

Exit Interview: Si Lazarus (of the Domestic Policy Staff)

November 24, 1980 at his office in the Old Executive Office Building

Interviewer is Emily Soapes of the Presidential Papers Project.

Soapes: I read somewhere the DPS job was a young person's job, as to Stu Eizenstat (quote) "because it required hard work, long hours, and anonymity". I wonder if you could comment on that as an apt characterization.

Lazarus: I think it does require all those virtues and I think it is a relatively young person's job, although I think the staff suffered sometimes from having an image of being a bunch of extremely young people when, in fact it really wasn't *so* young. I think that the key people on our staff varied from the late twenties into early forties. Some of the most important people on the staff were in their forties and I unfortunately, living dangerously, admit to being in my forties myself and Stuart is now in his late thirties. So I would say the norm was really toward middle to late thirties. A number of people had rather responsible positions before, but it does require hard work and anonymity, as you said, which some people don't particularly crave.

Soapes: You think that the staff is better able to work when it is more or less an anonymous group?

Lazarus: Well, I think that it is essential that at least through the second level White House staff people be anonymous. Otherwise, it cheapens the value of the presidency and it would be very bad.

Soapes: Now you have been with DPS—

Lazarus: Also, I'm sorry—and also obviously it might diminish the public nature of the departments.

Soapes: Yeah, very important, I am sure, in the kind of work that you would be doing to make it back on that [?] Well, you have been on DPS since the beginning of this administration, right? Now, did you work with Stu Eizenstat in the campaign?

Lazarus: Yes. Technically, I was a speechwriter. I was on the speechwriting staff but I really was functional as an issue person with Stu. Basically, I joined the campaign in August of '76, and have pretty much been doing the same thing since then.

Soapes: Was it that you were attracted to working with Stu Eizenstat or with Jimmy Carter?

Lazarus: No, I was attracted to Jimmy Carter. I was attracted by what I understood to be an emphasis on making government work effectively as distinguished from getting rid of it altogether, on the one hand, or not caring too much how well it worked on the other.

So, I liked the whole theme of his campaign a lot, and that's why I decided to support him.

Soapes: Yeah, that was something that maybe you helped write the speeches—the ones about the government is as good as its people—certainly—

Lazarus: Those speeches were written before I came, before I joined, largely, but I like the theme.

Soapes: So you were recruited for DPS specifically to work on that issue?

Lazarus: You mean after the campaign?

Soapes: After the election, yes.

Lazarus: That's right.

Soapes: Now that included not only Civil Service Reform but—

Lazarus: It included four basic areas: it included efficiency in government sorts of issues such as Civil Service reform; it included integrity in governments sorts of issues such as the often lamented ethics legislation. It included regulatory reform very significantly which has included all of our deregulation bills and administrative action and it included—for somewhat illogical reasons having to do with my own personal background—consumer issues.

Soapes: I didn't realize that. Now Steve Simmons worked for you, right/

Lazarus: He worked directly for me, right.

Soapes: I interviewed him just before he left. And he had talked about a program that was done by—he thought it was called the American Management Institute on the Civil Service reform bill.

Lazarus: No, I don't know what that was.

Soapes: You don't what that was? He said that he had done a lot of interviews for them, for a book affair—

Lazarus: Oh, yes, yes, I do remember that. There was some, I think it was Columbia—I'm not really sure.

Soapes: Okay, he was not sure. I don't want to plow over the same ground, but I want to get the reference there that someone is trying to—

Lazarus: Yes, both of us participated in some oral history interview program, having to do with the passage of the Civil Service Reform Act, but that would have been much more detailed about that—

Soapes: But it was the Columbia?*

Lazarus: Well, I remember that. I tell you, you could find out about that—I bet if you called Scotty Campbell's office, somebody would be able to look it up.

Soapes: Okay, you mentioned Regulatory Reform. So that means airline deregulation—federal regulation. Could you talk a little bit about working with and through, say, CAB or Congressional Liaison to get a bill passed. How do these things happen?

Lazarus: Well, I think that what might be helpful is if I just went through the early history of our deregulation efforts.

Soapes: Good.

Lazarus: I think certainly one of the things which really drew me to President Carter was the fact that he seemed personally interested in these issues, certainly beyond what most politicians are, even during the campaign. And despite the fact that they were tremendously controversial kinds of issues with very well located interest groups powerfully opposed to the kind of deregulation that consumer advocates, and so forth, thought was a good idea. On one of the very last days of the '76 campaign, the campaign issued an airline deregulation statement, a campaign statement which I actually did not work on, but it really was not a very significant act—it was unclear what the President would really do once he was elected.

During the transition, I worked on Harrison Wellford's cluster, the transition staff, and a woman named, then name Mary Schuman, now married to Dennis who now General Counsel to the CAB and was on our staff here, began working on airline deregulation then. We really began developing an options paper for the President Elect which we actually did write and sent to him. I don't think we ever really got a formal reaction. I don't even know if he ever saw it actually. It was leaked. I actually read the whole thing in the *Washington Star*. But in any event, we were already working pretty hard on that issue.

The new Secretary for Transportation, Brock Adams, was extremely reluctant, to say the least, about undertaking a major airline deregulation campaign. There was a considerable amount of controversy in the administration. Finally, in early March, the President sent to Congress a very short statement saying that he endorsed airline deregulation legislation. We did not sent up a bill because there already was a bill on the hill, but the statement endorsed the basic principles that we considered essential in airline

*Columbia University started the first oral history program, under Allen Nevins. deregulation legislation.

Mary took over the responsibility really of supervising the day-to-day, the week-to-week and the month-to-month responsibility for the airline bill, from the White House, and that was a very important responsibility because DOT--which was formally the lead agency--was at best reluctant even after we sent the message out to really push the effort.

The bill dragged through hearings and many, many mark-up sessions throughout 1977 and without the President's personal interest in the project, without strategic phone call from him and continued reminders to others in the government that we really did care about it, the bill clearly would never have gone anywhere. I won't go into great detail about that, but if anyone is interested in the subject, I am sure that Mary and I and Stuart and others could recall a lot of that because I think it is clearly one of the most worthy little chapters in the history of the administration.

I can remember one specific little incident. In something like February or March, there was an article in *Fortune* magazine about economic deregulation, both the airlines and other areas—trucking, communications, and so forth—how important and needed it was. We sent this article in to the President and it came back with scores of underlining, some graffiti in the margins and an enormously enthusiastic message. Stuart said: “Grab the message to Congress—we need to do all these things.” That was in the phase when the administration had a feeling it could do anything it wanted and we all knew we couldn't do all of these things right away. The surprising fact is, however, we ended up doing virtually all of those things. We did pass a very substantial trucking deregulation bill. We did not pass a communications deregulation bill, but a great deal of deregulation was done administratively by the President's appointee, Charlie Farris. We passed a very substantial rail deregulation bill, we passed deregulation measures that affect the financial institutions industry. We did an awful lot of what this article stated, but the President's personal enthusiasm for these kinds of projects was always evident to us and it was—none of these things would have happened without it. I don't know whether that is useful to you or not.

Soapes: Yes, it is. Who or how or what circumstances set the priorities? You mentioned that you weren't—you know you couldn't tackle—

Lazarus: Well, the obvious first target was airline deregulation. It was already in being on the Hill. In the Senate, there had been extensive hearings that Senator Kennedy had had a couple of years before. The bill had never gone out of the Senate Commerce Committee the year before but it had received a great deal of attention so what we did do was not to send up our own bill, but said we would like to see that bill prosper. And that's what we did do. We held off on other areas until we saw how the airline bill went.

Now after the airline bill passed--and the airline bill passed in '78—that was one of the bills that passed at the end of the first session. It was a real “Perils of Pauline” struggle as are almost all controversial bills, of course.

Soapes: Did you get involved at all at the bill passage stage?

Lazarus: I didn't personally; Mary was handling it. Mary must have spent 75 percent of her two or three years in the White House on that. In the first two years, she probably spent 75 percent, something like that, on that bill. People on our staff as it evolved

became quite key members of the task forces that managed the priority legislation. Now in some cases they became in fact if not in name more than just a few members. Mary was such a person. Mary eventually got the assistance of Jim Free of the Frank Moore staff (Congressional Liaison), but even then she played a very leading role. Before that time she really was running the whole effort. In this case, as sometimes happened in other cases, she was running it with the very reluctant help of the agency and sometimes if the truth be told, against our opposition. That's because this was not a first priority. It was an important thing for the President, but for most of his staff, it was not the same thing as the energy legislation, or civil service reform, or one of the two, three, four or five most important measures of his next rung.

That was also true, for example, of the ethics legislation which basically was important to the President but not as important as other things. I basically did it along with Mike Cardozo of Bob Lipshutz's staff (Counsels Office). So she was of course involved at all times. But I really was not personally involved except at the beginning and it became apparent that she was so competent that there was no necessity to duplicate her work.

Soapes: Your main expertise then was more or less the government reform?

Lazarus: Well, I did try to keep track of and monitor all the work that was being done by Mary and Rick Neustadt, and by Steve Simmons--the people working for me during the first part of the administration--and help set priorities and so forth with them. But the way we operated, it really made sense ultimately for each person to take one or two projects and spend a great deal of time on those projects. Mainly, those projects were legislative projects. I did not spend a huge amount of time on the ethics legislation except in little batches. That was not really something the administration desperately wanted. As it happened, everything fell into place on the Hill and it passed. There were some periods of time when I spent a fair amount of time on it but it was really not like—I did spend, and so did Steve Simmons, a good 75 percent of my time for 1978 on the civil service reform.

Soapes: I was going to ask if that was where you spent most of your time.

Lazarus: For that year, it was. In '77 I spent my time on a number of different projects. I spent a lot of time on the Consumer Protection Agency Bill, which failed. I spent a considerable amount of time developing our regulatory reform program for the management of the regulatory process within the government, which was largely administrative. We developed an executive order which required all agencies to take a number of steps that were *supposed* to require them to make sure their regulations were, if not written in plain English, at least intelligible to people who could be expected to read them.

Soapes: (laughs) That sounds so easy—but did you get good cooperation on that? I've often wondered.

Lazarus: It was pretty rough. I think we made some progress but it was pretty hard to change habits.

Soapes: Excuse me for interrupting.

Lazarus: No, that's all right. And the executive order did a whole lot of other things and basically became a model for all regulated reform legislation that eventually got introduced on the Hill, including the President's own bill that was introduced two years later and it will unquestionably form a significant component of whatever president Reagan's program consists of. I spent a great deal of time on that in 1977 and I'm trying to think what other—I spent some time on airline deregulation—but less and less as the years went on because Mary just took it over. Some time on the ethics bill that year.

It basically was quite arbitrary whether projects got classified basically as an education or reorganization issue—for whatever reason it became an education—and I didn't have time to deal with it and other people were dealing with it. Then in the fall, the Civil Service reform proposal became very important and it was some time in September or October, I think, when—Steve had been working on it for longer—the early draft of the proposal itself landed on my desk sometime in September or October. I read it and immediately came to the conclusion that this could be a spectacularly valuable proposal although it was going to be very high risk proposal, but really it had the potential of being tremendously politically popular if properly marketed. It clearly seemed to me to have great merit, subsequently it would be a genuinely important and a good thing to do to make government work better. I don't really remember too much specifically but I know that Steve and/or I took it to Stuart who, to his enormous credit as occurred many times, immediately saw its importance and told other members of the White House staff about it—and I guess told the President about it.

Already in late '77 we organized a task force of a sort that we normally only organized after a bill had been sent up to the Hill. Les Francis, of Frank Moore's staff was the key person there to (unintelligible). Scotty Campbell, of course, was the key person and we began to work on the project very intensively as if it were already a priority presentation in late 1977.

Soapes: With Fern Marbury from across the street?

Lazarus: With Fern Marbury from across the street. We never really got a presidential decision. I can't remember the chronology. We never got a formal presidential decision until maybe a month or so before the bill was to go to the Hill. Obviously they were conferring further about that with the other senior people at the White House staff, in addition to Stuart. Stuart, I think, saw the promise of the thing from a pretty early moment. It could have been killed or reduced significantly, certainly anytime in January and February. I don't remember too much about what jockeying there may have been for position on the priority sheet during that period. But, I think enthusiasm ran pretty high from really, the time the proposal in draft form got to the White House—whether it was in September or October. It needed a lot of work on it. There were a number of changes made in it, though not changes in principle. It had been put together so well and

conceived so well, mainly, I think, by Scotty and some others who worked on it , that clearly it was something that was appropriate to go.

Soapes: You said it hit you when you first read it, as being something that—

Lazarus: In terms of popularity, there was an enormous amount of public feeling that we have to get the bureaucrats to do something about the government and this could be marketed so that it corresponded to that public concern.

Soapes: Reform the government.

Lazarus: But it was a positive proposal. It wasn't something that was going to screw the government up. It was attempting to apply simple business principles to working in government by putting more reward and risk in the process. It was also very cleverly designed to give public employees some gains that would also be appealing publicly. It gave them generally less protection substantively that they had enjoyed in the past—less in terms of what their rights on paper looked like but it gave them more in the sense that it was going to place responsibility protecting their rights and adjudicating, where their rights had been violated in independent new agencies that the President didn't have direct control over. So, that gave them more protection and that was an important objective that employee organizations had fought for, for a long time.

In additional to that, what was the key strategic decision that made the whole project possible, Scotty had developed a proposal for converting an executive order governing federal employee labor relations into law, into part of the bill, and that proposal was designed to persuade the AFL-CIO to accept the idea of the civil service reform bill. The AFL-CIO, because of that proposal, fought provisions of the bill that it did not approve of, but agreed not to block the whole piece of legislation if it lost—win or lose on those issues. Other more independent and more militant public employee unions, not affiliated with the AFL-CIO, fought the whole project in very strident terms which, of course, was useful, basically politically, because it made the press and public reassured that there was actually something tough in the bill.

The acquiescence of the AFL-CIO in passage of the bill was essential to getting it out of the relevant committees, especially in the House, and probably essential to getting it scheduled for floor action. Also, politically it really was not necessarily a great idea for the Presidency to support legislation which was strongly opposed by the AFL-CIO or it would have been now on that issue. So, this compromise that Scotty developed was quite elaborate and very complicated--complicated by the fact that the section of the bill granting basic organizational rights to public employees was changed substantively from what the executive order provided to expand the actual rights the public employees had. But that would have frightened away the supporters in the business community and some of the key agencies, especially the Defense Department, that were also necessary to pass the bill so it was a matter of properly maintaining the balance. In my own experience, elaborate strategic concepts like that never work and are so complicated that something always goes wrong. But this one did work—and that was the key, the key idea that made the whole thing go. All these things had been—to a remarkable degree—thought out before the proposal came over here. It was something one could go to the President with

and say “We don’t know if this is going to work or not, but it has a good chance to, and you really ought to push it.” And the President did.

The President did some very key things. The bill looked near death about a month after it had been introduced, a month after he gave a speech at the Press Club announcing it. He used the House Committee, which is to a significant extent captive of the public employee unions who didn’t want to touch it because it was too frightening for them. There were three meetings in the Cabinet Room in which members of the committee said to the President, “This is too tough, it’s not going to go, it’s going to take too long—we can’t do it.” And he really looked them in the face and said “I want it now. You can get it now.” Mo Udall, who had been very supportive of him in those meetings, said the pressure worked; they had started having hearings.

Without the President’s toughness at that movement it would not have gone. Another time it was quite crucial: the President played a critic role was –oh, I want to add one other thing! The President made a speech announcing that we were sending the bill up. That was, of course, a big deal. It got a lot of press. But we never really got a strong feel for his own personal interest in this the way we had for his personal interest in the airline deregulation stuff until just before the meetings which occurred in April 1978. We sent a memo in to him saying that the House Post Office and Court Service Committee Democrats were going to caucus on this one afternoon and we were afraid they were going to come out of this meeting and announce the bill was dead for the year. We knew he was terribly busy because at that time he was making telephone calls for the Panama Treaty, but (we asked) could he possibly make some phone calls to the following members of the Committee? The memo came back that he had made all the calls and he had detailed notes on what all the members had said—without those calls I am reasonably confident the bill might well have been pronounced dead that day. Then he had those meetings and was very strong in the meetings. The second time he was critical was late in the year in August when we were trying to get the bill up in the Senate before the recess. The bill was out of the Congress and in the Senate.

In late August, just before the Senate was to go out for a recess through Labor Day, the bill had been out of Congress, out of the Senate Governmental Affairs Commission. It was also out of the House committee. But it had not been scheduled for floor action in either of the houses just yet. The two opponents of the bill in the Governmental Affairs Commission, Senator Mathias and Senator Stevens, both of whom had come from states where there are strong public employee constituencies, had said they would filibuster the bill on the floor and Senator Byrd was not going to bring a bill up without a time agreement—the Senate equivalent of a rule which limits debates.

So, we were forced to negotiate with Stevens and Mathias who were basically in a position to demand things they had lost from the Commission in order to get permission to get the bill scheduled. These negotiations occurred over the points they had noted and that their staff had indicated they were satisfied with. But the senators would never tell *us* they were satisfied; they were refusing to return telephone calls, and so forth, and it became clear they were simply attempting to keep the bill from coming to the floor by not agreeing.

Soapes: And where you say “we,” are you talking about the task force?

Lazarus: Oh, the administration, Senator Ribicoff's staff, all working very closely together. As you know, the task force was a very elaborate mechanism and there were lots and lots of people on it by this time. In fact, these meetings were—well, three or four members of Frank Moore's staff played a key role at different points. I would say that, at that point, the key people were Bob Thompson of Frank Moore's staff—Les Francis and Scottie. There were so many people; it would really be hard to say. But those were the key people and all of us were representing the administration; the task force was really quite remarkable. It was one of the most effective organizations I have ever seen. It met virtually every night for an entire year—before the bill was passed—at 6:00—almost literally every night, I mean really, almost every night at 6:00. We had a room upstairs in the OEOB, special files, a staff secretary for the organization and every night we would meet and Les Francis would chart the meetings assignments handed out for the next day, the day's assignments would be reviewed, and plans would be made for the next week, and so forth.

Soapes: Really organized.

Lazarus: We basically had our own press person. We had every dimension of the effort necessary to pass the bill specifically assigned to somebody. It really worked very well. If we needed an editorial in a key newspaper the following Monday, we were basically in a position to try to generate it and did so. We need mailings out to newspapers in a particular set of communities, we could do it. Other legislative efforts were organized well also, although I think this was the first one other than the Panama one. Anyway, at this time they were holding out and I think Bob Thompson was the person who thought up the moves we would use to unplug the bill.

Senators Mathias and Stevens--and Senator Ribicoff and Percy, the proponents--were both invited to the White House with their staffs. They were invited to come to the White House and everybody met in the Cabinet Room--a number of the members from the White House task force plus the various Senate staff people and the four senators. When they arrived in the Cabinet room, this was an August afternoon and Frank Moore come out of the Oval Office and said the President wanted to meet with the four senators. They were ushered into the Oval Office and there was the President with Stu and Scottie and Frank. I was not there, but my understanding is that the President said to Stevens and Mathias: "Do you want to agree or don't you want to agree? We understand all the elements have been negotiated and now we want to know if all the elements are there or are you just trying to block the bill?" Very promptly they emerged and said they had agreed, and that they were there and that their staffs could negotiated the details, the actual legislative language, implement the agreement—that they wanted to talk with their staffs for a while, which they did. Then the Senators all left and their staff people were sitting in the Cabinet Room and the President came out and shook everybody's hand and told everybody how important the effort was, etc. to boost the people's morale.

The staff director of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, Dick Whiteman, of Senator Ribicoff's staff then pulled out of his pocket the draft legislative language, which he had prepared in advance and we sat down with Mathias and Percy's people and basically negotiated the themes and positions out, right there. Eventually the bill was scheduled and passed in the Senate. It was essential that it be passed in one

House before the recess. If it had not been, it would have been unrealistic to think that it would pass. So the President played on those two occasions, I remember in particular, a key role. Now, he didn't really have to be personally involved as much on this effort as I think on some other efforts because it was very well organized and it was quite popular. It had a lot of momentum on its own and it had some very significant support on the hill itself—Ribicoff, Percy, Udall, Congressman Rostenkowski on the House side, Senator Javits all really interested in it personally and didn't need to be pushed all the time. But he did play a very effective role when it was necessary. He also played a very effective public role. He held a forum of public employees during early August of that year to publicize it. It was a very satisfying effort.

Soapes: Now, was that something decided by the Task Force?

Lazarus: Yeah, it was somebody's idea. We were just sitting around thinking how do we demonstrate the President's interest in this to give it a boost. How do we make sure the President is identified with it publicly to give him a boost? We had a whole lot of things we were trying to do. How do we quiet the concerns of public employees? So this appeared to be something we thought we could do. We worked with Jerry Rafshoon (Chief of White House Communications) on that.

Soapes: With a new administration coming in, do you look at the bill as being just as—*safe* isn't the world I wanted to use—do you look on it as being just as good. There was something the other day that might cause this kind of worry about the SES (Senior Executive Service) as being a potential now for political appointments.

Lazarus: Well, that's the whole point of it. Yeah, the whole idea was that the new administration, whatever its political persuasion, ought to have much more flexibility than it had before to shape the real-life policies of the government. And even Ralph Nader agreed with that and indeed he thought that the whole SES ought to be nothing but political appointees, which is further than other people wanted to go. But I think that the philosophy of the bill was to give President Reagan, or President Carter or President anyone and their appointees more ability to shake the government up and inject new life and send it off in new directions. So I think that those were all good things.

Soapes: How would you rate it in importance of things, first of all, that you worked on and, secondly, overall of the administration?

Lazarus: Well, I think it was the most important thing that I worked on. Personally, certainly the most important thing in which I invested a huge amount of my personal time in. It was one of the more important things that my cluster worked on. Whether it was more important than trucking or supposedly more important than an individual bill—I think that personally the most disappointing thing for me has been in what appears to be the fact that Civil Service Reform did not end in producing a lot of political credit for the President or the administration. Partly, I guess because it was too boring and too insignificant to the public. And also, frankly, I was disappointed that it didn't seem to me that the President's campaign this year pushed it very hard. Others in the administration

seemed to downplay the whole notion of trying to claim that the President's record of achievement was a lot better than many people of the general public thought it was and identifying the major victories that he had had and achievements he had—one of which to me, clearly, was this one. So, one just didn't hear about it a great deal this year and it didn't seem to have done the President nearly as much good as I think it will do the country.

Soapes: Can you at this juncture do any evaluation of the contribution DPS did for the Administration? There has been a Domestic Policy Staff before, but it seems that in this administration that it has been much more active than it had been in previous administrations.

Lazarus: Well, the key question is if it made a bigger contribution which it probably did than at least in the most recent administration, the Ford administration because of Stuart. Stuart was very important, therefore, his staff was important. I think Erlichman was important and therefore, I presume that his staff was probably awfully important also. Jim Cannon who was director of DPS under Ford was simply not as significant as Stuart was or as Erlichman was. Joe Califano was terribly important under Johnson and I think he really launched the real evolution of the idea of a specific Chief Domestic Policy Advisor. In theory, he had a smaller staff. It was quite a distinguished group of people, a number of whom have important positions in this administration. But it is also true that OMB was then the BOB (Bureau of the Budget—later OMB) in the sixties and it was not as much of a rival of the White House Domestic Policy Staff because it only had two political appointees. It did not have a whole layer of OMB associate directors and I think my impression--I will have to check with Charlie Schultz who was head of BOB then--my impression is that OMB is probably more of a staff for the Califano operation than OMB is certainly now for us.

But in any event, Califano had about four or five people, I think, than the twenty or so that Stuart has. Califano was just as important as Eizenstat is, I presume. At least, that is my impression and Erlichman obviously was tremendously important, so I don't think that there really is that much of a difference today. Eizenstat is more important than Jim Cannon was under Ford and therefore his staff was, but that is really a function of the person that is on top. So I don't think it is really very different. I think that there is no way in which a President can function with all these departments out there and the various constituencies to which they are attracted—all the centrifugal forces in this government make it essential that a President have his own little group of people which looks at all these issues from his interest, from the standpoint of his interest. They don't have to dominate the departments publicly or necessarily otherwise--depending on who the heads of the agencies are--but they will be quite important and the government won't work well if there isn't something like that.

I personally think that our staff is very large and maybe doesn't have to be as large as it is, but you certainly need six to twelve at least very able, dedicated, sophisticated people to make sure that the President's interests are being represented in various domestic issue areas. And you need them working under somebody who is extremely good and is very, very close to the President.

Soapes: Everybody I have talked to since the election has said they think that in ten years, twenty years, this administration is going to look a lot better than it does now. Having worked for it now for almost four years, what is your summary?

Lazarus: Oh, I think that's true. In fact, I feel perhaps less depressed than some. These have been very difficult times to govern in, and therefore the possibility of being defeated in four years was always very clear to me. I think that the record is much more creditable than the public generally assumed. I regret very much the fact that we always have seemed to have a lot of trouble communicating what we *were* doing. I think that was probably largely because of difficulties the press has in reporting substantive achievements. It is also partly because I think we just didn't spend as much—pay as much—attention to that as we might have.

But, in any event, it is clear that we have, if you compare the first two years for example, the first congress which this President—which coincided with the President's term—to the first two years of the Kennedy administration, there is really just no comparison whatsoever, at least in terms of domestic legislation. I think this administration—the president—basically created the energy program that is going to govern our energy policy for the rest of the century. There is no doubt about that. Reagan has no proposals. Nobody has any real proposals except to dismantle things that we have done which, in fact, they will not do.

And I think that the achievements we have had in our area, again, they are not the *most* important things in the public's mind, but they are significant and I think that at least the deregulation measures are in fact recognized by knowledgeable observers to have been very important. So I think that there are a lot of other—the Alaska lands legislation—there really is just a draft of legislative achievements in particular that have occurred. The foreign policy, I think there are at least, of the top of my head, there are two or three things that I think are terribly important. First of all, of course, the Middle Eastern progress with the Camp David agreement is tremendously significant and one just has to try to think about what that area of the world would have been like without Camp David over the last 4 years. And this is a point that somehow we didn't manage to convey as effectively as you think that we could. Secondly, I think that the extraordinary progress that has been made in building a greater trust of the West in the Third World, especially in southern Africa, by the President's very enlightened policies, the fact that the permanent crises there have not produced much more menacing situations than they have—Zimbabwe and other places—is a very substantial achievement for which the President personally deserves a great deal of credit. It is a fact that is not listed anywhere very much in this country and one can only hope that it won't all be undone by the incoming administration which really has considerably less appreciation for the subtleties of dealing with those countries. I think those are very important achievements. We haven't been perfect certainly but I think it is clear that it has been a very creditable record and it will look pretty good on paper ten years from now.

Soapes: You sound like a man who is not dissatisfied with what he has done the last four years.

Lazarus: Well, I am kind of fortunate, I think, because I have been able to work in an area where the President was very interested and where the temper of the times coincided with what we were trying to do. And we had some luck. We passed a lot of things which I think are pretty good. It was an area which presented a lot of opportunities and I think we did manage to take advantage of it.

Soapes: I know you have got to go so let me just ask you how best to get in touch with you, say in another three to five years.

Lazarus: (laughs). Well, I expect I will be living in Washington, but who can really tell? My mother's name is Mrs. Simon Lazarus, Sr. She currently lives in Cincinnati. And you could probably find me through the Kennedy Institute of Politics at Harvard.

Soapes: That gives us enough places to find you. Thank you for giving so much time here because this is very much the sort of thing I was looking for.

(end of tape)