book, *America's Challenge in a One-Superpower World*. Are you happy with the way the press has covered your book and reviewed it and just in general how this thing's going?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, frankly, I'm surprised. I mean, I'm surprised because it had a very favorable review in the *New York*

Times and also was respectfully reviewed in the *Washington Post*—not particularly favorable, but it was respectfully reviewed. It was well-reviewed generally, and I would say I am somewhat surprised because this is unconventional wisdom. Assuming it's wisdom at all, it's unconventional, because, as you know, I take a different view on the Gorbachev-Yeltsin matter, I take a different view on China on MFN [most favored nation], I take a different view on a number of issues, particularly in the last chapter on entitlements, etc. So, under those circumstances, while the views that I express are probably unpopular, I appreciate the fact that most reviewers at least appreciated the fact that it was worth reading it to see what I was thinking.

Q: This is really off the track, but one of the times as I was reading it, it got my attention where I thought that this was something new was when you said that you were for strict gun control.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes.

Q: Have you always been for strict gun control?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Oh, yes. Let me be quite direct about that. I'm known as a conservative Republican, and I am conservative. But on the other hand, on some issues I take a different point of view. Gun control—I feel strongly about it. I have many

friends--Joe Foss [?], who served with such distinction in World War II. I met him when I was in the Pacific. He was a great fighter pilot--25 Japanese planes shot down. He's the head of the organization, but I am for strict gun control. Let's just look at the figures. During the Persian Gulf War, during that war, 20 times as many people were murdered in the United States as were killed on the battlefield. That's unacceptable. Gun control, I think, could have some positive effect in controlling that and seeing that that doesn't happen in the future. So, in gun control, I figure that way. As you note, I take a different view on abortion. Now, that's a very sensitive issue, and Americans may disagree about abortion. But I feel very strongly that we should not try to export our views on abortion to countries abroad. I have visited the countries of what I call the Southern Hemisphere. I've seen the overpopulation in those countries. I know that the infant mortality, everything else, is just unacceptably high. Under the circumstances, population control is absolutely necessary. I don't think we should subsidize it, but on the other hand, I don't think we should say that if a nation abroad does have an abortion program we do not support a population program. I think, for example, the so-called Mexico City policy which the administration apparently has endorsed, which would deny any assistance to a population-control program if the country abroad has abortion, I think that's wrong.

Q: You also talk about the MTV generation. It sounds like you're

worried about the attention span of the young people.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, we're on television, so I suppose I shouldn't knock it. But I think it's very important that our young people read more. I think they spend too much time in front of the tube. I think that there's so many good books out there that remain to be read and to be re-read. I like television. I watch your program on occasion. I like sports on television. I don't usually listen to talk shows, and I think that you can get hooked on a lot of trash if you're on television.

Q: Why don't you listen to talk shows?

PRESIDENT NIXON: The talk shows have never appealed to me. I've been on them. I mean, I go on them on occasion--"Meet the Press," "Face the Nation," I've done them all. But generally speaking, I'd rather read about it the next day rather than see it. I think that if you read it the next day, you're not going to be overwhelmed by the style of whoever's on that show. I mean, it's very important to emphasize substance rather than style.

Q: How much power do they have?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Great power. Oh, television? Television has enormous power. After all, I mean, I'm sort of the expert in that. I was saved by television when I made my fund speech in

1952. People say I lost because of television in 1960 in the debates with Jack Kennedy. In 1968, again, I won with television, and my "silent majority" speech saved our policy in Vietnam so that we were able to go ahead and finally reach a peace agreement just exactly 20 years ago. But as far as television's concerned, it is certainly a mixed blessing if it is a blessing at all in politics. If we had had a television age, people like Bob Taft would probably never have been elected to the Senate. Dick Russell, one of the great senators, would probably have never been elected to the Senate. What I mean is, the fact that somebody's good on television should not be the deciding factor in determining whether he's going to be elected to public office.

Q: How do you get your information today? In other words, when you decided to write this book, what's your daily habits of intake on information?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, as I point out in the book and as you're aware, first I travel. I've been--this book took, if I may say, 45 years to write. It began when I was a freshman congressman when Jack Kennedy and I supported the Greek-Turkish aid program, which was the beginning of the Marshall Plan, the goal of which was the defeat of communism. Through the years I've traveled all over the world. I've had a chance to survey the situation, and what wisdom I learned is in this book--not only traveling in office as president and vice president, but also out of office. In addition

to that, I talk to people and I listen because I find that in talking to people you can learn a lot. In addition to that, I get most of my information from reading. I read newspapers, magazines. I read everything from the *New Republic*, for example, to *National Review*—the conservatives, the liberals, etc. I read the columns, and I read as many books as I possibly can. I don't want to indicate that I spend all of my time reading material that doesn't eventually end up in a book, but I find that only by expanding the mind, by reading and talking to people, can you then write anything that makes any sense at all.

Q: Daily how many newspapers do you read?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Oh, I limit that because it's repetitive. But I read in New York—I'm living in New York or near to New York in New Jersey at Park Ridge. I read the *New York Times*. I read the *Wall Street Journal*. And then people send me—and I have somebody who sends me—the major columnists from other papers from around the country. I just don't limit it to the *Times* and the *Journal* and, for example, the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Times*.. I find that some of the best columns are written out in the country and in not just the big papers, in the small papers.

Q: Do you go to the office every day?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Oh, yes. Yes. I go to the office every day,

and I spend about four hours in the office. Then in the afternoon I read, generally, for about four hours. Then the rest of the time I try to write a little.

Q: The last time I saw it, you're 79 years old?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Seventy-nine, yes.

Q: When's your 80th birthday?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, it's too close. It's 11 months from now.

Q: Would you say that you have a happy life, and are you surprised, based on all the things you've done in your life, at where you are?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I'm--oh, yes, yes. But when you speak of a happy life, I'm not among those that think that when you judge a person or a life that the question is, are you having fun? That isn't the test. The test is, is it a satisfying thing? Did you accomplish something? That is what gives you the happiness in the broadest sense as you have described it. I've reached an age, incidentally, where I was rather surprised when I came in and one of your associates out here said, "My, you look very well." And I've reached that age that Dean Rusk described so well. He describes the three ages of man, and he said, "Youth, middle age

and my-you're-looking-well." So, under the circumstances, I trust I do. As a matter of fact, when I point out that I spend a lot of time in the office, I am doing what I didn't do in the White House. In the White House I played golf only five times in five-and-a-half years, and I had virtually no exercise--sometimes swimming when we went to Florida and up to Camp David in the pool. But now my sole exercise is walking. I walk between four to five miles a day, about two miles in the morning and two miles at night. That's what keeps me--if I am in good shape, that keeps me in shape. And also some of the best ideas come when you're walking. I found in talking to Adenaur and de Gaulle, Yoshida, De Gaspari, these great people that I've had the opportunity to know, that virtually to a man they said they got good ideas when walking by themselves, so I follow their example.

Q: You mentioned leaders. Are there any good leaders or great leaders in the world today?

PRESIDENT NIXON: There probably are, but we probably don't recognize them. You see, the difficulty is that when you live among giants, you don't realize that they are giants. Looking back, I think I was fortunate. Of course, after World War II, I did meet all the giants. I met the giants. I must say I thought they were giants then. You couldn't meet Churchill without knowing you were meeting a giant, or de Gaulle or Adenaur or Yoshida or Zhou Enlai or Mao Zedong and the others that I had the

privilege of knowing. Or here in the United States, people that I've had the opportunity to know like Eisenhower, Johnson, etc. But at the present time we have a tendency to look around us and say, "Where are the giants?" My answer is we won't know until maybe 25 years from now. As a matter of fact, I'll put it another way. People are aware of the fact that I'm sort of a connoisseur of good Bordeaux. A Bordeaux should never be drunk until it's at least 20 years old. In my view, history is never worth reading until it's 50 years old. It takes 50 years before you're able to come back and evaluate a man or a period of time. So, my reading goes back to people who lived and worked 50 years ago. As far as those who work today, I'm not going to evaluate them. I won't be around 50 years from now to evaluate them.

Q: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I keep hearing that one of the reasons why Thomas Jefferson is viewed as such a great man today is because so much of what he wrote and his papers have been maintained, and the reason why James Madison isn't thought of a lot by people as much as Thomas Jefferson is because a lot of his papers burned and they're not around. I bring that up to ask you about--you've spent a lot of time putting your thoughts down on paper. Are you of the impression that this kind of thing, these books are going to last?

PRESIDENT NIXON: They will last only if the events bear out the predictions and also the recommendations that I have set forth in

them. But whether they have lasting value is something I cannot judge. The jury's still out on that. What I have tried to set forth in these books that I have written are my analyses of the way things were, but also to make recommendations as to what our policy should be in the future to avoid some of the disasters we have experienced in the past. I am probably wrong in many cases, but in other cases I can be right. If the book, this book, affects maybe one, two, even three potential leaders, it will be worth it.

Q: Do you have any sense of whether any of our leaders are reading this book right now?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, unless they're lying in the letters they write to me, I would say quite a few are. But, Brian, we're not a nation of readers anymore. I know that the bookstores are in a recession at the moment, as is most of the country. But, unfortunately, our leaders today are so busy doing things--like members of the House and the Senate. They have to spend their time raising money, meeting potential givers to their campaigns and so forth, attending meetings, just running around like chickens with their head cut off. They don't have the time to sit down and read. I would recommend that they take the time. And also what I would do is I would urge all people who are in public life, who are trying to get into it, spend less time in front of this tube--even if you're listening to this program--and more time

reading.

Q: Based on the 18 years you've been out of office, looking back, would you change the presidency in any way? If you had to go back in there, structurally what would you do differently?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I'm not for the six-year term. I think you need the two terms. After all, the great accomplishments of most presidents have been in their first terms when they had to make a record which would get them re-elected. The second terms have usually been disastrous for most presidents, but it's been worth it. Woodrow Wilson in his first term was a great president. That's an example. Now, as far as the office itself is concerned, the staff has grown much too big. I think the White House staff should be cut by at least 25 percent, probably a third, and the same is true in all of the agencies of the government. It's particularly true of the Congress. Did you know, for example, today--because you've spent a lot of time on the Hill--a congressman from California has a bigger staff than I had for eight years as vice president? Now, that doesn't make any sense. Does a congressman do that much better than I was able to do as vice president? No. I think when you have a big staff, there's a tendency to leave too much to staff. Let me give you an example on books. One time I was talking to Foster Dulles. He had come back from a trip to Europe, and he'd made a speech. I was remarking that I knew it was such hard work to do speeches. I was

complaining that I just hated to spend all the time to write speeches. And he answered, he said, "I like to write my own speeches. It forces me to think the problems through." He had a big staff at the State Department, but he wrote his own speeches. And I would urge our congressmen, our senators, our political leaders--sure, use speechwriters, get good phrases and the rest, but you don't think the problem through unless you sit down here with a yellow pad and write it out yourself.

Q: Would you deal any differently with the press?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Would I?

Q: If you were president.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes. If I had survived into the second term, I would have spent more time in press conferences and the rest. It was very difficult in the first term apart from the Watergate period, which, of course, answers itself. But during the war, a president can't be as available to the press as he otherwise would be. But I think it's important with the press that the relationship be one of not trying to win them by having them to dinners and all that sort of thing. They're not going to be bought off by that kind of bribery. But the way to deal with them is straightforward in press conferences and the rest, and don't play favorites. I think it's very important not to play

favorites.

Q: Ronald Reagan, I think, had something like 57 news conferences, and George Bush has had 157. I mean, it's just a whole different way of looking at it. Looking at the way those two presidencies have worked with the press, what's the good and the bad of it?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, first, everybody has to do it in the way that fits him. Ronald Reagan was a great speaker. Having a press conference was not his strong suit. George Bush is a good speaker, but he himself would say he's not a speaker like Reagan. He is better in the give-and-take of a press conference, so he has far more of them. My view with the press, if I were giving advice to people in office, particularly a president, is don't be too available, because if you're too available, then when you have something to say, they're not going to pay any attention. They'll say, "Ho-hum, here it goes again."

Q: Back to the book. If you were to characterize this book for people that haven't seen it, it does cover the world. That was your intent.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes, including the United States.

Q: For the moment here--this is a two-part series, two one-hour

discussions—I want to get back to a country, Israel, the Middle East. Land for peace—you come down hard with a recommendation in Israel.

PRESIDENT NIXON: I do, and some of my friends who are strong supporters of Israel, as I am, disagree with that. I had a letter from Norman Padoreth [?], for example, who says he just disagrees with me on this.

Q: Of *Commentary* magazine.

PRESIDENT NIXON: That's right, and a very able geopolitical thinker. I would say that as far as Israel's concerned, what they have to realize is that this is the best time in 40 years to make a deal. The Russians, or the Soviets as we used to call them, aren't going to poison the well as they have on all previous negotiations that have taken place. The Iraqis have been certainly stopped dead in their tracks, at least for a while. The Saudis are playing a more helpful role. Arafat has been discredited to a certain extent. When you make a deal is when you're strong. I remember so well de Gaulle saying to me when I saw him in 1963, "The United States should open its negotiations and recognize China now when China is weak, rather than waiting later when China's strength will require it to do so." I followed that advice. It was the right decision, despite what has happened since then. I think as far as Israel's concerned, it is in a very

strong position now, should make its deal now. Now, what about land for peace. Israel can't give up all the land that it acquired in the '67 war. It's got to have secure borders. But for Israel to insist that it must keep all this land is going to mean that in the end it will be sitting on an impossible situation--an impossible situation where you're going to have millions of second-class citizens there who, without question, are going to continue to cause difficulties and which will make it very difficult for Israel to govern them without getting international condemnation for the way that they've done it.

Q: You suggest that Israel is a socialist country.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Israel at the present time has a socialist government. By that, even though it's a conservative government, the Labor Party, for example, which is in opposition to the current government, is considered to be more socialist than the current one. But what I am saying is this: Israel, I see, has the greatest potential of any country in the world because of its people. They have the highest literacy in the world. They have the best scientific capabilities of any people in the world. They have indicated all over the world wherever they go, those who come from Israel, who have the Jewish background, are among the ablest in the world. Now, they have to be unleashed, and Israel, if it gets rid of some of this socialist mentality which keeps the country back, can astonish the world in what it will do. It has

already made a great impression on the world. It can do even more.

Q: You've come down on the 1967 war on the side that Israel really started that war. We hear from our callers all the time, arguing back and forth. Explain your position on that.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, as you'll note in the book, I point out that that is a view which comes directly from Israel, because that's something that [Menachem] Begin himself said. You know, he said, "After all, we don't know whether he was going to attack or not, but we did attack first." So, the question of who did it first, however, now is irrelevant, because you say that if they started the war, then we have a right to keep the territory. I don't buy that, either. My point is there isn't any question that Israel at that time felt it had to do what it did because it was threatened by war, but now, having acquired this territory, it must go back. Let me use another example. The United States, this year we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, and yet Japan started the war. Why don't we keep Okinawa? Because it's not in our interest to do so. It's better to have Okinawa, which was Japanese, under Japan's control. And as far as Israel's concerned, Israel's security will be far better if it gives up some land in order to have peace than it will be if it tries to keep all of these people repressed and has to stay in a state of war, because Israel for 45 years has been in

a state of war. Israel needs peace. And, incidentally, about half the people of Israel are for land for peace under a proper formula.

Q: By the way, there's a lot of statistics in this book. Where'd you get all those statistics? How did you accumulate them all?

PRESIDENT NIXON: A lot of it is from my reading, and a lot of it is from the excellent people I have on my staff. I'd have ideas and I'd say, "Check this, check this, check this." And, incidentally, those statistics have been checked backwards and forwards, and I think they're pretty reliable. That's how you get them.

Q: One statistic is that we have spent something like \$400 billion in 40 years on foreign aid.

PRESIDENT NIXON: That would include the foreign aid which goes clear back to the Marshall Plan and then through the years since then. The number is astronomical, but that, of course, includes aid to countries that receive basically what we call security-related aid--aid to Turkey, aid to Pakistan, etc.

Q: But you say that you're not too crazy about foreign aid.

PRESIDENT NIXON: As a matter of fact, I, during the Eisenhower

years, was the point man on foreign aid. I think it was the right thing to do at that point. But what I mean is, that as far as economic foreign aid is concerned that too much of it had been wasted because it has gone to governments rather than to people, and the governments have been corrupt. They have misused it. They have been either corrupt or socialist or whatever. In the future, any aid we receive has got to find a way to get to people rather than to go through governments.

Q: We spend something like \$15 billion in foreign aid right now, and 60 percent of it goes to Israel and Egypt. Bad idea?

PRESIDENT NIXON: That is one of the reasons why we ought to be for a peace process. That's frankly not in our interest, but it also is not in Israel's interest. It's not in Egypt's interest. The reason we're spending it is because Egypt and Israel had the peace process, the Camp David Accords for which President Carter deserves great credit. But now we must have some sort of peace in the area, which would mean that much of those funds could be released for places in Africa, Latin America and so forth where there are 4 billion people living--that's about four-fifths of all the people on the earth--where 30,000, for example, die each day from drinking dirty water or from contaminated sources, where in Africa, for example, half the people have malaria. What I'm referring to is this: that I am for the aid to Israel and Egypt at the present time to carry out the Camp David Accords, but it

distorts America's foreign policy, and in the future it is very, very important that we try to find a way to get that in better perspective. So, if we can have some sort of peace settlement in the area and if Israel can move away from some of its socialist policies, Israel will then be much better off, but so we will. We'll have a better foreign policy.

Q: Again, a lot of our callers will call up and talk to our guests and suggest the only reason why we're giving so much money to Israel is because of the Israeli lobby. How do you view that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I know that bashing the Israel lobby seems to be a problem these days. Let me say in that respect, one of those who's been criticized for that is my old friend and associate--and you know him well--Pat Buchanan. Now, Pat Buchanan may say outrageous things--and he does--but when people say he's anti-Semitic, I remember that in the Yom Kippur War when I ordered a huge airlift which Golda Meir said saved Israel, that the strongest supporter within the administration for that airlift was Pat Buchanan. Now, anybody who supported an airlift for Israel is not anti-Semitic. But I would say that looking at the situation today by the Israeli lobby--of course there's an Israeli lobby. There's also an Irish lobby for Northern Ireland. There are various lobbies, as we know. There are lobbies for Croatia--I heard from them when I wrote a recent piece on Croatia--for Poland, etc. But what I am suggesting is that in this instance that the

fact that we are supporting Israel is in our interest and in their interest, up to a point. But when it comes, as it does, to the occasion when it no longer serves Israel's interest or our interest, then we've got to try to support a peace process. That's why the peace process at the present time must go forward. I'm not sure it will succeed, but what I would urge to my friends in the Israeli community, what I would urge to them is go into it with an open mind. Find a way to break this impasse, because you just can't continue to have a situation where we're pouring all that money into the Israeli-Egyptian area which could be used for other purposes.

Q: Of all the places that you write about and all the places you think about, which part of the world do you enjoy the most studying and thinking and talking about?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I've often asked, what is my favorite city in the world? The city I would prefer to go back to of all the places I've been is Istanbul. It's the most fascinating city in the world. That doesn't put down Paris, it doesn't put down London, it doesn't put down Bangkok or Beijing and the rest. But Istanbul, here in the heart of the Mideast--I mean, the bridge to Europe, the bridge to Africa, the bridge to Asia. That is one of the most fascinating of all the cities.

Q: How often have you been there?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I've been there twice, and I hope to go one more time.

Q: You write in the book you've been to Russia or the Soviet Union seven times. Did you . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: And the same with China.

Q: Seven times.

PRESIDENT NIXON: I give equal time to both.

Q: Have you ever totaled up the number of countries in the world you've been to?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I think it's about 90, but some of them are no longer countries. Some of them were colonies at the time I went there. But it's in that magnitude.

Q: Are you planning any more trips?

PRESIDENT NIXON: At the present time I don't have any scheduled, although I have been considering the possibility of one more trip to Asia, maybe one more trip to Europe. But I have none that I'm ready to announce at the present time.

Q: Do you have any other books planned?

PRESIDENT NIXON: That I can answer categorically no. As I told you, I remember when I finished *Six Crises*. I said, "Never again! Never again." And then when I finished each book, I would say, "Never again." My guess is that this is probably the last, but I'll still have some things to say. I'll make a speech now and then; maybe appear on a television program now and then, but only when I have something to say. Incidentally, as you probably are aware, I'm not on the speaking tour. I don't take honorariums. I only make a speech when I think it's an audience that needs to hear something, and I do the same with regard to what I write.

Q: Some years back you also let go of your Secret Service detail. Why did you decide not to stay—I don't know how you phrase this—on the government dole on a lot of these things, and how much does the government pay of your office space and all that stuff now?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the government takes care of the office space and a staff of, in my case, three people—four, I should say, four people. The government takes care of that, and they do that for all the former presidents. Now, the Secret Service, that's only purely personal. All the other former presidents have Secret Service, and the presidents' wives have Secret Service. If they think they need it and they want it, that's fine. But it's a matter of choice for the former president, and I decided seven

years ago, and Mrs. Nixon strongly supported it--in fact, she suggested it and recommended it--that we should dispense with it because I don't think we need it, and, frankly, we like the privacy the traveling alone. I, for example, have come down to Washington with one man, who happens to be the chief of police of Upper Saddle River [N.J.], and he volunteered his time and I pay some expenses for him. When I travel abroad, I take just one person with me. That's all we need because when you're abroad the problem is you're usually too safe. They furnish all this for you. I should point out that as a result of getting rid of that Secret Service--it costs \$3 million a year to support a former president and his wife--that it saved the taxpayers \$20 million. I'm not suggesting now that others must follow, but that's a personal decision of mine and I don't regret it at all.

Q: How is Mrs. Nixon?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Surprisingly well. As you know, she has suffered and recovered from two strokes. You would never know she'd had a stroke. She was able to go out to the Reagan Library dedication, and it was a little hard for her. She shouldn't have really taken the trip, but she said, "Look, he came to our library; I'm going to hers." She's a very strong woman in that respect. She does not do the public appearances anymore, but when it comes to babysitting for grandchildren, she is the best.

Q: We've got another hour to talk later, but I want to ask you before we wrap up this hour, in the beginning of the book you have dedicated this book "To the democrats."

PRESIDENT NIXON: I received, incidentally, a very outraged letter from a very good supporter who loved the book. She said, "I loved the book," and she agreed with me on my attitude toward the Russians and toward the Chinese and the rest, but she's a very partisan Republican and said, "Why did you dedicate it to the Democrats?" She didn't realize that it was a lower case *d* rather than higher case. This is to the democrats of the world, and democracy, in the best sense, that is the wave of the future. In other words, government by the people rather than government from the top down, from authoritarian leaders, be they on the right or the left.

Q: As a way of wrapping up this hour, I asked you earlier about your favorite place in the world, and really what I meant to ask you--and we'll pick it up in the next time--is what part of the world do you enjoy thinking about and writing about? You cover the world in this book, but what part?

PRESIDENT NIXON: First, at the present time, what happens in Russia is the most important thing. Let me describe why that is so important--because Yeltsin must not fail. Historically speaking, it was about 170 years ago the Battle of Waterloo was

fought, and Wellington after that battle said, "It was a very close-run thing." But Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo and Wellington's victory affected the course of history in Europe for a century, the 19th century. Today, what happens in Russia, whether freedom survives and wins, will affect the course of history for the whole 21st century. And if he fails, if Russia reverts to authoritarianism or dictatorship--it won't go back to communism, but dictators could be on the sidelines--then it means that the forces of freedom in the world will have an enormous setback. Take even China. As China sees what happens in Russia, these tough, hard-line leaders in China at the present time would be delighted to see Yeltsin fail. If he does not fail, the pressure then will be irresistible on them that they, too, will have to have political reforms to go along with their economic reforms.

Q: This is what the book looks like. It's called *Seize the Moment*. The author is Richard Nixon. We talked a lot this hour about Russia. We'll talk more about China and Vietnam and Japan and Germany in our next hour. Thank you for joining us.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you. Nice to be here.

PART II

Q: Former President Richard Nixon, author of *Seize the Moment*, in the book you write, "Although President Bush has used the phrase 'new world order,' he does not share this wooly-headed idealism." Why did you write that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the impression was after the Persian Gulf War that President Bush felt that that was really a U.N. operation and that, therefore, we now were entering a new era in which the United States would no longer have to play the major role, but where we could rely on the United Nations to deal with problems of that sort. They forget that as far as the U.N. was concerned, he used the U.N. He wasn't used by the U.N. It was very important to have their support because without that support he probably wouldn't have gotten the support of the Congress. But the United States must never be in a position where it gives the U.N. or any other organization a veto over any actions that affect its vital interests, and President Bush is one who understands that completely. He wants to have a different world. He wants to have a world that's more peaceful, but he is not under the illusion that because we defeated aggression in the Persian Gulf and because, as I put it in the book, communism committed suicide in the Soviet Union that now we have a new world order and everything's going to be very different, where the United States can reduce its defenses far beyond the point that would be at

least acceptable.

Q: One of the things that I noticed through the book--and for those who are just watching this one, we had another session together, and so this is the second part of a series--is that you had a lot of references to sports. I wrote a bunch of them down, and I want to read a couple of them to you. When you were talking about Japan, you said, "In fact, the greatest cultural link between the two countries is a common love of baseball." Why did you write that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I wrote that because between the United States and Japan, there is a great cultural gap. We are very different, and, incidentally, we should honor the difference. We should not try to change each other to become like the other. We like different food, we like different dance, for example, and that sort of thing. Baseball, however, is one area where we totally agree. We like baseball. Incidentally, I look forward to the time when Japan will have major league baseball. It'll have the richest club, and I also want to say that I thought it was a very serious mistake when the baseball commissioner denied the opportunity of a Japanese group to invest in the Seattle Mariners. We should welcome that. If it makes the Mariners better so that they're a contending team, I'm all for it.

Q: We'll talk more about Japan later. Another quote: "To put the

East Europeans up against Russia would be like fielding an Ivy League football team against the Washington Redskins."

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I think you should know, Brian, that that was a rather prophetic comment, because the book was finished on Sept. 11, and at that time the Giants were still in it. I'm, of course, for the home team. I'm for the Giants. I used to be for the Redskins when I lived here. I was, in effect, predicting that the Redskins were going to do what they did do--win the Super Bowl--then. I was glad it came out that way. But we have to understand that if you put an Ivy League team up against the Washington Redskins, it's no contest, and so it would be if you put any of the Eastern European countries up against either the former Soviet Union or the current Russian Republic.

Q: Another quote: "In 1991, for example, the city of Denver paid more money for an expansion baseball team than the United States gave in aid to the people of Poland."

PRESIDENT NIXON: As far as aid to the people of Poland is concerned, I imagine that that has more support than aid to a lot of other areas because the Poles, if we know their tragic history, have been overrun. They have been divided. They have been repressed by the Russians on the one side and the Germans on the other and the Austrians when the Austrians were still in the game. And so, therefore, there's a sentimental feeling in favor of the

Pole. I think, too, that when we consider aid to Poland, we would be aiding a country that has taken the big risk of having shock therapy. They have gone all the way to free markets. It's a very big risk. It's very painful for them. They've had to go through tremendous inflation, and yet they're seeing it through. A country like that deserves assistance.

Q: Okay, here's another. I've got two more. You're talking about Mr. Gorbachev. You said at this point you wrote about, "He's at the top of his game, addressing complex issues as effortlessly as Ozzie Smith fields grounders for the St. Louis Cardinals."

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, that shows that I do follow my baseball. I only wish Ozzie Smith were with the Mets or the Yankees, which are my two home teams. But he is the best, of course--the best fielder. He is not a great hitter, although in one World Series, as you know, he did fairly well a couple of years ago. He's just basically Mr. Smooth, and, may I say, Gorbachev was Mr. Smooth. There's a smooth character. Whereas I would say that Yeltsin is a very rough diamond, Gorbachev is a very smooth diamond.

Q: All right, the last sports analogy. You're talking about a fellow by the name of [Paavo] Nurmi--I believe that's the way you pronounce it-- . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes, sir, it is.

Q: . . . who ran in Finland in 1924 in the long distance running contest. This is all about competition. You said, "Had Nurmi faced strong competition, he would probably have broken the four-minute barrier 30 years before Roger Bannister did in 1954." How did you know that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I'm a sort of a sports nut as you can probably tell. I am that not because I was any good at it. I went out when I was in high school and college for everything--for basketball, football, track. Never made a letter, always made the team. I was quite competitive, but I didn't have the weight or the speed or, frankly, the brains to be the quarterback. So, under the circumstances, I followed sports by reading about it. Nurmi, that was 1924. He ran in the Olympics that year. I was 11 years old and I read about it, and I remember seeing a picture in the *Los Angeles Times* of this runner as he turned the corner. He was looking down at his watch, and the story said that he was--I think it was at that time the 5,000-meter race. As a matter of fact, he won the 1,500-meter, the 5,000-meter and the 10,000-meter. Probably the greatest distance runner who ever lived, and the reason was nobody could provide competition, as the rabbits do at a dog track. Incidentally, don't bet the dogs. They're all fixed, I understand. But whatever the case might be, in the case of Nurmi, he never broke four minutes in the mile. Roger

Bannister of England, he did break four minutes, the first one, and now virtually every great runner does, and that's because they have competition. I use that example as a lesson to those in this country that want to close our borders to immigrants, who want to close down our markets to foreign goods. Whenever a nation goes down the line of protectionism, it is going into decline. A nation or a people to be great must compete and compete with the best. Otherwise we never break the barriers, whether it's the four-minute barrier or whatever.

Q: Have you liked competing?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, competition is—I think you're sort of born with it. I can answer it in two different ways. I don't relish the battle, the personal battle of personalities. But the running for a post, the competing in a great cause, that to me has always been very fascinating. I like to read about it, I like to think about it, and when the occasion allows, I like to compete. But I particularly, incidentally, think I do best when the odds are great. When the odds are great, I think I do the best. Incidentally, that's one of the great strengths of President Bush. You know, he's known for his rhetoric and his acceptance speech, you know, about a kinder, gentler policy and so forth and so on, and people underestimate him and think, "Well, this is just a nice guy." Well, he is a nice guy and he's a fair guy, but he is a competitor. Whenever the chips are down, don't figure that you're

going to have a pushover with him. He's always best when he's behind. That's why at the present time when some of the polls indicate that he has a tough race or might even be behind, that's when he's most dangerous. They'd better watch out. And he'll play fair, though.

Q: You quote a lot of different people, and I want to bring up some of those quotes. Some of them are ancient; others are closer to this time.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I'm pretty ancient, so I guess that's why I do that.

Q: You twice quote Whittaker Chambers. The first time you quote him as saying, "Communism is never stronger than the failure of others' faiths." And the second time you say that Whittaker Chambers pointed out that the war in Korea was not just about Korea, but also about Japan. What is it about Whittaker Chambers? Why did you go back and find quotes from him?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, Whittaker Chambers is only known as a former Communist spy who exposed Alger Hiss, who had been in the State Department, had been at Yalta with Roosevelt, and who was convicted of perjury for lying about whether or not he had given documents to a Soviet agent. Chambers also was a great writer. He wrote some of the great editorials for *Time* magazine. He also

wrote a great book, *Witness*, which I would recommend to anybody, a philosophical magazine. He was a very religious man—a Quaker, as a matter of fact, a convert to Quaker. I happen to be a Quaker—not a very good one, but we had very much in common there. What he said there about communism was very profound. He said, "It's never stronger than the failure of other faiths." I wrote this, as you'll note, in the context of the Moslems. The Moslems have a strong faith. Whatever we want to think of them and some of those extremists who have engaged in some of these terrible acts, those who have the Moslem religion have not been usually very susceptible to the communist appeal, whereas in Christianity, many Christians have been. It doesn't prove that Moslems are better than Christians or vice-versa. It does tell us something, though, about the strength of the faith. I think, too, that in Chambers's case he understood the world. He had been a Communist, but he became a Communist because he wanted to change the world. And as a Communist and an intellectual, he understood the world. The reason that he said this about Korea, he was not for Eisenhower. I was for Eisenhower. He actually was for Taft, and he was very sad when Taft came out against aid for Korea. This is when the Communists attacked—the North Koreans attacked South Korea. He said, "What the senator does not understand is that the war in Korea is not about Korea. It is about Japan, because if they get South Korea, then they will have a dagger pointed at Japan." And Japan, being very weak then immediately after World War II, would fall into their laps. That, to me, was geopolitical

thinking at its very best.

Q: Do you ever go back and think about the days that you knew Whittaker Chambers and the Alger Hiss case and all that? As a freshman congressman, that was one of your first, you know, when you first became visible on the national scene.

PRESIDENT NIXON: That's right. Well, it was quite an experience for a freshman congressman. That was a time when we didn't have the huge staffs. This will be hard to believe, but I was the only lawyer on the Un-American Activities Committee, which investigated that case. We had no lawyers on our staff. It was a staff of only five people. We had a brilliant chief investigator, Bob Stripling [?], who was really better than a lawyer, and yet we were able to expose Hiss for what he what he really was. He had lied when he said he didn't know Chambers, and he had lied with regard to turning over documents to a Communist agent, a Soviet agent. And yet we were able to do that when we were up against the Justice Department, the administration, up against one of the greatest law firms of the country with scores and scores of people. I guess what I'm coming around to here: You don't need huge staffs, such as the staffs that have investigated the Iran-Contra thing, in order to do a good job of investigation. Smaller staff, overworked, does far better than a huge staff where a lot of people are spending most of their time cutting each other up.

Q: Other quotes here. We have Franz Kafka: "Every revolution evaporates, leaving behind only the slime of bureaucracy." Why'd you use that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I used that because it was very important to point out that at this time as the Soviet Union and now Russia and the various other republics throw off communism, there is still left the bureaucracy. Who ran the place? You, of course, had the top people, but you also had all these thousands, millions of bureaucrats. And if you have those bureaucrats there, that's the slime of bureaucracy. If you have them there, then when you try to run the place—for example, the problem that Yeltsin has in having a free market economy. Who's going to implement it? Who are going to run the factories and the rest? So, there have to be trained a whole new group of managers, and that's the area where the United States and the West needs to concentrate particularly in providing assistance to Russia and the other former Soviet republics. We must help them develop a management class. Rather than a Peace Corps, for example—and it can be helpful in some areas—and rather than a Democracy Corps, what we need is an Enterprise Corps, where the best young management types from the best big corporations of this country and in other countries abroad are sent to Russia and the other republics where they want to accept them and help them develop a new management class, so that the slime of bureaucracy can be pushed away because they are not going to support, they are only going to sabotage a free-

market program.

Q: What memories do you have of your own bureaucracy when you were president?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I have memories of some very able people. For example, I take a few shots here at some of the foreign service people who have briefed me in the past where I didn't think the briefing—I thought it was honest; they thought it was honest, but it didn't prove to be correct because they were confusing style with substance. But generally speaking, I have found that if you want something done, you've got to do it in spite of the bureaucracy and not through them. But if you lead them—if you lead them—then they are professionals. But, on the other hand, those that say, well, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of State or the Secretary of the Treasury should simply ask the people in the bureaucracy to develop a program—forget it. It's not going to come. Leadership has to come from the top. It has to come from the secretary himself, or in the case of the administration on a national policy, it has to come from the president. If it doesn't come from there, it will not come up from the bureaucracy, although those in the bureaucracy can be very, very effective in implementing a policy once they know what is to be done. It isn't a question of their being disloyal. They're not disloyal to the country; they're not disloyal to their president. But the point is that simply don't have the

capability--they have never developed it--to lead. They expect the leadership to come from somewhere else.

Q: André Malraux you quoted as saying once he observed "the U.S. is the only nation in the world to have become a world power without intending or trying to do so."

PRESIDENT NIXON: He was a legendary figure, as you know, in literature. I met him for the first time--de Gaulle introduced me to him when I was there in 1969 on the state visit, my first state visit to France. And then he came to the United States and I saw him and I gave a small dinner for him just before going to China. At that time he had had a stroke, and he talked very painfully--just as Mao had had a stroke. He had been in China, as you know, and was an expert in that field. He was very, frankly, complimentary of the fact that I was going to China. I remember as he was leaving that day, we went out on the South Portico and he said to me, speaking painfully through his rather contorted mouth, "Mr. President, I am not de Gaulle. No one is de Gaulle. But if de Gaulle were here, he would praise you for what you are doing." Malraux, of course, was a great historian; he was a great writer. And that statement is right on target because as distinguished from other powers that became world powers, the United States did not try to do so. In fact, we did not want to do so after World War II. We would have brought all the boys home, and we wanted to do that and not play a world role, except

for the fact there was no one left to do it. The British and the French, the Italians and the rest were all decimated by war. They couldn't do it. And, of course, the others who might have done it among the great powers, the Japanese and the Germans, were defeated, so the United States had to be the leader. But we became the leader of the free world because we were the only ones that could lead, and we did it not, however, as philanthropy, but for ourselves because if we don't lead, who else is going to lead today? People say, "Well, let somebody else do it. We've taken the burden." The only other nations capable of leading today, who have the resources to do so potentially, are the Japanese, the Chinese, the Russians and the Germans. Does anybody want to leave their fate in the hands of those nations and those peoples? No. So the United States right now, whether we want it or not, despite all the isolationist talk, we must lead if we're going to build this new world--call it "order" or whatever you want to call it.

Q: Why wouldn't you want to leave your fate to the Germans?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Because I do not believe that the Germans, frankly, would accept that responsibility. I do not have the feeling that many have that because the Germans were engaged in two world wars and many believe were certainly aggressors in the second and many believe were aggressors in the first--although some question that; there were many at fault--I don't agree with those that say that Germans are going to be an expansionist power

always. After 45 years of democracy, I trust the Germans, but I would also say that is not true of many of their neighbors. They still have memories of the Germans riding through their capitals in tanks rather than a Mercedes limousines as is the case today. So the Germans are not the ones to lead. They have a history which will not let them lead. And the same is true of the Japanese. The Japanese are an economic superpower, but does somebody want the Japanese to lead today? What about the Chinese? Same story. The Chinese would not be ones that we would want to be the leaders of the free world.

Q: If you were in that White House today, what would you do with the Japanese?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, we probably, even in an hour's program, couldn't cover that completely. But let me say that--now, I'm going to say something that may surprise you. Those that bash Japan are running America down. And why do I say that? Because we should welcome the fact that Japan is a competitor. They've got to compete more fairly than they do. We've got to insist on that, and their tariff barriers must come down and the other non-tariff barriers, which are the major ones that they have. But on the other hand, we've got to realize that we share so much in common. They are a democracy; we are a democracy. They are for free markets; we are. They have no expansionist goals; we have no expansionist goals. Between the two of us we have 40 percent of

the GNP of the world. Between the two of us we can play an enormous role in seeing that the world remains free. After, for example, Europe becomes protectionist, as it may after 1992, then Japan and America must stand together to keep the world open. The other point I should make with regard to Japan: We shouldn't be so concerned about the fact that they are investing in America. That's good. You have in mind the fact that the British have twice as much invested in America as do the Japanese, and the Dutch have almost as much. Another point I should make is that Japan is very good, but we are better in many areas, and we can stay ahead. Our productivity, strangely enough, is higher than that of Japan--our worker productivity. We've got to make it better, of course. Another point I would make just in conclusion on that particular point is that I remember immediately before World War II--you're too young to remember this--but before World War II there were those who said, "We don't need to fear the Japanese. They can't shoot straight because their eyes are slit eyes." Well, they sunk the Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, and we learned they could shoot straight. Today we go to the other extreme. We think they're 10 feet tall, that we can't compete with them and that we, therefore, have got to insist on programs, "buy American, boycott Japanese" and so forth. They've got problems. Their population is getting too old. Do you know in a time, for example, that the United States and some of our governors are necessarily trying to cut back on welfare to mothers who have a third or fourth child or whatever, the Japanese provide

a bonus of \$6,500 a year to any woman that has a third child because their population is getting old. Second point: Their young people want the good things of life now, as ours do, and that means that they're not going to be able to compete as ruthlessly as they have done previous. But, third, and this is probably most important, they're missing an opportunity that we are not missing. Forty percent of the Japanese women are in the workforce, but they are second-class citizens throughout in that workforce. The fact that we have raised women as much as we have is a great asset for us, and the Japanese have so much to learn. So that in the end, this competition will be good for both, but I think rather than bashing the Japanese, we should try to do better. Welcome the competition and do better than they can, and I think we can.

Q: By the way, in your book you give credit to a lot of people in that back that helped you, but there are several names I wanted to ask you about because you mention other people that used to work with you. Bob Ellsworth, Dimitri Simes, Ray Price--how did these folks help you write this book?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Bob Ellsworth went with me on my trip to the Soviet Union, and he has traveled with me on other trips before I was president. He has written me memoranda for many, many years, and we often talk.

Q: He used to work for you?

PRESIDENT NIXON: That's right. He was in our administration. He was ambassador to NATO, one of the top geopolitical thinkers in the country, and in the world for that matter. Dimitri Simes also was with me. He was the one that was responsible for my trip to the Soviet Union in March, but we've been very close for several years because I've read his columns and we share views and he's been an adviser on those matters. So I used a lot of his thoughts in developing my Soviet chapter particularly. Ray Price was particularly helpful on the last chapter of the book. He worked with me, of course, earlier on *The Real War* and on *Leaders*. He was my top speechwriter, as you know, head of the speechwriting team in the White House. And in the field of domestic affairs where he is truly expert—he's very good in foreign affairs as well—he was absolutely invaluable. Many of the best ideas in the last chapter are from Ray Price after long talks with him.

Q: You also mention James Billington, who's the current librarian of Congress.

PRESIDENT NIXON: James Billington is, of course—you mention intellectuals. Now, there's an intellectual—just to show you I have an open mind—who everybody ought to know better. He has a first-class geopolitical mind. He particularly is expert in Soviet affairs. I'd like to see him sometime—I'd like to see him

ambassador to Russia. I think he would be a great ambassador.

Q: I've got some more quotes in here I want to read, but I want to ask you about another thing that you mention. You talk about mass media and pop culture, and you mention television shows "Dallas," "Knot's Landing" and "Dynasty," and you suggest they paint an unrealistically glamorous picture of America as exports around the world. These are seen in other countries.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, first I don't see them very often, but I see parts of them, and what I see is not the America that I know. I don't want our shows abroad to show just the worst side of America, but I think it should be more balanced. We mustn't leave the impression that everybody's running around in limousines and, you know, living high on the hog and so forth. What I want to make clear here, America is the place to go. It's the place to be. We stop to think of it, with all this running down of America these days and saying, well, we can't do this and that, the traffic's all one way. I used to have my office in the Federal Building in New York, and they have the offices there for people that want to, you know, get passports and that sort of thing. Those lined up to get out of America, there were very few--I mean to move permanently. Those lined up to get in went clear around the block. People want to come here because it is a country that offers opportunity for all, with all of the problems that we have.

Q: Let me read you another quote from your book. You wrote this: "Many liberals who claim to be advocates of the underdeveloped world raise the banner of protectionism in their campaigns against the free-trade agreement though their hidden agenda seeks to shelter special interests. They have launched a two-prong attack against the free trade accord." What hidden agenda of special interests are you talking about?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, what we're talking about is the hidden agenda of industries--steel is one, some parts of agriculture or others--where they simply want to have a market where they have a monopoly. They don't want the foreign competition. Let me give you an example in the agriculture field of how it affects the people that are listening to this program or the great majority of the American people. Due to restrictions of that sort on agriculture, because we're trying to keep some people in business who are no longer competitive due to restrictions--I was just reading recently in a column in *Newsweek* these facts: At the present time, Americans can have only one teaspoonful of foreign ice cream a year. They can eat only two foreign-grown peanuts a year, and they can eat only one pound of foreign-produced cheese a year. Now, that's nonsense. Due to those restrictions, we pay twice the world price for sugar. Why? Because we want to protect sugar growers, we want to protect 15,000 peanut growers or 30,000 or whatever the case might be. That doesn't make sense. I don't want to put them all out of business, but I do say that when it

comes to that kind of protection, that doesn't make sense. And in the case of steel, for example, our steelmakers can eventually compete, but simply putting up these artificial restrictions means that they're not going to do so because people only compete if they have to. And I think it's very important for us to make it necessary. If we're going to be the best, we must have the competition from the best. That's why I'm a free-trader up and down the line.

Q: A Richard Nixon quote: "Advocates of the cradle-to-grave welfare state and of socialism with a human face still carry clout at the elitist dinner parties in Washington." We talked about the elitists in the other program, but I want to give you a chance to continue.

PRESIDENT NIXON: What you have here is a situation which comes pretty much from what I would call the university community. There are a number of very fine teachers who basically are enamored still with Marxist thought. They're not Communists, you understand, but, you know, this is a theory. They're for equality, and they're for changing the world and so forth in that direction. Now, as a result of, because communism committed suicide at least in the Soviet Union or in Russia, the number who openly would do that is reduced. But at the present time, there are still--there are still--in what I would call the intellectual community in this country, many of them enamored with the idea of

equality at any cost. Call it socialist ideas--they would reject that term, but that's exactly what it is. What they want to do is to look to government to solve problems rather than to people to solve problems. They look down their noses at business people, at individual enterprise, at private markets and the like, and, frankly, time has passed them by. It's time for them to recognize, as even the Swedes have recognized--we know that communism doesn't work, that socialism at its best doesn't work. And it's time when the rest of the world is turning our way for us not to turn the way that they were.

Q: If you had to do it all over again and go to school, go to college--you got a law degree from Duke. I believe it's Duke. Is it Duke?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Yes, sir.

Q: Would you . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: Great basketball team.

Q: Would you do it the same again?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I think I was very fortunate in my college days. I went to a small college, and I'm for small colleges--and the large ones as well, of course, because each has to make its own

contribution. My small college is Whittier in California and used to be a Quaker school that is now non-sectarian. I never had a course in political science. They didn't teach it. I don't think I lost much. You learn more about political science by practicing it than you do by hearing about it or reading it in the textbook. At Duke I was very fortunate. The law school at Duke was a great school when I was there. The classes were small, and we had some great professors like Leon Fuller, one of the top legal philosophers in the country, whom I quote in my book, incidentally. I think I-I wouldn't change it, no. I like the fact that I went to undergraduate school in a small school and then went to a top-flight graduate school where the competition was as high as it could be. What is most important is that an individual who wants to develop all of his abilities, you can't do it unless you have to compete. And so, at the graduate level, be sure you pick a school where you're going to have real competition. It's tough, but it's worth doing. If you can't make it there, you're not going to make it elsewhere.

Q: Also from your book, though, about the academic environment:

"The image of the United States"--and this is you writing--"the image of the United States as a declining great power remains dear to the hearts and minds of many academics." Having said that and with your attitude about a lot of academics, if you were, again, starting over again, how do you protect yourself against the so-called Marxists in the universities if they're . . .

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the difficulty is with many of our academics--and it's, incidentally, a tribute to our younger people that so many of them come out without being brainwashed. They come out--in fact, they react the other way. Some of them turn toward the conservative line. You find in many of our so-called better schools this idea that the United States is a declining power. They see everything that is wrong with the United States, and there are many things that are wrong. But they fail to take into account that there are many things that are very admirable about the United States, and they also fail to see the real world. If the United States does not lead, who? I mean, I don't buy this business, "Well, the United States is not worthy to lead because we have so many problems at home." Yes, we've got problems, but let's solve those problems but let's not retreat into isolationism and beating our breast about how bad we are when there's so much in this country that is good. I don't speak as a jingoistic individual who sees nothing to be improved in this country. I have some pretty tough comments in here about what we can do to improve. But let's quit running America down and try to make America better.

Q: What period of your life did you enjoy the most?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, these personal questions are very difficult for me, because I don't like to psychoanalyze myself. But let me try to answer it objectively. I liked all periods in

its way. I mean, I went to college in the Depression, and it was rough. It was rough. But we didn't even think of it as a Depression. I mean, we had to scratch around to make a living, to have anything. I can remember when getting a steak was considered to be something that was so unusual that we just thought this is the ultimate as far as a fine food and so forth is concerned. All that has changed. I would say that I liked my study of the law at Duke due to the fact that I had great teachers. The practice of law was not something that I liked as well as some of the other things I did, although I was very fortunate to have outstanding partners. I mean, the partners that I had in the New York law firm were really not only good lawyers, but they were fine people. They talk about New York lawyers. Some of them are very fine citizens in addition to being fine lawyers. But I would say that the most interesting time of my life has been in running for office, serving in office. The years out of office, however, the years in the wilderness as I call it between the loss in 1960 and winning the presidency in '68, while I wouldn't say it was my favorite time, it was probably my most useful time. That's when I was able really to travel the world, to learn what really made the world tick and to develop my thinking so that I could be, perhaps, a better president than I would have been had I been elected in 1960. Had I been elected in '60, I wouldn't have had the opening to China. But when I was elected in '68, I was ready to make that move, so that was why that was important. And now, of course, this is the period after having been in office. We had some

difficult times in office, as everybody knows. I'm not speaking just of Watergate, but presiding as president over a war that was terribly divisive was not easy. But the period since then has been, while a ordeal, yet it has its compensations because in a period when you're down, you then discover who your real friends are. And I have some great friends out there. I hear from them by mail. Some of them come to see me. When I think of people being for me at a time when most of your friends in the media are against me--which is not unusual; they always have been, as I understand it--it's really very reassuring.

Q: Did you ever ask yourself why so many in the media are against you?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Oh, they didn't agree with what I stood for. This is long before Watergate. The Hiss case particularly was very difficult for the media. They all thought he was innocent, and if they didn't think he was innocent, they didn't want him exposed because it was--one individual said it would be a reflection on the foreign policy of the Roosevelt administration, which, of course, was not my goal at all. And so with that it was difficult. Not that I didn't have many friends in the media, but media people, while they try to be objective, many of them do, they also have strong convictions, and, frankly, they generally are not particularly enamored with conservatives, as I am, even though I'm probably more reasonable than some of the conservatives

that they go after.

Q: I assume you study the way people even treat you now. People often say you're a contradiction. They write it all the time--this great success in foreign policy, but the difficulties you had in your presidency alone. How do you address that, the contradictions in Richard Nixon? Or do you think about it?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I really don't think about it, but since you asked the question I would say that that's part of a political life. I have read a lot, as you know. I repeat what I said in our first interview that I don't consider history ripe until it's 50 years ago, so I read a lot about the 19th century and earlier periods in which democracies began to develop in Britain and the United States and so forth. And you find that leaders in democratic countries are generally not universally liked all the time. They are very effective in some areas; not as effective in other areas. In my case, I was considered to be, by most, somewhat effective in foreign policy, although many disagreed with me on the fact that I insisted on trying to win peace with honor in Vietnam. On the other hand, they felt that politically that I was not the kind of a leader that they liked, and I understand, for example, in the Watergate period that that would certainly be justified. But it wasn't just that. It was in other areas as well, as you're well aware.

Q: What about Watergate and Vietnam? Those two periods, difficult as they were for the country, what's the legacy of those periods? Do you see any in the youth?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the legacy of Watergate, I mean, and Vietnam fortunately now is past us. The syndrome is over, and it was particularly Vietnam more than Watergate. Vietnam has been described by many who are frankly not really aware of what happened, or if they are aware, they're not properly disclosing it. Vietnam was not a military defeat for the United States. Every American had left Vietnam two years before it fell, and it fell because the Congress didn't provide the assistance to the South Vietnamese that were our allies that the Soviets and the Chinese were providing to the North Vietnamese. But it was an enormous defeat for the American spirit because a country that we had supported, two years after we had left, it came under communist domination. And so right after Vietnam, the general conventional wisdom in this country was that the United States couldn't do anything well because we had lost in Vietnam to this Third World power. That was wrong, just as it was wrong to assume after we had won in the Persian Gulf that we could do anything. After Vietnam we could do nothing, and after we won in the gulf, we could do anything. And then, of course, to carry the syndrome a little further, after the collapse of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, there's nothing left to do. These are all instant evaluations which are incorrect. The world remains the same. The

United States still could play a major role after Vietnam because we had not suffered a military defeat, and we should have played the role. For a while we did not, and it cost us dearly. And the same is true with regard to these other areas. At the present time to say that because communism has collapsed in the Soviet Union that there's nothing left to do, that assumes that that's all the problems we had. Let me just give you one example.

People will be surprised by this, but since the end of World War II there have been 140 wars. Eight million more people have been killed in those wars than were killed in all of World War I, which used to be called the big one. Most of those wars would have been fought had there been no conflict between the Soviet Union and the free world and the United States. Now, that has not changed.

That is why the United States must continue to maintain adequate military forces, because what happened in the gulf, affecting our vital interests, can happen in other places as well.

Q: Back to a couple of quotes. St. Thomas Aquinas: "If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship, he would keep it in port forever."

PRESIDENT NIXON: That quote, incidentally, came from a book by Leon Fuller. Leon Fuller, my professor at Duke University, gave a series of lectures at Yale, and in reading that I found the quote. I would like to say that I read everything that St. Thomas Aquinas had written, but I didn't. I got it out of there, and I think

it's a marvelous quote, because what the quote tells us that seven centuries ago [is] that an individual must not be satisfied with just keeping what he has. Many conservatives make the mistake of saying, "What we're going to have to do is to keep what we have. We mustn't risk anything in order to be better or to improve." As you point out, if the whole, the sole purpose of a leader or of an individual is to retain what he has, then that's the same as keeping a boat in harbor because of your unwillingness to take it to sea. When you take that boat out to sea, it's true you're going to run into rough weather sometimes. Sometimes it may even be sunk. But if what you do is simply keep it in the harbor forever because of your fear of what the world out there holds, then you're not going to be what you really should and can be, working up to the limit of your capabilities.

Q: You told this in our first hour that if you had to pick a city you'd go back to or you liked the most, it would be Istanbul. If you had to pick a book—a book that you enjoy reading the most, maybe reading it again; you say you like to go back and read them over again—what would that book be?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I would answer and I can say this in a way that it doesn't' certainly appear to be political. You would have to take the Bible for that. I mean, the Bible apart from religion is great literature—the New Testament particularly and even parts of the Old Testament. I've always felt that the Book of

Ecclesiastes, for example, was some of the most eloquent writing that I've ever seen, and it always lifts you. So I would pick that as a book. Now, among others, very hard to tell. Among current authors that I read who write historically, I would say the books by Paul Johnson appeal to me a great deal. He's a marvelous writer. He's a geopolitical thinker. Many people, of course, remember his later books, but the one that is my favorite is his one on the British, *The Off-Shore Islanders*. It's just a marvelous book. It's not only great prose, it's great poetry as well.

Q: If you have to pick music that you want to listen to the most, what would you do?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Not vocal music. I'm not one who goes much for opera, perhaps because I don't like the social part of opera. You know, I've been invited many times, and you're supposed to dress up when you go to the dinners and all that sort of thing. I think that I would prefer the Tchaikovsky ballets. I don't like ballet particularly, and I've seen "Swan Lake" a number of times. I've seen it, believe it or not, I've seen "Swan Lake" in Moscow, I've seen it in Leningrad, I've seen it in Sverdlovsk. I have seen it also in Novosibirsk, and all of them with great companies. But if I had to turn on a record, I would like that, some of the Tchaikovsky ballets and so forth. And I like Liszt. I know that somebody was saying to me once when I wanted some number of the

Liszt preludes played at one of our inaugurations, the leader of the orchestra didn't want to play it because he said Hitler liked it. Well, my goodness, the fact that Hitler may have liked the music doesn't mean that I liked it because he did. Liszt preludes has a moving quality to it that I like to play. And then I would say, if you want to get to modern music, I think the Guadacanal March in *Victory at Sea*. That has a lift to it that is really incredible.

Q: Who in history would you like to meet that you have not met, possibly because you didn't get a chance to see them or they're deceased, either one? Who would you like to meet if you had your first choice, your second choice of a couple people you'd like to meet?

PRESIDENT NIXON: To spend some time with?

Q: Spend some time with that you never had a chance to know in history.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, I was fortunate to know some of the great people in history. Looking further back--well, looking at British history particularly, this will surprise our audience, I suppose. Look at the 19th century, and I have studied that considerably. Who were the great British prime ministers? If you ask most of our scholars out there, they would, of course, name [William] Pitt

at the beginning of the century and many would name [William] Gladstone and many would name [Benjamin] Disraeli. To me the greatest British prime minister was probably [Robert] Peel, and the reason Peel was a great prime minister was that he was responsible for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Now, because he was for that--the repeal of the Corn Laws--Peel lost office and his party was split apart, the Tory Party. He later died in falling off his horse, incidentally, unfortunately in an accident in Hyde Park. Now, why do I like Peel and admire him? Because he took an unpopular position, which was the Corn Laws, which was against what many of his constituents--the farmers and so forth of Britain--wanted, and he supported that position and as a result Britain gained enormously from it. They got cheaper grain, and it enabled them to move forward in the Industrial Revolution because Britain became then a free-trading nation to the extent that you could become one. So I give Peel the highest marks for making a difference for most of the people, even though it cost him enormously politically.

Q: You have a quote in your book. It goes back to the Iron Curtain speech made at Westminster College in Fulton, Mo., in 1947. This is Winston Churchill: "The U.S. stands at this time at the pinnacle of world power. It is a solemn moment for the American democracy, for with primacy and power is also joined an awe-inspiring accountability for the future." Why'd you use that?

PRESIDENT NIXON: I used that quote for this reason: You earlier asked me about Malraux when he said that the United States is one of those nations that became a world power without trying to do so. The American people basically are isolationist. We like our country. We like to travel abroad, but we don't want anything from any other country. We don't want to expand. We don't want to have our young men and women to have to risk their lives in foreign wars and that sort of thing. And yet at the present time we can't think that way any longer. Wendell Willkie wrote a book many years ago called *One World*. It was a very short book. It wasn't one world then when he took that trip around the world, but it is now. Because of the communications explosion, we all live in one world today. Let's put it in terms of present-day politics. People talk about, "Why don't we talk about the needs of our own people? We have the recession," and all that sort of thing. Do you realize that as far as the United States is concerned that approximately 20 percent of our GNP at the present time comes from world trade? If the rest of the world has a sick economy, we're going to catch the sickness as well. Let me take it back a few years. We all have read about and I lived through the Great Depression. It was first a recession. It became a depression when the world economy collapsed, in part because the United States adopted the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. We mustn't let that happen again. At the present time, what happens in faraway places--in Europe, in Japan, in Russia and so forth--can have a dramatic effect on the United States. If we want a healthy

American economy, we can't do it alone anymore, because a 15 or 20 percent drop because of trade being cut off would bring a disastrous depression here.

Q: We are shortly going to be out of time. I wanted to ask you, are you surprised about how people treat you today? What I mean that is--just take your visit here. You can't walk outside here. There are cameras waiting for you and people surround you that want your autograph. Are you surprised after being out of the White House since 1974 and what you went through that people are approaching you the way they do?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Well, the American people are sometimes for the underdog, and maybe I'm gaining a little from that. And also the American people like so-called celebrities, whether they're celebrities for good reasons or bad reasons, and maybe I benefit from that. But I would say, to me, what means the most is when somebody comes up to me as one did just recently, just today, and said--he was a little bit older; he was a little younger than you are--and he said, "I just want to thank you." He said, "Because of what you did, I got home from Vietnam." And so that makes it all worthwhile.

Q: If you had to choose another profession that you haven't done that you've observed over the years and would want to give a try at, what would it be?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Sportscaster. I think that would be the greatest job in the world. I like sports. I think I would do it pretty well because I like to watch how they play and see these young people, how they meet the test and so forth. I'd just love to be a sportscaster.

Q: Why do so many politicians and political columnists talk about sports?

PRESIDENT NIXON: Because many of them have come up that way. You know, you take, among the writers--Scotty Reston, for example, was a sportswriter. Pegler [?] was a sportswriter. I've taken two extremes there who probably couldn't get along with each other, but, nevertheless, they both like sports. And the reason is that politics is the greatest sport there is. It's competitive. People win, people lose, people come back, etc. So I think that's the reason that you see an affinity between the politicians and the sportswriter.

Q: The name of the book is called *Seize the Moment*. Our guest has been Richard Nixon, the former president of the United States. Thank you for joining us.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you. I enjoyed being with you again.
[This interview was conducted for C-SPAN by Brian Lamb on Feb. 4, 1992.]

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