

Gerald R. Ford Oral History Project
Bob Goodwin
Interviewed by
Richard Norton Smith
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Smith: Thank you for doing this. Tell us a little bit about you before you and Gerald Ford crossed paths.

Goodwin: I was working here in Washington. I was discharged from the service and didn't have a job and didn't have any money. So I finally got a job at a local television station here - what is now WJLA, it was then WMAL on FM TV.

Smith: Was that the ABC affiliate?

Goodwin: It was ABC, right. I worked there for ten years from 1959 to 1969.

Smith: What'd you do?

Goodwin: I started out in the training program and then I wound up as Director of Business Services before I left. I left because I bought a radio station in Iowa.

Smith: Whereabouts in Iowa?

Goodwin: In the Cedar Falls/Waterloo market which is the northeast part of the state. I was born and raised on a farm in Iowa and so I was familiar with the area.

Smith: I lived in West Branch for six years - the Hoover Library.

Goodwin: My dad started the Hoover Library. He was the first chairman of the Hoover Library.

Smith: And what was his name?

Goodwin: Robert K. Goodwin.

Smith: Of course.

Goodwin: He started with the Hoover, which was the—

Smith: Allen Hoover.

Goodwin: Allen Hoover. So, that was in the Fifties, I think, wasn't it?

Smith: Yeah.

Goodwin: Something like that. So, in any event, I worked at the television station here and one day before we moved back to Iowa, I saw an article in the paper about somebody who'd done an advance trip for President Nixon and I thought, "That sounds interesting." I sent a letter to I forget who it was in the Nixon advance office saying if they ever needed help, I'd be happy to volunteer to try to help, not having any idea what was involved. I'd never been in a political event before and didn't know anything about it, but it just sounded interesting. Never heard a word. So then we moved to Iowa and then I wrote again when we lived in Iowa to somebody in the advance office and I did get a short note back and they said, "Nice to hear from you. If you're ever in town, come see us."

Smith: Was this still during the Nixon presidency?

Goodwin: During the Nixon presidency, about 1970, I believe. So, I came to Washington about two weeks later, went to the White House, and couldn't get in, the person who I was supposed to see had no recollection of who I was. Couldn't get in and didn't see anybody. And, about six months after that, I got a call in the middle of the day one time to see if I would be interested in going to St. Louis to do a trip for Julie Eisenhower. So, not having any idea what was involved, I said yes. And, not even knowing whether I was going to get my expenses reimbursed or what was happening, I went there and met the fellow they went out to do the trip for. We did the trip, including, as I recall, a trip to the top of the Arch which was interesting. Julie was the nice daughter. Tricia was the one who ruined the careers of a lot of young people unfortunately. I guess I was fortunate to be assigned to Julie, so then I got called to do another trip for her, maybe a month or two later. And then we got several calls to do trips for President Nixon. And that's where I met Red Cavaney. Then I did Nixon's last two foreign trips to the Middle East and the Soviet Union.

Smith: Which was extraordinary. I mean, those were amazing crowds in Egypt.

Goodwin: Nixon, at that time in the spring of 1974, had not reached the point yet where there was significant talk that he was going to be impeached. But things were not going too well. Nixon knew that anytime in his presidency when he'd gone overseas his approval rating was greater when he came back. So, he instructed Kissinger to look into possible foreign trips for him in the spring of 1974. Nixon was more popular in Egypt than he was in the United States and that trip was quickly arranged. Then a trip on top of that to meet with Brezhnev in Moscow, oriented on the Black Sea in Minsk, was arranged.

So, Frank, Red, and I and a couple other people were sent out to do these trips. We got to Cairo for the first trip. We'd been there a day and I was told to go to Alexandria, a port city on the Red Sea, because Kissinger, in making the arrangements for Nixon to go there, had to acquiesce to Sadat's request that Nixon come to the presidential palace in Alexandria and spend a night, unknown to President Nixon. In any event, Red said, "You go to Alexandria and set this up." So, I went to Alexandria on the train and it was like going back through the Bible because you're seeing the oxen going around the water wheels blindfolded and all sorts of scenes like that like you see in the Bible.

I got to Alexandria and I set up the trip. There's a limited number of beds in the palace, so I sent a cable back and said, "There are only eighteen beds including the one for the president, so you're going to have to leave much of the party in Cairo," because Nixon was coming down on a train. So, they sent back the names of the people with one exception. There was one person who showed up who wasn't supposed to be of notable interest.

Smith: Is there always one?

Goodwin: There's always one. And so the day that Nixon arrived, there were huge crowds and on one side of the route - seven miles to the presidential palace - was the Red Sea. On the other side were miles of open apartment buildings with balconies impossible for the Secret Service to secure. And, several days before that, the lead agent came to me and said, "We can't secure this."

Nixon had agreed to ride in Sadat's open limousine, almost identical to the one President Kennedy was assassinated in, so they said, "We're going to request that, through Dick Kaiser, that the President invite Sadat to ride in his limousine," the bulletproof limousine. So, Dick relayed the story to me that he went in to see the president about it and the president said, "No, I'm going to ride in the open car." He said, "If they don't get me over there, they'll probably get me over here." Shortly before that time, Nixon had heard the tapes that would incriminate him and this was in early June or late May of 1974, so that he had a fatalistic approach to it. In my view, might have wanted to be shot over there and be a martyr as opposed to what he faced over here potentially.

Smith: Extraordinary man.

Goodwin: So, anyway, the train arrived with the entourage and he got into the open car – I have some pictures of that, I think, still - and there are these huge throngs of people that are wildly supportive of President Nixon. So, they got to the palace and everybody settled in. By the way, Nixon wanted to do a reciprocal state dinner, so the entire state dinner was flown over 24 hours before. All the china, all the silver, the California wine, the steaks in dry ice, and the staff from the White House; they were working in a hundred plus degree weather putting on this lavish dinner. Then after everybody got to the presidential palace, some of the rooms were less than perfect. A couple of the rooms where they had beds, they had sort of a common toilet area which was in the floor, but where the President stayed and where Kissinger stayed were very opulent rooms. Shortly after they arrived, Zeigler came up to me and poked his finger in my face and said, "Where's the room for Ms. So-and-so?" Her name wasn't on the list, so I had no room for her. And, he said, "You get her a room, get her a place to stay right now," and turned around and walked away. Well, there wasn't anything I could do because she showed up uninvited – well, she was invited by somebody, but wasn't on the manifest. Well, that person that showed up was Diane Sawyer, she and Ron were friends at that time, so he wanted her to come down and enjoy the evening.

So then we had about four days off and then went to the Soviet Union and I did Minsk where the Putin memorial was. We were in Moscow for a few days and then went down. Anyways, Nixon came back and, during this time after President Ford had become vice president designate - I was still living in Iowa at the time – I was called and asked if I would arrange a few of his trips, which I did. It was a very small traveling party at the time of, I think, about six people. And we flew around. The only airplane they gave him was a twin engine plane. I forget what it was, but it wasn't too terribly comfortable. But he made a few trips. Then he had his confirmation hearing and after that, they asked me to come down and do trips when he was vice president. Then, the day after President Ford was sworn in, they called me and asked me to come down and work full-time in the advance office. There were just three of us, I think, at the time.

Smith: When you were on the vice presidential plane and in the entourage, I realize there's layers and layers in the perimeter—

Goodwin: Not at that time, there really weren't.

Smith: Okay. I don't know if you've read Tom deFrank's book. He makes a great deal out of a slip of the tongue by Ford who at one point talked about 'when I'm [President?].' I mean, he was in a very awkward position. Was anything said?

Goodwin: You mean when he was vice president?

Smith: Yeah, as vice president, anything in earshot that led you to believe that they were planning or anticipating or—

Goodwin: No, and I wasn't in a position to hear that because I was living in Iowa and when I'd finish my trip here, I'd go back there and be involved in my own business. So, I wasn't in the vice president's suite of offices in Washington during that time. I'd do my trips. I'd be on the plane with him.

Smith: But, on the plane with him they must have been walking on eggs.

Goodwin: I suspect that Phil Buchen and some of the others were kind of planning behind the scenes and not talking to the vice president about it. I would think there were some conversations going on, but not including the vice president.

Smith: Was that your first contact with Ford?

Goodwin: Yes.

Smith: What was your impression of him?

Goodwin: I liked him very much. He was very down to earth. I've worked for four presidents and quite clearly the tone of the administration is set by the person in the Oval Office. It was very different from the Nixon White House in the sense that everybody was walking on egg shells and afraid virtually to do anything wrong or they would, as far as the advance people were concerned, they'd just never be on another trip. Red and I did the last big event back in the United States that President Nixon did, which was a rally in Phoenix and we filled the basketball arena at the time with, I think, twelve or fifteen thousand people. That was after Nixon returned in June and before he left in August.

But, there were a lot of demonstrators and there were difficult times then and there were a lot of people who were creating mischief as far as that was concerned. So, they asked me to come down here and work full-time for the president. We moved down here in July of '74 and we moved into the house where we're sitting right now and, before the moving van got here, I left for Poland to do a trip for the President, so my good wife unpacked everything with our children. And, from then on, it was just steady travel, domestically and internationally. The big trip I did was the President's trip to China, the Peoples Republic of China, and I was there for about five weeks. That's where I met George Bush because he was head of the Liaison Office at the time, not ambassador as the media incorrectly characterized him, because we didn't have formal relations with the Peoples Republic at the time. But Bush was more highly regarded there than other ambassadors and he could get in to

see Teng Hsiao-Ping or anybody he wanted to on an hour or two notice, whereas any other ambassadors had to wait a couple of days.

Smith: Tell us something about Gerald Ford that might surprise people.

Goodwin: Well, not surprisingly, he was a very nice individual who went out of his way to thank people. Whenever I was traveling on Air Force One, he would always go up to the cabin and thank the crew for flying him on his way out the front door. Everybody on the staff liked him. I would say he was the most popular president among the full-time staff from one administration to another that there's been at the White House. And I'd say what would surprise most people the most is that he was much smarter than he was given credit for being.

Smith: Illustrate that.

Goodwin: Well, I heard him on a number of occasions talking about policy. I was just a fly on the wall, but talking about policy matters and saying "We're not going to do that. We're going to do this. And this is what we need to say." And then, just before the election in 1976, Dick Cheney and the President had drawn out a list of changes they wanted made as far as individuals were concerned in personnel. And there were some very solid people slated to come in.

Smith: Really?

Goodwin: Into the White House and a lot of the so-called dead wood that had come with the President from the Capitol were going elsewhere. Some of them were in over their heads, but that's not *not* understandable because you can't go from a congressional office to the White House and expect to, you know—

Smith: Did you have contact with Bob Hartmann?

Goodwin: Yes.

Smith: Did you find him to be as polarizing a figure as many people did?

Goodwin: No, I didn't find him polarizing. Sometimes Bob wasn't functioning as well in the afternoon as well as he did in the morning. He was a little bit on the gruff side, but he was nice to me, personally. So, I didn't have any problems with anybody.

Smith: We talked to Don Rumsfeld. He said he urged the President very early to clean house and to do it as ostentatiously as possible. My sense is that he wasn't just referring to the Nixon people, but some of his own people from the Hill.

Goodwin: Yes, I think that's correct.

Smith: And, clearly, Ford was reluctant to do that.

Goodwin: But, at the same time, it's important to recognize that when he came into office, getting his arms around the job of the presidency, that he was almost thrown into the campaign at the same time. Trying to decide whether to run or not.

Smith: Yeah.

Goodwin: Well, we'll talk about the campaign later, because there were clearly ways the President could have won the election. But, anyway, I think he was probably just a little bit reluctant to change people so quickly and Don probably perceived that these people were not White House level people and he supplemented them with others who were.

Smith: It's interesting because it says something about him. I'd be interested in your interpretation. In the case of Hartmann, someone who had been enormously loyal, who had produced the most memorable words the President had spoken—

Goodwin: Well, I wouldn't say—

Smith: Well, at least the inaugural address.

Goodwin: Yeah.

Smith: And yet, someone who was clearly a lightning rod. It got to the point where there were in fact two separate speechwriting operations going on. And he [Ford] was willing to tolerate that. Can you be too nice to be president? Was he capable of ruthlessness?

Goodwin: Well, the President was definitely capable of making the decisions that needed to be made. I wouldn't call him a ruthless person by any stretch of the imagination, but he was very capable of making the decisions that needed to be made and, by virtue of the fact that they had agreed on some outstanding people to come in if he had been elected in 1976—

Smith: Do you remember any of those names?

Goodwin: I'm not going to mention them, but there were clearly some very qualified people who were coming in and were going to replace a lot of the people that probably needed to be replaced. So, in my view, he would've had a very successful four-year term as president because he was comfortable in the office. I was with him a lot, personally, and he never seemed overwhelmed. He seemed fully capable of doing everything that needed to be done and I just never saw him obsessed with the job, but fully capable of handling every aspect of it.

Smith: It's interesting, because one of the things even critics acknowledge is that over time he put together one of the most impressive Cabinets in recent years. And, if you stop and think about those people, Bill Coleman or Carla Hills, those are heavyweights in their own right. So, he was clearly comfortable with having around him people of great intellectual fire power and sometimes ego.

Goodwin: Yep.

Smith: Did you ever see his temper?

Goodwin: Did I ever see his temper? Uhm, not really. There was one occasion where he was really frustrated, and that was when we were at Vail. The media used to like to go out and get on the ski slopes. There was a station the press would

have assigned to them about halfway down the mountain and they would reluctantly trudge up there and they'd get a shot of the President skiing for the picture of the day. So, on this particular day, he was skiing with the US Ski Team. They'd come in the day before and asked me if the President could ski with them the next day.

So we set it up and he was very happy to do that. And, they were coming down Black Diamond and it was an icy area and, sure enough, he slipped and fell within camera view. The next day, that picture was on the front of the *New York Times*. The subtext was 'President's a bumbler' and so forth. And here he was skiing at Black Diamond with the US Ski Team; fell; probably wasn't the only person who fell that day, and it winds up on the front page of the *Times*. And, the other time, they got him in Poland when he landed in a rainstorm and was coming down the steps of the plane and slipped. So, of course, that picture was on the front of the papers. I think he was probably frustrated by the fact that the press was pretty petty in publishing pictures like that which had no bearing on policy or the country in any way.

Smith: I've always wondered how he felt. I mean, the whole caricature that was built up. People forget, *Saturday Night Live* went on the air in 1975. It was a real sea change in a lot of ways about what was seen as humorous, including the White House. The fact that Ron Nessen would go on the show, too. He knew what a great athlete he'd been. He used to say later on, "Playing football was good practice for this because there are 100,000 people in the stands who are critics, and you're the only one out there who's actually playing." But you wonder if it got to him.

Goodwin: I don't know that it really got to him. I think that he always struck me as being comfortable in the job and felt that he was capable of doing the job.

Smith: And, above all, one senses, comfortable in his own skin.

Goodwin: He was, and I never really heard him criticize people when there was plenty of room for some people to be criticized, people who did not serve him well. But I never heard him really criticize – other than just one person – even when

he let some people go from his cabinet for good reason, he never really was critical of them. He just said, "Well, we needed to make a change."

Smith: I only heard him speak disparagingly about two people and the worst epithet he could come up with was, "He's a bad man."

Goodwin: Yeah.

Smith: That was the worst he could do. One was John Dean and one was Gordon Liddy. He really looked for the good in people. Someone described him as Eisenhower without the medals. That kind of middle of the road, middle American, basically optimistic—

Goodwin: I couldn't equate that because I didn't know President Eisenhower, but he was certainly very comfortable with who he was and where he was, I thought.

Smith: Did he enjoy the job?

Goodwin: I think he did. I think he was very disappointed when he wasn't elected when clearly he should've been. And, he would've been elected - I think that what disappointed him most was the fact that Ronald Reagan would not campaign for him.

Smith: Was that disappointment clear at the time? I heard it afterwards, but was it voiced in a contemporary way?

Goodwin: Yeah, it was because Reagan made seven appearances that fall. Not once did he mention President Ford's name after the convention in 1976. I was sort of the point man on the convention out there and so I was very involved in that. Of course, President Ford's supporters had beaten President Reagan on the one key issue which would've forced the President to name his vice presidential running mate before people voted. And there would've been a great deal of mischief, possibly, by the Reagan people at the time.

Then, after that, Reagan would never appear for President Ford. I know for a fact that he was urged repeatedly to go to Ohio and Mississippi and very late in the campaign to Hawaii and I think it's important to understand that

President Ford ended up with 240 of 270 electoral votes he needed. They tried to get Reagan numerous times to go to Mississippi and Reagan would never go. The seven appearances Reagan made were on behalf of the Republican Party around the country. Not once during that time did he mention President Ford's name. If he would've gone to Mississippi, where the President lost by, I think, 11,000 votes, that was seven electoral votes. I was in charge of a cross-state motorcade for the President in New Hampshire earlier in the year that was very successful, so they asked me to do one across Ohio to sort of wrap up the campaign about the third or fourth week in October, I think it was. So, I was out there and just had started to organize it when I was called back and told, "The President's not coming back to Ohio." The reason was that John Connally had persuaded the campaign people that Ford could win Texas if he went back to Texas. Well, Carter was campaigning up and down the Pedernales River and nobody in the campaign at the White House stood up to John Connally and say, "Listen, Texas is a lost cause, but we still have a chance in Ohio."

So, they acquiesced to Connally and I was on one trip with the President. In fact, the President went to an Oklahoma game down there and had been to Texas quite a few times. I had, for some reason, drawn all of his trips to Texas, so I was there quite a bit. But nobody could say no to John Connally. So, what happened was, instead of going to Ohio he went to Texas. He lost Texas by 130,000 votes, which was forecast. He lost Ohio by only 11,000 out of four million. That was 26 electoral votes. And he lost Mississippi by only 15,000 votes out of almost 800,000 votes. So, there's no doubt in my mind that if he'd gone to Ohio and turned down the trip to Texas, he would've won Ohio with those 26 electoral votes. And, if Reagan had campaigned for him in Mississippi, he would've won Mississippi. No doubt. And, even Hawaii, where he only lost by 7,000 votes, would've been enough.

I did President Ford's last two big rallies. One, the day before the election on Long Island, New York at the Nassau Coliseum, and about a week before that at Fountain Valley, California. Red sent me out there and he said, "Go out there and do a rally." I said, "Where?" And he said, "Some place in Southern

California. Find it.” So, I drove around for a couple of days and had zero staff, so Red said, “Well, I have this friend who runs a gas station. Go talk to him.” So, anyway, to make a long story short, Fountain Valley is maybe an hour from where President Reagan lived at the time. We wound up with a crowd of 35,000 in what essentially started out to be a parking lot. We had John Wayne there and other people and I made repeated phone calls to Ronald Reagan’s office to get him to come down there and they turned me down every single time. Reagan would not appear with President Ford. Flat out would not appear with him after the convention. Not only, as I say this was at Fountain Valley which was only about an hour from where he lived. And, we offered every amenity possible, motorcades and what have you.

But that was sort of an interesting event. We had 35,000 people and John Wayne showed up. John had been imbibing a little bit on the trip down and by the time he got to where we were doing the rally late in the afternoon, John Wayne was having a little trouble standing, so he stayed in his car. Finally, after the President arrived, just before the program was to start where John Wayne was supposed to be the emcee, he pops out of his car like a perfect actor, gets up on stage, does exactly what he’s supposed to do without a hint of there having been a problem.

Smith: Probably not the first time in his career he was called upon to hit his marks.

Goodwin: Yeah. And then we left and the President was going up to Los Angeles to do a media event. Wayne wound up in the President’s limousine. So as we’re heading up to the freeway, somebody called me and said, “We have Mr. Wayne in the president’s limousine. We need to make arrangements to get him to his house.” So, to make a long story short, I got somebody who had a car to follow the motorcade and just before they got to the freeway, I called Kaiser and said, “Pull into that gas station.” So, the motorcade comes in this gas station. The president’s limousine is there with the flags. John Wayne gets out of the president’s limousine. There were a couple people there pumping gas who were just wide-eyed at this. John Wayne gets out. He was a big, major figure at that time. He gets out and stands there and the

motorcade takes off and my guy pulls in with his car. There's John Wayne standing momentarily at this guy's gas station by himself by the freeway. So, I think, quite clearly, had Ronald Reagan campaigned for President Ford, he would've been elected.

Smith: You were at the convention?

Goodwin: I was. I was there for six weeks doing the planning for it.

Smith: How bitter was it?

Goodwin: I'm not sure that I saw any real bitterness because I was in charge of all of the logistical operations. I think some people didn't take the diaphragms out of some of the oppositions telephones on the floor so that they could hear, but they couldn't speak or that when they'd speak they couldn't hear it out the other end. At that time, the three networks had booths that were on the balcony, sort of like a VIP suite would be at a stadium today and I do recall a couple people getting up there with fishing poles and a sheet that said "Bedtime for Bonzo" and as Huntley-Brinkley were doing their evening news show, this sheet would come down behind them.

Smith: Remember you had the dueling entrances by the wives. You had this sense of constant one-upsmanship.

Goodwin: But that happens all the time. I'd been in charge of presidential debates for a number of cycles and always the wives can't quite figure out who wants to be the first in for a presidential debate and who wants to be the last in. So, there's always one-upsmanship everywhere. I do recall that it was difficult to get Reagan to come down to the stage afterwards. We had sort of planned that that would happen, so we knew the logistics of getting him there were not difficult, but he literally had to be coaxed down there on the stage.

Smith: We talked to Stan Anderson.

Goodwin: He ran the convention in '76.

Smith: He recalls being there in their box making the request from the President and, before he could finish his sentence, he heard the words “Don’t do it, Ronnie”.

Goodwin: Yeah.

Smith: Which, again portends the attitude you described in the fall campaign.

Goodwin: Well, further that night when the decision was made as to whom President Ford’s running mate would be, Reagan entered into that decision in the following way. After that day and evening, I’d been out there going on no sleep for quite a long while, so I wound up about one in the morning in the President’s suite. They were discussing the potential vice presidential running mates. I was not part of the discussion. I was just sitting back on the floor against the wall trying to stay awake because I knew the next morning, at some point, I’d have the responsibility to get everything set up for the media announcement. So, about one o’clock or so, I’m so tired, I left and went to bed. But, at that point, Bob Dole was not even in the discussion. He was one of the five people being discussed, but his name had dropped out and they were focusing elsewhere.

Smith: Was Anne Armstrong’s name in the mix? I know her name was on the list of possibilities, but it’s never been clear whether that was a gesture—

Goodwin: No, she was never one of the final people. The final people were Dole, Ruckelshaus, Connally, and there’s one more. I can’t remember who it is right now.

Smith: Was it Howard Baker?

Goodwin: It could’ve been, but I sort of don’t think it was Howard. I think it was somebody else. But I’ve seen all sorts of lists that were out about it. That’s not to say they weren’t on an original list, but Anne Armstrong was not on the final five.

Smith: Yeah.

Goodwin: When I was in the room that night. So, at seven in the morning, I got a call to set up for the announcement at ten o'clock for the vice president arraignment. I said, "Okay, who is it?" They said, "Dole." I said, "Dole? He wasn't even in the discussion when I left about 1:30." What had happened during the night, they had sent a short list over to the Reagan people. The books all said it went to Reagan, but, of course, Reagan was sound asleep. And they said to probably Nofziger and whoever else - the others - sent back and said that the only person on that list that they would not contest on the floor the next day was Dole. Interestingly enough, President Ford was responsible for Dole even being in the Senate at that time.

The story on that is in 1974 Dole was running against a guy by the name of Doctor [Bill] Roy of Kansas. I had a trip out there with President Ford very late in the campaign, maybe just three or four days before the election. It was a driving rainstorm and a crowd had come to see President Ford appear with Bob Dole. It was a driving rainstorm and these people had stood in the rain for about an hour and so before the President arrived and I said, "Mr. President, this is not a good situation." He said, "That's alright. These people have been standing here for an hour in the rain. I can be in the rain." And he went to that event and there were four or five thousand people there - that's what they told us, because it was raining so hard we could hardly tell - but Dole was there and that appearance by President Ford was widely credited with pulling Dole across the finish line when he won by a very narrow margin in 1974.

Anyway, back to the convention. The story I got the next morning was that Dole was the only one on the list that the Reagan people wouldn't contest on the floor the next day. President Ford thought it was important not to have a contest on the floor, and rightly so because nobody could foretell what would happen. And, the last thing you wanted was somebody off the wall being the one the President was forced to run with.

Smith: The second debate with the famous Polish gaffe. Were you there?

- Goodwin: No, I was in charge of Bush's debates in the '88 primary and the general election '92 and '96, but I wasn't there.
- Smith: Did you watch it?
- Goodwin: M-hmm. [meaning no]
- Smith: Did you have the immediate sinking sensation that some people – by no means everyone – had? There's grown up this mythology that it was such a decisive factor.
- Goodwin: No, I don't feel it was and I'm quite knowledgeable about Presidential debates. I wrote the debate agreement in 1988 that's still in effect today. I wrote it from scratch and did all the staging for it. I did all the original staging for it and I know all the details. In 1976, there wasn't even a written agreement. In 1980, there was a two and a half page agreement. The one I wrote for 1988 was 32-pages and it was the first time anything had ever been put on paper. I'd done all the staging for the primary debates and everything, so after that, after President Ford, I was very involved with Presidential debates. But I've looked back and have seen that debate a number of times and I don't think it rose to the level of what the media portrayed it as being. And, in fact, you could see some semblance of truth to that.
- Smith: It was just an artless way of saying that Eastern Europe refused to accept Soviet domination. I mean, he could've turned that to his advantage.
- Goodwin: But, what the campaign should've done was what Jim Baker did for George Bush in 1988, after the debate we did in Winston-Salem with Governor Dukakis where Bush had made a statement, I think, on abortion possibly being a crime that he had to correct. So, the next morning at seven o'clock, Jim called the press together over in Arlington before they left on a campaign trip and clarified what the President had meant the night before. So, I think if somebody would've done the same thing with President Ford, it would've ceased to be the issue it was.
- Smith: But there was no Jim Baker as we know it at that point.

Goodwin: That's right.

Smith: And the President was stubborn.

Goodwin: Yeah. I don't think the President felt that he had made that big of a mistake. But Jim came on the campaign in August. Jim's a good friend of mine, somebody who I have great admiration for. We worked together a lot over the years. But Jim was sort of new.

Smith: Sure.

Goodwin: He came in August. After the convention, I was in charge of making logistical arrangements back in Vail for the post convention meeting. And they said, "Well, get a room for this guy Jim Baker from the Commerce Department – he's coming out here and he's going to take over the campaign." I think if Jim had been there from the beginning, the President would've won.

Smith: That's interesting. In between, of course, you had that event you put together, literally overnight, in Russell, Kansas with Dole. I know that was a source of some friction.

Goodwin: I was not involved in that because I was out in Vail, but, yeah, I think Senator Dole didn't understand what was needed at that point or what the media was after. And, of course, then, also, in all fairness, Senator Dole put in virtually no effort for debate preparation with Mondale. They had somebody from Rockefeller's staff traveling with Dole and he was sort of a briefer, he had the briefing books, which were not done in the way they are done today, but nonetheless, they were there and Dole wouldn't pay any attention to them. The only time he ever opened them was in Houston in his hotel suite the night before the debate when the press wanted to come in and see him studying for the debate.

When Dole ran for President, I got a call one day from one of the senior guys in his campaign who wanted to know if I would take over the preparation for his debate stuff. And I said, "Well, is he going to work at it or not?" And the

answer was, “Probably not too hard. He’s probably going to sit in his condo down in Florida and get a suntan,” and so forth. So, I said, “In all fairness, I’d rather not be involved then, because I know how it should be done.”

Smith: He’s certainly not a lazy guy.

Goodwin: No, but Dole’s reason was that he debated on the floor of the Senate every day, so he could debate. Well, they’re two entirely different things. Jack Kemp was the same way. Kemp really wouldn’t work at preparation and he got sort of mopped up by Gore in St. Petersburg. And Jack was an awfully nice guy, a bright guy, a very articulate guy who felt he had addressed about every issue there was to address and wasn’t prepared for the format that you find at a debate like that - which is unique. You don’t find it anywhere else. But, that was Dole’s reason. He felt that he’d debated on the floor of the Senate and that was enough.

Smith: I’ve never asked him, but I’ve often wondered, because he’d had one debate with Doctor Roy at the end of the campaign and it had not been a pleasant experience – so I’m just wondering whether that was a factor in some ways—

Goodwin: I don’t think so. My hunch is that he just felt that he was on the floor of the Senate every day and addressing issues in this direction and that direction. Then in 1996, I handled the debates for the Commission on Presidential Debates because I’d done them in ’88 and ’92 for Bush and Janet Brown was under the weather, so they said I was the only person that the Clinton people would agree to have come in and run them.

So, I did and the last debate was in a “theater in the round” type of environment we hadn’t done before. It was in San Diego between Dole and Clinton. Each candidate had an hour of technical briefing allowed to them and I’d written that in the original debate agreement back in 1987 and ’88. And Dole came and spent maybe 20 minutes. Clinton, on the other hand, spent the entire hour, but the only thing Dole requested was that Mrs. Dole be out in the audience in his line of sight where he could see her. And, so, during the entire debate, he sat there and looked at him and she had sort of a

frozen smile on her face because she was trying to get him to smile and to be less serious. So, he sort of felt that he needed to be able to see her. The Clinton people sort of chuckled over that.

So, the fact that he really didn't care where the cameras were, he didn't care where the tapings were. There was a line that the candidates were not supposed to walk past or to cross forth and, of course, Bill Clinton is a master of that and he sort of takes over the debate in certain ways. So, he just sort of monopolized the debate, not by speaking so much, but in the way that he presents himself. And Dole didn't do well in that debate, but I think that was lack of preparation as well.

Smith: Did you have much contact with Mrs. Ford?

Goodwin: Not too much, no. Only at Vail when we were there.

Smith: They loved Vail, didn't they?

Goodwin: They did. They did. And the President immediately relaxed when he got there and he loved to walk to all of his places, the people he knew - just liked to stroll around Vail. And back then, Vail was not nearly what it is today, of course. You could go from point A to point B in five or ten minutes by walking. And he loved to go out and ski every day in the morning and then he'd work on papers in the afternoon and then he'd always go to a reception or dinner at night. One night, we were at the Ford's house and he called my wife over and he said, "I just wanted you to know how much I appreciate your letting your husband be out with me so much. I just wanted to thank you for letting me have him for the last year." She thought that it was very nice of him to say that.

Then, back in those days, security wasn't what it is today. If I'd leave the White House grounds, for example, at lunch and I'd come back to the White House complex and I'd see some nice family looking through the fence and, if the President wasn't in residence, I could escort them in because of my White House pass in to see the Oval Office. Of course, you couldn't do anything

like that today. That was just sort of the environment that was there at the time.

Smith: Did it change at all because of the two assassination attempts?

Goodwin: Well, I was with him on one of them.

Smith: Were you?

Goodwin: Yeah. And, yes, I think it did. Both occurred in California just weeks apart. The first one, of course, you know the story of Larry Buendorf jamming his hand in the hammer of Squeaky Fromm's gun and saving the President's life. The second time was at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco when I was with him. He was about ready to leave the hotel. The police had sawhorses on both sides of the street and there was quite a crowd on both sides. About forty-five minutes before the President was to leave, the Secret Service came to me and they said, "We just don't like the look of the crowd. Would you ask the President not to go work the crowd and shake hands with the crowd but just to wave?" So, I went up to the President's suite and told him what the request was and he said, "That's fine."

So, that probably saved the President's life because, normally, what he would do would be to walk around the front of the limousine, walk over to the crowd, and shake hands. Had he done so at that time, he would've walked right into the bullet, probably. We walked out of the hotel and I guess I was in the news pictures with him because my wife didn't know anything about it until somebody from the Secret Service called her and said, "Your husband's safe. He's on the plane." But the President and I walked out in front of the hotel and just then you could hear a sort of pop, pop, pop, and I thought, "Gosh that must make the Secret Service nervous when they hear firecrackers going off like that." Almost instantaneously, of course, they shoved the President in the limousine. And most of what is written is correct except that I jumped in the Control Car and we raced out to the airport in about fifteen minutes in what was normally a forty-five minute drive.

But, we had no radio contact because, at that time, under those conditions the procedure was not to have any radio contact. So, we didn't know whether the President was dead or alive or what while we were racing out to the airport with the truncated motorcade. The driver of our car had the local radio on and the report on the local radio was that a 'good-looking man in the Presidential Party had been shot, so, of course, there was some gallows humor and David Kennerly and some others guessing who that was or who that wasn't. And Kennerly said, "It couldn't have been a good looking man because I'm in the car right here." But everybody suspected it was Rumsfeld. Anyway, we got to the airport and the President was immediately rushed onboard. Of course, Mrs. Ford had flown up from Los Angeles had just arrived at the plane.

Smith: Knowing nothing.

Goodwin: Knowing nothing that had gone on. And, then, as we're on the plane and flying back across the country, in clear air, just like today, somewhere over Iowa, I guess it was, we hit a downdraft and dropped three or four thousand feet like that.

And for many years, those bullet nicks from Sarah Jane Moore's gun were still visible in front of the St. Francis Hotel and may still be.

Smith: Did you think at the end of the '76 campaign that you had caught up and were going to win?

Goodwin: Yeah, I sort of thought so, but again, I was out every day and I was working fourteen, sixteen, eighteen hour days. When I finished the Fountain Valley rally, I took the red eye to New York and started doing the last big rally at Nassau Coliseum – we had about four days to do that – so I was so involved in doing things day to day that I didn't have a lot of time to think about the campaign. But, I could see the crowds and I could see the reaction the President was getting from the crowds and it was very positive.

Smith: Could you see that picking up? I mean, was there a trajectory to the fall campaign?

- Goodwin: Yeah, I thought there definitely was and when we did the cross-state motorcade that took twelve hours across New Hampshire, the crowds were everywhere. In fact, we arrived in Petersburg(sic) an hour late in the evening and there was a huge crowd there waiting and had been waiting for an hour in a slight drizzle. But, during the campaign, all I can say is the events where I was, there was a very strong reception for him. And at Nassau Coliseum, I think Joe Margiotta was the county chairman at the time, sensed that as well. Joe ran things pretty well.
- Smith: That was a tradition in Nassau.
- Goodwin: Yeah. And I said, "Joe, we need to do this the right way." And, in about three days, the place was packed and very enthusiastic and the President felt good coming back on the plane after that event. It wasn't until well after midnight on election night until Ohio came in that the President really realized he probably wasn't going to win because, I think, all along he thought he was going to win Mississippi and win Ohio. Hawaii was a surprise because it was so close. I think probably in retrospect, they probably might've gone out there and done a little more because I think he only lost by about 7,000 votes out there. But, you know in Ohio, what's interesting is, while he lost by only 11,000 votes, Lester Maddox got 15,000 votes. The President lost by 11,000 votes, but there were 98,000 votes for others, including 15,000 for Lester Maddox, and I'm convinced some of those 98,000 could have been brought over to President Ford.
- Smith: We've been told it took him awhile to bounce back.
- Goodwin: I think it did. I don't know if he ever bounced back.
- Smith: Really?
- Goodwin: I mean, later, after he left the White House, he was fine, but I think the morning of the Inauguration – and I was sort of responsible for the Inaugural planning to the extent that he was involved in it – he held an informal coffee at the White House for his Cabinet and senior staff and that's where he gave the Cabinet chairs - to the members of his Cabinet each having a small plaque

on the back with their name and date of service on it - and so forth. He was sort of nostalgic at that time, but I think, by then, probably, he'd come to grips with it. But I think he felt that he was going to win.

Smith: He was a very competitive guy.

Goodwin: Yeah.

Smith: We've been told a wonderful line - right after the election he'd go around - obviously in a small circle - and said, "I can't believe I lost to a peanut farmer."

Goodwin: Yeah, I don't think he ever thought he was going to lose the election. But if you have time, I'll tell you the story about how he met Mao Tse Tung unexpectedly.

Smith: Yeah.

Goodwin: I was in Peking for about a month. The U.S. Liaison Office had about twelve people in it, so initially, every meeting that I would go to, Bush would go with me. We became very good friends. So, while we were there, we knew the President was going to meet with Deng Hsiao-Ping (?) and others, but we had no idea. The Chinese were very secretive about who was going to meet President Ford for his arrival at the airport in Peking. So, we could never get that information from them and I sent many cables back that said, "Information not forthcoming." And George Bush couldn't get it either. The Chinese were waiting to decide at what level they wanted to receive President Ford and to what degree of seriousness they wanted to treat his visit.

So, the last several days before the Presidential party arrived, I asked my Chinese counterpart on my own, because nobody asked me to do this, in regards to the meeting if he thought the President was going to see Chairman Mao. We knew that Cho en Lai was sick and had cancer and was in the hospital at that time, but nobody quite knew what Mao's situation was. We knew that Mao had three residences, but where he was, nobody particularly knew. So, the answer I got back was, "We don't think that it is possible for

him to meet Chairman Mao.” So, I sent a cable back to Cheney or Red or whoever it was and said, “This is the response I have.” And the day before the Presidential party arrived, it was the same answer. “We don’t think this is possible.” The President arrived at noon on a Monday and left at noon on a Friday and Monday came and went and Tuesday, during the day, I asked my counterpart again if he thought that such a meeting might happen and he said, “We don’t think that’s possible.” Well, Kissinger kept saying to Cheney that there was no way that the President was going to meet Mao on this trip and that was the information that Kissinger had been given before the President left Washington.

So, on Wednesday morning, I’m sitting having breakfast on one side of the small dining area in the Guest House where the President was staying and Kissinger was on the other side. Kissinger says, “Come over and sit with me and then you can tell your wife you had breakfast with the Secretary of State.” Kissinger was asking about the rest of the schedule and I said, “But I just have a feeling there might be a meeting with Mao Tse Tung at some point.” And he said, “No, it’s not going to happen.” The next morning, Thursday, Mrs. Ford and Susan had gone to the Great Wall for a trip. The President had no plans in the morning and had a schedule in the afternoon. That night, there was a scheduled farewell banquet, at the Great Hall of the People. About 11:15 a.m., my Chinese counterpart came up to me and said, “Get your President ready. He’s going to go see Chairman Mao.” “But,” he said, “he cannot take anybody with him.” So, I go and immediately tell Cheney and the President and the President says, “Fine.” We lined up the limo and the follow car and, of course, made arrangements for people that normally traveled with the President – cut a few people out – so, I went to my Chinese counterpart and I said, “We’re ready.” And he looked out and said, “What are all these cars here for?” I explained to him and he said, “No. I told you only the President can go.” He said, “Mrs. Ford can go and Susan can go and George Bush can go and Kissinger can go. Those are the only people who can go.” And I said, “Well, Susan and Mrs. Ford are at the Great Wall and he said, “No, they’re not. They’re on their way back here and will be back here in a

few minutes,” which was interesting because, in all the trips I made to China then and since, I’ve never see a Chinese use a radio, but anyway Mrs. Ford arrived a few minutes later.

Smith: Probably one of the few times in her life when she was on time.

Goodwin: Yeah, right. So, they said, “No Secret Service can go. The President’s doctor can’t go. Your photographer can’t go. Your interpreter can’t go.” Nancy Tang who was the official Chinese interpreter for the President was there. They said, “None of your White House Communications people can go. Nobody can go except the five people.” And they had this Russian Zil lined up for the five of them to ride in. So, I go back in and tell Dick and I said, “These are the terms. Nobody can go” and I ran down the list again. The President was standing there and he said this meeting was too important not to happen. He said, “We’ll do it on their terms.” So, they take off and for forty-five minutes, nobody in the U.S. delegation – nor the Secret Service - knew exactly where the President was. The Chinese knew where he was, of course, and we had the communications car trail the abbreviated motorcade of just a few cars until they were stopped from going into the Forbidden City, which is the residence that Mao was using at that time, that particular day.

Smith: Right in downtown Beijing.

Goodwin: Yeah.

Smith: I mean, the Forbidden City is right off of Tiananmen Square.

Goodwin: Yeah, but it’s a huge area in there. But he had three residences and nobody knew which one he was at. So, then, after about forty-five minutes, Mrs. Ford and Susan were escorted out.

Smith: By all accounts, the Chairman fawned on Susan.

Goodwin: I’m not sure, but he may have. Of course, they sat in these Chinese chairs with the armrests up like this and, at the end of the meeting, George Bush told me that after Susan and Mrs. Ford left Kissinger and Bush stayed with the President. At the end of such meetings, Mao, usually just sat and whoever he

was meeting with got up and left. But Mao had his two medical attendants help him up out of his chair and walked to the door with President Ford, which was a show of great respect for him to have done that. So, only after Mrs. Ford and Susan came back did anybody really know where they had been and where the President still was. So, for about forty-five minutes, there was no contact with the President.

Smith: It's hard to tell in the pictures, obviously, but Mao was coherent?

Goodwin: Yeah. Yeah. He had several diseases at the time, Parkinson's disease and several others, but according to what George Bush said, he was quite conversant and carrying on a conversation. So, it was sort of an interesting time.

During that trip was when President Ford asked George Bush to come back and be director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Bushes would've much preferred to have stayed there for another year. As a matter of fact, when they first got there, Barbara was telling me when they walked their dog, they would attract hoards of people because people thought their dog was a cat. They'd never seen a dog since the revolution. People had eaten dogs and so a lot of people had grown up having never seen a dog. When I first went there in '75, just walking on the street, people would come up to us and feel our long coats because they'd never seen anything like that. The Chinese people could only wear the two different colored types of pajamas at the time – light grey or dark grey. Also - you had to be invited to go into the Peoples Republic of China at that time. You couldn't just fly in. I think Air France had one flight a week there or something like that. Arrangements had to be made well in advance for those of us to go to the PRC. President Ford had to be "officially" invited as well.

Smith: You know, Nelson Rockefeller went to his grave convinced that Don Rumsfeld engineered that whole shift that not only brought Bush back home, but deep-sixed him, politically, in '76. Because, remember, one of the conditions of him being confirmed at the CIA – a job he didn't really want in

the first place – was that he would explicitly rule himself out of the vice presidency in '76.

Goodwin: Yeah, but what happened was Bush could not get confirmed by the Senate committee the former Chairman of the Republican Party. The Democrats were using that as sort of a shield to not vote for Bush as Director of Central Intelligence. So, Bush asked me to help him get ready for the hearings and blah-blah-blah, because they lived just near here in Palisades at the time. So, one day, he came in and he said, “They’re just not going to confirm me unless I say that I’m not going to be on the ticket.” And he might’ve been, I’d say, first on Ford’s list at the time. But, anyway, he went in to see the President and the President reluctantly took the action that you suggested and then Bush was confirmed unanimously by the Senate committee.

Then, I remember going to Bush’s house the day after Carter was sworn in and we’re sitting there drinking a beer and Barbara’s packing up their stuff to go back to Texas. And I said, “I hope you’ll run for President some day,” and he said, “I don’t know. You have to have a big ego to do that. I’m going to go back and think about it.” So, then, later that spring, he started calling me to ask if I would meet him when he came to Washington and drive him to his various meetings. It was just Jim Baker and Margaret Tutwiler down in Houston. He’d call me when he’d fly to DC on Eastern Airlines and I’d meet him and drive him around to the different meetings he was going to. He was starting to put things together for his campaign then. But, no, he didn’t want to come back from China. He would’ve preferred to have stayed there certainly.

Smith: Did Ford have a sense of humor?

Goodwin: Yeah, he had a great sense of humor. Oh, my gosh, did he ever. He had a sense of humor and he used it in his speeches. He had a self deprecating type of humor that pulled people to him. He was always laughing on the plane about something. Probably a good example of the President’s humor was, on one occasion, he was invited to play in the Jackie Gleason Golf Tournament in Inverrary in Florida and he played on the first day with Jackie Gleason—

Smith: By all accounts, he was a piece of work.

Goodwin: Yeah. Gleason, Hope, the President, Jack Nicklaus, and a guy from Long Island who had won a lottery to play with them. There were huge crowds everywhere. Gleason and Hope, at that time, had a \$10,000 bet where the loser would pay the winner's charity. They were clowning around that entire time. The President loved it and Nicklaus, through all this, shot the course record. And the President just loved to be in events like that. I did another golf tournament like that with him at Pinehurst when they dedicated the World Golf Hall of Fame when he played with Gene Sarazen among others. Ben Hogan walked around with the President but wouldn't play. Nicklaus or Palmer did. Sarazen and one other – I forget who it was – they took turns playing with the President. On one occasion the President hit his ball into the rough and he's about ready to hit his second shot when Hogan says, "Mr. President, I wouldn't hit that shot. I'd move your ball, because it's sitting on a twig. You can't see it." He said, "I don't want you to hurt your wrist." And you couldn't see the twig with the naked eye, but Hogan knew it was there. Hogan could see it. And, sure enough, it was there. So, the President did what Hogan suggested.

So, anyway, the night that he played in the golf tournament at Inverrary in Florida with Gleason and Hope in the tournament. Jack Nicklaus held a reception for the President and the only golfer who showed up for the reception of all these pro golfers competing in the tournament was Nicklaus. Not a single other pro attended. Of course, that wouldn't be true today, I don't think. Many of the golfers would show up for somebody like that today.

On the trip to Vladivostok for the meeting with Brezhnev in 1974, no westerners had been in Vladivostok for over 25 years because it was their only warm water port and they had a lot of their electronic trawlers there and they had other stuff going on in that area. And whenever we flew into the Soviet Union, we would stop at some point and pick up a Russian pilot and navigator on the advance trip and usually they would just sit in the compartment behind the cockpit and smoke cigarettes.

On this particular occasion, we picked them up in Japan and when we got over the coast of the Soviet Union, they took over the plane with our pilots moving out of the cockpit. We went down to what I was told later was about 6,000 feet and we would go a ways that way and go a ways this way and we had no idea where we were going to land. Of course, the technology didn't exist that exists today, so people couldn't follow us. The only way people knew where we were when we landed was for someone to radio back our coordinates. So, there was a young guy from the CIA who was on the plane who had a stopwatch and every time we'd go this way, he'd time it and then we'd turn that way and he'd time it and so forth. Then, all of a sudden, we landed on this sort of grass runway between these huge mounds which had MIGS in them, we found out later.

But that young CIA agent was Bob Gates. So, only then did we know where we were. We were taken to this, I guess it was supposed to be a vacation area for Soviets, but it was like a sanitarium, they called it. It was a series of buildings and we were there for a couple of weeks. It was difficult to get cables out, but we were able to do that and the meeting was always in flux. Nobody knew quite what was going to be on the agenda. The President stopped in Alaska on the way over and got this huge fur coat, which he subsequently gave to Brezhnev, and a couple of nights before Brezhnev and the President arrived, we had a huge ice storm. The temperature all the time we were there was never above zero. We had this huge ice storm, and as soon as it stopped, the Russians sent out about a hundred soldiers in tattered coats and with some very primitive pick axes and they spent all night long and all the next day chipping away at the frozen ice on the walkways so that when the Presidents arrived, they would have dry walkways. All night long, we could hear these poor guys out there chipping away at the ice.

In any event, the meetings happened and we were in the motorcade going back to the train that was supposed to take us back to where the plane was located. All of a sudden the motorcade just takes off in an unplanned direction. It's about six or seven in the evening and starting to get dark and somebody in the Control Car calls me on the radio and says, "Where are we

headed?” And I said, “I don’t have a clue.” They said, “Well, aren’t we supposed to be going back to the airport?” And I said, “Yeah, but we’re not in charge of this motorcade, so we’re going wherever they take us.” And I said, “I don’t know where that is.” And, truly, we had no idea. Well, what the Soviets wanted to do at that time was to show the President downtown Vladivostok and so they were taking him on a circuitous tour. But nobody had mentioned that to us and it never came up in any conversation and the President was scratching his head wanting to know where we were going as well. But he felt very good about, whatever transpired at his meeting with Brezhnev, he felt was very positive. And he was very pleased with the outcome of the meeting.

Smith: A couple of quick things. In retrospect, were they too slow to awake to the danger that Reagan posed? Did they underestimate either the likelihood of Reagan running or the threat that he would pose when he did run?

Goodwin: Probably because the President had won - what was it - nine primaries in a row before he ran in North Carolina. And I think they were a little surprised that Reagan won in North Carolina. Until that point, I think they thought it was pretty smooth sailing. But, again, the campaign operation had been through two chairmen and neither one was very good. One of them had health problems, also, but there was no strong leadership like there was at the top of Nixon’s campaign operation. So it was just sort of a headless campaign until about Labor Day when Jim Baker took over.

Smith: Do you remember the last time you saw him?

Goodwin: Yes, it was at one of the Ford dinners maybe ten years ago, something like that.

Smith: How do you think he should be remembered?

Goodwin: I think as a president who brought stability to the country, who brought direction to the country, and I think it’s unfortunate that he wasn’t elected because, had he been, I think the country would’ve certainly been strengthened economically. I think he had a good sense of what our position

was internationally and was moving in a position of strength in that area at that particular time. Of course, if he'd been elected, we probably wouldn't have had Bill Clinton in office. We probably wouldn't have had George Bush in office. Who knows what the direction the country would be in today because none of that would've happened, probably.

Smith: And, quite possibly, the Reagan presidency would never have occurred.

Goodwin: Yeah, that's very true. Very true. The transfer of a few thousand votes in Ohio and Mississippi would have really changed the course of the country to a great extent.

Smith: Last thing. Did you ever see him out at Rancho Mirage afterwards?

Goodwin: No. I didn't ever see him out there, but I saw him a couple of times back here and he was always appreciative of what everybody had done for him. But, I think, of the Presidents I've worked for, he was as strong as any of them and knew what he wanted to do, was comfortable doing it, was not caught up in the Presidency in the sense that he was overwhelmed by it. It was a job that he wound up being in a position to do and he did it very well as long as he was there. I think it's unfortunate that he wasn't elected because I think people would've had a much different view of him in another four years.

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