

# Welcome to My World, Barack

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On Jan. 20, Barack Obama will inherit a world very different from the one his predecessor found in January 2001. Over the past eight years, the Bush administration has faced great challenges and nurtured grand ambitions; it has tried hard to remake the world. Condoleezza Rice has been a central player in that effort since becoming the candidate Bush's chief foreign-policy adviser in 2000, so we arranged to interview her at the State Department late last month. The interview turned into a wide-ranging discussion of where this government has taken the United States and what sort of world it will leave for the next president. The editors have culled the highlights of her remarks in the text that follows. We also spoke with other administration foreign-policy makers — Christopher Hill and Daniel Fried of the State Department and Gen. James L. Jones, former supreme allied commander, Europe — whose remarks supplement and illuminate those of Rice.

## I. OUR ELECTION, AND THEIRS

### WHAT THE ELECTION THAT HE WON MEANS.

Electing a black president says around the world that you can overcome old wounds. I've said in our case, We have a birth defect, but it can be overcome.

### WHAT THE ELECTION THAT HE WON MEANS.

I've heard people commenting on how in this election, in far places, people talk about what is a caucus and how does that differ from a primary. I think that links up with the fact that the United States under this president has been more active and more insistent that democracy is not just something for a few. People are watching, and I think they're trying to learn from democratic experience.

### WHAT ALL THOSE ELECTIONS IN IRAQ AND UKRAINE AND LEBANON MEANT.

It's not that you deliver on it tomorrow. Maybe 2005 was a bit deceptive in that way because you had the Iraqi elections, the Cedar Revolution, the Orange Revolution, the Rose Revolution and the Palestinian election. So maybe people came to expect too much too soon.

### WHAT ELECTIONS COULD MEAN FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T TEND TO HAVE THEM.

I've seen too many peoples dismissed as not ready for self-government. First it was Asians, and then Latin Americans and Africans were there for a while. I know for a while black Americans were, too.

I've seen it said, well, you know: They're illiterate; how could they vote? And then you see in Afghanistan people line up for long, long lines. Because somehow they know that making a choice matters.

#### WHAT AMERICAN PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY CAN DO.

I think that over the last several years, because of a more assertive American voice on this, there have been some real gains — like women in Kuwait voting or like Iraq, which is an imperfect and fragile and still-emerging democracy but one that is multiconfessional, multiethnic and in the center of the Arab world.

#### AND WHY AMERICA SHOULD NOT STOP PROMOTING IT.

If the U.S. doesn't remain that lodestar, then I think democracy moves off the international agenda at a time when you're beginning to see, for instance, the Europeans unafraid to give their award to a Chinese dissident, despite the blowback from Beijing. The Egyptians know that their next election is going to be an important transitional election. I think they're going to insist on a different kind of election.

#### WHAT AMERICA DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT DEMOCRACY.

It's not easy for a country to embrace the chaos of democracy. It's especially not easy because people who try to introduce democratic reforms are often people who have to bear the responsibilities but also the consequences when sometimes things don't go well. So one should be careful about giving advice and not having to deal with the consequences of that advice. . . . I have no doubt that democracy is the best form of government. I'm very optimistic that it is one whose reach is increasing throughout the world. I would just urge all Americans to understand how our advice is taken. And to be careful how we offer advice. For many people in the world, they look at America, and they see an enormous country with an extraordinary amount of power. Pure power. And so they feel that asymmetry immediately as soon as they meet us. So we have to understand how people look at us sometimes. So advice coming from a country with enormous power can be taken wrongly. CHRISTOPHER HILL Christopher Hill is the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. Since February 2005, he has been lead negotiator on talks with North Korea aimed at ending its nuclear program.

## II. SUPERPOWERS PAST, SUPERPOWERS FUTURE

### THE PROBLEM RUSSIA HAS.

They've got problems, and the basis of this is that the legitimacy of the Russian government is not ideology; it is not a pretension to a different route for human development as Communism was. It is the ability of Russians to, if they can't afford those Cartier shops near Tverskaya, to be able instead to go to the Ikea store that now completely dominates the Tank Trap Monument that celebrates the repulsion of the final push of the Germans into Moscow.

### THE BIGGER PROBLEM RUSSIA HAS.

Russia has an aging population that's not being replaced and unfortunately a sickly population, and an economy that did not take advantage of higher oil prices to diversify. It's still an infrastructural nightmare if you get outside of major cities and certainly if you start going toward the Far East. So I think we should be calm.

### RUSSIA AND US — THE MORAL DIFFERENCE.

The West does not go out and conquer countries by using force, try to deprive countries of a choice. It didn't insist that Poland join NATO. Poland wanted to join NATO. It didn't impose NATO membership or E.U. membership on Estonia; Estonia chose it. That's a difference, and it's a moral difference as well. . . . If you validate the assumptions of Russians who believe that the only proper relationship between Russia and its neighbors is one of subordination and intimidation, then how do you expect a more cooperative Russia to emerge in the future? The United States has learned that it is in our interest that our neighbors, Mexico for example, be prosperous, successful and free. And Russia needs to develop a normal set of relations with its neighbors. The notions of privileged relations or its sphere of influence . . . which the Russians demand is not the formula for greater stability; it's the formula for greater tension. I'm not stating these things as a fiat; I'm suggesting that the next administration will have to think this through. DANIEL FRIED

*Daniel Fried is the assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs.*

### SOMETIMES EUROPEANS ALSO COME FROM MARS.

I remember telling my European colleagues that I know they always think that America is going to be more aggressive on fighting extremism than they. But you know, we could never, within our context, have passed the law like the basic incitement laws that the British have passed.

The first amendment would have prohibited it.

### HOW WE CAN HOLD THE WEST TOGETHER.

I remember when I went to Europe, I said — you know, this is in the wake of 2003-4, which was tough on the alliance — and I said: “Can we take the trans-Atlantic relationship off the sofa? And stop analyzing it and analyzing whether it’s healthy, and actually put it to work in common causes?” Because we all share the same interests and, by that time, we even shared an interest in a stable Iraq. There is only one process in the Middle East; it’s the Annapolis process, and it’s got Arab support and international support from all of our European friends.

### HOW BUSH DID HOLD THE WEST TOGETHER.

It’s a myth that we have poor relations with the Europeans. We have excellent relations with all European states at this point. Now, it may be that we still have some disagreements, but even on something like how to fight terrorists, I think there’s a growing recognition that this isn’t just law enforcement and that it puts difficult questions on the agenda about the relationship of gathering information to civil liberties and so forth.

### WHY THE EUROPEANS WILL MISS BUSH.

An Obama presidency will be greeted in Europe with enthusiasm, but as some Europeans have put it to me, “We realize that we won’t have the excuse of George Bush.” Obama made it clear during his trip to Europe that he wants to work with Europe, but any American president is going to think globally, and Obama, from what I know of his team, is a freedom Democrat. He believes in a values-based foreign policy. He’s going to want Europe to stand up and do more. . . . And Europeans will have a problem, in that they will embrace him, and they will not be able to say: “Well, this is the Bush administration. We have to resist.” DANIEL FRIED

## III. HOW WE USE POWER

### WHERE “NEVER AGAIN” NEVER QUITE GOT DONE.

I have regrets about Darfur, real regrets. I don’t know that there were other answers. The president considered trying to do something unilaterally — very difficult to do.

### THERE WILL ALWAYS BE DICTATORS.

The United States is not an N.G.O., so it’s not as if we throw out every other interest or every other concern with a country because it’s authoritarian. And sometimes we aren’t able to effect change as completely as we like. It has to be indigenous change.

## TO WARD OFF NEW DICTATORS, YOU NEED TO WORK.

We've gone a long way to make foreign assistance a partnership. We've gone a long way to make foreign assistance have accountability on both sides. Developed countries deliver, but developing countries have to deliver for their people, and you can't ask new democratic states or fragile democratic states to be democratic and to be accountable to their people and not help them have the resources to do it.

## WHAT WE ASK OF OTHER STATES.

The innovation in Latin America that I think has gone largely unnoticed is when the president went to Brazil and he said: We have no litmus test for our friendship. The only question is, Do you govern democratically, do you invest in your people, do you fight corruption? And so our best friends in Latin America include Colombia from the right and Brazil from the left. Chile from the left; Uruguay from the left.

## WHY WE MAY BE LOSING IN AFGHANISTAN.

I think the first thing the next president will have to do is understand that Afghanistan is now part of a regional problem. Maybe four or five years ago it was about Afghanistan, but now it's about Afghanistan and Pakistan, and you can't deal with one without dealing with the other. So there is a regional aspect to this that I think we have to deal with. Secondly, I think it's important for people to understand that Afghanistan is an international problem. It's not a U.S. problem alone, as opposed to Iraq. . . . The U.N. is there; NATO is there; the E.U. is there; the World Bank is there; all the N.G.O.'s in the world; around 50 countries. So the question is with all of this capability there, why do we have the sense that we're backsliding? The top of my list is the drugs and narcotics, which are, without question, the economic engine that fuels the resurgent Taliban, and the crime and corruption in the country. . . . We couldn't even talk about that in 2006 when I was there. That was not a topic that anybody wanted to talk about, including the U.S. JAMES L. JONES Gen. James L. Jones has served as commandant of the Marine Corps, supreme allied commander in Europe and head of the U.S. military's European Command. He was named a special envoy for Middle East security last year by Condoleezza Rice.

## WHY FREE TRADE WILL COME UNDER ATTACK.

Mexico has benefited from Nafta. In the current global financial crisis, of course, a lot of people are going to be questioning free trade and international integration and all of those things. . . . Yes, the financial system clearly got out of kilter, and Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson and the president and Congress are dealing with that. But it shouldn't go to the core principles of markets, the

importance of open trade, the fact of globalization — which is not going to go backwards.

#### IV. THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

##### HOW WE CHANGED THE CONVERSATION.

There have been some real gains, but there also has been a complete change in the conversation, particularly in the Middle East, where some form of popular legitimacy is being sought in almost every country. The American voice has got to stay strong in that conversation.

##### HOW TO MOVE THE CONVERSATION FORWARD.

I really think we have the best atmosphere between Palestinians and Israelis since the mid-'90s, so I'm very gratified that that has come into place. The Palestinian leadership is avowedly in favor of negotiations, renounces violence, recognizes the right of Israel to exist. There is a robust negotiating process, and they have made a lot of progress on how to get to a two-state solution. There is now broad Israeli acceptance of the need for a Palestinian state. After all, Kadima came out of Likud with that in mind. And we have a process on the ground that is beginning to make some progress in terms of making life better for people who live on the West Bank. Palestinian security forces are becoming competent enough that they're now about to move into Nablus, one of the toughest areas, with Israeli consent.

##### WHY SPEED IS ESSENTIAL TO DEALING WITH HAMAS.

The Hamas takeover of Gaza is a problem, but thanks to good Egyptian work, at least there is calm for now. One reason to try and get an agreement done pretty quickly is that I think Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas needs to be able to take an agreement to the Palestinian people through either referendum or elections in order to sideline Hamas politically or to have Hamas buy in, which I think is unlikely, or to sideline Hamas by demonstrating that they don't have a solution for the Palestinian problem. So that's another reason to do it quickly. But I think the structure is there, I think the Annapolis structure is a very powerful structure . . . On the Palestinian-Israeli issue, we will leave this in a much, much better place, agreement or no.

##### HOW TO CHANGE A REGIME — SLOWLY.

We have said to Iran that this is about changing your regime's behavior, not changing your regime. That has been the message all along. Would we hope that the Iranian people . . . do they deserve to have a different regime than they've got? Absolutely. But the way that we have tried to help with democracy in Iran is to help indigenous forces there — to bring everyone from people who

do disaster relief to artists to sending our wrestlers there. You know, it's why the question of an interests section continues to be important to us.

#### FINDING PRO-AMERICANISM IN IRAN.

There's a very pro-American feeling among most Iranians not because of our policies but because of who we are and because we have stood for democracy. Iranians are sophisticated people — that's a sophisticated and great culture — and we need to be able to reach out to them. But in terms of dealing with the regime, I think we've made it very, very clear that we're prepared to deal with the regime; we just don't want them to use negotiations as a cover while they improve their nuclear-weapons capability.

#### V. TWILIGHT OF THE INSTITUTIONS?

##### DISCOVERING WHETHER THE “RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT” MEANS ANYTHING.

I think we thought the Responsibility to Protect meant something. I remember when the responsibility-to-protect language came up at the 2006 United Nations General Assembly, and I remember thinking at the time: If this turns out to be nothing but words, the Security Council is going to have a real black eye, and in the Darfur case it has turned out to be nothing but words. I think it has been an enormous embarrassment for the Security Council and for multilateral diplomacy.

##### DON'T PREACH TO THE CHINESE.

I think if we do find a solution to the problem of Darfur, it will be because we worked with China. If we find a solution to the problem of Iran, it will be because we worked well with China. Similarly, if we close this deal with North Korea, it will be because of our efforts with China. So I think China has emerged as a country with whom we have to work globally on security challenges. There are increasing signs that we can do that. China suffers at times to an extent, I think, from a caricature of what it is. It's a really complex society. I don't think it should be defined by one dimension, its economics, or security, or human rights. We need to look at all the issues. CHRISTOPHER HILL

##### WHY THE SECURITY COUNCIL NEGLECTED DARFUR.

We worked day in and day out. Almost not a day passes in this office that we're not trying to find some way to get more forces into Darfur. To make the Sudanese government live up to the multiple agreements that it has made and then walked away from. We go to the Security Council, and nobody wants there to be consequences, well, not nobody, sorry, some don't wish there to be

consequences. And so we end up sanctioning again, unilaterally. The Europeans do some things but other interests seem to then trump the responsibility to protect.

#### HOW NATO REALLY WORKS.

First of all, the NATO alliance took on this mission in Afghanistan by consensus. It only operates by consensus. And I think what you see is steadily increasing alliance participation. The French have increased their numbers; most of the small states have increased their numbers over time.

#### AN ALLIANCE OF DEMOCRACIES IS NEVER SIMPLE.

There's this past image of NATO as in total, complete unity with exactly the same views during the cold war. Simply fiction. Fiction. Do you remember that in 1989 the big NATO 40th-anniversary summit was going to see a breakdown around short-range nuclear forces being deployed? So, NATO has always been an alliance of democracies. . . . Yes, I'd like to see NATO do more. Yes, we push hard for NATO to do more. Yes, we don't like the caveats, and some of them have come off in time. But you look at what this alliance is doing; it's impressive.

#### WHAT NATO IS STILL GOOD FOR.

I think if NATO members draw the conclusion that they shouldn't have been here in Afghanistan, and we're not going to do this again, then I think the purpose of NATO in the 21st century will very quickly be called into question. I think that most of them do understand that for NATO to survive as an institution in the 21st century, they need to start thinking about a new strategic concept. . . . Unfortunately NATO's mission is still rooted in the 20th-century, cold-war model of a defensive, static, reactive alliance instead of agile, flexible and proactive 21st-century reality. JAMES L. JONES

HOW NATO MIGHT HAVE WORKED AFTER 9/11, BUT DIDN'T. If there is one thing that was unfortunate about 9/11, about the aftermath, I remember when the alliance invoked Article 5, first time it had ever happened, and we simply couldn't wait for the alliance to mobilize. And, had you had the ability to mobilize the alliance the way we have now, there probably would have been more buy-in. But that's one of those — it was impossible to do. Capabilities just weren't there. Later on we got the rapid reaction force and all the things that we needed.

## VI. THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE BUSH AGENDA



## WHY BUSH SET THE FREEDOM AGENDA.

George W. Bush deserves credit for recognizing that the terms were now going to be set for the next big historical evolution. The president recognized that freedom was something that was not just desirable but essential for the United States; that it meant not just freedom from tyranny but also freedom from disease, from poverty. And that if you were going to have democratic leaders, they had to be able to deliver for their people. Thus the president supported the millennium challenge and the H.I.V. AIDS and Malaria project. And linking up the great compassion of the United States with our security interests. Making it about democracy, defense and development. We're at the beginning of that historical transformation, and yes, sometimes it's lonelier at the beginning than at the end.

It's really recognizing that this is about a single answer to what is the right form of government, and that's democracy. It takes different forms: there is Japanese democracy, and there's American democracy, and there are fragile democracies, and there are emerging democracies, and there are states that are trying to find some form of popular legitimacy.

## IMMIGRATION POLICY IS FOREIGN POLICY.

We didn't get comprehensive immigration reform. . . . I think everybody knows that this president tried. I remember the first foreign-policy meeting that I went to with the then-governor, before he was inaugurated, was with the then-governor, soon to be president of Mexico, Vicente Fox, and they talked about the need to fix this problem. I am a firm believer in defending our laws and defending our borders. . . . But it's also true that there are a lot of hardworking people in this country who live in the shadows.

## IMMIGRANTS ARE CENTRAL TO AMERICAN IDENTITY.

I was a major proponent of the temporary-worker program and finding some way to normalize the status for these people. I think that it goes to the core of who we are. I hear some people talking about, well, maybe there should be a timeout on legal immigration, check your last name and see whether or not it came over on the Mayflower.

## WHY SOME IMMIGRANTS SHOULD STAY — AND SOME SHOULD STAY HOME.

Improving the economic conditions that would allow people who are clearly ambitious — if they're going to walk across the desert to get here, they're ambitious people — improving the capability of those people to stay home and contribute is the last piece of that puzzle. Comprehensive immigration reform is

the one thing I wish we'd been able to do, and it's going to have to be done, and I hope it's done soon.

#### WHAT SHOULD NOT BE ABANDONED.

The other thing that I'm worried about out of this current global financial crisis and whatever economic fallout there may be is, I really hope we don't sacrifice foreign assistance. The Millennium Challenge and programs like it say: invest in your people, fight corruption, be democratic, and we'll help you. If you can't fulfill that promise, then good governments around the world that have staked their futures on that argument are going to be in very deep trouble. And so I hope that foreign assistance, if anything, continues to increase. We found it flat. The president doubled it in Latin America, quadrupled it in Africa, tripled it worldwide. The president authorized 300 new U.S. AID officers and 1,100 new Foreign Service officers, because we believe that transformational diplomacy is a word for not thinking that your job as a diplomat is to sit in the capital and talk to other governments. It's to get out and help those governments. Without the tools of foreign assistance, we won't be able to do it.

#### WHAT THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD CAN'T ACCOMPLISH.

Do you think Bush expected 9/11? No. Did Clinton expect Bosnia? No. Man makes his plans; God has his own. . . . Remember Bush's second debate with Gore where he campaigned against nation building? Oh, well. . . . The tension between the modesty of knowing what's possible and what isn't, and the desire and ability to do good because you're president of the United States, that challenge is one of the most profound things. . . . Don't shortchange the opportunity to make a difference, but understand how hard it is. . . . You've got to keep both notions in your head at the same time. And that's hard. That's the description for the man in the Oval Office. DANIEL FRIED