

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение
высшего образования
«ТЮМЕНСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»

ИНСТИТУТ СОЦИАЛЬНО-ГУМАНИТАРНЫХ НАУК
кафедра английского языка

РЕКОМЕНДОВАНО К ЗАЩИТЕ
В ГЭК И ПРОВЕРЕНО НА ОБЪЕМ
ЗАИМСТВОВАНИЯ

Заведующий кафедрой

д-р филол. наук, проф.

Н. Н. Белозерова


19 июня 2018 г.

ВЫПУСКНАЯ КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННАЯ РАБОТА
(магистерская диссертация)

ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЕ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ МОДЕЛЕЙ
НА ПРИМЕРЕ ЖАНРА ИНТЕРВЬЮ

45.04.02 Лингвистика

Магистерская программа «Теория и практика преподавания иностранных языков и культур»

Выполнила работу
Студентка 2 курса
очной формы обучения



Хаджимуратова
Аминат
Вахаевна

Научный руководитель
к.ф.н.



Антонова
Светлана
Николаевна

Рецензент
к.ф.н.



Кукарская
Ольга
Валерьевна

г. Тюмень, 2018

СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ.....	3
ГЛАВА 1. ОБЩАЯ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА РЕЧЕВОГО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ.....	5
1.1. Основные параметры описания речевого взаимодействия..	5
1.2. Конвенции и правила речевого взаимодействия.....	9
1.3. Специфика интервью как особого типа речевого взаимодействия.....	15
ГЛАВА 2. ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ПРИЕМЫ В СМИ.....	19
2.1. Понятие СМИ и их типология.....	19
2.2. Языковые средства в СМИ и в частности в интервью.....	22
ГЛАВА 3. ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ СРЕДСТВА, ИСПОЛЬЗУЕМЫЕ ДЛЯ РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ В ЖАНРЕ ИНТЕРВЬЮ.....	27
3.1. Коммуникативные стратегии в прагматическом аспекте. Функционирование повторов в интервью.....	27
3.2. Интервью как источник возникновения эмоциональных высказываний в публицистическом жанре.....	32
3.3. Языковые средства эмоциональной экспрессии в интервью.....	34
3.4. Способы речевого воздействия в заголовках и текстах интервью.....	39
3.5. Языковое манипулирование в интервью.....	46
ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ.....	51
БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК.....	54

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Данная выпускная квалификационная работа посвящена анализу функционирования коммуникативных моделей на примере жанра зарубежных интервью. Представленное исследование основано на положениях функциональной стилистики и прагматики, а также на основных достижениях лингвистического жанроведения.

Как известно, коммуникационный процесс представляет собой обмен информацией между двумя и более людьми. Его целью является обеспечение понимания информации, которая является предметом обмена, то есть сообщением.

Модель коммуникации является абстрактным, речевым или графическим изображением процессов коммуникации, которое выражает взаимосвязь между адресантом (т.е. коммуникатором), адресом, адресатом (т.е. коммуникантом), каналами коммуникаций и средствами коммуникации.

Актуальность исследуемой темы заключается в том, что существует довольно значимое количество моделей коммуникационного процесса, одним из которых является непосредственно интервью.

Жанр интервью относится к особой группе коммуникационных моделей, благодаря своей специфике. Иными словами, интервью представляет собой особый диалогический дискурс, обладающий иллокутивными целями и перлокутивными эффектами.

Важно также отметить, что жанр интервью является одной из наиболее интенсивно развивающихся форм массовой коммуникации. Именно поэтому он и представляет интерес для дальнейшего анализа и изучения.

Теоретическую основу нашего исследования составили труды таких известных отечественных ученых, как Н. Д. Арутюнова, Л. В. Щерба, А. К. Михальская, В. Г. Гак и др., а также мы опирались на труды зарубежных ученых-исследователей: Д. Серль, Д. Остин, П. Грайс и другие.

Объектом исследования является интервью, а предметом

исследования коммуникативные модели и их функционирование.

Материалом исследования послужили 40 текстов интервью, опубликованных в различных изданиях, среди которых Vanity Fair, The Guardian, The Times, CNN, BBC и т.д., а также другие интернет-ресурсы, в том числе видео-интервью.

Целью исследования стало изучение основных моделей коммуникационного процесса и их функционирования (на примере жанра интервью).

Для достижения поставленной цели нами было выделено несколько **задач**, которые решились в ходе исследования:

- 1) изучить сущность массовой коммуникации;
- 2) определить понятия коммуникационного процесса и речевого взаимодействия;
- 3) изучить непосредственно функционирование жанра интервью, его психологию воздействия.

Методы исследования. В данной работе нами использовались многие методы. В их числе методы описания, анализа, обобщения, контекстуальный и интерпретационный методы, а также индукционный и дедукционный методы.

Практическая значимость. Представленный в исследовании практический и теоретический материал может быть использован в теоретических курсах по английскому языку, теории диалога и, возможно, теории и практике СМИ.

Структура работы. Выпускная квалификационная работа состоит из введения, трех глав и заключения. К работе также прилагается библиографический список, включающий 49 наименований отечественных трудов и 7 зарубежных.

ГЛАВА 1. ОБЩАЯ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА РЕЧЕВОГО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ

1.1. Основные параметры описания речевого взаимодействия

Как известно, речь является основным инструментом не только в личном и общественном общении, но также и передаче информации. Иными словами, речевое общение является мотивированным живым процессом взаимодействия, благодаря которому, при использовании конкретных видов речи, можно передавать жизненные целевые установки в разностороннем порядке.

В отечественном языкознании речевое общение стало предметом и объектом исследования в работах таких известных ученых, как Л.П. Якубинский, Л.В. Щерба, Л.С. Выготский, А.А. Бодалев.

Бодалев в одной из своих работ «Личность и общение», определяет **речевое общение** как общение с помощью речи, направленное на достижение цели коммуникации форма взаимодействия двух или более людей посредством языка, включающая обмен информацией познавательного или аффективно-оценочного характера [Бодалев 2008, 24].

Следовательно, взаимодействием общения называется обменный процесс, в котором применяются не только речевые высказывания, но и действия и поступки. Взаимодействие может иметь форму контакта или конфликта, сотрудничества, партнерства или конкуренции и прочие. Взаимодействие может быть речевым и неречевым.

Язык – средство речевого общения, речь – его способ. Как правило, к средствам неречевого общения относят зрение и жесты, моторику и кинестезию (осознание, обоняние, ощущения).

Как пишет Бодалев в своей работе, необходимым условием речевого общения является заинтересованность в общении и способность к диалоговому взаимодействию, обусловленная личностными характеристиками коммуникантов. Эффективность общения при этом зависит

от нацеленности говорящего на слушателя, от способности слушателя принять доводы и аргументы говорящего, его способности прогнозировать смысловое развитие речи, терпимо относиться к речевым недочетам говорящего и критически оценивать личную коммуникативную социокультурную компетенцию

В процессе речевого общения творческий характер имеет не только деятельность говорящего, но и деятельность слушающего, который конструирует диалог, прогнозируя результат коммуникативного взаимодействия [Бодалев 2008, 24].

Общение - это сложный процесс взаимодействия людей. Проблемами общения занимаются представители различных наук: философы, психологи, лингвисты, социологи, культурологи и др. Исследователи выделяют и описывают основные единицы речевого общения - *речевую ситуацию, речевое событие, речевое взаимодействие*.

Речевая ситуация, как отмечает автор, определяется многими исследователями как контекст высказывания, то есть то, что помогает его понять. Известно, что высказывание строится в определенном месте в определенное время и имеет определенный набор участников: говорящий и слушающий. Таким образом, составляющие речевой ситуации – это говорящий, слушающий, время и место высказывания.

Очевидно, что для речевой ситуации важна цель общения, то есть результат, который хотят получить адресат и адресант от своего общения. Различают цели прямые и косвенные. Под прямыми целями обычно понимают передачу и получение информации, выяснение позиций, запрос мнения, обсуждение проблемы, поиск истины, развитие темы, разъяснение, критику и другие. Косвенная цель подразумевает завоевание расположения или сострадания собеседника и так далее.

Речевая ситуация – это то, что помогает понять смысл сообщения, конкретизирует значение ряда грамматических категорий, например, категории времени, местоименных слов типа я, ты, сейчас, здесь, там, вот и др.

Она позволяет также правильно истолковать высказывание, уточнять его целевую функцию (угроза, просьба, совет, рекомендация), выявлять причинные связи данного высказывания с другими событиями и т. д.

Как отмечает А.К. Михальская в своем учебном пособии «Основы риторики», речевая ситуация диктует правила ведения разговора и определяет формы его выражения [Михальская 2009, 46].

Например, типичные диалоги на экзаменах, у железнодорожной кассы, на приеме у врача, в юридической консультации; светские беседы в гостях, на банкетах; публичные дискуссии.

Основная единица речевого общения - речевое событие.

По словам Михальской, **речевое событие** - это своего рода законченное целое со своей формой, структурой, границами. Например, школьный урок, родительское собрание, заседание, конференция, разговор в булочной, в метро и т. д. относятся к речевым событиям.

Речевое событие составляют два главных компонента:

- 1) словесная речь (то, что говорится, сообщается) и то, что ее сопровождает (жесты, мимика, движения и др.);
- 2) условие, обстановка, в которой происходит общение (речевая ситуация).

Первую составляющую речевого события, то есть живую речь, взятую в событийном аспекте, в современной лингвистике называют дискурсом (от франц. discours - речь). **Дискурс** - это речь, «погруженная в жизнь». Дискурс включает паралингвистическое сопровождение речи (мимика, жесты).

Вторая составляющая речевого события представляет собой речевую ситуацию, которая включает его участников, их взаимоотношения, а также обстоятельства, в которых происходит общение.

Согласно Михальской, речевое событие можно представить в виде формулы: «это дискурс плюс речевая ситуация» [Михальская 2009, 46].

Таким образом, речевое событие есть сумма дискурса и речевой ситуации. Это означает, что под речевым событием следует понимать протекающий в контексте речевой ситуации дискурс.

Что касается **речевого взаимодействия**, то, по мнению Михальской, оно представляет собой очень сложное явление. С одной стороны, это говорение, порождение речи субъектом, с другой - восприятие речи адресатом, ее декодирование, понимание содержания, оценка полученной информации и реагирование (вербально, мимикой, жестами, поведением и т. д.).

При межличностном взаимодействии ученые выделяют три компонента, связанных между собой:

1. К компонентам поведения относятся результаты действий, речевые взаимодействия и неречевые действия участников коммуникаций, а также мимика, пантомимика, жесты и все, что можно наблюдать в процессе общения. Наблюдая за поведением определенного человека, можно обозначить его личные отличительные черты, особенности поведения, темперамент и характер. Вспомогательные средства общения (мимика и жесты) помогают человеку проще и быстрее усваивать передаваемую информацию.

2. Эффективным компонентом являются все механизмы, которые отображают эмоциональное состояние человека, удовлетворение или неудовлетворение от общения.

3. Компонент информативности – это понимание целей и задач общения, а также ситуации целиком.

Как известно, средством речевого взаимодействия является высказывание или текст.

Высказывание представляет собой единицу речевого общения, обладающую смыслом, целостностью, соответствующей оформленностью и структурой. Языковым оформлением высказывания является предложение или текст.

Под **текстом**, согласно Михальской, понимается словесное произведение, которое обладает не только связностью, но и завершённостью,

исчерпанностью речевого замысла, наличием момента оценки и самооценки. Различают тексты художественные, разговорные, научные, инструктивные, информационные, агитационные, рекламные, публицистические и другие.

В быту и на работе люди постоянно общаются: обмениваются мыслями и чувствами, договариваются о совместной деятельности, предоставляют какую-либо полезную информацию или дают советы друг другу и т. д. Так, можно сказать, что взаимодействие между людьми является разносторонним проявлением совместной деятельности человека, которая видна во время совместной работы, в общении с друзьями, в научной дискуссии и т. д. Взаимодействие людей в трудовом или творческом процессе подразумевает осмысление всех процессов, совместную работу над стратегиями, их выполнением, усовершенствованием и преобразованием.

Также следуют отметить, что взаимодействие является сложным процессом, для которого основной задачей является налаживание контактов во время осуществления совместных проектов. Для успешного общения необходимо знание языка и достаточное владение речью. С точки зрения психологии и лингвистики, к основным видам речевой деятельности следует отнести слушание, говорение, письмо и чтение.

При обращении к человеку, необходимо понимать цель обращения и характерные психологические особенности адресата. Ведь в процессе общения, чтобы рассказать о чем-то или убедить в чем-то, нам приходится пользоваться разными инструментами речи при разговоре с ребенком или взрослым человеком, с хорошим знакомым или с незнакомцем. В результате человеку необходимо владеть и понимать элементы речевой этики.

1.2. Конвенции и правила речевого взаимодействия

Как показывает практика, в процессе речевого взаимодействия недостаточно знать только родной язык и хорошо владеть речевой культурой. Поэтому важно отметить, что существуют определенные условия, которые необходимы для нормального осуществления

коммуникации. Собеседники также должны придерживаться определенных принципов, правил ведения разговора, которые позволяют координировать их действия и высказывания. Как правило, эффективность речевого взаимодействия прежде всего зависит от создания позитивного коммуникативного климата. Именно он помогает установить контакт и взаимоотношение в процессе общения. Это возможно, если участники коммуникации соблюдают определённые принципы или правила ведения разговора, которые помогают им координировать действия и высказывания.

Учёные сформулировали некоторые принципы организации речевой коммуникации. К ним относятся такие, как принцип последовательности, принцип предпочтительной структуры, принцип кооперации и принцип вежливости.

1. **Принцип последовательности** предполагает смысловое соответствие, или релевантность, ответной реакции: вопрос должен получать ответ; просьба – принятие или отклонение; приветствие – приветствие и т. д. Этот принцип требует закономерного завершения речевого события.

2. **Принцип предпочтительной структуры** характеризует особенности речевых фрагментов с подтверждающими или отклоняющими репликами: согласие дают без промедления, лаконично, ясно, а несогласие же отсрочено паузой, оправдывается доводами, формулируется пространно и т. д.

3. Под **принципом кооперации** подразумевают *готовность партнёров к сотрудничеству*. Этот принцип связан с именем американского философа Герберта Пола Грайса (Herbert Paul Grice). Принцип кооперации требует, чтобы каждый из коммуникантов (участников общения) старался предпринять всё, что только возможно для успешности общения [Грайс 1985].

Следствия из принципа кооперации, по Грайсу, называются максимами, под которыми понимают *коммуникативные обязательства*

говорящего по отношению к адресату. Грайс выделяет четыре таких максим:

1. **Максима количества** – говори только то, что необходимо.
2. **Максима качества** – говори правду.
3. **Максима соответствия** (отношения/ релевантности) – говори только то, что относится к содержанию данного разговора.
4. **Максима способа** (манеры) – говори ясно, последовательно, точно, вежливо.

1) Максима количества требует, чтобы человек говорил не больше, но и не меньше того, чем это нужно, т.е. делал свой вклад настолько информативным, насколько необходимо. Примером нарушения максимы количества может служить высказывание В. Жириновского: «Политику нужно иметь лицо и уметь говорить! Я способен овладевать аудиторией – не каждому это дано. Я завораживаю зал. Люди хлопают на каждую хорошую фразу» [Грайс 1985].

2) Максима качества означает «говори правду». Не говори того, что считаешь ложным. Не говори того, в чём сомневаешься. Не утверждай того, чего не можешь подтвердить доказательствами. Будь искренен, поскольку адресат ожидает, что ваш вклад будет искренним, а не фальшивым. Грайс замечает, что если он попросит соль, то он не ожидает, что ему подадут сахар, или если он просит хлеба, он не думает получить камень [Грайс 1985].

3) Максима отношения, или релевантности, призывает не отклоняться от темы. Говори только то, что относится к сути данного разговора. На каждом шаге совместных действий естественно ожидать, что вклад партнёра будет уместен по отношению к непосредственным целям данного шага. Говори только к месту. Будь релевантным. Говори только по существу. Как нарушается постулат отношения, показывает следующий пример: Пойдём в кино. – У меня завтра экзамен (вместо «не могу»). Ты считаешь её красивой? – Она хорошо одевается (не считает, но не хочет говорить) [Грайс 1985].

4) Максима способа (манеры) требует последовательности, ясности, точности, вежливости. Избегай непонятных выражений. Избегай двусмысленности, неоднозначных выражений. Будь краток, избегай излишнего многословия. Будь последователен. Будь организован. Будь аккуратен, систематичен. Естественно ожидать, что партнёр даст понять, в чём состоит его вклад, что он выполнит свои действия с должной скоростью.

П. Грайс говорит: «Я сформулировал постулаты таким образом, будто целью общения является максимально эффективная передача информации; естественно, это определение слишком узко, и всё построение должно быть обобщено в применении к таким общим целям, как воздействие на других людей, управление их поведением и т.п.» [Грайс 1985].

Эти максимы Грайса углубляют традиционные критерии речевой культуры: правильность, точность, уместность, выразительность и лаконичность. В этих максимах имеются некоторые перекрёсты, тем не менее они создают набор правил, которые определяют, как должно проходить общение. К сожалению, они не учитывают те речевые ситуации, когда необходимо защитить «лицо». Чтобы сохранить «лицо», коммуникант предъявляет партнёру ряд требований. При этом он отдаёт себе отчёт в том, что у партнёра такие же требования. Это говорит о том, что «лицо» – это двусторонняя категория: 1) «негативное лицо» с требованиями свободы действия и 2) «позитивное лицо» с требованиями быть уважаемым, получать одобрение остальных. В этом случае принципы Грайса несколько уступают принципу вежливости Джеффри Лича, который гласит: «Своди к минимуму (при прочих равных условиях) выражение невежливости мнений и суждений и доводи до максимума выражение вежливых мнений и суждений». Этот принцип всецело принадлежит речевому этикету. Принцип вежливости представляет собой совокупность ряда максим [Leech 1983].

Под *постулатом* (*postulatum* эквивалентно понятию «соглашение, принимаемое без доказательств») вежливости Д. Лич понимает определённую стратегию общения, направленную на предотвращение

возможных конфликтных ситуаций. Эту стратегию составляют шесть максимум (постулатов):

- **Максима такта:** «своди к минимуму неудобство для адресата и доводи до максимума выгоды для адресата; не следует затрагивать тем, потенциально опасных для собеседника.

- **Максима великодушия** – не следует связывать партнёра обязательствами, обещаниями, не обременяй его. Эта максима предохраняет собеседника от доминирования в ходе коммуникативного акта. Хороший коммуникативный акт не должен быть дискомфортным для участников общения.

- **Максима одобрения** – не осуждай других; не судите, да не судимы будете. Эта максима позитивности в оценке других. Атмосфера, в которой происходит речевое взаимодействие, определяется не только позициями собеседников по отношению друг к другу, но и позицией каждого по отношению к миру. Если оценка мира не совпадает с оценкой собеседника, то это сильно затрудняет реализацию собственной коммуникативной стратегии.

- **Максима скромности** – не будьте высокомерны, будьте реалистичны в самооценке; «своди к минимуму похвалу себе и доводи до максимума неодобрение себя». Эта максима неприятия похвал в собственный адрес. Одним из условий успешного развёртывания коммуникативного акта является реалистическая, по возможности объективная самооценка. Сильно завышенные или сильно заниженные самооценки могут отрицательно повлиять на установление контакта.

- **Максима согласия** – избегайте конфликтных ситуаций, старайтесь уменьшать разногласия и увеличивать согласие. Эта максима неопозиционности. Она предполагает отказ от конфликтной ситуации во имя решения более серьёзной задачи – сохранения предмета взаимодействия путём взаимной коррекции коммуникативных тактик собеседников.

- **Максима симпатии** – будьте доброжелательны по отношению к партнёру; «своди к минимуму антипатию между собой и адресатом, доводи симпатию до максимума. Эта максима благожелательности, которая создаёт благоприятный фон для перспективного предметного разговора. Неблагожелательность делает речевой акт невозможным. Определённую проблему создаёт так называемый безучастный контакт, когда собеседники не демонстрируют доброжелательности по отношению друг к другу [Leech 1983].

Ученый Дж. Лич также отмечает, что в процессе общения принцип кооперации Пола Грайса взаимодействует с его принципами вежливости и является его дополнением. Он допускает возможность кросскультурной вариативности, поскольку в разных культурах предпочтение может отдаваться разным максимам. Например, для средиземноморской культуры более важной является максима вежливости, для европейских стран – максима такта, а для азиатского менталитета – максима скромности.

Максимы Лича способствуют сохранению социального имиджа коммуникантов, которые заинтересованы в сохранении как своего лица, так и лица партнёра. При этом сохранение лица не цель коммуникации, а главное условие, без соблюдения которого нормальное общение невозможно.

Принцип кооперации Грайса и принцип вежливости Лича составляют основу так называемого коммуникативного кодекса, представляющего собой сложную систему принципов, регулирующих речевое поведение обеих сторон в ходе коммуникативного акта и базирующихся на ряде категорий и критериев [Дорфман, Чернова 2011].

Исходя из этого, при рассмотрении коммуникативного кодекса и анализе возможностей его использования в практике речевого общения следует иметь в виду, что сформулированные максимы не имеют абсолютного значения, ни одна из максим сама по себе не обеспечивает

успешного взаимодействия собеседников, более того, соблюдение одной максимы может привести к нарушению другой.

1.3. Специфика интервью как особого типа речевого взаимодействия

Изучение речевых жанров является одним из основных подходов к исследованию диалогической речи. Современная действительность порождает большое количество разнообразных коммуникативных ситуаций. Одной из самых ярких форм «публичной коммуникации» в наши дни является «**публичный диалог**» (термин Е.И. Голановой) [Голанова, 2000]. Интервью, как один из самых распространенных типов публичного диалога, дает возможность увидеть и зафиксировать новые тенденции развития устной и письменной публичной речи. Тексты современных интервью отражают значительные изменения в языковых вкусах и речевом поведении нашего современника.

В интервью собеседники – журналист (интервьюер) и его партнер (интервьюируемый) – участвуют в информационном обмене для информационного насыщения главного, хотя и незримого, третьего участника коммуникации – аудитории, чьим требованиям и потребностям они должны соответствовать [Швец 2006].

Следует привести некоторые определения жанра интервью современных исследователей.

К примеру, Г.В. Кузнецов, В.Л. Цвик, А.Я. Юровский определяют интервью как жанр публицистики, представляющий собой разговор журналиста с социально значимой личностью по актуальным вопросам. При обращении к семантике английского слова «интервью» видно, что слово состоит из префикса *inter*, что значит – взаимодействие, и слова *view*, одно из значений которого – взгляд. Таким образом, анализируя семантику слова «интервью», авторы дают еще одно определение – «Интервью – обмен

мнениями, взглядами, фактами, сведениями» [Кузнецов. Цвик, Юровский 2002].

Э.Г. Багиров, Р.А. Борецкий представляют интервью как беседу в форме вопросов и ответов. «Интервью – это диалог, происходящий между журналистом, получающим информацию, и каким-либо носителем информации, при одностороннем участии аудитории» [Багиров, Борецкий 1987].

Наиболее точное, на наш взгляд, определение интервью как вида журналистского творчества дал в своей книге С.Н. Ильченко: «Интервью – целостный акт коммуникации, предполагающий диалогическое общение журналиста с интервьюируемым в ситуации последовательного чередования вопросов и ответов с целью получения информации, мнений и суждений, представляющих общественный интерес» [Ильченко 2003].

Это значит, что жанр интервью – это форма получения журналистом определенной информации от респондента, т.е. собеседника, с помощью вопросов; иными словами, диалог – самое естественное средство общения.

Направляемый вопросно-ответный диалог в СМИ, основная задача которого заключается в выяснении отдельных фактов, взглядов и позиций респондента, является ярким примером асимметричного общения с четким распределением коммуникативных ролей и жесткой регламентацией прав и обязанностей коммуникантов. В плане структурирования речевого взаимодействия доминирует журналист, где вопрос является для него основным средством организации и направления разговора в нужное русло. Но в плане содержания ведущая роль, как правило, принадлежит респонденту [André-Larochébouvy 1984, 11-12; Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1990, 120].

В связи с таким распределением ролей следует отметить, что в случае сомнения относительно иллокутивной функции (при отсутствии вопросительных маркеров), высказывание журналиста обычно воспринимается респондентом как вопрос, даже если оно произносится с

повествовательной интонацией [Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1991, 94; Fontaney 1991, 130].

Другая важная особенность данного диалогического жанра состоит в том, что настоящим адресатом акта коммуникации являются третьи лица, следовательно, и журналист и респондент должны сотрудничать для удовлетворения интересов своей аудитории. Вследствие ориентации диалога на аудиторию, журналист часто задает вопросы, на которые он уже знает ответ [André-Larochebouvy 1984, 11].

Таким образом, главное назначение жанра интервью состоит в том, чтобы информировать общественность о значительном событии, важном начинании, привлечь внимание к актуальной проблеме, узнать авторитетное мнение по тому или иному существенному вопросу.

Суть интервью – целенаправленное, плановое получение информации, необходимой для реализации определенных целей.

Специфика интервью заключается в том, что, в отличие от всех других жанров публицистики, оно представляет собой результат сотрудничества журналиста и собеседника. Интервью обладает особой силой убедительности, правдивостью. В этом смысле интервью играет немаловажную роль в формировании общественного мнения.

Интервью обладает возможностью эмоционального воздействия на читателя, т.к. позволяет дать представление о личности собеседника, об обстановке, в которой протекал разговор. Этот жанр позволяет охарактеризовать внутренний мир человека, передать его мысли [Швец 2008, 9].

Успех интервью измеряется количеством и качеством информации, полученной за время его проведения. Вопросы - не самоцель журналистского интервью. Разумеется, оно проводится ради ответов. Однако ответы не рождаются сами по себе, их вызывает вопрос.

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ

Таким образом, в первой главе исследовательской работы мы разобрали понятие речевого взаимодействия, основные его параметры и необходимые условия для успешного достижения коммуникативных целей и также правила, которые следует учитывать для создания положительного коммуникативного климата. Также мы выяснили, что существуют определенные правила и конвенции общения. Они играют практически решающую роль при ведении диалога. Следовательно, от них зависит то, насколько успешно будет достигнута коммуникативная цель. При несоблюдении данных правил и принципов, коммуниканты могут потерпеть коммуникативную неудачу.

Также в этой главе мы изучили и описали жанр интервью. Этот жанр является особенным за счет своей монолого-диалогической формы. Его основное назначение – это передача информации для третьих лиц. Более того, интервью является одним из жанров, в котором наиболее четко прослеживается применение и соблюдение вышеупомянутых правил и конвенций общения.

ГЛАВА 2. ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ПРИЕМЫ В СРЕДСТВАХ МАССОВОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИИ

2.1. Понятие средств массовой информации, их типология

Согласно Пугачеву, который занимался исследованием публицистических моделей коммуникации, СМИ представляют собой учреждения, созданные для открытой, публичной передачи с помощью специального технического инструментария различных сведений любым лицам – это относительно автономная система, для которой характерно большое количество компонентов: содержание, свойства, формы, методы определенные уровни организации (в стране, в регионе, на производстве и т.д.). Среди отличительных особенностей СМИ, которые выделяет автор, можно перечислить следующие: публичность, т.е. неограниченное число пользователей; наличие специальных технических средств, аппаратуры; непостоянный объем аудитории, который меняется в зависимости от того, насколько данная передача, сообщение или статья представляют интерес [Пугачев 1999: 205].

Также автор предоставляет классификацию средств массовой информации, разделяя их на визуальные (печатная пресса), аудиальные (радио), аудиовизуальные (телевидение, документальное кино).

Визуальные. К данному типу СМИ относятся печатные издания (газеты, еженедельники, журналы, альманахи, книги). Визуальные средства заняли особое место в системе средств массовой информации. Произведенная с помощью печатного станка продукция содержит в себе информацию в виде напечатанного буквенного текста, фотографий, рисунков, плакатов, схем, графиков и других изобразительно-графических форм, воспринимаемых читателем без использования каких-либо дополнительных средств (в то время как для получения радио- и телевизионной информации необходимо иметь телевизор, радиоприемник, магнитофон и т.д.) [Пугачев 1999].

Аудиальные. Радиовещание занимает центральное место среди

аудиальных СМИ в течение долгого времени. Наиболее характерной его особенностью представляется тот факт, что в этом случае носителем информации является только звук (в том числе и паузы). Радиосвязь может использовать как радиоволны (в таком случае она будет представлять собой эфирное вещание), так и провода (тогда речь будет идти о проводном вещании). Данные способы дают возможность мгновенно передавать информацию на любые расстояния, причем получение сигнала происходит в момент передачи (либо с небольшой задержкой, если расстояния, на которые происходит передача, довольно большие). Это обеспечивает оперативность радиовещания, когда сообщение приходит буквально сразу после того, как произошло событие, что не представляется возможным для печатной прессы. Более того, стоит отметить, что радио часто слушают водители автомобилей, так как за рулем невозможно смотреть телевизор или читать периодику.

На ранних этапах существования радио могло передавать только речевые сообщения, однако с развитием технических средств и радиоаппаратуры оказалось возможным передавать различные виды звуков – шумы, музыкальные композиции, устная речь. Именно это свойство обеспечивает такое преимущество радиовещания, как формирование полноценной звуковой картины мира [Пугачев 1999].

Аудиовизуальные. К данному виду средств массовой информации относится телевидение. Начало ему было положено в 30-х годах прошлого столетия, и уже в 60-х оно вошло в тройку самых влиятельных СМИ наравне с радио и периодическими изданиями. Со временем позиции телевидения только укреплялись, и по таким показателям, как событийная информация, культура и досуг оно прочно закрепилось на первом месте.

Особенностью телевидения является то, что оно объединяет в себе особенности и преимущества как радио, так и кино. С одной стороны, благодаря использованию радиоволн сигнал может передаваться на значительные расстояния. С другой стороны, этот сигнал будет нести не только звуковую, но и видеинформацию, а уже на экране она может

представать как в виде фильма или фотографии, так и в виде графиков, схем и т.д. Не стоит забывать и о том, что текстовая информация также может быть отображена на экране телевизора, что ранее являлось прерогативой исключительно печатной прессы [Пугачев 1999].

Как можно видеть из представленной выше классификации, средства массовой информации затрагивают различные области, включая экономику, политику, идеологию, духовную и социальные сферы. При этом среди выполняемых СМИ функций можно выделить следующие:

- производственно-экономическую;
- регулируемую;
- духовно-идеологическую;
- информационно-коммуникативную.

Современные исследования соотносят СМИ и осуществляемые ими функции следующим образом:

-гуманитарные функции СМИ – информирование населения, образование, развлечение, досуг и т.п.;

-политические функции СМИ – формирование массового общественного сознания и/или направленное влияние на отдельные группы населения.

Как пишет в своих исследованиях Розенталь, популярная (массовая) пресса чаще всего пишет о скандалах, сенсационных историях, личной жизни звезд, сексе, спорте и спортивной жизни в целом, печатает криминальную хронику, розыгрыши лотерей и призов. Основположником так называемой «копеечной» прессы считается лорд Нортклиф. Хотя реклама в британских газетах может занимать от 15 до 50%, что составляет большую цифру, ее количество на страницах печатной прессы зависит в первую очередь от тиража и рейтинга конкретного издания [Розенталь 1981: 59].

Важным является вопрос о нормах свободы печати и профессиональной этике работников СМИ. К сожалению, даже сам факт существования норм свободы печати является малоизвестным. Тем не менее, общее

законодательство страны, в частности законы о клевете и диффамации, о рекламе, о государственной тайне, а также о непристойности, предусматривает ответственность за злоупотребление вышеуказанными нормами. «Кодекс практики» регламентирует профессиональную этику редакторов газет и журналов, журналистов [Панкратов 2002: 58].

Нормативные акты предусмотрены только в рамках регулирования радио-, телевидения и рекламного дела, а также размеров собственности в газетном бизнесе. В 1953 году формируется Совет по печати, призванный следить за этикой прессы. Принятый Парламентом в 1965 году закон о монополиях и слияниях позволяет слияния газет, суммарный тираж которых составляет не более 500 000 экземпляров при условии санкции со стороны министерств, торговли и промышленности [Панкратов 2002: 185].

2.2. Языковые средства в СМИ и в частности в интервью

В процессе изучения языка СМИ отчетливо выявляются его особенности – конкретные лингвистические средства и композиционные приемы. В сочетании с тематикой текстов массмедиа они позволяют привлекать внимание читателей, слушателей, зрителей. Языковые средства – это характерные для медиатекстов лексические, стилистические, морфологические, синтаксические особенности, которые увеличивают аттрактивность, привлекательность этих текстов для воспринимающих их людей. Приёмы медиатекстов – это особенности их композиции, подача ими тематического содержания.

Анализ средств выявил большое сходство их стилистики со стилистикой развлекательной индустрии. Иными словами, можно сделать вывод, что в текстах наблюдается стремление к сенсационности и даже открытая апелляция к низменным инстинктам.

Среди основных средств, которые, по нашему мнению, увеличивают персуазивность дискурса и направлены на привлечение внимания зрителей и

слушателей к эфиру, можно выделить:

1) «вербальные сенсации», т.е. слова и лексемы, которые привлекают внимание зрителя: *stunning* (потрясающий), *fury* (ярость), *outrage* (возмущение), *prostitutes* (проститутки), *giant, giant monster wave* (огромная-преогромная волна-монстр), *crack smoking video* (снятое на видео курение кокаина); иногда целые предложения типа “you’ve got to see this video to believe it” («Вы не поверите, пока не увидите это видео»);

2) оценочные прилагательные (порой без фактологической нагрузки): *tragic shooting* (трагическое убийство), *stunning statement* (шокирующее заявление), *terrible tragedy* (ужасная трагедия);

3) яркие метафоры: *verbal scalpel* (вербальный скальпель), *prescription for disaster* (рецепт бедствия), *catch a wave* (поймать волну);

4) фигуры речи: градация в *targeted, injured and even killed* (взятые на прицел, раненые и даже убитые), оксюморон *a little too much* (немного слишком).

При этом первые три группы открыто и явно привлекают внимание зрителей. Они непосредственно завлекают зрителя, обещая ему пикантные детали криминальных историй, сенсаций, стихийных бедствий и т.д. Преследуя эту цель, авторы намеренно выбирают эмоционально-экспрессивные лексемы, которые несут в себе яркую оценку, что и позволяет создать эффект сенсации. Использование оригинальных метафор позволяет достичь актуализации благодаря столкновению прямых и переносных значений. Таким образом, данные средства выполняют аттрактивную задачу, то есть привлекают внимание зрителя и оказывают непосредственное влияние на его сознание.

Напротив, фигуры же речи не несут в себе эксплицитного призыва обратить внимание на новость, о которой пойдёт речь. Для обычного зрителя они остаются незамеченными, особенно при восприятии на слух. По нашему мнению, стилистические фигуры можно отнести к скрытым инструментам, поскольку они хоть и помогают продвигать новость в медиапространстве, но

основным средством её позиционирования не являются. Среди них, в частности, можно отметить оксюморон “a little too much time” (немного слишком много времени) или антанакласис в предложении: “While the government is talking military spending cuts, the military is expected to extend benefits to same sex partners” (Пока правительство говорит о сокращениях военного бюджета, военные должны распространить социальный пакет на однополые браки) [The Guardian 2008].

Далее мы рассмотрим морфологические средства привлечения внимания, которые, как показало исследование, играют довольно важную роль как в интервью, так и в других жанрах СМИ.

Таким образом, мы выделили следующие морфологические средства:

1) повелительное наклонение глагола: наиболее популярны конструкции типа take a look at/look at (посмотрите на...), look at this thing (посмотрите на это), watch this (смотрите это), stay with us (оставайтесь с нами);

2) настоящее время глагола в значении прошедшего: hear what he’s saying (узнайте, что он говорит) об интервью, которое уже со-стоялось;

3) прямое обращение к зрителю с помощью личного местоимения you (ты/вы), притяжательного your (твой/ваш);

4) превосходная и сравнительная степень прилагательных: the largest storm in the world tonight (самый большой циклон в мире на данный момент), the best video of the day (лучшее видео дня), the largest tropical cyclone ever (самый большой в истории тропический циклон);

5) наречия, условно относимые нами к «категории сенсационности»: они подчеркивают эксклюзивность предлагаемого материала (“only on CNN” (только на Си-эн-эн)), высокую степень масштабности и зрелищности происходящего (“the fire <...> so large it can be seen from space” (пожар настолько большой, что его видно из космоса), “the largest ever” (самый большой в истории)), невероятность, сенсационность происходящего (“completely crazy”(совершенно безрассудно), “even more tragic” (еще более трагично)).

Далее мы представим синтаксические средства, которые наиболее часто используются журналистами, особенно в интервью, где успешность речевого взаимодействия зависит не только от правильно построенного диалогического хода, но и от типов вопросов и от того, каким образом они были заданы.

Итак, мы выделили:

1) порядок слов. Здесь важно отметить, что он является вспомогательным средством и используется для усиления других инструментов воздействия;

2) вопросительные конструкции. Как известно, вопросительные конструкции являются составляющей вопросно-речевого хода. Следовательно, они играют важную роль. Сюда относятся не только общие и частные вопросы, но и риторические, вопросы-загадки, цель которых заинтриговать зрителя или слушателя. Например: “So, who in the administration knew what and when?” (Кто в администрации знал что и когда?) или “America’s unemployment rate drops, but will the conservatives give president Obama credit?” (В Америке падает уровень безработицы, но похвалят ли за это консерваторы президента Обаму?) [Times 2011];

3) вопросительные придаточные в роли самостоятельных повествовательных предложений. Помимо вопросительных предложений используются и повествовательные, которые начинаются с вопросительных слов (why, how, what, how much). Подобные фразы по структуре идентичны неполным предложениям. Они соотносятся с придаточными в составе сложноподчиненного изъяснительного предложения, главная часть которого восстанавливается логикой анонса: «мы расскажем/в программе будет рассказано» и подобные. Контекст в таких случаях всегда задан предыдущим предложением. К примеру, “How a 17-year-old was saved by a neighbor” (Как 17-летний подросток был спасен соседом) в контексте с предшествующим: “He was locked up in a basement for months and treated like a prisoner in his very own home” (Многие месяцы его держали в подвале собственного дома и обращались как с узником.) [Times 2007].

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ

Во второй главе исследования мы изучили языковые приемы, используемые в средствах массовой коммуникации. В ходе анализа мы углубились в понятие средств массовой коммуникации. Особенностью СМИ являются публичность, т.е. неограниченный круг пользователей; наличие специальных технических приборов, аппаратуры; непостоянный объем аудитории, меняющейся в зависимости от проявленного интереса к той или иной передаче, сообщению или статье.

Нами были выявлены некоторые типы СМИ, наиболее популярные в наше время. Каждый из них имеет особую специфику и по-своему важен, и интересен. Таким образом, СМИ может проявлять себя в разных сферах.

Далее мы изучили особые средства, фигурирующие в интервью и в СМИ в целом, и пришли к выводу, что наиболее часто встречающимися являются намеренно измененный порядок слов, различные типы вопросов, в том числе риторические вопросы и вопросы-загадки, и вопросы-утверждения. Все эти средства используются авторами для привлечения внимания зрителей, читателей, слушателей, иными словами – третьих лиц. Прибегая к языковым средствам, авторы таким образом непосредственно воздействуют на сознание третьих лиц, интригуют их.

ГЛАВА 3. ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ СРЕДСТВА, ИСПОЛЬЗУЕМЫЕ ДЛЯ РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ В ЖАНРЕ ИНТЕРВЬЮ.

3.1. Коммуникативные стратегии в прагматическом аспекте.

Функционирование повторов в интервью.

Как известно, жанр интервью отражает общую закономерность ведения диалога. Это значит, что собеседники не просто чередуются коммуникативными ролями адресанта и адресата сообщения, но сами процессы говорения и слушания сопряжены с сохранением в моделируемой речевой ситуации особенностей языкового сознания участников беседы. Опираясь на исследование Бахтина, отметим, что в процессе порождения высказывания собеседники стремятся запечатлеть актуальное для них прагматическое содержание, то есть личностный смысл. Как пишет автор, выражение личностного смысла представляет собой некую проекцию собственных способов воздействия на конкретных реальных людей в различных локальных ситуациях общения. Автор считает, что выражение личностного смысла почти невозможно без одновременного формирования у каждого из собеседников впечатления о партнере по диалогическому общению. Таким образом, в данном аспекте процесс слушания предстает активной коммуникативной установкой, которая требует интерпретацию, адекватную импликациям процесса говорения, который, в свою очередь, одновременно влечет за собой проекцию акта слушания в терминах идей М. Бахтина, общих установок использования языка в диалогическом дискурсе [Бахтин 1997].

Большинство исследователей, среди которых Н. Д. Арутюнова, О. В. Барабаш и С. А. Торлакян, подчеркивают активную роль слушающего в интерпретации и профилировании дискурса говорящего. Арутюнова в своей работе пишет, что в данном отношении актуальным оказывается тот факт, что адресат сообщения определяет значение иницирующей реплики, а

коммуникативное поведение слушающего оказывает влияние на позицию говорящего. Таким образом, мы заключили, что оптимальным прагматическим результатом подобного дискурса, способности моделировать свое участие в диалоге как на уровне общего участия в беседе, так и на уровне значения отдельного высказывания предстает коммуникативная стратегия активного вовлечения собеседника в диалогическое взаимодействие.

Многие тексты интервью предназначены для публикации в популярных иллюстрированных журналах, следовательно, стратегии активного вовлечения собеседника в спонтанную беседу распространяют свое прагматическое действие не только на интервьюируемое лицо, но и на последующих читателей. Иными словами, данные стратегии – через модели звука и смысла – актуальны как для устного, так и письменного дискурса. Так интервьюируемый вовлекается в конструирование спонтанного диалога через звуковую составляющую, а читательская аудитория – через смысловую составляющую. Реконструируя значения, которые поступают по разным каналам, интервьюируемый и читатель в равной степени становятся участниками диалогического дискурса. Исходя из этого, сделаем вывод, что данные типы активного вовлечения собеседника в диалог являются необходимыми условиями реализации интервью как жанра, для которого характерен двойственный собеседник [Гаранян 2010, 123].

Реплики интервьюера в процессе конструирования спонтанного интервью приобретают не только иницирующий характер, но также предстают реакциями на предшествующее высказывание интервьюируемого [Гаранян 2010, 123]. Автор исследования отмечает, что достаточно частотными в данных репликах интервьюера являются повторы. Средства языковой аналогии позволяют инициатору беседы, в последствии *корреспонденту*, задавать парадигму диалогического общения, диалогизировать частный слот для получения дополнительной – актуальной для третьих лиц – информации, фрей которой задан предшествующей репликой интервьюируемого, т.е. *респондента*:

(1) P: «...*Once you feel like you have something that has a good foundation, that's when you take it into the studio. That's where you open the door to some chaos and improvisation and chemistry with your friends and fellow musicians. That, more often than not, is where the atmosphere is created. It comes in the latter half of production for me.*»

K: «*A production of you?*» ... [*Vanity Fair*, 2009].

В данном случае поэтическая техника языковых повторов включает актуализацию скрытых смыслов, ассоциативные связи, заложенные в реплику как средство сознательного манипулирования готовыми знаковыми системами при вписывании их в более широкий контекст, что позволяет интервьюеру выявить разнообразие возможных номинаций ситуации, актуализированной в предшествующем высказывании как средство создания экспрессивности беседы [Заика 2007, 50]. И в связи с этим, можно сделать вывод, что, используя повторы, интервьюер работает не только с интервьюируемым, но, таким образом, и на третьих лиц – на публику, непосредственно вовлекая ее в происходящее.

В конструируемом дискурсе обнаруживается совместное участие в смыслопроизводстве, главной формой которого выступает порождение образов: как интервьюируемым, который уточняет, дополняет ранее обозначенную ситуацию – поддаваясь стратегии активного вовлечения в беседу, так и читателей/зрителей, который создает собственный образ на основе предложенного интервьюируемым образа. Сила образа, передающего смысл и эмоции, заключается в его способности детализировать актуализированную ситуацию [Кудряшов 2005, 240].

Как показывает исследование, на уровне текста беседы именно одновременное конструирование ситуации в когнитивном сознании интервьюируемого и читателя порождает процесс их совместного участия в смыслопроизводстве. Инициатором данного процесса выступает реплика интервьюера, содержащая повтор. В данном случае, языковая аналогия способствует порождению совместных образов, посредством которых

осуществляется коммуникация между интервьюируемым и публикой, оказывается возможным их взаимопонимание. Таким образом, создается единое смысловое пространство общения, которое делает возможным вовлечение публики в личностное пространство интервьюируемого, и «вторжение» интервьюера в личностное пространство публики [Кудряшов 2005, 240].

В рамках художественного и разговорного дискурса повтор традиционно рассматривается в аспекте таксономии средств когезии текста. Исследователями отмечается его референциальная и связующая функция [Милевская 2003, 311]. Бесспорно, данная функция актуальна для повтора и в жанре интервью. Он выявляет тот факт, как происходит сцепка диалогической реплики интервьюера с предшествующим дискурсом, как идеи, актуализованные в спонтанном дискурсе, соотносятся друг с другом. Вместе с тем средства языковой аналогии выявляют отношение интервьюера к сказанному, определяют его ведущую роль в конструировании значения спонтанного дискурса в целом. В терминах темы и ремы повтор предстает прагматически релевантным способом формирования ремы дискурса. При этом рема выступает как оценка деятельности интервьюируемого, на которой делается логический акцент.

(2) P: «*People just had this strong, visceral reaction to it... And people were thinking about Gollum's performance when he talks himself.* »...«*And people were saying he should get an Oscar.* »

K: «*It's animated character and people were talking about an Oscar for this!*» [Vanity Fair, 2009].

Повтор сегмента *and people* ... в реплике интервьюера связывает данную реплику с предыдущими (также содержащими данный сегмент), выступает индикатором того, что действия соотносятся с одним и тем же субъектом, за которым представляется, скрывается образ самого читателя или зрителя (интервью). Также повтор задает определенный ритм спонтанному диалогу, таким образом, создавая впечатление внушительного списка действий

зрителей-читателей, оценивающих творческую активность интервьюируемого (в данном случае автора фильма «Аватар»).

Можно сказать, что в интервью повтор выступает в качестве средства конструирования косвенного смысла, которое закладывается в когнитивное сознание публики в контексте введения беседы. Иными словами, повтор не только связывает части дискурса, но и способствует налаживанию диалога между участниками интервью и третьими лицами в смысловом пространстве, заданном интервьюером. Средства языковой аналогии косвенно семантизируют данную смысловую перспективу в выгодном для интервьюируемого свете.

В процессе развертывания беседы повтор используется интервьюером при описании очередных граней характера интервьюера, выявленных в сложившейся ситуации. Эти грани актуализируются в репликах участников интервью категорией отстранения: корреспондент характеризует собеседника как бы со стороны, глазами «чужака», что позволяет, в таком случае, выявить уникальный характер ситуации, в которые попадает респондент в ходе своей творческой деятельности.

В референтном отношении повтор отражает положительные качества респондента, обладает подтекстным потенциалом, оболочка которого сообщает некую дополнительную, требующую расшифровки со стороны третьих лиц информацию.

(3) К: «*What was your favorite scene to shoot?* »

Р: «... My favorite scene that we ended up shooting was this little random one near the beginning... *There was a person over there who intimidated Bella by being a scary vampire and she doesn't back down at all.* »

К: «*And you played that person...*»

Р: «*And I couldn't put together the fact there was someone intimidating Bella and I played that person...*» [Vanity Fair 2008]. Интервьюируемый с поддержкой реплики-реакции интервьюера повествует о своих впечатлениях во время съемок как бы глазами постороннего зрителя.

3. 2. Интервью как источник возникновения эмоциональных высказываний в публицистическом жанре.

Как известно, языковые средства выражения эмоциональности, используемые коммуникантами, реализуют свою эмотивную силу в высказывании. То есть «осуществляется эмотивно-ориентированная стратегия речевого воздействия, которой присуща тенденция к изменению (модификации), например, при выделении и использовании оттенков смысла» [Рубанова, 2004: 148].

В публицистических жанрах наиболее отчетливо свои качества эмоциональность проявляет в интервью, т.к. диалогическая речь, являясь непосредственной характеристикой этого жанра, располагает соответствующей системой средств создания эмоционального значения. Выбор конкретной языковой единицы зависит от характера описываемого денотата, ситуации, взаимоотношения коммуникантов, участников интервью.

Диалогическая речь здесь - не только наиболее благоприятная среда для реализации эмотивной функции языка, но и источник возникновения новых выразительных средств. В формировании эмотивности принимают участие единицы разных уровней. Диалогическая речь, таким образом, представляет собой «коммуникативную систему, для которой характерна сиюминутность речепроизводства, быстрота и непосредственность процесса отражения явлений и ситуаций объективного мира, активность говорящих в отношении выражения своего индивидуального отношения к фактам, обилие эмоциональных реакций» [Чахоян, 1979: 121]. Что же касается интервью, то этот жанр рассчитан на формирование общественного мнения, манипуляции сознанием людей, что требует открытой манифестации эмоциональной оценки фактов окружающей действительности.

О тесной связи между интервью и диалогом говорит тот факт, что в некоторых исследованиях, посвященных интервью, употребляется термин «диалог» как синоним интервью в целом. Жанр интервью, отмечают

исследователи, традиционно входит в группу информационных жанров публицистики [Богданов, Вяземский, 1971:265]. Диалогическое единство в интервью состоит из двух, трех, четырех и более реплик, взаимосвязанных друг с другом не только в структурно-композиционном, но и в смысловом и функциональном отношении. «Между репликами диалогического единства устанавливаются отношения «стимул -реакция». Это означает, что каждая исходная реплика порождает вторую ответную реплику и т.д. Между ними существует, как правило, «имплицативная» связь» [Бузаров, 2001: 168].

Таким образом, выделяются интенциональные (стимулирующие, управляющие) реплики (вопрос), и реактивные, так называемые зависимые, реагирующие (ответ). Здесь можно провести параллель с обычным типом диалогической речи, где «именно ответная реплика, структурно завершая исходную, формирует целостный семантический план диалогического единства, автор второй реплики формирует реакцию, испытав и переработав то или иное воздействие партнера по коммуникации. В результате этого само диалогическое единство характеризуется структурной и смысловой взаимосвязанностью входящих в него реплик, семантической замкнутостью и коммуникативной завершенностью» [Агапова, 2003: 32].

Эмоциональные конструкции, функционирующие в интервью, могут входить в состав как стимулирующей, так и реагирующей реплик. Эмоциональные высказывания, входящие в ответные реплики можно разделить на две группы: контактные и неконтактные. Контактными называются эмоциональные высказывания, которые являются непосредственной реакцией на предшествующую реплику собеседника и следуют сразу за ней. Неконтактные высказывания, входя в состав вербальной реакции, не следуют непосредственно за инициирующей репликой. Между инициирующей и ответной эмоционально-оценочной репликой находится одно или два высказывания, не содержащих эмоциональной оценки (Агапова С.Г., Буренина Н.В., Евсеева Л.А., Змеева -Т.Е.).

В качестве ответных реплик широко используются вопросительные и

отрицательные предложения. Вопросительные по структуре, они лишь частично выполняют коммуникативную функцию запроса информации. В данном типе вопросительных предложений эта функция транспонируется в запрос подтверждения высказываемой оценки. На первый план выдвигается интенция выражения собственного эмоционального отношения к предмету разговора. Этому способствует положение данных конструкций в вопросно-ответном единстве в качестве реагирующей реплики.

3. 3. Языковые средства эмоциональной экспрессии в интервью

В рамках когнитивно-прагматического направления в современной лингвистике, ориентированного на анализ речевых актов в конкретных социально-психологических условиях их порождения, оказывается возможным по-новому взглянуть на семантические характеристики языковых единиц в их эмоционально-экспрессивной функции [Калимуллина 2006: 71, Касторнова 2005: 123, Кравченко 2008: 7]. Последняя в нашем исследовании анализируется в отношении констативного речевого акта, который, согласно наблюдениям, частотно употребляется не только в качестве стимулирующей, но и иницирующей реплики в рамках интервью. Данная тенденция характерна, в частности, для формальной коммуникации на английском языке, о чем свидетельствует анализ британских и американских изданий, специализирующихся на публикации интервью. В русскоязычных аналогичных изданиях подобной тенденции не отмечается.

Благодаря исследованию языковых средств в условиях неформальной коммуникации на английском языке, мы установили, что одной из характерных особенностей содержания знакового образа в спонтанной эмоционально окрашенной речи предстает тот факт, что теоретически любая значимая единица в определенном контексте может стать носителем эмоционального заряда [Кожевникова 1985: 514]. В процессе спонтанного порождения единицы языка в эмоционально окрашенной речи неформальной коммуникации одновременно выступают и знаком мысли участников

интервью, и признаком их психологических переживаний, входящих в намерение автора интервью, оформляемого посредством констативного речевого акта. Актуализируемые языковые единицы характеризуются двойственной референциальной отнесенностью, репрезентируя когнитивное мышление и эмоциональные переживания участников интервью, предполагающих субъективную оценку фактов в аспекте мотивов, что становится возможностью для успешной реализации неформальной коммуникации [Ларина 2003: 65].

Отличительной особенностью эмоциональных переживаний инициатора интервью в процессе спонтанного конструирования диалога предстает их связь с мотивационно-потребностной сферой, поэтому исследование эмоциональной речи позволяет комплексно изучить мотивационную составляющую неформальной коммуникации, представляющую особый интерес для современной лингвистики. Особенности семантики лексических единиц и иллокутивного значения репрезентирующих их речевых актов определяется тем, что в эмоционально окрашенной речи достаточной частотностью отмечается «выход» во внешнюю речь отдельных звеньев стимулирующей реплики со структурой констативного речевого акта, в обычных условиях, представленных лишь во внутренней речи и поэтому недоступных для наблюдения. Данные звенья служат прагматическим средством создания психологического контакта между участниками диалогического общения, нацеливают интервьюируемого на переход от предметно-денотативных форм отражения внеязыковой действительности к глубинным аффективно-ситуационным формам. В результате вскрываются неизвестные факты из частной жизни интервьюируемого, что немаловажно для последующего читательского успеха публикации интервью в прессе [Шишкина 2014: 115].

(4) - *Your use of lyrics often has a wonderful meandering aspect to it, with lots of wordplay and double meaning. Take “Fisher of Man” from this album: “He’s a fisher of man... he’s got a lot of the line.” You seem to be sitting there*

with a thesaurus when you're writing tunes... - When I hear that song, I think about the movie The Mission a bit. It might be about a missionary. And a missionary has a lot on the line. It happens subconsciously. Sometimes you will find yourself when you're writing and playing guitar chords, you will be mumbling something that turns into words [The guardian 2009].

В приведенном выше контексте инициатор интервью сосредоточивает свое внимание на творческом процессе написания песен интервьюируемым. Одна и та же инвариантная смысловая единица внутренней программы реплики (денотатом которой выступает содержание песен) реализована в речи автора интервью разными лексемами: *wordplay, double meaning, thesaurus*. Они передают тот концептуальный смысл, который песенное творчество интервьюируемого приобретает для инициатора интервью под влиянием аффективной ситуации диалогического общения. Выделенные слова в указанном контексте получают окказиональную поэтическую коннотацию, поскольку представляют результат напряженного творчества интервьюируемого, что подчеркивается последним высказыванием реплики-стимула интервью, в которой актуализируется процессуальность, беспрестанная длительность действий. Даже в придаточном времени (...*when you're writing tunes...*) употребляется Present Continuous Tense, что свойственно речи при подчеркивании оттенка напряженности и беспрестанности действия [Якушина 2003]. При этом инициатор интервью прибегает не к вопросительной, а констативной реплике, т.е. не запрашивает о возможности вывода из приведенных фактов, тем самым стимулируя интервьюируемого к дальнейшей более детальной аффективно-ситуационной категоризации представленных фактов, в результате чего выясняются более новые обобщения, актуализируется неизвестная информация, пользующаяся повышенным спросом читателей.

Интересно заметить, что запрограммированная инициатором интервью нацеленность диалога на субъективную оценку характера творчества интервьюируемого под углом зрения мотивов успешно реализуется в

реагирующем высказывании последнего. Констативный речевой акт в реплике-стимуле определил и прагматику грамматической «упаковки» аффективно-ситуационной категоризации фактов из собственной частной жизни в реплике интервьюируемого, в которой мы также встречаем Present Continuous Tense в том же значении, что и реплике-реакции. Другими словами, констативный речевой акт как реплика-стимул на уровне интервью в прагматическом плане оказывается не менее действенным, чем более традиционный интеррогативный речевой акт в этой же функции [Шишкина 2014: 116].

Данное речевое воздействие воспроизводит коммуникативную стратегию интервьюера на поддержание читательского интереса к публикации интервью и закрепляется как содержательное основание в англоязычной культуре интервью вообще [Шишкина 2014: 116].

Согласно наблюдениям, наряду с лексическими единицами, обладающими однозначной положительной или негативной коннотацией, переход интервьюируемого на глубинный коннотативный уровень может фиксироваться и лексемами, содержащими в своей внутренней форме лишь намек на значение более конкретного слова, которое интервьюируемый затрудняется оперативно выбрать. Подобная лексика в большей степени соотносится с глубинными, ранними этапами смысловой организации реплики, чем эмоционально окрашенные лексические единицы.

(5) - *It was a clever way of dealing with the history, to incorporate it into the show and make the characters obsessive fans of those movies. - Well, we did more riffing on The Godfather, only because I think the real wise guys – or connected guys – my impression is, it is more of a trip for them, because it's a period piece, and it's more operatic and...* [Vanity Fair 2007].

В данном контексте инвариантная смысловая единица внутренней программы реплики-реакции интервьюируемого (денотатом которой предстает фильм) представлена сочетаниями *it is more of a trip for them, it's more operatic*, построенными по принципу параллелизма. Это отражает поиск

интервьюируемым уместного определения понятию, концептуально важного для реплики-стимула. Указанные сочетания в условиях актуализированного в интервью контекста не обладают четкой позитивной или негативной коннотацией. Реагирующий собеседник лишь осуществляет поиск данной коннотации, озвучивая свою внутреннюю речь. На поверхность выходит «смысловый синтаксис». Причем характер коннотации так и не был им найден, поскольку так и не было найдено уместное определение понятию, заданному репликой-стимулом, что отражено непосредственно многоточием в конце реагирующего высказывания. Все это является результатом спонтанности речи, для которой характерно появление недифференцированной, только в общих чертах ясной схемы содержания, поэтапное, но неровное его выяснение, проявляющееся то в постепенном, прогрессивном разворачивании его, то в регрессивной доработке и детализации его [Declerk 2006, 363].

Наши наблюдения свидетельствуют, что незавершенность, коннотативная нейтральность реплики-реакции интервьюируемого имеет место в том случае, если реплики инициатора интервью со структурой констативного речевого акта отличается смысловой полнотой. Если же реплика-стимул предстает незавершенной, интервьюируемый, как правило, вступает в диалог репликой, маркированной в коннотативном плане и завершенной в смысловом отношении.

(6) – *But you found working in journalism to be more of ... - A funny thing. I was on my high school newspaper and on my college radio station as a sportscaster. However, it was never something I thought I would do for a career. I was a theater guy – and not a writer ...* [Vanity Fair 2008]. Данная типичная коммуникативная ситуация подтверждает именно «двойное авторство» спонтанно порождаемого текста интервью.

Неформальное интервью таким образом, как коммуникационный процесс предстает процессом трансформации коммуникативного пространства в коммуникативную среду, т.е. производство коммуникативного действия и условий этого действия (построение коммуникативной среды

относительно коммуникативного пространства и упорядочивание данного пространства относительно коммуникативной среды). Характер этого упорядочивания задается исходной репликой интервьюера, построенной по модели констативного речевого акта. В этом, видимо, следует искать объяснение частотного употребления данного речевого акта в качестве инициирующей реплики в рамках неформального интервью.

Эмоциональная экспрессия констативов в функции инициирующей реплики на уровне неформального интервью нацелена не только на интервьюируемого, но и читающего индивида, активно воспринимающего и оценивающего тексты интервью при их публикации в соответствующих изданиях. В англоязычном медиа-дискурсе читатель выступает полноправным субъектом интервью, оценивающим коммуникативное поведение других участников общения [Шишкина 2014: 117].

3. 4. Способы речевого воздействия в заголовках и текстах интервью

Как известно, речевое воздействие является неотъемлемой частью публицистического дискурса. Большинство лингвистов сходятся во мнении, что в любом акте речевого общения коммуниканты преследуют определенные неречевые цели, которые в конечном счете регулируют деятельность собеседника [Иссерс 2009: 20]. При этом, речевое воздействие определяется как «воздействие человека на другого человека или группу лиц при помощи речи и сопровождающих речь невербальных средств для достижения поставленной говорящим цели» [Стернин 2001: 54].

Прежде всего следует отметить, что воздействие на читателей в печати осуществляется не только посредством собственно языковых ресурсов, но и с помощью различных графических средств. Речевое воздействие в интервью можно разделить на два типа: направленное на массового адресата и направленное на собеседника. Это деление весьма условно, так как большинство приемов речевого манипулирования обращено одновременно и

на читателей, и на интервьюируемого (например, с целью выведать скрытую информацию) [Данилова 2009].

Первое, на что мы обращаем внимание, когда берем в руки газеты, - это заголовки. Выразительные, запоминающиеся заголовки служат своего рода рекламой текста, средством привлечения внимания читателей. Одним из наиболее эффективных способов воздействия в заголовках является **языковая игра**. Ее цель – не передача информации, а «затруднение понимание, приводящее к концентрации внимания участников ситуации общения на самом языковом выражении, на границах и возможностях языкового воплощения смысла» [Крысин 2005].

Термин **языковая игра** впервые был предложен Л. Витгенштейном, под которым он понимает те явления, когда говорящий «играет» с формой речи, когда свободное отношение к форме речи получает эстетическое задание, пусть даже самое скромное. Это может быть и незатейливая шутка, и более или менее удачная острота, и каламбур, и разные виды тропов (сравнения, метафоры, перифразы и т.д.) [Земская 1983: 172]. Языковая игра в СМИ является достаточно эффективным средством творческого самовыражения автора. Сознательное нарушение языковых норм, правил речевого общения, речевые искажения позволяют придать сообщению большую экспрессивную силу и привлекательность для читателя [Юсупова 2016: 102].

Феномен языковой игры представлен на разных уровнях языка: *фонетическом, семантическом, фразеологическом, словообразовательном, графическом и т.д.* Она используется для выражения эмоциональной оценочности, вносит в текст поэтическую ноту, раскрывающую образ автора, суть самого общения.

Фонетическая языковая игра базируется на созвучии разных по своему значению лексем, позволяя придать ироническую окраску тексту. Звуковое построение текста является одним из факторов, влияющих на его восприятие читателями.

Наглядным примером является заголовок газетной статьи в интервью

“*Friends fur-ever and feather*”. Лексемы *fur-ever* и *feather* используются вместо лексемы *forever*, таким образом трансформированное устойчивое словосочетание *friends forever* передает информацию о том, что такими друзьями являются совершенно разные представители фауны.

В другом заголовке “*Tears and tiaras*” использован прием ассонанса, основанный на повторении гласных звуков, и прием аллитерации, основанный на повторении согласных звуков. Благодаря этим приемам создания языковой игры заголовки выглядят привлекательным и броским и уже в самом себе содержит намек на содержание статьи.

Еще один интересный момент заключается в том, что фонетическая игра может быть выражена при помощи рифмы: “*Everybody else should go home and pet their solitary cat*”. В английском высказывании рифмуются две лексемы *pet* и *cat*. Данное предложение – заключительное в подразделе статьи и, следовательно, этот прием логически красиво завершает повествование. Кроме того, лексема *pet* имеет несколько значений: 1) *to touch and move your hand gently over someone, especially an animal or a child*; 2) *an animal such as a cat or a dog which you keep and care for at home* [Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 2015]. Автор шутит с читателем, играя словами. Таким образом, использование фонетической языковой игры не просто делает фразу интересной и меткой, но и позволяет ей приобрести многозначность.

Языковая игра на **семантическом уровне** является одной из самых сложных и тонких видов языковой игры в языке СМИ и реализуется за использования многозначных слов. Наиболее яркий пример здесь представляет каламбур. **Каламбур** – это шутка, основанная на комическом использовании сходно звучащих, но разных по значению слов [Ожегов 1970: 900].

Этот стилистический оборот, основанный на игре контрастных значений, придает комический оттенок сообщению.

Так, например, подзаголовок статьи “*Whitewashing Obama*” имеет двоякий смысл. Лексема *Whitewash* означает *to cover something with whitewash*,

что в данном словосочетании служит намеком на цвет кожи президента Америки. Ее другое определение *to hide the facts about a serious accident or illegal action*. Таким образом, автор статьи, выражая свое мнение, дает понять, что Обама нечистоплотный политик.

Другой пример: ***“Bears are still roaming the streets of Russia”***. Данное предложение завершает дискурс, в котором обсуждалось появление дикого животного на улицах города. Основным значением лексемы *Bear* является *a large strong animal with thick fur that eats flesh, fruit and insects*. Однако в словосочетании *Be like a bear* данное слово также имеет переносное значение *to be rude to people*. Соответственно автор проводит аналогию между медведями и русскими людьми, считая, что русские такие же грубые и неприветливые, как медведи.

Анализируя приведенные примеры, можно прийти к выводу, что семантическая языковая игра эффективна благодаря взаимодействию значений многозначных лексем, поэтому оценить и понять эту игру может только тот, кто владеет английским языком на достаточно высоком уровне [Юсупова 2016: 103].

Языковая игра на **словообразовательном** уровне чаще всего выражается при помощи окказионализмов. Под окказионализмами понимаются новообразования в речи, которые служат «для выражения смысла, необходимого в данном случае, и создаются из имеющегося в структуре языкового материала вопреки сложившейся литературной норме» [Бельчиков 2003: 283]. Окказионализмы являются интересным материалом для исследования, так как отражают субъективно-оценочный потенциал словообразования и ярко демонстрируют потенциал языковой игры как средства воздействия на читателя.

Существуют разные способы образования окказиональных слов. Например, в следующей реплике интервьюера ***“It’s not double standards because some witches are witchier than others”***. Слово *witchier* образовано при помощи суффикса *-er*, который служит для выражения сравнительной степени

прилагательных и заменяет слово *worse*. С помощью данного приема автор привлекает внимание читателя к проблеме, придавая своему высказыванию более яркую окраску. В данном случае слово образовано по непродуктивной модели и могло быть использовано только в этом контексте.

Другим ярким примером новообразования служит заголовок интервью, проведенного с известным шеф-поваром: *“The city is setting up a new sport - pelmening”*. Лексема *pelmeni* русского происхождения и не имеет никакого отношения к спорту. Этот авторский окказионализм противоречит языковой норме и его образование отклоняется от принятых способов образования слов. Таким образом подчеркнута именно шуточность соревнований по приготовлению пельменей [Юсупова 2016: 104].

Все это единичные явления, создаваемые с намеренным нарушением законов словообразования для определенной ситуации и определенной тематики.

Языковая игра на **фразеологическом уровне** реализуется за счет трансформации фразеологизмов, пословиц, поговорок, устойчивых словосочетаний, цитат из известных произведений. Сознательное изменение известной фразеологической единицы или паремии позволяет сделать высказывание более ярким. Чаще всего заменяется один или несколько компонентов фразеологизма, или образуются совершенно другие предложения по образцу какого-либо устойчивого словосочетания.

“Forgive your enemies, but never forget their names.” Данное высказывание, употребленное говоря об угрозах американской нации в условиях обострения международных отношений, создает языковую игру, которая строится на столкновении двух жанров: фольклора, к которому относится приведенная пословица, и политического нарратива (подробнее о политическом нарративе, который по преимуществу представлен в тексте интервью с президентом). Языковая игра (а именно, игра с речевыми жанрами) служит здесь средством самопрезентации автора высказывания как человека, знающего и любящего народное словесное творчество и, таким образом,

близкого и понятного большинству слушающих.

“Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.” Политик, говоря о справедливости возмездия, обыгрывает слово *justice*, несколько раз употребляя его в различном контексте. В данном случае это является нарушением одного из постулатов общения Грайса, который гласит о том, что надо говорить только необходимое. Многократный повтор слова в одном предложении явно не относится к коммуникативной необходимости, однако используется вполне намеренно с целью акцентировать внимание слушающих на неотвратимости возмездия врагам американской нации. Игра, основанная на нарушении речевых норм, обуславливает стратегию самопрезентации: оратор явно желает выглядеть защитником интересов нации и гарантом справедливости в мире.

В следующем высказывании наблюдаем еще один интересный вариант языковой игры: *“When I was young and irresistible, I was young and irresistible.”* Языковая игра возникает здесь на основе тавтологии. Высказывание политика носит тавтологический характер, так как главное предложение, призванное пояснить придаточное, которое занимает инициальную позицию, вместо пояснения дословно повторяет его.

В следующем примере интервьюер интересуясь мнением собеседника о недавних политических событиях также прибегает к языковой игре: *“In that case I would say that no better gift than a dead terrorist.”* Здесь использовано устойчивое выражение *no better gift than* после которого всегда употребляется лексема, имеющая позитивную эмоциональную окраску. В данном же случае используется словосочетание *a dead terrorist*. Подобная авторская трансформация позволяет убедить читательскую аудиторию в правильности принимаемых правительством политических решений.

“If this is war, then I am Greta Garbo” – такой комментарий дает интервьюер на реплику собеседника о военных событиях, произошедших в одной из Сирийской местности. В этом примере известная устойчивая фраза *if this is..., then I am...* имеет ироническую окраску и приведена в качестве

критики определенной политики.

“But gays, being people, come in all shapes and sizes, and many take good care of their bodies”- устойчивое выражение *all shapes and sizes* используется для описания каких-либо неодушевленных предметов. В данном примере интервьюер выражает свое негативное отношение к людям нетрадиционной ориентации, отождествляя их с предметами.

Важно отметить, что для создания фразеологической языковой игры определяющее значение имеет контекст. При изменении фразеологизмов трансформации подвергается не только их внешняя форма, но и семантика [Юсупова 2016: 105].

Языковая игра на **графическом уровне** наиболее часто употребляется в качестве дополнительного средства, позволяющего придать повествованию более экспрессивный характер. Наиболее распространенными средствами графической экспликации являются шрифтовое выделение, использование заглавных букв вместо строчных, а также заключение слова или фразы в кавычки с целью указания несоответствия значения этого слова или этой фразы действительности. Например, графически выделенное слово **MORE** в заголовке *“Stranded in Sharm for 10 MORE days”* в целом усиливает смысловую нагрузку данного предложения. Автор делится с читателями своим негодованием, указывая на вынужденность таких действий.

В следующем предложении используется графическое выделение при помощи кавычек: *“But as photos of the ribbon-cutting ceremony show, the «stop» is just two slabs of concrete on the ground”*. Тем интервьюер автор смеется над помпезностью в действительности ничего не значащего события.

В приведенном далее примере графичность представлена с помощью скобок и тире: *“The list of offenses that will bring the police on you and your bellowed includes things like shooting in the air (make sense) and being drunk (well...), but also starting to dance before your elders do, inviting a girl to dance, dressing up in “clothes not fitting the Chechen mentality” and – wait for it – cutting the cake”*. Здесь автор с помощью слов, заключенных в скобки и

ограниченных тире, выражает свое личное согласие или несогласие с описываемыми событиями. Графическое выделение помогает ему в шуточной и непринужденной форме привлечь внимание читателя к повествованию.

Следует отметить, что понимание графических приемов языковой игры невозможно без зрительного восприятия. Однако, несмотря на приоритетность визуализации, без вербального восприятия невозможно безусловное понимание высказывания [Юсупова 2016: 105].

3. 5. Языковое манипулирование в жанре интервью.

Манипулирование, как известно, является достаточно универсальное явление, которое можно обнаружить во всех социально значимых сферах жизнедеятельности человека. Этот феномен служит объектом изучения многих наук. Соответственно, он нашел свое место в журналистике. Здесь речь пойдет о так называемых «**манипулятивных тактиках**». Они несут в себе импликацию хитрости, то есть субъект не осознает, что по отношению к нему был осуществлен манипулятивный акт. Отправитель сообщения намеренно скрывает акт манипуляции от партнера, партнер подчиняется в ошибочном убеждении, что действует в своих собственных интересах.

Таким образом, манипуляция рассматривается как воздействие, сопровождаемое утаиванием или искажением информации, не обязательно против интересов манипулируемого, но против его желания [Goodin 1980].

Манипулирование также рассматривается как своеобразный способ регуляции, управления, контроля жизни личности при помощи различных средств. В интервью манипулирование используется для извлечения нужной или интригующей информации у интервьюируемого. Для этого интервьюер задает наводящие вопросы, используя по максимуму языковых средств и речевого воздействия.

К ним относятся:

- манипулирование потребностей субъекта (использование желаний, интересов партнера);

- манипулирование чувствами субъекта (использование эмоций, страстей);

- интеллектуальное манипулирование (навязывание субъекту неких мнений, точек зрения) и так далее [Братченко 1997].

Манипуляциями в общении в ситуации интервью называют систему заранее продуманных действий одного партнера по отношению к другому с целью получения определенной информационной выгоды [Лобанов 1997].

Интервьюер использует возможности языка с целью оказания воздействия, для этого он навязывает интервьюируемому определенное представление о действительности, эмоциональную реакцию или намерение.

Особенно эффективными в акте манипулирования выступают разнообразные тропы: метафора, метонимия, гипербола и т.п. и средства, относящиеся к лексическому уровню, а именно:

- создание и использование неологизмов, отдельных слов или словосочетаний: **Only two Alka Seltzer ago you were feeling downhearted and low** [Face 2000]. В данном примере время обозначается нестандартными единицами – «алказельтцерами», что придает высказыванию оригинальность и привлекает внимание;

- переименование – изменение имен тех или иных объектов и явлений и создание новых: **Don't you think it is the best salary for refuse officers?**

- использование слов, имеющих яркую положительную или отрицательную коннотацию, употребление оценочных или эмоциональных определений при существительных вместо нейтральных [Гурочкина 2009: 139].

Интервью строится на основе диалогической формы. Для построения успешной коммуникации журналисту приходится осуществлять выбор тональности общения. Как отмечает О. С. Иссерс, выбор тональности (или кода, по терминологии автора) обладает ресурсом воздействия [Иссерс 2009: 48]. Как кажется на первый взгляд, самой оптимальной тональностью для интервью как публичного диалога является официальный тип общения.

Действительно, в большинстве проанализированных нами интервью код общения официальный: обращение к интервьюируемому по имени-отчеству и на «вы», исключение из речи нецензурных слов и выражений, жаргонизмов и т. д. Однако в интервью все чаще можно встретить полуофициальный, неофициальный и даже фамильярный тип речевого общения. Стираются статусно-ролевые границы, разговор приобретает дружескую тональность. Компетентному журналисту путем снижения уровня официальности общения удастся войти в доверие собеседнику и получить от него таким образом больше нужной информации (в этом и заключается воздействующий потенциал выбора тональности коммуникации). Но в выборе тональности важно ориентировать не только на своего непосредственного собеседника (на его социальный статус, возраст и т. д.), но и на аудиторию, для которой это интервью предназначено. Самой большой воздействующей силой обладает та информация, которая подается неявно, имплицитно. Имплицитная информация обладает целым рядом преимуществ перед информацией эксплицитной: она не осознается адресатом и, следовательно, не подвергается критической оценке; процесс извлечения скрытой информации происходит в подсознании объекта воздействия, поэтому она не воспринимается как полученная извне; за имплицитно переданную информацию автор редко несет ответственность [Иссерс 2009: 64].

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ

В последней главе мы изучили языковые средства, используемые для реализации коммуникативных стратегий в жанре интервью. Выяснилось, что самым распространенным приемом является повтор, языковая аналогия.

Языковая аналогия выступает в жанре интервью в качестве средства дискурсопорождения. В прагматическом плане повтор облегчает процессы восприятия и понимания текста интервью посредством того, что помогает интервьюеру разрядить информативную составляющую дискурса. Повтор в

реплике-реакции интервьюера отдельных элементов предшествующего высказывания интервьюируемого позволяет разбить новую информацию на два блока, причем второй информативный блок вводится в последующей реплике интервьюируемого как детализация первого блока.

Можно заключить вывод, что повтор является одним из оптимальных способов получить желаемую информацию, поскольку у интервьюера высвобождается время для обдумывания новой темы беседы. Повтор, таким образом, оптимизирует процесс смены коммуникативных ролей собеседников.

Таким образом, нами было рассмотрено пять основных приемов реализации языковой игры, используемых в англоязычных СМИ. С их помощью автор имеет возможность привнести в свой текст и в свою речь оригинальность, придать ему наибольшую привлекательность, что в свою очередь, позволяет установить с читателем непосредственный контакт. Следует отметить, что языковая игра подвержена влиянию языковой моды. Так, например, несколько ранее недопустимым было использование сленга и просторечных слов в интервью и в СМИ в целом. В современных интервью подобная лексика представлена достаточно широко, что позволяет сегодняшней аудитории с готовностью воспринимать предлагаемую авторами информацию. Кроме того, применение языковой игры придает тексту легкость, позволяет в наибольшей степени раскрыть возможности языка, делает его более интересным и живым.

Языковая игра, как правило, в сочетании с лингвостилистическими фигурами и приемами способствует формированию в тексте определенных коммуникативных стратегий: самопрезентации, интимизации общения, иронии, эмоциональности.

Приведенные примеры показывают, что журналисты стараются все чаще воздействовать на читателя, используя видоизмененные языковые единицы, особенно в медиа-материалах, связанных с политикой, экономикой и культурой. В большинстве примеров можно увидеть, как автор выражает

свое мнение по той или иной теме, реализуя таким образом эмотивную функцию языка. Языковые средства, формы и жанры, которые используются для достижения необходимого эффекта, весьма разнообразны. Так, к примеру, выделяются каламбуры, сатира, распад значений фразеологизмов, искажения произношения, шуточные метафоры, сравнения, шутки, аллюзии, рифмовки, намеренные нарушения языковых норм, ирония.

ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ

В ходе данного исследования нами были более подробно изучены такие явления как **язык, речевое общение и взаимодействие, дискурс, текст и высказывание**. В нашей жизни эти явления фигурируют неизмеримое количество раз, поскольку мы взаимодействуем друг с другом каждый день. Речевое общение непосредственно является способом коммуникации и формой взаимодействия между людьми посредством языка. Это не только говорение и порождение речи субъектом, но и восприятие ее адресатом, декодирование и понимание, а также дальнейшая оценка. Речевое взаимодействие включает в себя дискурс, т.е. живую речь, которая сопровождается мимикой, жестами и другими невербальными знаками. Что касается высказывания (или текста), то оно представляет собой единицу речевого общения, которая имеет определенную структуру, оформленность и самое главное смысл. Соответственно, текст – это языковое оформление высказывания.

Далее мы разобрали конвенции и правила речевого взаимодействия, которые необходимы для успешного осуществления коммуникации. Это значит, что участникам речевого общения необходимо создать комфортную обстановку и наладить позитивный контакт. Для этого учеными были выделены определенные принципы: **последовательность, предпочтительность и кооперация**. Принцип кооперации включает определенное количество максим (П. Грайс, Дж. Лич), которые в ходе речевого взаимодействия обеспечивают успешную коммуникацию, но в том случае, если все максимы и принципы будут соблюдены.

В «публичном диалоге», т.е. в интервью, эти максимы и принципы функционируют очень часто. Поскольку интервью представляет собой общение, целью которого является получение информации с помощью вопросов, то корреспонденту необходимо, в первую очередь, расположить к себе респондента, создав позитивную для него атмосферу. Для этого, в его

интересах следовать определенной структуре и правилам речевого взаимодействия, нарушение которых может привести к коммуникативной неудаче.

Помимо конвенций и правил, в интервью прослеживаются и другие приемы, используемые журналистами для того, чтобы получить необходимую информацию, другими словами, заставить респондента добровольно рассказать о каких-либо интригующих или интересных событиях.

В интервью, как и во многих других СМИ, фигурируют конкретные лингвистические средства и композиционные приемы. Они включают в себя определенные слова (метафоры, эпитеты, фигуры речи), заголовки, иллюстрации, которые «цепляют глаз зрителя, читателя или слушателя». Как мы уже отмечали, эти приемы являются открытыми инструментами привлечения. Для нас же интерес представляли другие, так называемые имплицитные, способы привлечения внимания и воздействия на третьих лиц.

Многими учеными, а в последствии и нами, было отмечено, что реплики корреспондента в интервью приобретают иницирующий характер и предстают реакциями на предшествующее высказывание респондента. Автор намеренно прибегает к различным средствам и стратегиям (повторы, риторический вопрос, вопрос-загадка, вопрос-утверждение). Безусловно, респондент является главной фигурой в публичном диалоге, однако тематику и тональность ему задает интервьюер, поскольку важно помнить, что этот диалог нацелен на привлечение третьих лиц.

Как показал материал исследования, интервью является одним из публицистических жанров, которому довольно часто присуща эмоциональность. Интервью, как известно, рассчитан на формирование общественного мнения, манипуляции сознанием людей, а это требует «открытой манифестации эмоциональной оценки фактов». Эмоциональные конструкции входят в состав реплик всех участников интервью.

Речевое воздействие на третьих лиц осуществляется не только посредством языковых ресурсов, но и с помощью различных графических

средств. Для этого важно создать броский заголовок, иногда сопровождаемый картинкой или фотографией. Здесь речь пойдет о языковой игре, когда говорящий «играет с формой речи», сознательно нарушая языковые нормы, правила речевого общения и используя речевые искажения, автор старается придать сообщению более экспрессивную силу и привлекательность. Это так называемый эффективный способ творческого самовыражения автора.

Все эти перечисленные способы и приемы являются своего рода инструментом манипуляции. Она рассматривается как воздействие, сопровождаемое утаиванием или искажением информации. Это своеобразный способ регуляции, управления и контроля жизни личности, используемое для извлечения нужной или интригующей информации у интервьюируемого. Интервьюер заранее продумывает систему действий, используя возможности языка, чтобы в последствии оказать воздействие на собеседника.

Итак, в нашем исследовании мы показали, что в интервью активно используются приемы речевого воздействия и на читателей, и на интервьюируемых. Предлагаемый в работе перечень приемов далеко не исчерпывающий. Мы представили только те способы речевого воздействия, которые встретились нам в анализируемом материале.

Как показывает практика, в провокационных интервью применяются сразу несколько средств воздействия, подчиненных одной задаче – разоблачить собеседника, при этом эффективно используются не только эксплицитные, но и имплицитные средства воздействия.

В интервью применяются способы речевого воздействия, характерные для всех жанров СМИ и специфические (например, объединение нескольких вопросов в один, выбор тональности общения). Помимо собственно языковых средств, воздействующей функцией в печатных интервью обладает и графика. Поэтому в данном случае понимание графических приемов невозможно без зрительного восприятия.

БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК

1. Агапова, С.Г. Прагмалингвистический аспект английской диалогической речи: Дис. д-ра филол. наук Текст. / С.Г. Агапова. -Ростов-н/Д, 2003. 269 с.
2. Амири Л.П. Язык рекламы: лингвистические и психологические особенности // Язык и мышление: психологические и лингвистические аспекты: Материалы 4-ой Всероссийской научной конференции / Отв. ред. проф. А.В. Пузырев. – М.; Пеликан, 2012. 256 с.
3. Антонова Ю. А. Жанр интервью в газетном дискурсе // Политическая лингвистика. Екатеринбург: Изд-во УрГПУ, 2006. № 18. С. 5-9.
4. Арутюнова Н. Д. Диалогическая цитация // Вопросы языкознания. 1986. № 1. С. 57.
5. Багиров Э. Г., Борецкий Р. А., Юровский А. Я. Основы телевизионной журналистики: Учеб. пособие для вузов по спец. "Журналистика". Москва: Изд-во МГУ, 1987. с. 238-239.
6. Барабаш О.В. «Другой» в языковом сознании и подсознании // Языковое сознание: устоявшееся и спорное: тез. докл. XIV Междунар. симпозиума по психолонгвистике и теории коммуникации. М.: РАН, Институт языкознания: Институт психологии: Российский новый университет, 2003. С. 22-23.
7. Бахтин М.М. Проблема речевых жанров // Бахтин М.М. собрание соч.: в 7 т. М.: Русские словари, 1997. Т. 5. 732 с.
8. Бельчиков Ю.А. Окказионализмы // Русский язык: Энциклопедия. М.: Наука, 2003. С. 283. 2.
9. Богданов, Н.Г., Вяземский, Б.А. Справочник журналиста Текст. / Н.Г. Богданов, Б.А. Вяземский. — Л., 1971.
10. Бодалев А.А. Личность и общение: Избранные труды. М.: Педагогика, 2008. 272 с.
11. Братченко С. Л. Диагностика личностно-развивающего

потенциала. Псков, 1997.

12. Бузаров, В.В. Круговорот диалогической речи, или взаимодействие грамматики говорящего и грамматики слушающего Текст. / В.В. Бузаров. Ставрополь: 2001. - 168 с.

13. Гак В.Г. Теоретическая грамматика французского языка: Учеб. для студентов. Москва: Добросвет, 2004. 860 с.

14. Гаранян О.А. Языковые средства реализации коммуникативных стратегий в жанре неформального интервью // Вестник СамГУ. Серия: Языкознание. 2010. № 5. с.

15. Голанова Е.И. Устный публичный диалог: жанр интервью // Русский язык конца XX столетия. М., 2000. С. 427–453.

16. Грайс Г.Ф. Логика и речевое общение // Новое в зарубежной лингвистике. М.: Прогресс, 1985. Вып.16. С. 217–237.

17. Данилова А. Манипулирование словом в средствах массовой информации. М., 2009.

18. Дорфман Т.В., Чернова О.Е. Учебно-методический комплекс по дисциплине «Русский язык и культура речи». Магнитогорск: МаГУ, 2011. 240 с.

19. Заика В.И. Эстетическая реализация языка: функционально-прагматическое исследование: автореф. дис. ...д-ра филол. наук. Великий Новгород, 2007. 50 с.

20. Зверева П.П. Лингвопрагматический анализ текстов печатных СМИ формальными средствами (на материале газетных публикаций США о России): дис ... канд. фил. наук. М., 2015. 181 с. 3.

21. Земская Е.А., Китайгородская М.В., Розанова Н.Н. Языковая игра // Русская разговорная речь. Фонетика. Морфология. Лексика. Жест. М.: Наука, 1983. С. 172–213.

22. Ильченко С.Н. Жестокие игры современного телевидения// Организационно-правовые, финансовые и научно-технические аспекты

современного телерадиовещания: Сборник материалов 11-й международной конференции. М., 2003. 200 с.

23. Ильченко С.Н. Интервью в журналистском творчестве. СПб.: Факультет журналистики СПбГУ, 2003. 60 с.

24. Ильченко С.Н. Телевидение новейшего времени: последствия виртуализации реальности // Техника кино и телевидения № 9. СПб., 2003. С. 50.

25. Ильченко С.Н. Электронные СМИ: новая политическая реальность // Журналистика в 2002 году. СМИ и реалии нового века: Сборник материалов научно-практической конференции. Часть 2-я. М., 2003. С. 34-40.

26. Ильясова С.В., Амири Л.П. / Языковая игра в коммуникативном пространстве СМИ и рекламы. М.: Флинта, 2009. – 296 с.

27. Иссерс О. Речевое воздействие. М., 2009. С. 20.

28. Калимуллина Л.А. Современные трактовки категории эмотивности // Филол. науки. 2006. № 5. С. 71 – 80.

29. Кара-Мурза С. Манипуляция сознанием. М., 2007. С. 212.

30. Касторнова О.Н. К вопросу о разграничении оценочности и эмоциональности в высказываниях со словами категории оценки // Проблемы систематики языка и речевой деятельности: материалы 8-го регион. науч. семинара. Иркутск, 2005. С. 120 – 124.

31. Кожевникова К. О смысловом строении спонтанной устной речи: Линейное построение речи и нелинейное формирование содержания // Новое в зарубежной лингвистике. Вып. 15. М., 1985. С. 514.

32. Кравченко Я.Ю. Лексико-стилистические и социально-прагматические особенности неформального речевого общения: автореф. дис. ... канд. филол. наук. Майкоп, 2008. С. 7.

33. Кудряшов И.А. Феномен коммуникативной свободы в устном и письменном дискурсе. Ростов н/Д.: РГПИ, 2005. 240 с.

34. Кузнецов Г. В., Цвик В. Л., Юровский А.Я. Телевизионная журналистика: учеб. для студентов вузов / Моск. гос. ун-т им. М.В.

Ломоносова. Москва: Изд-во Моск. ун-та: Наука, 2005. 366 с.

35. Ларина Т.В. Неформальность как одна из доминантных черт английской коммуникативной культуры // Язык. Речь. Речевая деятельность: межвуз. сб. науч. тр. Вып. 6. Н. Новгород, 2003. С. 65.

36. Лобанов А. А. Манипуляции в общении. Владимир, 1997.

37. Милевская Т.В. Грамматика дискурса. Ростов н/Д.: Изд-во Рост. гос. ун-та, 2003 (б). 311 с.

38. Михальская А.К. Основы риторики. М.: Знание, 2009. 120 с.

39. Панкратов В.Н. Психотехнология управления людьми: Практическое руководство. М., 2002.

40. Панкратов Ф.Г., Баженов Ю.К., Серёгина Т.К., Шахурин В.Г. Рекламная деятельность: Учебник для студентов высших учебных заведений,- М.: Дашков и К., 2002. 364 с.

41. Розенталь Д.Э., Кохтев Н.Н. Язык рекламных текстов. ,- М.: Фараон, 2002. 159 с.

42. Стернин И. Введение в речевое воздействие. Воронеж, 2001. С. 54.

43. Телия, В.Н. Коннотативный аспект семантики номинативных единиц Текст. / В.Н. Телия. -М.: Наука, 1986. 143 с.

44. Торлакян С.А. Косвенные речевые способы актуализации фактора адресата в информационно-когнитивной системе диалога. Ростов н/Д, 2008. 22 с.

45. Чахоян, Л.П. Синтаксис диалогической речи современного английского языка Текст. / Л.П. Чахоян. М., 1979.

46. Швец Е.В. Интервью как одна из форм «публичной коммуникации» // Коммуникация в современном мире: Материалы научно-практической конференции. Воронеж: Изд-во ВГУ, 2006. С. 240-241.

47. Шишкина Т.С. Языковые средства в неформальной коммуникации // Инновационная наука. 2015. № 12-2. С. 189-191.

48. Юсупова А.О. Языковая игра в англоязычной прессе // Вестник Московского государственного областного университета. Серия:

Лингвистика. 2016. № 4. С. 101-109.

49. Якушина Р.М. Динамические параметры оценки (на материале современного английского языка): автореф. дис. ... канд. филол. наук. Уфа, 2003.
50. André-Larochebouvry D. La conversation quotidienne. Paris : Didier, 1984. 196p.
51. Declerck K. The Grammar of the English Tense System: A Comprehensive Analysis. Berlin; New York, 2006. P. 363.
52. Fontaney L. A la lumière de l'intonation // La question. Lyon : PUL, 1991. P. 113-161.
53. Goodin R. Manipulatory Politics. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1980.
54. Jacobson R. Linguistics and Poetics // The Routledge Language and Cultural Theory Reader. London; New York, 2000. P. 334 – 340.
55. Kerbrat-Orecchioni C. Les interactions verbales. T. 1. Paris : Armand Colin, 1990. 318p.
56. Leech G. Principles of pragmatics. London: Longman, 1983. 250 p.

ПРИЛОЖЕНИЕ

Unthinkable: The Alzheimer's Epidemic

Aired May 7, 2011 - 20:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight, Alzheimer's. A fatal disease that destroys your mind and your memory.

MARIA SHRIVER, FATHER DIES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: It's really challenging to look at your father or your mother and have them not know who you are.

TERRELL OWENS, NFL STAR, GRANDMOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: I'm trying to hold it together now.

KING: A looming epidemic.

RON REAGAN., PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SON: It's basically a coin flip as to whether or not you will have Alzheimer's.

KING: More than five million Americans have it. And the numbers are rising.

SETH ROGEN, ACTOR, FIANCEE'S MOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: More and more people in our generation are going to have to deal with it.

KING: There is no cure.

DR. RONALD PETERSEN, DIRECTOR, MAYO CLINIC ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH CENTER: This is the disease entity that is going to cripple the system.

KING: But there is hope.

LEEZA GIBBONS, MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: We will be victorious. We have to be.

ROGEN: We felt so --

KING: Seth Rogen, Angie Dickinson, Terrell Owens, Maria Shriver, Laura Bush, Leeza Gibbons open up about their own experiences with the disease.

Plus, Ron Reagan and I travel to a cutting-edge facility to see how people are diagnosed. One of us will take an Alzheimer's evaluation. One of us will not.

It's UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Tonight's show is an important topic. According to the Alzheimer's Association, every 69 seconds another person is diagnosed with this horrifying disease.

It's the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. It has no known cure, which is why new guidelines have just been released to include people who have no symptoms yet or are only showing mild symptoms of it.

Tonight those who've experienced Alzheimer's firsthand share their stories.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ROGEN: We felt so alone in this.

ANGIE DICKINSON, ACTRESS, SISTER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: It was horrible.

OWENS: You know I just hold on to the good memories.

KING (voice-over): These are the faces and voices of those touched by Alzheimer's disease. They are actors.

ROGEN: No one we knew had experienced anything like this at this age.

DICKINSON: It was horrible to watch her be afflicted. You know. I would just sometimes just break down crying.

KING: And athletes.

OWENS: You know for me to sit here and talk, I get emotional. But I just -- I just enjoy the moment, you know, that I had with her.

KING: They are from famed political families.

SHRIVER: I think anybody who's not concerned about Alzheimer's is in denial.

LAURA BUSH, FORMER FIRST LADY, FATHER DIES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: I call Alzheimer's the sad good-bye.

KING: And they're from families just like yours.

JACKIE SINGER, PARENTS HAVE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: We were so overwhelmed.

KING: Rich or poor, famous or anonymous, Alzheimer's can strike anyone and the outcome is always the same.

GIBBONS: There is nothing more helpless and nothing more alone than knowing that someone you love has this diagnosis.

PETERSEN: Alzheimer's disease is probably the looming epidemic on the horizon for the United States as well as perhaps the world in general. KING: Dr. Ronald Petersen is director of the Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center.

PETERSEN: There are probably 5.4 million people with Alzheimer's disease in the U.S. right now. And with the baby boomers, aging into the period of risk, this number is going to skyrocket.

This is the disease entity that is going to cripple the system in the next decade if we don't address it head-on at this point in time.

KING: For years the disease did not get the attention it deserved but in 1994, Ronald Reagan announced to the world that it had been diagnosed in him. The president put a very public face on what was often a very private matter.

Dr. Petersen was Ronald Reagan's Alzheimer's doctor.

PETERSEN: If he can get Alzheimer's disease, I can get Alzheimer's disease, so I think that opened up some doors for us and increased the public awareness of the frequency of individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

REAGAN: This is something that affects all of us, really.

KING: Ron Reagan Jr. says his interest in Alzheimer's began with his father's diagnosis.

REAGAN: I mean, if you think about the fact that by the age of 85, it's basically a coin flip as to whether or not you will have Alzheimer's or not. You know the chances of either getting the disease or having to be a caretaker for someone who has the disease is -- the odds are pretty good.

KING: We asked the president's son to share his story to help others understand what it's like for a family to experience it.

(On camera): So what was life like when you would visit it?

REAGAN: His personality remained really until the end. He was this very sort of warm presence in the room, even when he couldn't really express himself, which is, of course, a tragic irony for somebody who's known as the great communicator.

DR. JEFFREY CUMMINGS, DIRECTOR, CLEVELAND CLINIC LOU RUVO CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH: This is really a terrible disease. It undermines human dignity. It undermines that sense of self, you know, who we know we are is because of our memory and who we have been until this moment in our lives. And now that is beginning to be erased by the disease.

KING (voice-over): This diagnosis, Alzheimer's, was named after the German doctor who first discovered it in 1906 in the brain tissue of a woman in her 50s. What we know about the disease hasn't changed much. Doctors still do not have a cure. And only a few effective therapies exist.

It tends to strike people in their 60s and 70s, but it can even surface earlier. Essentially erasing their memories. Destroying their brain cells. Leaving them as a shell of who they once were. Until it eventually kills them. And helpless family members are left to watch it happen before their eyes.

And with warnings that the number of cases will triple by 2050 as the population ages, it's a growing disease that has doctors sounding an alarm.

CUMMINGS: We have not somehow impressed on people how common it is, how terrible it is and how much we need to combat it.

KING: Dr. Jeffrey Cummings of the Cleveland Clinic says the medical community is far behind where it needs to be.

CUMMINGS: We spend \$6 billion a year on cancer. We spend \$3 billion a year on HIV/AIDS research. We spend \$500 million a year only on Alzheimer's disease research. And it is just as much of a killer as HIV or cancer is.

REAGAN: Imagine your own mind, which is really how you relate to the world, your mind creates the world for you in a sense, and now it's betraying you.

KING (on camera): During the failing years, I saw your mother a lot, quite a bit. How do you -- how do you assess how she handled it and how did you deal with it?

REAGAN: Well, she, of course, bore a much greater burden than I did. She was there, you know, every day, day in, day out. This is her spouse. This is the person she's been married to for, you know, 50- some odd years ultimately. And you know, the pain, the agony of seeing somebody you love that deeply fading away like that.

KING (voice-over): Ten years after his diagnosis, President Reagan died. For the Reagan family, it was both a relief and an unbearable loss.

REAGAN: I was with him when he died. Yes, he opened his eyes, looked at his wife for the last time.

KING (on camera): Was there a sign in the eyes?

REAGAN: Yes, yes. He looked at his wife -- he looked at my mother remarkably. I mean, it was -- it was something. It was something to see.

KING: Do you think his death helped Alzheimer's?

REAGAN: I would like to think so and I think he would like to think so. I know that he felt that way. Felt important. It was important that he write that letter to the American public.

KING (voice-over): President Reagan wanted to use that letter to tell the American people of his fate.

REAGAN: "My fellow Americans, I have recently been told I'm one the millions of Americans who will be afflicted with Alzheimer's disease."

KING: And to help the millions of others who would also share it.

REAGAN: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. I know that for America, there will always be a bright dawn ahead. Thank you, my friends. Sincerely, Ronald Reagan."

Sorry. I can never get through that.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Seventeen years after President Reagan put a public face on Alzheimer's, are we closer to finding a cure?

Ron Reagan and I learn about Alzheimer's testing and how doctors determine if you're at risk. One of us took a brain scan. One of us did not. Find out who did and didn't and why.

But first, actor Seth Rogen and football star Terrell Owens open up on their own Alzheimer's battles.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROGEN: We had turned on the TV and seen someone else who was around our age talking about it, it would have made us feel a lot better.

OWENS: To this day she's never, you know, seen me play a football game.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Up next, on a Larry King special UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Alzheimer's is often thought of as an older person's problem, but each year younger people are finding themselves face to face with the issue in a very real way.

NFL star Terrell Owens is helping take care of the grandmother who helped raise him. He'll tell us how devastating it is when he visits her. And she doesn't know who he is. Or what he's accomplished.

But first, actor Seth Rogen and his fiancée Lauren Miller open up about their story. Both are in their late 20s. And like most young, had not thought much about Alzheimer's until Lauren's mom was diagnosed a few years ago.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LAUREN MILLER, MOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: She was diagnosed at 55. And now she's 59. She was a teacher her whole life and had to retire at 57. My dad, who retired also to take care of her. And now they, you know, just deal with it every day. ROGEN: It's terrible to see it happen. And I feel so bad for her father just to see -- I mean, I've seen a few times here or there she clearly doesn't really know who he is and why he's trying so hard to take care of her.

KING: Lauren's dad has become one of the estimated 15 million unpaid caregivers who give up so much of their own lives to now care for their loved ones.

MILLER: He does her hair. I mean, he takes her shopping if she needs something to wear. And my dad does not like shopping. And he's just amazing. You know I don't think you are 62 years old and, you know, one day out of retirement think that you're going to be taking care of your spouse with Alzheimer's.

KING (on camera): Are you angry about it?

MILLER: Very. It's pretty unfair. But, you know, I think the things that make me angry are that, unfortunately, this disease gets very little attention, especially with people, you know, that are our age. They know very little about it.

ROGEN: If there's one thing that like, you know, we represent it is that more and more people in our generation are going to have to deal with it, you know. We're dealing with it before most people will have to, but as you get older and you see it happening to your parents and ultimately realize it could happen to yourself and your friends, it becomes much more real and not some imaginary old person problem, you know?

KING: Why have you decided to be public about it?

MILLER: It's just become much more important to us to bring an awareness to it because we've seen firsthand how terrible it is.

ROGEN: We felt so alone in this. You know, no one we knew had experienced anything like this at this age. And I just know that if we had turned on the TV and seen someone else who was around our age talking about it, it would have made us feel a lot better.

OWENS: I grew up with my grandmother, lived with her, and pretty much she's the reason, you know, why I am who I am today.

KING (voice-over): Terrell Owens, the flamboyant wide receiver of the Cincinnati Bengals is also speaking out for his grandmother who helped raise the football star after his parents split up.

(On camera): Did she go to your high school games?

OWENS: Not much. Not much. My grandmother was very, very strict and she really didn't care for the sports world. You know, too much.

KING: No?

OWENS: She saw that as an avenue of me getting out of the house and getting in trouble. She just didn't really understand. KING (voice-over): T.O., a college athlete, was drafted into the NFL in 1996. The same year his grandmother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

OWENS: It got to a point where, you know, she was kind of starting to wander off a little bit. She'd start misplacing, you know, her purse and things of that nature. My rookie season I remember exactly where I was when I got a phone call from my mom.

And that's when they said she had early stages of dementia, or what have you. And so, put her on the phone and she started talking. And her voice sounded pretty much like - like a battery going dead? You know?

KING (on camera): Really?

OWENS: And -- yes. So I knew there was something wrong.

KING: When you went home to see her, what was it like?

OWENS: It got to the point where she didn't really notice or realize what I had become, you know as --

KING: Or you were playing?

OWENS: Right. Exactly. So to this day she's never, you know, seen me play a football game and really be conscious of --

KING: Does she still know who you are?

OWENS: Not anymore.

KING: Now here's a woman who helped raise you, right? A important part of your life. What is it like when you're with her and she don't know who you are? What's it like for you?

OWENS: You know, I'm -- it's -- I'm trying to hold it together now, but it's -- you know, I just hold on to the good memories.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Coming up next, Maria Shriver speaks out publicly for first time since her father's death from Alzheimer's disease earlier this year.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SHRIVER: It's just one of those diseases that there is no coming back from.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: And later, if you were at risk for Alzheimer's in the future, would you want to know? Ron Reagan and I traveled to the Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. One of us agrees to an evaluation, one of us does not. Find out what happened as Larry King special UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Three incredible women open up about their personal stories of dealing with Alzheimer's disease. Former First Lady Laura Bush's father died of Alzheimer's in 1995. Actress Angie Dickinson's sister was diagnosed in 1984. She was only 55 years old. And Maria Shriver, speaking out tonight for the first time since her father, Sarge Shriver, died of Alzheimer's in January.

Maria opens up about her dad, her thoughts on Alzheimer's research, and why the disease is especially hard on women.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KING (on camera): How's the family doing?

SHRIVER: Well, it's a lot of changes. I'd say I've lost both my parents and my uncle in the last year and a half, so it's an adjustment period.

KING: You called Alzheimer's a defining challenge.

SHRIVER: Mm-hmm.

KING: Explain.

SHRIVER: Well, I think it is the defining challenge of our era and certainly of the baby boom era. The numbers are staggering. The costs to the nation are staggering. The costs to individual families are staggering. And it is -- I call it a mind-blowing disease because not only does it blow the mind of the person who gets it, but it blows the mind of everybody who loves that person.

KING (voice-over): Sergeant Shriver was another Kennedy family politician, the driving force behind the Peace Corps and the 1972 Democratic vice presidential candidate.

(On camera): Your dad was such an amazing guy.

SHRIVER: Yes.

KING: Did it come on quickly?

SHRIVER: Well, I don't think it might have for him, but for us, it was -- and I think from everybody I've spoken to, you slowly begin to notice or you think maybe but maybe not. And I think there's a lot of denial before you actually accept that a loved one has Alzheimer's.

KING: Was there a moment for you?

SHRIVER: No. There was no moment. There was just a slow realization and then a really long journey.

KING: Long good-bye. SHRIVER: Well, I think it's -- or a new hello every day. That's what I say, because you're meeting that person and that person's meeting you anew every day.

KING: What's it like, though, to have a father you love not know you?

SHRIVER: It's challenging. It's really challenging to look at your father or your mother and have them not know who you are and have to introduce yourself to them over and over again. Even though they look like your parent, they're not your parent. They become really your child.

KING (voice-over): As her dad's condition worsened, Maria took action. She used her training as a journalist and her position as California's first lady to bring attention to the disease, publishing a ground-breaking study looking at how Alzheimer's affects the economy, families and especially American women.

SHRIVER: "The Shriver Report" was the first report to really place Alzheimer's as a women's disease. It took on redefining it, saying that, for example, you know, the majority of people with it were women, the majority of people doing the caretaking were women.

We looked at the policies that were in place. We look at how women were able now to or not able to be primary breadwinners, primary parents and primary caretakers, and how society and institutions have not kept up with where women find themselves.

KING: Are you concerned for yourself?

SHRIVER: Absolutely. I think anybody who's not concerned about Alzheimer's is in denial. Everybody I've talked to who has a parent with Alzheimer's or a brother or sister is scared to death.

KING (voice-over): Laura Bush's father started showing signs of memory loss in the '90s.

BUSH: My dad really started to get sick. And I think we didn't know then that it was Alzheimer's. And it was really when my dad couldn't fill out bank deposit slips anymore that my mother sort of realized something was the matter. Slowly we saw him start to fail. And forget things.

His Alzheimer's never got so bad that he didn't know me. But he did on the very last Thanksgiving that we spent with him, after George had been elected governor, but before he'd been inaugurated.

We were in their living room and my dad said, who's that over there? And I said, well, dad, that's my husband, George Bush. And he said, you married George Bush? And I said, yes. And he laughed and said, I think I'll ask him for a loan. He never lost his sense of humor.

KING: Mrs. Bush says that her dad's disease progressed slowly but it became a burden for her mother who took care of him. She says the most important thing for families is to make sure they don't do this alone. BUSH: It's very important for caregivers to be sure they get help. Start to ask for help, look around for ways your family can come in and give you a little bit of a respite or friends can.

And that's, I think, the really hard part of caring for somebody. And I want to urge people to look around and see how you can help. For family members, for myself, I should have -- I felt like I should have been there more often for my mother.

KING: Angie Dickinson's been speaking out about Alzheimer's for decades.

DICKINSON: You don't do well with Alzheimer's. You just get worse and worse.

KING: She first talked about it on our show in 1991 after her sister was diagnosed at age 55.

DICKINSON: Everything is memory.

Mary Lou was absolutely wonderful. She was gorgeous. She was loving. She was gentle. She was a tender soul.

KING (on camera): You've spoken about her publicly for more than 20 years. Why?

DICKINSON: I want everyone to know, so that they can help and be helped.

KING (voice-over): Like many others, Dickinson noticed her sister's memory failing. She'd get lost driving, forget words, even holidays.

DICKINSON: I opened her trunk of her car and Christmas presents were in there. And it was spring or summer. That she had never took out. So I started to watch for the signs.

KING (on camera): Did it deteriorate fast?

DICKINSON: Yes. She went down fast.

KING: Did she lose recognition of you?

DICKINSON: Oh, yes. Oh, sure.

KING: What was it like for you?

DICKINSON: Well, I knew that was coming. I -- I was only sad for her. I wasn't sad for myself.

KING: But it is the long good-byes.

DICKINSON: Yes, it is. Yes. But you pray for the good-bye to come as soon as possible.

KING: You do?

DICKINSON: Absolutely.

KING: What would you say to people who are about to confront it as a family member?

DICKINSON: Well, I would say love them and I don't mean just love them with your soul and your head, love them with your arms and your company and your touch and whatever pleasure still might be there for them. And don't ever let up. Just stay as close as possible. Comforting them all the way because they're lost.

KING: And what would you say to someone diagnosed with it?

DICKINSON: I would say, oh, shit.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: When we come back, Leeza Gibbons on the pain of being a caregiver and watching the person you love slowly fade away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GIBBONS: It is a stab to the heart the likes of which I have never experienced before.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: We'll be back with more right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DON LEMON, CNN ANCHOR: I'm Don Lemon at the CNN world headquarter headquarters. Here are your headlines this hour.

A day of prayer for victims of the devastating tornadoes in the south. The death toll across six states now stands at 339.

Alabama took the hardest hit losing 250 people to the twisters. Senior administration officials today toured some of the worst hit places. Their primary message was to reassure survivors they will not be forgotten and the federal government will provide needed assistance.

Flooding is the problem in other places. A tiny Illinois town of Cairo facing pressure from rising waters on both the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The Army Corps of Engineers is considering blowing up a levee in Missouri to ease the pressure.

That might save the town but it would send floodwaters pouring across thousands of acres of Missouri farmland. Missouri has already lost one court case to stop that demolition. It's now asking the U.S. Supreme Court to step in.

Those are your headlines this hour. "UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC" continues right now.

KING: Alzheimer's affects more than just the person with the disease. Millions of family members suddenly find themselves as caregivers, having to drop everything to deal with the illness.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, some 15 million people, family members and friends, provided 17 billion hours or \$202 billion of unpaid care to those with Alzheimer's disease last year.

Leeza Gibbons has made caring for the caregiver her cause after losing both her grandmother and her mother to the disease.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GIBBONS: No matter how smart you think you are, how educated you might be, how much money you might have, there is nothing more helpless and nothing more alone than knowing that someone you love has this diagnosis.

My mom started showing symptoms in her late 50s. By the time she was 63, Larry, we had a diagnosis. Ten years later she was gone.

KING (on camera): What was it like for you when she didn't know you?

GIBBONS: That's the cruelest moment. I'm sure everyone would tell you the same thing. And after she was diagnosed and I was home in South Carolina helping her make the bed and I said, mom, I can never get the corner of the bed as great as you do. And she said, you're such a nice lady. What's your name?

It is a stab to the heart, the likes of which I have never experienced before.

KING (voice-over): Leeza helped her father care for her mom while trying to maintain her own life and career. She knows what a burden it was for her family and millions of others.

GIBBONS: Many times the caregivers, because of what we call compassion fatigue, are sicker than their diagnosed loved ones. They're under assault. And my dad was under assault. We all were.

KING: After feeling that assault firsthand, Leeza started a memory foundation and opened Leeza's Place. There are eight locations around the country. It's a facility for people to get help and bond with others in similar situations. It's a place for caretakers to catch their breath.

GIBBONS: We care for the people who care for people. It's all about knowing that this is a journey that you cannot take by yourself.

KING: Being a caregiver for an Alzheimer's patient is often an emotionally, spiritually, and physically and exhausting experience.

GIBBONS: The caregivers have to know that the best way to love their diagnosed family member is to nourish themselves, mind, body, soul and spirit. And that's counterintuitive. These caregivers will give everything they have, but it's hard to get them to focus on their own needs.

KING: Molly Miller and Jackie Singer know too well the burden of being a caregiver. The twin sisters from Las Vegas are caring for their parents. Both diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease just six weeks apart from each other last summer.

SINGER: We weren't -- I can honestly say that we weren't familiar with many of the symptoms of Alzheimer's. Actually, all we had ever seen as far as the media was concerned and what we had read about Alzheimer's was apparently a later stage in Alzheimer's, which is a serious memory deficit.

We didn't know about what we later discovered were symptoms of Alzheimer's. We didn't know that things like maybe slight paranoia, maybe losing interest in things.

KING: Their parents had been married 69 years. As the disease took hold, their mother had trouble recognizing their father.

MOLLY MILLER, PARENTS HAVE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: He's right here, mom. Right here.

She wanted that man out of her house. She didn't know who he was. And she's strong enough that she was able to convince him that he wasn't her husband. And he --

So got so confused.

M. MILLER: He would ask us, where's my first wife?

KING: Their father responded to medication but their mother did not. Both parents who are independent up until a few months ago now need constant supervision.

M. MILLER: It's heartbreaking.

SINGER: We were -- we were so overwhelmed. It happened -- it happened very fast. When we realized -- it caught us off guard. We were so overwhelmed that all we wanted to do was try and get them help as fast as we could.

KING: Between Molly, Jackie and Jackie's twin daughters, the family has set up round-the-clock shifts, tending to their parents' every need.

SINGER: At this point right now we really have no life of our own. A typical day for us involves 24/7 care for them, just figuring out who's doing what.

In three weeks she went from feeding her own dog, like she said, dressing herself to being able to do nothing. Nothing. Not lift a comb, not wash your face, not hold a toothbrush, nothing.

M. MILLER: Toothbrush was very foreign.

SINGER: Right. And also questioning, what were these things. She'll turn around and say to me, this is so humiliating.

M. MILLER: She knows that. SINGER: She knows.

M. MILLER: This is so degrading.

SINGER: These are things I used to do myself.

M. MILLER: You shouldn't have to help me.

KING: Molly and Jackie are watching their parents slowly fade away.

M. MILLER: She asked me this morning, do you have a mother? I said, yes. That's good. You're a nice girl.

SINGER: Those are the things that can be difficult, yet we know that that's not really her.

M. MILLER: No.

SINGER: We've always had such a close relationship with her that we know that it's not her. You know, it tears you up. But it's not her.

M. MILLER: We feel like we've lost her already.

SINGER: We have. And we know it. So all we can do is make her life as comfortable and as peaceful and as joyful as possible. We may be crying now. It's been -- it's for us. It's for the loss that we know we're experiencing already.

But the truth is, there's also a lot of humor in this sometimes. There's a lot of times where we just laugh and she laughs with us. So even though it's hard for us, if we can bring her comfort and we can be there for them, that's what it's about.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Molly and Jackie's mom passed away last month. The family continues to care for their father. We offer them our heartfelt condolences.

Ron Reagan and I visit the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas to see how doctors are treating the disease. One of us will be evaluated. The other will not. That's next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Would you want to know if you were at risk for Alzheimer's?

To learn more about the disease and how doctors diagnose it, I went to the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. We asked Ron Reagan to come along with me to see how testing and treatments have changed since his father was diagnosed.

Well, one of us decided to take an evaluation to see if we were at risk. The other did not. We'll show you that in just a moment. But first, Larry Ruvo is the man behind this amazing center after his father died of it. He decided to do something to make sure others didn't go through the same frustrations his family experienced.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LARRY RUVO, FATHER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: He was showing signs but we didn't know it was Alzheimer's and had no idea at that time that much about the disease. We were on the way back to the airport and he -- just the two of us were in the car and he looked at me and he says, how long do you think I have? And I said, I don't know about this disease to tell you but we're going to sure investigate it and look.

I was angry that there wasn't information that -- I knew other people had this disease in their families and why wasn't there information readily available in.

KING: So Larry Ruvo, a famed Las Vegas businessman, started making calls, gathering information, raising money. His self-described Alzheimer's obsession led to

the building of this \$80 million medical facility in downtown Las Vegas, designed, by the way, by world famous architect Frank Gehry.

To many people, it looks as if it's a giant stainless steel covered brain. Ruvo, a quintessential marketer, says the high profile project was all about getting people's attention.

RUVO: We knew that the world was going to know, we were going to build something in Las Vegas that was going to change the course of the disease.

KING: This state-of-the-art facility treats Alzheimer's and other diseases of the brain. Larry drew upon his own family's experiences to make sure patients here are treated with dignity and respect.

RUVO: There are no waiting rooms in our facility. And when my father went down for his original diagnosis he was in a waiting room with three other patients who are -- had been in stage three of the disease. I said that if I ever had an opportunity to help anybody at all, I would never commingle stage one with stage two with stage three of the disease.

KING: Larry partnered with the Cleveland Clinic and brought in some of the best brain doctors in the United States to work here.

Dr. Jeff Cummings heads up Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health.

(On camera): The first signs people say, the -- I don't know if it's a joke, if you forget where you lost your key, that's not Alzheimer's. If you forget what the key is for, that is Alzheimer's, is it that simple?

CUMMINGS: Well, that's not a bad -- not a bad way of thinking about it. Certainly memory loss is the first thing that occurs in the huge majority of cases.

KING: But everybody getting older loses memory. **CUMMINGS:** But it's the repeated not learning that's important. So, if you ask me, when are we going to the show tonight, and I tell you, you're likely to remember that. If you keep asking that question and don't lay down that memory, that's Alzheimer's disease.

KING (voice-over): The exact cause of Alzheimer's is still unknown but protein deposits called plaques and tangles are believed to play a big role in the destruction of brain cells, causing symptoms of the disease.

CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta explains.

DR. SANJAY GUPTA, CNN CHIEF MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT: When you look deep inside the brain, what you're looking for typically are neurons. People

typically know that word. That's the brain cells, so to speak. And they're conducting signals all the time. This is what makes --

(CROSSTALK)

KING (on camera): Goes through the body, right?

GUPTA: Yes. They go to each other and they go to the rest of the body. Then all of a sudden you can see what's happened here, Larry.

Two things. First of all you've got these proteins. They're called plaques and tangles, and those cells in there, not only do they stop working well but they actually start to die. So part of your brain actually is shrinking away in addition to not working well.

KING: Is that the memory part?

GUPTA: The memory part is often affected first. But what people often don't realize about Alzheimer's is that it really does affect the whole brain so people start having all sorts of different problems with movements --

KING: Headaches?

GUPTA: They can have headaches. But their movement, their swallowing, their ability to have -- you know, normal respirations, control their heart rate, their heartbeat, all of that. So that's why Alzheimer's is typically fatal.

KING (voice-over): Back at the Ruvo Center, Ron Reagan and I wanted to see how doctors make their diagnosis.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Right this way.

KING: Between the two of us, only one decided to be tested to see if we were at risk. That's me getting ready for an MRI. It's just one part of the evaluation. Ron Reagan decided not to participate.

First step was taking a scan of my brain. It's a 40-minute process as the technicians search for any signs that brain shrinkage has occurred. CUMMINGS: The MRI is one way of our looking at the structure of the brain. And we know that when Alzheimer's strikes, it strikes the memory portions of the brain first. So we can look at those memory portions and see if they're shrunken. And if they are, that's important evidence that the person has Alzheimer's.

KING: This is a scan of my brain. Later we'll tell you what Dr. Cummings saw.

Another part of the exam is memory testing. Since Alzheimer's affects the ability to learn and remember new information, Dr. Cummings is looking at my memory and recall skills.

KING (on camera): Grass. Engine.

CUMMINGS: Good. Now, tell me as many of those words as you can remember.

KING: Butter, arm, short --

CUMMINGS: Brain controls everything we are, Larry. Our memory, our thinking, our emotions, our movement, everything we are as human beings is controlled by the brain and that is eroded in the course of Alzheimer's.

KING (voice-over): There is no official test to tell if you will get the disease. Only if you're showing symptoms. And for now, the brain scan is only effective on people over age 60. Doctors are not ready to use these tests as screening tools like, say, a mammogram, just yet.

Ron Reagan watched me take the tests on this day, decided he didn't want to take any of his own.

(On camera): You don't want to know if you'll get it?

REAGAN: Until they come up with a cure or a real definite treatment, I'd just as soon remain blissfully ignorant.

KING: How well is our understanding of it improving?

CUMMINGS: I think we've made enormous strides in terms of understanding Alzheimer's disease. We know that there are several proteins involved. We know the cells are dying. We know that the clearance of the protein is reduced.

We have new tests that can show us the protein abnormalities in the brain. We're making definite strides in terms of the new therapeutics that are emerging. We don't know enough. We need a lot more research. But we're really making progress.

KING (voice-over): To change that researchers are studying segments of the population to see how they age, hoping to uncover clues as to what causes Alzheimer's in some but not others.

Dr. Petersen of the Mayo Clinic. PETERSEN: A great deal of research right now on Alzheimer's disease is focusing on imaging tests such as MRI scans, PET scans, even PET scans that can pick up the protein in the brain that's thought to be responsible for the disease as well as other biomarkers.

KING: The idea is to isolate early signs of Alzheimer's in patients with enough time to treat it before symptoms affect the individual.

PETERSEN: It's like we did with heart disease. So we don't wait for people to have heart attacks to address their cardiovascular problems. We look at people who have elevated cholesterol, people who have diabetes, people who have been smokers in the past to try and develop a prediction picture as to who's going to develop the disease.

Again, intervening as soon as possible to try to forestall those clinical events.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: So now we know more about what Alzheimer's is, how it affects you and what it does to your family. But can you prevent it? Or at least decrease the risk of getting it?

Plus, we'll go over my Alzheimer's results next on a Larry King special
UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Doctors are suggesting ways for people to begin protecting themselves from Alzheimer's. There are a number of steps you can take that may decrease your chance of getting it later in life. You do not have to wait for symptoms to appear before taking action.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SANDY PARKER, RICHARD PARKER'S WIFE: That was at Barbara's wedding.

KING (voice-over): Richard Parker was diagnosed with memory problems several years ago which could eventually lead to Alzheimer's. He is a former child actor who starred in movies with Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. He says he had a photographic memory.

RICHARD PARKER, PARTICIPATING IN ALZHEIMER'S CLINICAL TRIAL:
When you can remember things that -- and you remember them well, it just becomes natural but all of a sudden when you can't remember things and remember them as well as you used to, then it becomes a concern.

KING: His wife, Sandy, convinced him to see a doctor when she noticed him having some memory difficulty. He's been on medication for several years, which he says has helped slow down his loss. But more than anything, he's kept his mind and body active.

PARKER: I've always worked out. I just like it. It's just become a part of me. I do it every day. I try to walk my five miles. And when I do, I'd normally stop each mile around and I do 25 pushups until I've done 150. PETERSEN: What's become apparent in the last few years is that the development of Alzheimer's disease need not be a passive process. That is, let's just wait and see what happens down the road. But rather through lifestyle changes we can have an impact on our individual likelihood of developing cognitive impairment in the future.

So research is showing us now that lifestyle modifications such as aerobic exercise, staying active intellectually, engaging in a heart- healthy diet and staying involved in your social networks may very well postpone the likelihood of your developing cognitive impairment and maybe even Alzheimer's disease in the future.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: So what can you do? If you or your family have any concerns, talk to your doctor so you can be tested. Also, doctors suggest keeping your mind and body active, exercise, go on hikes, take up gardening, consume a low-fat diet, eat foods high in antioxidants like blueberries and other darkly colored fruits and vegetables. Engage your mind and memory, challenge yourself with crossword puzzles and games, keep yourself socially and mentally stimulated. Attend lectures or plays.

As someone in the age range of risk, I try to follow all of these practices.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CUMMINGS: There's no atrophy specific to those areas of the brain that are affected in Alzheimer's disease.

KING: And Dr. Cummings tells me my brain scan shows no visible symptoms of Alzheimer's disease or early memory loss. But for the millions of people who currently have the disease, for the millions about to be diagnosed and for the millions of family members caring for their loved ones, there is hope.

Research facilities around the world like the Mayo Clinic and the Cleveland Clinic are collaborating to find a cure.

With attention and activism, science is working to one day stop the UNTHINKABLE:
THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: If you're concerned about your memory or the memory of someone you know, talk to your doctor. The earlier a professional can make a diagnosis, the better the possibility of effective treatment.

If you're a family member or someone with the disease, there are organizations that can help you. The Alzheimer's Association is a pretty good place to start.

We'd like to thank everyone who opened up their lives to share these stories tonight. We thank you for watching. Good night, good health.

ABC News' chief anchor

ABC News' chief anchor George Stephanopoulos' interviewed former FBI director James Comey for a special edition of "20/20" that aired on Sunday, April 15, 2018 ahead of the release of Comey's book, "A Higher Loyalty." The following is the transcript of the interview:

Interested in James Comey?

Add James Comey as an interest to stay up to date on the latest James Comey news, video, and analysis from ABC News.

James Comey Add Interest

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Thank you for doing this.

JAMES COMEY: Oh, it's my pleasure. Thanks for coming.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Simple start. Why did you write this book?

JAMES COMEY: I r-- I was never going to write a book. But I decided I had to write this one to try and be useful. That was my goal after I was fired, to be useful. And it occurred to me maybe I can be useful by offering a view to people, especially to young people, of what leadership should look like and how it should be centered on values. And so--

PHOTO: A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership by James ComeyFlatiron Books

A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership by James Comey more +

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You lay out qualities of an ethical leader. What are they?

JAMES COMEY: First and foremost, it's someone who realizes that lasting values have to be at the center of their leadership. Whether they're in government or in the private sector or leading a university, they have to focus on things like fairness and integrity and, most of all, the truth. That the truth matters.

James Comey gives first interview since President Trump fired him

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And you have-- there's almost a sense of-- of alarm underneath the whole book. You say it's a dangerous time in our country?

JAMES COMEY: I think it is. And-- I chose those words carefully. I was worried when I chose the word, "Dangerous" first. I thought, "Is that an overstatement?" And I don't think it is because--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not?

JAMES COMEY: I worry that the norms at the center of this country-- we can fight as Americans about guns or taxes or immigration, and we always have. But what we have in common is a set of norms. Most importantly, the truth. "We hold these truths

to be self-evident," right? Truth is the fourth word of that sentence. That's what we are. And if we lose that, if we lose tethering of our leaders to that truth, what are we? And so I started to worry. Actually, the foundation of this country is in jeopardy when we stop measuring our leaders against that central value of the truth.

Comey defends his handling of the Clinton email saga in bombshell interview
Comey says Trump presidency is a 'forest fire' that can cause 'tremendous damage'
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Are we losing it?

JAMES COMEY: I think we are in part. But I think the strength of this country is that we're going to outlast it. That there will be damage to that norm. But I liken President Trump in the book to a forest fire. Going to do tremendous damage. Going to damage those important norms. But a forest fire gives healthy things a chance to grow that had no chance before that fire.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How do we put it out?

JAMES COMEY: We put it out in two ways. We put it out first by not becoming numb to the fact that the truth is being assailed every day. By not deciding that it's just too much to pay attention to because that's the path to losing truth as the central value in this country. So all of us have to constantly be involved and call it out when we see the truth endangered, when we see lying. And then next, we need to get involved. The American people need to stand up in the public square and in the voting booth and say, "Look, we disagree about an awful lot. But we have in common something that matters enormously to this country. And our leaders must reflect those values."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And-- and why the title, "A Higher Loyalty?"

JAMES COMEY: Well, in part, the title comes from a bizarre conversation I had with the president in dinner at the White House in January of last year, where he asked for my loyalty personally as the F.B.I. director. My loyalty's supposed to be to the American people and to the institution. But more than that, it grows out of a lifetime of my trying to be a better leader and figure out what matters in a leader, and realizing from a whole lot better leaders than I, that there must be a loyalty to something above the urgent, above the political, above the popular. We have to think, "What are the values that matter in the institution I'm involved with and in the country that I care a lot about?"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You look at your career over the last four decades, you're like the Zelig of modern law enforcement?

JAMES COMEY: I stick out 'cause I'm so tall. I appear in every picture--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Y-- that's only part of it. You've taken on the mob, Martha Stewart, right in the middle of huge controversies over government surveillance, over torture. What are the big lessons you take away from that?

JAMES COMEY: The big lesson from that-- and I've had a strange and wonderful career. And I don't know how I've ended up in all these spots. But the lesson I've learned is that it's important when you're involved in a difficult situation with loud voices to in your mind, rise above it and ask, "So what matters in the long run? What does this institution stand for? What does my country stand for?"

It helps you see things more clearly and realize things like truth matters, integrity matters. Those ethical values are what are going to last. And when you have to explain what you've done someday to your grandchildren, that's what will matter. Your grandkids won't understand that people-- angry at me, or the vice president of the United States was telling me people were going to die because of me.

What they'll want to know is, "What was your North Star? Why did you make the decision you made?" And I hope your answer's going to be, "'Cause I took the time to think about what matters. What my institution stands for and what my country stands for."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Right at the beginning of your career, you're involved in prosecution of major mafia figures. How does that form you?

JAMES COMEY: Well, it's a tremendous education to get-- a view inside La Cosa Nostra, the mafia, both in the United States and in Sicily. And to realize that the mafia is an organization like any other organization. Has a leader, has underlings, has values, has principles. They're entirely corrupt. And it is the antithesis of ethical leadership.

But I didn't know it at the time. But it was forming my view that the truth has to be central to our lives and that leadership has to be focused on important and ethical values. And not what's good for the boss, how do I accomplish what's good for the boss and get the boss what he wants.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Truth at the center of our lives. That's the-- at the center of the Martha Stewart case as well?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. The Martha Stewart case was a case that I initially hated.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why?

JAMES COMEY: And didn't want any part of. We had a lot of big cases going on at that point in time. WorldCom, Adelphia. Enron was going on. We were trying to investigate corporate fraud, massive corporate fraud, and send a message to the American people that the system isn't rigged, the rich aren't going to get away with frauds, and that's really hard and important work.

And in the middle of this, walks on this case involving a famous person who appears to have lied during an investigation of insider trading. And my initial reaction was, "You know, that's kind of a small thing. That'll be a big distraction. People will throw rocks at me. But more than that, it'll take away from this other work we're doing."

And folks don't realize this, but I almost hesitated and almost didn't bring the case against Martha Stewart, in hindsight, because she was rich and famous. And decided that if she were anybody else, any other ordinary person, she would be prosecuted. And what helped me come to that conclusion was I remembered a case I'd been involved in against an African American minister in Richmond when I was a federal prosecutor there, who had lied to us during an investigation.

And I begged this minister, "Please don't lie to us because if you do, we're going to have to prosecute you." He lied. And at the end of the day, we had to prosecute him. And he went to jail for over a year. And as I stood in my office in Manhattan, I'm looking out at the Brooklyn Bridge, I remember this moment. And I'm thinking, "You know, nobody in New York knows that guy's name except me."

"Why would I treat Martha Stewart differently than that guy?" And the reason would only be because she's rich and famous and because I'll be criticized for it. The truth matters in the criminal justice system. And if it's going to matter, we must prosecute people who lie in the middle of an investigation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You don't lie to investigators, you don't lie under oath?

JAMES COMEY: You can't or the rule of law breaks down. And there once was a day when people were afraid of going to hell if they took an oath in the name of God and violated it. We've drifted away from that day. And so in its place has to be a fear that if you lie and the government can prove it beyond a reasonable doubt, they will prosecute you in order to send a message to all the others who might be called upon to give evidence. You must tell the truth. It matters enormously.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You mentioned that Vice President Cheney-- at one point said, "People are going to die because of what you're doing right now." Take us inside that room?

JAMES COMEY: It was the chief of staff's room in the West Wing of the White House. And we were engaged-- I was at the Justice Department, the number two person at the Justice Department then, the deputy attorney general. And we were in a dispute with the White House about whether there was a lawful basis for surveillance activities that the president had authorized the NSA to engage in in the United States.

And we had concluded, very smart lawyers working for me had concluded and I agreed, that there wasn't a lawful basis for a big part of these activities. And so we were not going to sign onto it. And there was a meeting to pressure me to change my

view. And Vice President Cheney presided at the meeting. He sat at the head of the table.

I sat just to his left. And he looked me in the eye and said, "Thousands of people are going to die because of what you're doing." W-- what he meant was, "Because you are making us stop this surveillance program," because there was no lawful basis for it, "people are going to die 'cause of what you're doing."

And my reaction was, and I said it to him, "That's not helping me. That makes me feel badly. I don't want people to die. I've devoted my life to trying to protect innocent people. But I have to say what the Justice Department can certify to, what we find lawful. And that you really want it or that it's important doesn't change the law. And so I-- I can't my view." And so it was thick with tension and it was-- I felt like I was going to be crushed like a grape, frankly. But in a way, there was no other way I could act. The law was clear. And so how could I possibly, as the leader of the Justice Department, sign up to something that we had no lawful basis for. And so we stood our ground.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That same issue led to a now famous confrontation in the hospital room of the attorney general at the time, John Ashcroft. You sped to that room. Why?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I did. I think it was the next day after the meeting with Vice President Cheney when I was on the way home, driving along Constitution Avenue. So on my left, I could see the Washington Monument. On the right, we're coming up on the ellipse where you can see the White House. And the phone rang.

It was-- the attorney general, my boss was John Ashcroft. He was in intensive care. Very, very seriously ill at George Washington Hospital. And his chief of staff was on the phone, telling me that although we had told the White House we can't certify to this, I'm the acting attorney general, we can't certify to its lawfulness. And so it has to stop.

He was calling to alert me that the president was sending two of his top people, the White House counsel and the chief of staff, to the intensive care unit at George Washington Hospital to see the attorney general. And so I hung up the phone, told the driver, "Ed, I have to get to George Washington Hospital immediately."

And he didn't need to hear more than the tone in my voice. And so he turned on the lights and siren and drove this armored vehicle like it was a NASCAR race to George Washington Hospital. We pulled up in front. I jumped out with my security detail. And I ran into the hospital and ran up the stairs. Didn't wait for the elevator to get to that floor because I needed to be there to make sure a desperately ill man wasn't asked to sign something when he wasn't competent to sign it and I was the acting attorney general.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And in the end, he didn't sign it?

JAMES COMEY: In the end, he was remarkable. I went into that hospital room and got there before they did. And I tried to orient Attorney General Ashcroft as to time and place. And he didn't seem to be following me. He looked gravely ill, gray and lying in his bed, barely conscious. And I then sat down next to him as close to him as I am to you.

His wife stood on the other side of the bed the entire time and never let go of his arm. And I waited. And two of my staff members stood behind me. I didn't know that one of them was taking notes the whole time. But in came the White House chief of staff and the-- the-- the White House counsel. And they were carrying an envelope. And they were going to try and get John Ashcroft to sign off on this program that we had said couldn't continue because it didn't have a lawful basis.

And they started speaking to him. And he shocked me by pushing himself up on his elbows and blasting them. And telling them he had been misled, he hadn't understood what they were doing. They had deprived him of the legal advice he needed. And then exhausted, he fell back. And as he fell back, he said, "But that doesn't matter because I'm not the attorney general." And then he pointed at me and said, "There's the attorney general." And the two men didn't acknowledge me. They just turned. One said, "Be well" to the attorney general, and then they walked out.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And in the book, you describe an incident after that, a tender moment between Robert Mueller and Mr. Ashcroft?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. I called Bob Mueller-- as the armored vehicle was being driven like it was a NASCAR race to the hospital, I called Bob Mueller, then the F.B.I. director. He was out at dinner with his family. And I told him what was happening. He had been following the conflict with the White House. The F.B.I. was a key participant in the program.

And so Bob Mueller's view was, "If the F-- if the Justice Department can't find a lawful basis for this, there's no way the F.B.I. is participating." The F.B.I., as folks may know, is a separate organization, but it sits within the Justice Department. And so I called Bob and told him what was happening. And I wanted him to know about it because of his stature and his ability. He and I weren't close, we weren't friends in any social sense. But I knew he saw it the way I did. And I knew that his gravitas, his-- his experience, his weight, would be important. And he said, "I'll be right there."

And then he started a race to the hospital. He didn't get to the hospital until after the two senior White House officials had turned and left. But he came in moments later and he stood and s-- leaned down and spoke to the desperately ill attorney general and told him that, in every man's life, there comes a time when the good Lord tests him. And then he said, "You've passed your test tonight."

And I was-- it was a really hard time. And I was overcome with emotion, hearing that. And-- had this sense that the law held. The law held. It-- it felt like a dream to me, that we were in a hospital room with senior officials trying to get the desperately ill attorney general to sign something. But it wasn't a dream. And the law held.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: In that same administration-- you had the controversy over torture, whether or not it could be justified and legal. And there's-- a remarkable moment with your wife, Patrice. She doesn't know all the details of what you're going through, but she says?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, that was remarkable-- it actually irritated me a little bit. I love her desperately. But she's great at giving me feedback. And she had seen on the news-- didn't know what I was working on, but had seen on the news all the controversy around the treatment of prisoners at a U.S. prison in Iraq called Abu Ghraib.

And there was a great deal of news and debate about whether the American government was engaged in torture. She knew that and she also knew I was under some sorta great stress. This is after the stress of the surveillance battle. And she said to me one evening, "Don't be the torture guy." And I said, "Wha-- you know I can't talk to you about that kinda stuff."

And she said, "I don't want to talk about it. Just don't be the torture guy." And she repeated that periodically thereafter. And I've since told her, "Look, that was not helpful except your voice echoed around my head an awful lot during that." What she meant was, "Rise above and remember, someday you're going to explain to your grandchildren how you conducted yourself."

James Comey's wife warned him: 'Don't be the torture guy'

The former FBI director said his wife, Patrice, gave him the warning when he was deputy attorney general for George W. Bush.

James Comey's wife warned him: 'Don't be the torture guy'

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You still think it wasn't helpful?

JAMES COMEY: Oh, it was helpful. In the moment-- it was helpful. In-- in the moment, it was irritating because I wanted to say, "You have no idea how hard these legal issues are. You have no idea that Congress defined torture in American criminal law differently than you and I would understand it. So saying, 'Don't be the torture guy,' I don't want to be. But my job as a lawyer is to say, 'Here's what the statute means.'" And there's a whole lot that would pass muster under the statute, that I would think that any normal person would think is torture.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Explain that to-- to everybody watching at home because I think that it would be hard for people to understand. You really can't talk to your wife about the things you're working on?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. It adds to your level of stress. The-- the way the rule works-- the rules are, if you're dealing with a classified matter, you may only discuss it with someone who has a need to know it, a work related need, and the appropriate clearance. Well, your spouse has neither-- I guess unless your spouse works with you in the government, on that particular matter.

But as much as I loved her and as important as an advisor she's been to me my whole life, she didn't have a need to know anything about the classified topics I worked on. And she didn't have the appropriate clearance. She's an extraordinarily trustworthy person, but she doesn't have the appropriate clearance.

And so she would know, during surveillance and during torture, something was disturbing my sleep. Something was making me come home very late at night, leave very early in the morning. But she could only guess what it was. In the surveillance fight she couldn't guess 'cause it was totally secret. In the torture battle, she could have some idea 'cause she could see it on the news.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Right at the top of the book, y-- you write that you're aware that it could be seen as an exercise in vanity.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What are you worried about there?

JAMES COMEY: Well, that's why I was never going to write a book. It always felt like an exercise in ego. And one of the things I've struggled with my whole life is my ego and-- and a sense that I-- I have to be careful not to fall in love with my own view of things. And so that battle with ego and my sense that memoirs are an exercise in ego convinced me I was never going to write a book.

And I'm sure friends of mine from college and law school are out there laughing right now, saying, "Ah-ha, he wrote a book." I never wanted to write a memoir. And I hope folks will read the book 'cause my goal was to be useful. It's not a memoir. Lots of stories about my life that aren't in there, important stories. But I tried to pick stories that relate to leadership to try and explain, including mistakes I've made, how I think about ethical leadership and what I think it ought to be.

I'm not a perfect leader. There-- I don't think there are any perfect leaders. But I've learned from working with great people, from making a lot of mistakes, and from working for people who aren't effective leaders, here's what I think it should be. And so that's what I'm trying to offer in the book.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: As you say, no one's perfect. What's James Comey's rap on James Comey?

JAMES COMEY: How much time do you have? Yeah. My rap on myself is that-- is that ego focus. That I-- since I was a kid, I've had a sense of confidence. That I know I'm good at certain things. And there's a danger that that will bleed over into pride, into not being open minded to the fact that I could be wrong and other people could have a better view of it.

And so I think that's my primary worry about myself, is an overconfidence that can lead to that-- that pride, that closed mindedness. I've tried to guardrail that my whole life. First of all, by marrying someone who will tell me anything at any time. But then also surrounding myself with people who will cut through that and say-- "No, no, no, no. Slow down. Have you thought about this? Have you thought about that?"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you don't mind-- and you write this as well, the uncomfortable questions?

JAMES COMEY: I have to have them because, again, if what I worry about myself most is that I'll be-- convince myself that I'm doing the right thing, if I don't have people who will push through that, who will try and pierce whatever certainty I'm feeling, I may make a bad decision. I may make a big mistake.

And part of that is just aging and getting to realize that doubt is not a weakness. Doubt is a strength. Always remembering I could be wrong until the moment you make a decision is important. And that's great to tell yourself. But it's also important to have people around you who will poke at you, poke at you, poke at you.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Another short chapter in your career, you were part of the Senate Whitewater investigation of the Clintons. Wha-- what exactly did you do?

JAMES COMEY: I worked for five months as a staff lawyer on the banking committee's special committee I think they called it on the Whitewater investigation. My role was to focus on the suicide of a White House official who was the deputy White House counsel--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Vince Foster?

JAMES COMEY: --named Vincent Foster, yeah. And whether any documents were taken from his office and mishandled. I was only there five months. Patrice and I had a personal tragedy. We had a healthy baby boy, Collin Comey. Was born after I'd been there five months and died unfortunately of a infection that was preventable. And so I never went back.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And later, you also were involved in-- the prosecution or at least investigating whether Bill Clinton as president did anything improper in the pardon of Marc Rich?

JAMES COMEY: That's right. When I became U.S. attorney in Manhattan after 9/11, I inherited from my predecessor, Mary Jo White, an investigation into whether there was any corruption associated with a pardon that President Clinton had given to a fugitive named Marc Rich and his codefendant, Pincus Green.

These were guys who had been charged with a massive tax fraud case and-- and trading with the enemy and had fled to Switzerland and had been there for many years. And President Clinton, on his way out the door, pardoned them, which was extraordinary.

Actually, I've never heard of another case where a fugitive from justice was pardoned. And so the F.B.I. and the U.S. attorney's office were investigating were there promised contributions made to the Clinton Library or something else to secure that pardon. And so as the new boss in Manhattan, I oversaw that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what you found?

JAMES COMEY: Concluded there was not sufficient evidence to bring any charges in that case. And so we closed it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you draw any conclusions about the Clintons, about Hillary Clinton, from those experiences?

JAMES COMEY: No.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: None at all?

JAMES COMEY: No. I had-- first of all, I've never met her. And my engagement was very limited. The five months on the Whitewater case was focused on Vince Foster and his office. One of the questions was had the-- the then first lady, Hillary Clinton, caused anyone to go remove documents from his office. I don't remember what the conclusion was, but I didn't re-- reach any conclusion about her.

And same with the pardon business. President Clinton's pardon of Marc Rich took my breath away. Th-- the notion that the president of the United States would pardon a fugitive without asking the prosecutors or the investigators, "What do you think," was shocking to me. But it didn't give me any view of Hillary Clinton.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So what did you think of Hillary Clinton before the email investigation began?

JAMES COMEY: Seemed like a smart person, very hardworking. Had been obviously a U.S. senator and had a reputation-- again, I get only this-- I get this from the media, as a very hardworking person. Had worked very hard as secretary of state. That was really about it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And then on July 6th, 2015, there's a referral about her email case. What do you do?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, in early July the inspector general for the intelligence community, which is an-- an organization that looks for fraud, waste and abuse or violation of standards in the intelligence community, sent a referral that was public actually to the Department of Justice and the F.B.I., raising concern that there might've been mishandling of classified information on Hillary Clinton's email server, which was a personal email server device she had in her basement. And that came in in early July. I didn't focus on it. Shortly thereafter, the F.B.I. opened a criminal investigation. And I didn't know when we'd opened it. I was b--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So this was far below your level?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. F.B.I.'s an enormous organization. It was opened in the ordinary course in our counterintelligence division. Then eventually, it got briefed up to me by the deputy director, who's the senior agent in the organization, telling me that we've opened this criminal investigation of Secretary Clinton.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But that's the kinda thing that gets briefed up pretty quickly, doesn't it?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, yeah. I'm just saying, I didn't know-- I didn't know bef-- as I recall, I didn't know before they opened it that they were opening it, but nothing untoward about that--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And it wasn't your order to open the investigation--

JAMES COMEY: Correct. Correct.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And describe what exactly was at issue, what you were looking at?

JAMES COMEY: The question was, was classified information mishandled. And what that means is did anybody talk about classified information outside of a system that you're supposed to talk about classified information on? Did anybody give classified documents to someone who shouldn't have them?

What it centered on there was Secretary Clinton used this personal email domain to conduct all her business as secretary of state. She didn't use government email. And what the inspector general raised was in emailing, in doing her work on that unclassified system, did she and those around her talk about classified topics?

Classified information is either the lowest level confidential, the next level secret, the top level top secret. And there's rules about how you can email about that information

and where you should talk about it. And the question was did they talk about topics on an unclassified system that shouldn't have been on an unclassified system?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And this had come right on the heels of a very famous case-- involving General David Petraeus for his mishandling of classified information. Something that was-- prosecuted. He eventually had a plea. As you know, many of your conservative critics-- say that the David Petraeus case was far [less] serious than the Hillary Clinton case. Yet, you chose not to prosecute. Answer that.

JAMES COMEY: Well, the David Petraeus case was, to my mind, not a close case at all. He was the director of the C.I.A. He was having a romantic relationship with a woman who was also an author, going to write a book about him. He had taken home and stored in a backpack notebooks full of notes about some of the government's most sensitive secrets. Classified at the top level in the government, including conversations with President Obama about special access programs, some of our-- our most closely guarded secrets.

And he had given these notebooks to this person who had neither a need to know, nor the appropriate clearance. And he'd actually allowed her to photograph pages containing top secret information. And then, when the F.B.I. interviewed him about it, he lied about it. And so you had clearly intentional misconduct by a guy who's in charge of the country's secrets as the director of the C.I.A., involving huge trove of our top level classified information. And then obstruction of justice.

It was not a close call. In fact, I thought David Petraeus should've been prosecuted not just for the mishandling of the classified information, but also for lying to the F.B.I. because lying is-- strikes at the heart of our rule of law in this country. And in the end, the attorney general at the time, Eric Holder, decided he would be charged only with the misdemeanor mishandling of classified information.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Y-- you also write that you-- you knew from the start that the Clinton case was unlikely to be prosecuted. Some of your critics, including President Trump, think that-- that you brought a prejudgment to the case?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. There's wrong-- what-- what the F.B.I. brought to the case-- folks forget I didn't actually do this investigation. I supervised an organization that did it, is a knowledge about how these cases are handled in the counterespionage world. That's the world where mishandling of classified information is investigated. And so we have a 50 year history of knowing what will the Department of Justice prosecute?

They'll prosecute cases like David Petraeus'. But they're very unlikely to prosecute a case unless you can show the person, like Petraeus, clearly knew they were doing something they shouldn't do. There's evidence of obstruction of justice or disloyalty to the United States, spy-- indications.

But without those, sloppiness, even extreme sloppiness, is handled through administrative discipline. Somebody is not prosecuted. And I've gone through 50 years of cases. I don't know of a case where anyone has ever been prosecuted for just being careless, even extremely careless. And so when the case was open, we know that history.

And so the investigators knew that, unless they found something that was a smoking gun, where someone told Secretary Clinton, "You know, you shouldn't be doing this," or where she acknowledged it or where somehow there's an indication of her obstructing justice, the case was unlikely to be prosecuted.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: One of the things that President Trump and his allies bring up is that at some point, her staff smashed Blackberries, also whitewashed the server?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. There was evidence that old Blackberries, after she was finished with them, they destroyed them, which I think a fair number of people do to make sure that if it's resold, someone doesn't end up with your information. And that after they produced information back to the d-- to the Department of State, they used-- a software program to clean the server to make sure there was nothing on it, or clean laptops to make sure there's nothing on them.

They did that. But as investigators, our question is, when they did that, are they trying to obstruct justice in some ways? And we could never establish, develop the evidence-- evidence is a different thing from what people say. Evidence that anybody who did that did it with a corrupt intent. And most importantly, any indication that Secretary Clinton knew that was happening and knew that it was an effort to obstruct justice.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You did know from the start that this case was going to be trouble for you. You tell of a scene with your deputy director?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. I knew this was a no-win situation, this case. America is in an unusually polarized state. We've just opened a criminal investigation of one of the people who will likely be candidate for president of the United States in the middle of that viciously partisan atmosphere. One half of the partisan divide is going to be angry at us no matter what we do.

Of course, at the time, I had no idea that I could make both halves angry at us, but we'll come to that later. But the deputy director who was a great deputy director and a longtime special agent, looked at me and said, "You know you're totally screwed, right?" And I smiled. And I said, "Yup. Nobody gets out alive." And, of course, it was gallows humor. And it was funny because it was an actual gallows.

If we decide there is no criminal case there and we recommend no prosecution, the Republicans will be screaming that we let, you know, the greatest crime go since the Rosenbergs were executed for selling our nuclear secrets. And if we prosecute her, the

Democrats will scream that we're just doing it out of some sort of partisan bias because I'm a former Republican appointee and so the system is rigged against Hillary Clinton. Either way, we were going to be attacked.

And this may sound strange, that's kind of freeing. If you know you're totally screwed and you know that people are going to be angry at you no matter what you do, y-- you can't do anything about it. And so you just put your f-- head down and you do your job. And you let the facts and the law decide what you should do.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: First big controversy comes up-- late that summer, September, 2015. You have a meeting with the attorney general Loretta Lynch because you've decided to say publicly there is a criminal investigation-- of Hillary Clinton, which many considered a break with precedent?

Comey describes how Loretta Lynch's credibility gap propelled him into Clinton email

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, it was not a break with precedent, but y-- you're right. In the late summer after the investigation had been opened for three months and the whole world was talking about it, 'cause you remember, it began with a public referral from the inspector general. So the candidates were talking about it. Congress was talking about it. The people we were out there interviewing were talking about it.

I went to the attorney general and said, "You and I are both going to have public events coming in the next--" I think it was a few days later. "Do you think it's time to do what the Department of Justice policy permits, in the appropriate case where there's a public interest that justifies it, confirming that you have an investigation?" And she agreed.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: She-- but-- she agreed. But you write that she didn't want to call it an investigation?

JAMES COMEY: That's right. She agreed. Loretta Lynch I had a great relationship with and still have a lot of respect for. And she said, "I agree. But call it a matter." And I said, "Why would I do that?" And she said, "Just call it a matter." And I didn't know exactly why she was doing that, but I decided in that moment that the whole world would miss the distinction between investigation and matter. And so I dropped it at that point. At my press event, I said-- used the term matter, and I was right, the press missed it and said we'd confirmed an investigation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did-- did you think she was doing that to protect Hillary Clinton?

JAMES COMEY: I didn't know. It worried me. It gave me an uncomfortable feeling because the Clinton campaign, since the matter had come in, the investigation had started in July, had been trying to come up with other words to describe it. They had used "Review" I think, "Security referral," things like that. And it did worry me that

the attorney general's direction was tracking that effort to avoid using the word "investigation." And so, to be honest, it gave me a bad feeling. And maybe I should've pushed harder in the moment.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Yeah, did you push her on it?

JAMES COMEY: I didn't because I've known Loretta for a long time. We worked a case together in the early 1990s. And she's a very smart person. And if she'd had a reason that I couldn't see in Justice Department policy or something, she'da given it to me. But her answer, "Just do it," told me this is an order from the attorney general. So it's not improper, it's a little bit off axis from the actual facts. But people are going to miss the distinction. And so I'm not going to fight this new attorney general. This is not going to be our first battle.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You think you should have?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I probably should have. Given that I respect Loretta, I probably should've pushed harder in the moment.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The investigation proceeds. And your initial instinct-- is confirmed by the investigation. So that by-- I guess it is by spring, 2016, you're pretty clear you're not going to prosecute-- Hillary Clinton. And you say you took one weekend, I think it was in May, 2016, and began to draft-- a statement explaining the decision. Again, President Trump looks at that and says you were "Writing the r-- the conclusion even before you interviewed Hillary Clinton. That is just wrong."

Comey says his assumption Clinton would win was 'a factor' in the email investigation

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I've heard that an awful lot, not just from President Trump, but from a lot of former prosecutors and former government people saying, "This shows that you had prejudged the matter." Here's my reaction. And the reason I smile a little bit is anybody who's actually done investigations knows that if you've been investigating something for almost a year and you don't have a general sense of where it's likely to end up, you should be fired because you're incompetent.

If you've been investigating for a year, you know that, unless things change, we're going to head in this direction. Prosecutors and investigators all the time draft indictments before they finish the investigation. Their mind is open that if they find something that changes their view, they won't bring an indictment. But they know where it's headed after a year of investigation. Same thing here.

We had looked all around and scrubbed thousands and thousands and thousands of Hillary Clinton's emails. We had a very clear picture after nine or ten months of investigation of this case. Our mind was open to a couple of facts. Maybe something will change in the final month of the investigation. Or maybe she'll lie to us during the

interview, which is a whole 'nother kettle of fish. Or maybe we'll need to do additional investigation.

But after nine or ten months of investigating, it looked like on the current course and speed, this is going to end without charges. And so what will we do? Smart people, competent people plan ahead. If you're going to charge, you plan ahead. If you're not going to charge, you plan ahead. And the hard part about this investigation was going to be not charging because the Obama Justice Department could bring charges against Hillary Clinton without claim of bias, political bias, because they're Democrats.

What would be hard for the Obama Justice Department for a bunch of reasons is not to bring charges about Hillary Clinton. That will be hard to do without jeopardizing the reputation of the institutions of justice. So it required thought to think about, "So how will we end this in a way that maximizes confidence that we did it in the right way, that the system was not rigged?" So that's what I'm doing in the beginning of May, is trying to think through, "So how will this end if it continues on this course that it's on now?"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And to those who say you should've brought Hillary Clinton before a grand jury?

JAMES COMEY: Look, I understand why people ask that. We would actually prefer - most people haven't been in front of a grand jury. We would prefer with a subject of an investigation to do an informal interview. Lot more flexibility there. You can bring a lot more people and have a lot more people involved in the questioning. And it offers us an opportunity in a less formal setting to poke at someone. They're still required to tell the truth. That's another thing that gets lost--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, President Trump says you should've put her under oath.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. President Trump's not-- I'm-- I'm sure his lawyers, given his situation, are focusing him on this. It's still a crime to lie to the F.B.I. and federal prosecutors, whether or not you're under oath. It doesn't matter. If you knowingly tell a false statement to the F.B.I., as Martha Stewart did, as David Petraeus did, as so many others have, you will be prosecuted for it. It doesn't matter whether you're under oath or not.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You interview Hillary Clinton I guess it was July 2nd-- 2016. But actually, you're not there?

JAMES COMEY: No 'cause I'm the dir-- at that point, the director of the F.B.I. Only on TV is the director jumping out of helicopters and conducting interviews. My job is to make the final decisions. The pros will do the interview, the agents who had actually been investigating her and crawling all around her life for a year. And that's the way it should be.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And after the interview, what did you learn?

JAMES COMEY: Spent a lotta time on the phone with the team that afternoon and learned that we didn't find anything, the team didn't, that changed their view of the case. That this was a case that the Department of Justice would never prosecute. And, most importantly, they didn't want to do additional investigation.

There was nothing she said that they believed we could prove was false. And there was nothing else they needed to run down to see if she was testifying to us falsely. And so the view of the team was, "We're done here. Our view of this case is firm. No prosecutor would prosecute this case."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So if no prosecutor would prosecute this case, why not put out a one line statement, "We decline to prosecute"?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. It's a great question and a reasonable question. And the reason I thought that would be inappropriate is the faith and confidence of the American people in the Department of Justice and the F.B.I. are at the core of those organizations. If they're not believed to be honest, independent and competent, they're done.

If you issue a one liner from the Obama Justice Department about one of the two candidates for president of the United States, in this case the Democratic nominee for president of the United States, and say, "We're done here," in the absence of any kind of transparency, corrosive doubt creeps in that the system is rigged somehow. And so my view was-- and this is a longstanding practice of the Department of Justice, that in rare cases, you should offer transparency so the American people can take a look at what you did and know that it was done in an honest, competent, independent way.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The Department of Justice, but not the F.B.I. director?

JAMES COMEY: That's right. What was unusual about this, in fact unprecedented in my experience, is that I decided it was important that I speak separately from the attorney general. In the-- in the ordinary case, what we'd do is what I said publicly, we'd have sent that to the Department of Justice. And the attorney general could announce it in any way the attorney general chose.

What was different here is I decided, given some things that had happened, that to protect the institutions, we actually had to step away from the Department of Justice and tell the American people, "Look, here's what we did. Here's what we found. Here's what we think. You can count on the fact this was done in an apolitical way. Your organization of justice acted the way you'd want it to be. And that if I'd done the normal thing, that wouldn't have happened and the institutions would've been damaged."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Your critics say this is where your ego got the best of you. This was your original sin?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I hear that. And, look, there's always a risk that I'm blind to how I'm acting. I don't think so. I knew this would be terrible for me personally. So if it was about ego, why would I step out in front of the organization and get shot a thousand times?

I actually thought, as bad as this'll be for me personally, this is my obligation, to protect the F.B.I. and the Justice Department. Given all that had gone on, the attorney general of the United States could not credibly announce this result. And if she did, it would do corrosive damage to the institutions of justice.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Dig into that. Why could the attorney general not credibly announce the results of this investigation?

JAMES COMEY: Well, for a bunch of reasons. And it sort of built over the course of the investigation. First of all, we had the problem that President Obama had twice publicly basically said, "There's no there, there." In an interview with-- on Fox, an interview on 60 Minutes I think, both times he said that. So that's his Justice Department.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did that surprise you?

JAMES COMEY: It really did surprise me. He's a very smart man and a lawyer. And so it surprised me. He shouldn't have done it. It was inappropriate--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you think he was trying to color the case?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I don't think so. He didn't have any insight into the case, at least as far as I know, more than anybody reading the newspaper did, which was zero 'cause there were no leaks. I think he felt a pressure in the political environment because he wanted Hillary Clinton to be elected, to give her a shot in the arm. And so he spoke about an investigation. And he shouldn't have done that. But that, as you can imagine, created this drumbeat that the Obama Justice Department, the fix is in because the president has told them what result they should reach.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So that's one reason that the Justice Department is compromised. What's reason number two?

JAMES COMEY: Reason number two. And I have to talk about it very carefully. Classified information came into the possession of the U.S. intelligence community in the early part of 2016 that indicated there was material out there that raised the question of whether Loretta Lynch was controlling me and the F.B.I. and keeping the Clinton campaign informed about our investigation.

Now, I don't believe that. And I don't believe that's true. But there was material that I knew someday, when it's declassified, and I thought that would be decades in the future, would cause historians to wonder, "Hmm, was there some strange business going on there? Was Loretta Lynch somehow in -- carrying water for the campaign and controlling what the F.B.I. did?"

Loretta Lynch, the former attorney general, could not credibly take the lead on announcements about the Clinton email investigation, Comey told ABC News George Stephanopoulos.

Lynch lacked credibility to announce details of Clinton inquiry: Comey
Again, it wasn't true. But there was material that would allow that to come out someday in the long future when it's declassified. That all changed when someday, in my mind, became maybe tomorrow. That was in the middle of June, when the Russian government, using some fronts, started dumping stolen material that had been hacked from organizations associated with the Democratic party in the United States. And all of a sudden, it dawned on me that that someday decades from now when this material comes out actually may be now, tomorrow. And again, even though I didn't believe it, the material was real. Whether what it said was true or not, I didn't know. But it would allow people, partisans and even people who were partisans, to strongly argue that something was wrong with the way the investigation--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you investigate it?

JAMES COMEY: We did.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what did you find?

JAMES COMEY: Found no indication that it was true.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Boy. So-- so-- so you find no indication this is true. And yet-- you write that this is the reason you went out on your own--

JAMES COMEY: One of the reasons.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: One of the reasons. Doesn't that cast a cloud over the attorney general, an unjustified cloud over the attorney general?

JAMES COMEY: In a way, yeah. I mean, I like Loretta. As I said, I respect her even today. And so in a way, it's unfair to her. But when you're in the business of running a Justice Department institution, what people think matters. Public faith and confidence is everything to the Justice Department.

And so whether or not it was true, the fact that it would be out there and allow people to argue that something terrible was going on in this investigation cut in favor of more transparency. I'm not saying it's true. But because it will undermine confidence in our

work, the way to react to that is show people your work. And again, Justice Department policy allows for this. What made it different was the separation between the F.B.I. and the Justice Department. Now, that-- of course, that material-- so-- I'm talking about it carefully because it's still classified, that was just one brick in the load. The-- the major brick in the load happened just before--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: H-- how--

JAMES COMEY: --the Clinton email--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --yeah, and I want to get to that--

JAMES COMEY: --entered.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --in a second. But I know you can't talk about it, but I've read about it. I think a lotta the country has read about it as well. These are emails or memos released by the Russians. The F.B.I. knows they're junk. How can you then allow that to influence this decision?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, that's tricky for me 'cause-- 'cause the F.B.I.'s told me that I have to be very careful speaking about this 'cause it's still classified. What I can say is the material is legitimate. It-- it is real. The content is real. Now, whether the content is true is a different question. And again, to my mind, I believed it was not true.

I-- I didn't see any indication that Loretta Lynch was trying to cover this investigation for the Clinton campaign or direct me in any way. She stayed away from it as far as I could tell. But the point of it is I knew there was material that might hit the public square any moment, that would allow people to argue powerfully that there was monkey business going on--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But then wouldn't-- your obligation then be you get up and say, "No, there's no monkey business. I know that. I've investigated it. I've looked into it. It's not true"?

JAMES COMEY: Well, sure, if I could do that, given the rules of classified information, but I couldn't. But what I could do instead is offer unusual transparency to the American people about the investigation. Tell them, "Here's what we did, here's what we found, here's what we think about it. You can trust us because we're showing you our work." Again, which Department of Justice policy permits in an unusual case.

And so, it was frustrating. I'm sure it's frustrating to Loretta Lynch that-- that this material was out there. But it-- to my mind, it added to the case that we need to do something unusual to offer the American people transparency. And then the capper happened at the end of June.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Yeah, I want to get to that in one second. One final point on this. The New York Times quoted former Department of Justice officials saying, "The F.B.I. never uncovered evidence tying Ms. Lynch and the document's author and are convinced that Mr. Comey wanted an excuse to put himself in the spotlight."

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Look, I-- I understand why people say that. That's just not true. I'm telling you how we evaluated the information. We didn't have any reason to believe that what the document said was accurate. That is, that Loretta Lynch was a channel to the Clinton campaign and controlling us. But there's no doubt that it would've allowed people to argue strongly that that was the case.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did-- did you tell-- Congressional officials in a classified setting that this was not true?

JAMES COMEY: That what was not true?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That this-- that this information was not true? That you'd investigated, looked into it and it was not-- it was-- it was not valid?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I can't say what I said in a classified setting, so let's set that aside. I can tell you right now-- we looked into it and found no evidence to support its truth.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Third brick. The tarmac meeting.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, the biggest brick of all. Loretta Lynch and Bill Clinton had a conversation on an F.B.I. plane which transported the attorney general in Phoenix in late June. And I didn't pay much attention to it. I saw news accounts of it early on. And it quickly blossomed into a very big deal the last week of June.

I don't know what they talked about. I credit Loretta Lynch 'cause I think she's an honest person, saying, "We talked about grandchildren and other things." I find it hard to believe that Bill Clinton would've tried to obstruct justice by walking across the tarmac in front of--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Kind of public.

JAMES COMEY: --in front of a bunch of F.B.I. agents up the stairs and onto an F.B.I. plane. And so, look, I-- I credit Loretta's account that-- what they talked about. I think she's telling the truth about that. But again, the confidence of people that the system is working in a fair way, that Lady Justice has kept her blindfold on, matters.

And so what happened the last week of June is a big storm blew up about what was going on there. And the attorney general did something that, to my mind, was strange.

At the end of that week-- so I think Friday, July the 1st, she put out a public statement which I didn't know was coming, saying, "I'm not going to remove myself from the investigation." "Recuse" is the official word. "I'm not going to step outta the investigation. But I will accept Jim Comey's recommendation and that of the career prosecutors." And at that moment, I decided I have to step-- as much as I like her, I have to step away from her and show the American people the F.B.I.'s work separately.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Wasn't there another route? Couldn't you have just gone to her privately, personally and said, "You've gotta recuse. You've gotta get out of this completely"?

JAMES COMEY: Maybe. But she's my boss, one. Two, w--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You've stood up to bosses before.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And so that's why there's a two. Two, she announced publicly what she was doing before talking to me. And so I really didn't think there was a prospect that, having announced publicly, she would accept my recommendation and that of the career prosecutors, that I would be able to convince her to recuse.

Now, what I did think about was, "Should I call for the appointment of a special prosecutor?" Someone outside the normal chain of command who can then take our work and announce it separately from-- so I don't have to do this, can do it separately from me. And I decided that would be brutally unfair to the subject of the investigation, Hillary Clinton. And that's not a political judgment, that's an ethical judgment.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: No, but there's a third route. You-- you-- you push her to recuse and then it goes through the normal Justice Department channels. The deputy AG, Sally Yates, makes the decision, makes the announcement?

JAMES COMEY: Sure, maybe. Maybe. And-- and I-- I suppose a reasonable person might have done that. But my judgment was she's just announced publicly that she's not going to recuse herself. And she'll accept my recommendation that of the career prosecutors. And so what more is there to do at that point?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, you make the decision to make a public statement-- July 5th. Take us inside your head. Tell us what you were thinking.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, my goal was to try to offer as much transparency as I could, consistent with the law and policy, to the American people, with the goal of convincing them, first of all, that we're not on anybody's side. We're not on the Democrat side or the Republican side. That we did this in a competent way, an honest way, an independent way.

James Comey says Robert Mueller is 'not on anybody's side'
And there's no there, there. That no reasonable prosecutor would prosecute this case. And you can rely upon that 'cause we did this well and in an apolitical way. And so we crafted a statement that we worked on endlessly to get it right. And I decided that I would read it, say it out loud, so that people could hear the tone in my voice. But that I wouldn't take any questions. And that was the goal, to give a report to the American people and then step away from it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You even thought about the tie you'd wear that day?

JAMES COMEY: I did. We're in such-- we're still in such a vicious partisan time. I don't know whether folks notice this, but in Washington Democrats tend to wear blue-- men tend to wear blue ties. Republicans tend to wear red ties. And so I chose a gold tie that morning 'cause I didn't want to wear either of the normal gang colors.

Which seems crazy that I have to think about that, but given the times we were operating in and we're still in, I was hoping the American people would see us as apart from this craziness. That these are people I can trust. And part of that was not just the way I dressed. But by offering them a lot of information. Sh-- let me show you my work so you can understand we did this in the way you would want us to do it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Your critics say you offered way too much information. The way they put it, "Listen, in the F.B.I. we simply do not bloody up people we choose not to prosecute."

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, and I get that. Look, that's fair criticism. But here-- here's my response to it. The Department of Justice has long done that in the appropriate case, where it's necessary to the credibility of the work. There was controversy for the first couple years of my time as director over whether the IRS had targeted Tea Party groups.

And the Department of Justice and the F.B.I. did a criminal investigation and in a detailed report that was public as to what we had done-- the department did this, they criticized people but said no criminal case was warranted. This is just consistent with that practice. What I'd ask those people is would the work really have been credible if I wasn't honest? That-- that Hillary Clinton's c-- conduct on that personal email server was extremely careless. It just was. And if I wasn't honest about that, how am I achieving the goal of showing the American people this is your justice system working in the right way?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Y-- you-- you cited her for extreme carelessness. In an original draft of your statement-- the words, "Gross negligence" were there instead of "Extreme carelessness." And-- and President Trump's allies say that's a sign that you personally went easy on her.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't. All these allies who think I went easy on her have a hard time explaining so why did I do what I did in October, but I'll stay in July. I wasn't trying to go easy on her or hard on her. I was trying to be honest and clear with the American people. What she did was really sloppy.

Comey admits 'mistakes' in describing Clinton's 'really sloppy' handling of info
The former FBI director said Hillary Clintons email use were out of the ordinary, but not something anybody would prosecute.Play

Comey: Clinton's actions with the email server were 'really sloppy'

Not-- you know, there's all the time people mishandle a classified document or maybe have one conversation on email that they shouldn't. This was over the course of four years, dozens of conversations on email about secret topics. And I think eight about top secret topics. So this is more than just ordinary sloppiness.

So if I'm going to be honest, I have to say somehow it's more than ordinary sloppiness. So my first draft, which I wrote myself, said, "Gross negligence." It's a lawyer term. And the reason I used that term is I wanted to also explain that I don't mean that in the sense that a statute passed 100 years ago means it. And then my staff convinced me that that's just going to confuse all kinds of people, if you start talking about statutes and what the words mean. What's a colloquial way to explain it? And elsewhere in my statement I had said, "Extremely careless." And so they said, "Just use that." And so that's what I went with.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And to Hillary Clinton supporters, that sounded like you're accusing her of a crime even though you don't prosecute.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I get that. And then the other said saying, "You're admitting she committed a crime, you didn't prosecute her." The goal was-- and-- and one of the mistakes I made is I don't know what it would be. I should've worked harder to find a way to convey that it's more than just the ordinary mistake, but it's not criminal behavior, and find different words to-- to describe that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Even your family had some criticism of that press conference?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, they did. They did. God love them, they have criticism of nearly every press conference. But this one, their feedback was, "You Seacrested it, Dad," which I-- they explained to me was a reference to Ryan Seacrest, the TV host, who I guess will frequently say-- he's about to announce a result and then say, "But first, this commercial." And what they meant was I made people wait till the very end to say what the conclusion was we were reaching, when folks wanted to hear that at the beginning.

And I actually think that's fair feedback. And I-- I think that's an example of my ego sneaking through. That-- that I thought I knew the best way to present this was not to give them the headline up front 'cause I thought then they won't listen to the rest of it--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You wanted people to listen.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. But-- I think I was wrong about that. In fact, I know I was wrong about that 'cause it led to a lotta confusion. "Where is he going?" And people thinking that I was somehow burying the lead for dramatic purposes or-- or something. So that feedback from my family, as usually is, was accurate.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And you also would not use the words, "Extreme carelessness" today?

JAMES COMEY: No. I'd find some-- I don't know what it would be, sitting here. Find some other way to convey, 'cause I wanted to be honest and transparent. This wasn't your ordinary bureaucrat who just mishandles one document. This was something more than that. But not something that anybody would prosecute.

And-- and that's one of the things about the criticism that drives me crazy. Nobody who has done counterespionage work would think this is a case that's been prosecute-- would be prosecuted, ever. And so I needed to find a way to both convey that and to capture that it was more than just ordinary carelessness.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But do you think that the F.B.I. would be in better shape today, the institution you love, would be in better shape today if you had simply put out that one line statement, "We decline to prosecute"?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I've asked myself that a million times. It's hard-- hindsight is a wonderful thing. I'm not sure that it would have. And-- here's why I say that. Because we would've taken a tremendous amount of criticism for being fixed. The system fixed, no detail. And I still would've been dragged up to Capitol Hill all that summer to justify the F.B.I.'s work.

And so surely, I would've said something about how we did the work. And so I-- I'd kinda be in the same place, except I'd be playing defense like a cornerback backpedaling. There'd be this tremendous hit the institution would take. I'd be trying to explain to people, "No, no, we did it in a good way. We did it in a good way." And none of it, by the way, would change what I faced in late October. Even if we'd just done the one liner, we'd still have the nightmare of late October.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Y-- you laid out a series of reasons that led you to do-- do the July press conference-- even going back to Loretta Lynch calling this a matter not an investigation. President Obama weighing in. The classified information about Loretta Lynch, the tarmac meeting. Can you assure people today-- can you assure them that the Obama Justice Department was not protecting Hillary Clinton?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. And if there were people who were secretly trying to protect Hillary Clinton, we didn't know about it. The FBI drove this investigation and we did it in a competent and independent way. I would bet my life on that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: While this is all going on in July of 2016, the FBI also opens an investigation into the Trump campaign. Why?

JAMES COMEY: Well-- to be more clear, we opened an investigation into whether there were any Americans associated in any way with the Trump campaign who were working with Russia as part of Russia's effort to influence our election. And so in late July, the FBI got information that there was somebody who had had-- was a foreign policy advisor named Papadopoulos to the Trump campaign.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: George Papadopoulos.

JAMES COMEY: Right, who had been talking to someone in London about getting dirt that the Russians had on Hillary Clinton as part of their effort to influence our campaign-- the-- our election. And the reason that was important was that was long before the-- there was any public indication that the Russians had material they were going to dump, which they started dumping in mid-June.

And so we opened, our counterintelligence division, in late July, an investigation to try and figure out-- we know the Russians are trying to mess with our election. Are any Americans working with them, trying to help them?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You also had had your eye on Carter Page, who had also been working with the Trump campaign.

JAMES COMEY: Correct.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what was your concern there?

JAMES COMEY: Similarly, trying to figure out is he in any way coordinating with the Russians, as part of their effort to influence our-- our election? We hear the word "collusion" all the time. "Collusion" is not a word that's familiar to me from my work. The question is, is anybody conspiring or aiding and abetting, helping, the Russians accomplish their goal of interfering in the American election? That's what the counterintelligence investigation was about.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: S-- so what impact did the Steele-- the so-called Steele dossier have on the FBI investigation? Did that trigger the FBI investigation in any way?

JAMES COMEY: No. No, in fact, as I said, the information that triggered it was the Papadopoulos information that came in late July. The FBI didn't get any information

that's part of the so-called Steele dossier, as I understand it, until after that. And so the investigation was triggered entirely separately from the Steele dossier.

Comey says Trump asked if he could disprove salacious allegations in 'dossier'

VIDEO: Comey says Trump asked him to investigate dossierPlay

Comey says Trump asked him to investigate 'dossier'

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So the FBI is investigating Russian interference in our campaign, and whether or not any individuals associated with President Trump are cooperating with that interference. What are you thinking then? As you see President Trump invite the Russians to release Hillary Clinton's emails, as you see him refuse to criticize Vladimir Putin?

JAMES COMEY: I'm thinking the questions that we're asking ourselves, which is, is anybody-- is the Trump campaign in any way working directly with the Russians? Is there-- because the-- the fact that the president is calling for the release of the emails could cut both ways.

You could argue it's an indication that they don't have a secret channel with the Russians, or you could argue it means they're in bed with the Russians and there must be connections that we can find. And so it was obviously of interest to us, but we already had the investigation underway.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And the refusal to criticize Vladimir Putin?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know what's behind that. I mean, that's-- that mystified me even after President Trump became president 'cause I discovered that he wouldn't criticize him even in private, which-- I can understand a president making a geopolitical decision that, "I ought not to criticize an adversary country's leader for some reason publicly." But I discovered President Trump wouldn't even do it privately, and I don't know why that is.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You first were briefed on the Steele dossier in August of 2015. What did you make of it?

JAMES COMEY: That it, at its core, was consistent with the other information we'd gathered during the intelligence investigation. That there was a massive Russian effort underway to interfere with our election with three goals: to dirty up the American democracy so it's not a shining light for others around the world; to hurt Hillary Clinton, who Vladimir Putin personally hated; and to help Donald Trump become elected president.

Th-- those allegations are at the core of the Steele dossier, and we already knew that was true from totally separate information. And so at its core, it said something that was consistent with what we believed. It was coming from a credible source, someone with a track record, someone who was a credible and respected member of an allied

intelligence service during his career. And so it was important that we try to understand it, and see what could we verify, what could we rule in or rule out?

Comey says he believes the source of the Steele 'dossier' to be 'credible'

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you think it was a credible document?

JAMES COMEY: Well, certainly the source was credible. There's no doubt that he had a network of sources and sub-sources in a position to report on these kinds of things. But we tend to approach these things with a bit of a blank slate, trying to figure out, "So what can we replicate?" This guy, who's credible, says these things are true. Okay. That means we should try and replicate that work to see if we can develop the same sources.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: A-- and at the time, did you know it had been financed at the beginning from President Trump's-- by President Trump's political opponents?

JAMES COMEY: Yes, I-- I was told at some point that it was-- the effort had originally been financed by a Republican source to develop-- material-- opposition research on Donald Trump. Then after the Republican nominating process ended, the effort was taken up and funded by a Democratic aligned group trying to get opposition research on Trump. I never knew which-- who the groups were, but I knew it started with Republicans paying for it and then Democrats were paying for it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And-- and all through August and September-- there's a great debate going on inside the Obama administration: What to reveal about Russia (SIC) was doing, what to reveal about your investigation. Describe that.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Not the second part. Y-- actually was not a hard question about whether to talk publicly about the fact that we'd opened in-- counterintelligence investigations on a small number of Americans because it was far too early. We didn't know what we had, and we didn't want to tip them off that we were looking at them.

So consistent with our policy-- again, very different than the Hillary Clinton case, which began with a public referral. Everybody knew we were looking at her emails. So when we confirmed it three months later, there's no jeopardy at all to the investigation.

This was very different. We did not want these Americans to know that we had reason to believe they might be working with the Russians 'cause we gotta run this down and investigate it. So actually what was debated was a different and harder question which is what should we tell the American people about the fact that the Russians are messing with our election?

Trying to hurt our democracy, hurt Hillary Clinton and help Donald Trump. What should we do about that? And one of the options debated was should we inoculate the

American people in some way by telling them, "The Russians are trying to mess with you. You should know that so you can take that into account when you see news or see particular approaches to things."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: W-- we-- we know that-- there were s-- there were strong objections in-- by Republicans in the Senate to being public about this. But at one point, you actually volunteered to put it all on paper?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah-- I think it was in August, I volunteered that-- that I would be-- I remember saying that I'm a little bit tired of being the independent voice on things, after the beating I'd taken after the July 5th announcement. But I said in a meeting with the president, "I'm willing to be the voice on this and help inoculate the American people.

But I also recognize why this is such a hard question, because if you announce that the Russians are trying to mess with our election, do you accomplish their goal for them? Do you undermine confidence in our election by having the president of the United States, or one of his senior people, say this publicly?

Will the Russians be happy that you did that?" And so I-- I wrote an op-ed, was going to go in a major newspaper that laid out what was going on. Not the investigation, 'cause that was too sensitive to reveal, but that, "The Russians are here and they're screwing with us. And this is consistent with what they've done in the past," and they never took me up on it. The Obama administration deliberated until the beginning of October.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And-- and one of the things you write that was influencing the president and his administration was the assumption that Hillary Clinton would win.

JAMES COMEY: I think so. In fact, I heard the president say, as-- as I recount in the book, "Putin backed the wrong horse." That is, all of us were operating in a world where the polls were showing that Donald Trump had no chance. So I think what the president meant by that was the Russian effort is wasted, and so why should we help them by announcing what they're doing when their work is not going to achieve their goal?

Comey says everyone – himself included – thought Clinton would win 2016 election

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And it would give people reason to question the outcome of the election.

JAMES COMEY: Right. Donald Trump was already saying, "If I lose, that means the system is rigged." And so if the Obama administration comes out saying, "The Russians are trying to help elect Donald Trump," that walks right into his narrative that's, "See, I told ya," that the whole system is fixed and you can't trust the American democratic process. And the Russians would have accomplished their goal.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Eventually the-- administration does announce-- that they've found that Russia is interfering-- yet, and this is-- this confounds me. I-- I'm-- I'm puzzled by this. Yet, when they decide to come out with a joint statement of the intelligence committees, you as the FBI director refused to sign it. Why?

JAMES COMEY: Because of the way we approach action in the run-up to an election. The-- it's not written down, despite what you might have heard, but there's an important norm that I've lived my whole government career-- obeying. If you can avoid it, you should not take any action in the run-up to an election that could have an impact on the election.

By that, I mean the FBI or the Department of Justice. And so we were being asked, in October, to sign onto a statement that says, "The Russians are messing with our election." In my view and the view of the FBI leadership was it's too late. And we can avoid action here.

Because the goal's already been accomplished. The American people already know this because lots of government officials have been on background talking to the press about this, members of Congress have been talking about it, the candidates are talking about it. So the inoculation has already been achieved, and it's October. So we can avoid action here consistent with our policy that, whenever possible, we try and avoid action. So we won't sign this.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But doesn't that undercut the weight of the statement?

JAMES COMEY: I don't think so. I mean, coming from the director of National Intelligence, I don't think anybody noticed at the time that the FBI wasn't on the statement. It was the secondly of Homeland Security, and the director of National Intelligence, my boss. I reported to the attorney general and the director of National Intelligence.

And so I don't think it un-- undercut the statement. But it allowed us to be consistent with our standard which is, if possible, we should avoid action in the run-up to an election that might have an impact. Here, it is possible because the goal's been achieved already.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did anybody try to convince you to sign it?

JAMES COMEY: I think I was asked to sign it-- by the director of National Intelligence, Jim Clapper. And I think I explained why-- I thought the FBI shouldn't sign up at this point. I don't remember any pushback on that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: At the same time, the Hillary Clinton email investigation comes back. When did you first know you were going to have to deal with this again?

JAMES COMEY: Really, October 27th. Somebody earlier in October, the b-- in the beginning of October sometime, mentioned to me that there may be a connection between emails found on Anthony Weiner's laptop and the Clinton email investigation. I don't remember.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Was this Andrew McCabe?

JAMES COMEY: I think it was Andy McCabe, but I'm not certain. I didn't store that in any prominent place in my brain 'cause how could that possibly be true?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But how could that not be something you remember?

JAMES COMEY: That's a great question. I think the answer is because how could that possibly be true? How could there be a connection between Anthony Weiner's laptop and Hillary Clinton's emails? And so I think it was sort of a passing comment to me, and I'm sure I stored it away thinking, "Okay, well, that doesn't make any sense, but I'm sure they'll tell me if it does." And they did. They c--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: It's l-- it's led your critics to say that the FBI, for several weeks, sat on the knowledge that they had several thousand Hillary Clinton emails.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, more than several thousand, hundreds--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Hundreds of thousands.

JAMES COMEY: --of thousands on Anthony Weiner's laptop. And I don't know the answer to that criticism. I don't know whether the Bureau team could have moved faster to-- to bring it to me for a decision. All I know is that they did bring it to me on the morning of October 27th. And so, there's an inspector general investigation going on-- about our work on that investigation. I'm sure they'll say, which I think is great. But I don't know the answer to that now--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So th-- and-- and-- and-- and to be clear, between that first mention and October 27th, you didn't hear anything about Hillary Clinton's--

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --emails?

JAMES COMEY: --remember hearing anything else about it until I walked into a conference room early in the morning on October 27th. So we're now less than two weeks from the election. The deputy director emailed me at about 5:30 in the morning and said, "The midyear team," which was the code name for the Clinton email investigation, "needs to meet with you."

And it's unusual to email me at 5:30 in the morning. And so I m-- arranged to meet with the team. And I walked in with a stupid smile on my face, I think, and said, "The band is back together." 'Cause they were sitting in the same seats they'd sat in so many times.

And I didn't smile again for a long time like that-- after that. And what they told me was, "We have found, for reasons we can't explain, hundreds of thousands of Hillary Clinton's emails on Anthony Weiner's laptop. And something much more important than that. Thousands of emails from Hillary Clinton's Blackberry domain."

She used a Blackberry for the first three months or so of her tenure as secretary of State before setting up the personal server in the basement. And the reason that matters so much is, if there was gonna be a smoking gun, where Hillary Clinton was told, "Don't do this," or, "This is improper," it's highly likely to be at the beginning.

And we never found those emails. And so now they're telling me, "For reasons we can't explain, thousands of those Blackberry emails are on Anthony Weiner's laptop." And so I said, "Okay. We gotta go get 'em. How fast can you review these?" And the answer was, "We can't possibly finish before the election because we have to read tens of thousands of emails.

We can't ask recruits to come in and review them because you have to know the context." And so I'm sitting there on the morning of October 27th, they're telling me there's material that may change the conclusion in this case. We all agree, including the Department of Justice, we've gotta get a search warrant to go get these.

And then the question for me now is, "So what do we do now?" Remember the-- the standard is, the norm is, "If you can avoid it, you take no action that might have an impact on an election." And I'm sitting there, on the morning of October 27th, and I can't see a door that's labeled, "No action here." I can only see two doors, and they're both actions. One says, "Speak," the other says, "Conceal"--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, no. You-- you c-- you could you f-- try to find out first whether or not they were indeed relevant. Whether they-- there was evidence there of a crime.

JAMES COMEY: Well, maybe. And maybe another director might have done that. My view is that would be a potentially deeply irresponsible and dangerous thing to do, to gamble-- remember, the team is telling you, "We cannot evaluate this material before the election."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But we don't know what's in it?

JAMES COMEY: Well, we know there are hundreds of thousands of Hillary Clinton's emails there, including Blackberry emails. And so there is reason to believe that this is evidence in our case, and may change the result. And so maybe what you do is gamble and say, "I'll be quiet about it," but that comes back to my doors.

That's an affirmative act of concealment, right? Because I've told Congress and the American people-- the whole point of July 5th was transparency. "Look, American people, what we've done. We did it carefully, we did it well. There's no there there.

You can take that to the bank. You can rely on the FBI. We're done. Everybody can get on with their lives." It's October 27th, that's not true anymore, in potentially a huge way. So you could speak about it, or you could not speak about it. But the not speaking about it is an action.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Senior Justice officials weren't convinced that you actually had an obligation to tell Congress that at that time. What was their argument, what was your response?

JAMES COMEY: Their argument was that it was not consistent with our policy, and that we don't normally comment on investigations, all of which I agree with. And that they would advise against it. Actually never spoke to me about it personally. I had my chief of staff call over to the leadership's chief of s-- staffs of th-- the attorney general and the deputy and say, "The director thinks that is between speaking and concealing.

Speaking is really bad; concealing is catastrophic. If you conceal the fact that you have restarted the Hillary Clinton email investigation, not in some silly way but in a very, very important way that may lead to a different conclusion, what will happen to the institutions of justice when that comes out?

Especially, given the world we're operating in, when Hillary Clinton's elected president? She'll be an illegitimate president, but these organizations will never recover from that. You hid from the American people something you knew gave the lie to what you told them in Congress repeatedly. And so the director thinks that we have to speak. And he would be happy to talk to you about it. Let him know."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Even though you didn't know what was in-- what was in those emails, you could have predicted what President Trump and his allies would do with it once you released this information. It's exactly what happened. Everyone says, "This must be significant. This must be real."

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I totally get that, and-- which is why we worked so hard. And although they didn't want to talk to me about the decision, the leadership of the Department of Justice did give input on what I should say to Congress. And the goal

was to say as little as possible, because we didn't know, "Is this going to change our result or not?"

But j-- of course I know what's going to happen. It's going to be distorted one way, just as if it-- when the later thing came out, it would be distorted the other way.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That concern, when it dealt with the classified information about Loretta Lynch, something you didn't believe but were worried about how it would be used, didn't seem to affect you here. Here you know that President Trump is going to say-- that candidate Trump at the time is going to say, "This proves everything I've been saying about Hillary Clinton is right."

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. And the question is so what do I do? Given that that's going to happen, what do I do? Does-- does that mean I conceal? And my judgment, and reasonable people can disagree about this-- my point is not to tell people-- "You should believe I'm right." But I want people to know where the decision came from. That's between speaking and concealing. It would destroy the Department of Justice and the FBI to conceal that information from the American people.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That's the judgment you made. Boy, you seem to be alone in that judgment. You look at previous attorney generals for President Bush, for President Ford, for President Obama, Justice Department officials for President Clinton; they all disagree with you. They say this crossed a line.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I've-- I've heard a lot of that. And in fact, all that was put together allegedly to be the reason for my firing. What I would hope is that they would, by reading the book, come with me to October 28th. Come with me, and sit there with me.

Not knowing the future. And sit there with me, look at the doors I looked at, and tell me then what you would do. Tell me which you would pick? And th-- that's what I would, in my mind's eye, scream at the television. I wouldn't scream at the television, but I'd say, "Tell me what you would do. Tell me which door you would pick."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: They have a pretty clear answer. You say you don't break with longstanding Justice Department norms, you don't reveal information like this?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Okay. And so that means-- and first of all, the Justice Department norms allow you, in appropriate cases, to comment on an investigation, to comment on the facts you found in an investigation, all the things we talk--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But there's no-- there's-- there's no precedent for-- putting out information like this at the end of a campaign?

JAMES COMEY: Oh, I've never heard of it before. I-- I-- as I say in the book, I-- I think I did it the way that it should have been done. I'm-- I'm not certain of that. Other people might have had a different view. I pray to God no future FBI director ever has to find out.

I-- I hope so much this is just a 500-year flood we never see again. We have the FBI's criminally investigating one of the two candidates for president of the United States during the campaign. And-- and just over a week before the election, we find on Anthony Weiner's laptop-- and by the way, I-- I know this is obvious, but I didn't put the emails on Anthony Weiner's laptop.

Right? I would so much rather Anthony Weiner had never had a laptop. I'd rather never have heard about this situation. But a week or so before the election, we find material on Anthony Weiner's laptop that may change the result, including the missing Blackberry emails.

My question for all those op-ed pieces is, "So what do you do?" And maybe you would choose conceal, but you gotta explain to me why and how you think ab-- again, not with the benefit of hindsight. But how you think about the damage to the institutions--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: We just don't get involved two weeks before an election.

JAMES COMEY: Right. To my mind, that is a narrow way to answer that question without considering the damage to the institutions you lead. I mean, "We don't get involved." We get involved if it is the least bad option, right? That's a terrible option, to speak. It made me sick to my stomach to speak.

I've devoted my life in government to institutions that have no impact on elections. Speaking is going to have some impact, potentially. But concealing is going to destroy the institutions that I love.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Hillary Clinton's convinced that that letter defeated her. What do you say to her?

JAMES COMEY: I hope not. I-- I don't know. I honestly don't know. I sure hope not. But-- the honest answer is, it wouldn't change the way I think about it. I mean, my hope-- I didn't write the book for this reason. But talking about leadership, it was important to tell the email story because it's me trying to figure out how to lead well.

That people will read that story and try to put themselves in my shoes. Try to realize that I'm not trying to help a candidate or hurt a candidate; I'm trying to do the right thing. And you can come up with different conclusions. Reasonable people woulda chosen a different door for reasonable reasons. But it's just not fair to say we were doing it for some illegitimate reason.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If you knew that letter would elect Donald Trump, you'd still send it?

JAMES COMEY: I would. I would. In fact, that was a question asked by one of my best people-- a deputy general counsel in the FBI who is a very thoughtful and quiet person, who didn't speak a lot. And that-- that morning we were making that decision, she asked, "Should you consider that what you're about to do may help elect Donald Trump president?"

And I paused, and then I said, "Thank you for asking that question. That's a great question. But the answer is not for a moment because down that path lies the death of the FBI as an independent force in American life. If I ever start considering whose political fortunes will be affected by a decision, we're done. We're no longer that group in America that is apart from the partisans, and that can be trusted. We're just another player in the-- in the tribal battle."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But-- but at some level, wasn't the decision to reveal influenced by your assumption that Hillary Clinton was going to win? And your concern that she wins, this comes out several weeks later, and then that's taken by her opponent as a sign that she's an illegitimate president?

JAMES COMEY: It must have been. I don't remember consciously thinking about that, but it must have been. 'Cause I was operating in a world where Hillary Clinton was going to beat Donald Trump. And so I'm sure that it-- that it was a factor. Like I said, I don't remember spelling it out, but it had to have been. That-- that she's going to be elected president, and if I hide this from the American people, she'll be illegitimate the moment she's elected, the moment this comes out.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: An-- and doesn't that also explain, at some level, your decision to conceal the fact that you're investigating the Trump campaign for possible ties to Russia? You conceal it so you don't give him an excuse to say, "Hey, this thing is rigged."

JAMES COMEY: Well, no. Not with respect to the counterintelligence investigation of those small number of Americans. That-- that was actually not a hard call, given the sensitivity of the matter and that it was ongoing. We didn't want to tip anybody off. What-- you're right though, with respect to the decision by President Obama, as to how to talk about the Russian interference with the American people.

I think it was-- I mean, he said it to me-- in that meeting I described, "Putin backed the wrong horse." He was clearly thinking, "I don't want to, given that Trump's going to lose, be-- look like I'm putting my finger on the scale."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You've said that a few times now. You think it's not a close call. Boy, your critics say this is a clear, clear, clear double standard. You

revealed information about Hillary Clinton; you concealed information about Donald Trump. That elected Donald Trump.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I get that. I get that-- why they say that. But what I'd ask them to do is take a step back and stare at the two cases and the posture they were in. The Hillary Clinton email case, which began with a public referral, and so was public, th-- and we were actually investigating the candidate herself; and the counterintelligence investigations trying to figure out whether a small group of people, not Donald Trump-- we were not investigating Donald Trump.

Whether this small group of Americans was coordinating anything with the Russians. We had just started the investigation. Didn't know whether we had anything. So it would have been brutally unfair to those people to talk about it. And it woulda jeopardized the investigation.

As I said, the Department wouldn't agree to talk about that, and only in a general way, until the following March. So I hope those critics-- I get the initial reaction. It seems inconsistent. But if you take the time and look at the posture of the two cases, they're very, very different. And actually illustrate the rule that we're following.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If Attorney General Lynch had ordered you not to send the letter, would you have sent it?

JAMES COMEY: No.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: No way?

JAMES COMEY: No way. I-- I believe in the chain of command. I followed her instruction to call it a "matter," because she told me to call it a "matter." And I didn't believe it was unethical or illegal. And so, yes, I would have followed their instruction.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why do you think they didn't order you not to send it?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I don't know. Part of me thinks-- given an encounter I had with Loretta after I sent it, that she may have understood what I was doing. And-- and so didn't want to be involved in the decision, didn't want to approve it, but didn't want to give me the instruction not to send it. Sorta let me take the hit for that. And I could be wrong about that, but-- but I think that's consistent with-- with-- an encounter I had with her privately.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did it feel like to be James Comey in the last ten days of that campaign after ya sent the letter?

JAMES COMEY: It sucked. Yeah, it was-- it was a very painful period. Again, my whole life has been dedicated to institutions that work not to have an involvement in an election. I walked around vaguely sick to my stomach, feeling beaten down. I felt, when I went to the White House-- I don't want to spoil it for people, but there's a movie called "The Sixth Sense" that I talk about in the book where Bruce Willis doesn't realize he's dead.

That's the way I felt. I felt like I was totally alone, that everybody hated me. And that there wasn't a way out because it really was the right thing to do. And that-- that, in a way, I'm ruined. But that's what I have to do. I had to do it the way.

Former FBI Director told ABC News George Stephanopoulos in an exclusive interview that felt he was ruined, but did what he had to do. Play

Comey felt 'totally alone' after writing Clinton's emails letter

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And during that time, you actually talked about this encounter with Loretta Lynch.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, the Monday I sent the letter-- I learn about the emails, get briefed on the need for a search warrant on the 27th of October. We debated and debated and debated and decide on the 28th to send the letter. We had a regular meeting with Loretta on Monday, so that woulda been the 31st.

And she emailed me the Sunday night before and said, "Hey, can I meet with you after our regular terrorism threat briefing on Monday morning?" Said, "Sure." And at the end of the meeting, she asked could she meet with me? Which of course we'd all-- I'd already agreed to meet.

But our staffs were all there, and so they then knew the two of us were going to meet. And they all waited outside. And Loretta took me into an office in the FBI that's reserved for the attorney general, and I walked in first, and she walked in and closed the door and then turned and just walked towards me with her head down and her arms out.

And I'm not a big hugger, but especially-- there was an awkward dis-- difference in our height, I guess as there is with me and most people. But she pressed her face against my chest and wrapped her arms around me and then I reached down, as I explain in the book, and kinda awkwardly hugged.

And then we-- parted and she said, "I-- I thought you needed a hug." And she was right. I'm sure it showed on my face how beaten I felt. And then we sat down and she said, "How are you doing?" Loretta Lynch is a really good person and has known me a long time.

She said, "How are you doing?" And I told her that I felt terrible, that I felt beaten, and-- but that I didn't see that I had a choice. And then she said something that floored

me. She said, "Would they feel better if it leaked on November the 4th?" And my reaction was-- and I said to her, "Exactly, Loretta."

And so, I don't know, was she telling me, "You've done the right thing?" And, in a way, hugging me because she feels badly I've taken this incredibly brutal hit? I don't know. But I interpreted that as, "First of all, I feel badly for you. And even if you hadn't made this decision, once you start going to get a search warrant for Anthony Weiner's laptop to look at hundreds of thousands of Hillary Clinton emails, it's likely to leak out anyway," she's telling me.

And remember, the Department of Justice had thought, "We gotta go get a search warrant," in the week before the election. And so that's how I took it. Again, I-- I could be wrong about that, but that's how I took it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: One of the reasons it was-- you feared it was going to leak out is-- 'cause you were dealing with a rogue element of FBI agents and former FBI agents up in New York who were really pushing to get this out there. Were you aware of that?

JAMES COMEY: I knew that there were leaks coming-- or appeared to be leaks about criminal investigation of the Clintons coming out of New York. And I don't know exactly where that was coming from. I commissioned an investigation to find out. I don't know what the investigation found.

But, yeah, I was worried about-- the-- the team that had done the investigation was in the counterintelligence division at headquarters, of the emails. And there were no leaks at all, very tight. But the criminal folks in New York were now involved in a major way, and I don't want to single anybody out 'cause I don't know where it was coming from.

But there'd been enough up there that I thought there was a pretty reasonable likelihood that it would leak, and that's what Loretta was reflecting.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You had your-- your former boss, Rudy Giuliani, out there on television saying something big was coming.

JAMES COMEY: Yes, I saw that. And I don't know whether that was-- it's part of what I ordered investigated. I don't know whether that was part of a leak outta the-- FBI office in New York that knew about the search warrant. But that was my concern, that once you start seeking a search warrant, especially in a criminal case-- counterintelligence is different.

They're so used to operating in a classified environment. They're much tighter. But once you start involving people whose tradition is criminal, and in New York which has a different culture, there is a reasonable likelihood it was going to get out anyway.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So were you gamed here by people who had political motives?

JAMES COMEY: I don't think so. I mean, I-- I don't think anybody with political motives put hundreds of thousands of Hillary Clinton's emails on Anthony Weiner's laptop, for heaven sakes. And so I-- I don't think so.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Is one of the lessons here that, as hard as you tried to stay outta politics, it actually is unavoidable? That because you have to make political assumptions as ya-- as-- as you're closing in on an election, you're thrown into politics no matter which decision you make?

JAMES COMEY: Oh, I think that's right. And that-- that wasn't a new lesson. That was why Mark Giuliani said at the beginning, "You know you're totally screwed." The FBI's an independent organization, but it's operating in a very, very difficult partisan environment in the United States.

And investigating one of the two candidates for president of the United States. That's what he meant, "You're totally screwed." And-- one of my kids-- I stayed off Twitter during that period of time. One of my kids shared with me a tweet that's become one of my favorites where someone said, "That Comey is such a political hack.

I just can't figure out which party." And I took that as a compliment, but also an illustration of what I'm talking about. You're the FBI, you're supposed to be finding the facts. And you're finding the facts in a world where everybody's on a side, and can't possibly understand you're not on a side. And so you're inevitably going to get hammered from all points, and you're going to be involved in politics in some sense, because you're in the middle of it--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But does that--

JAMES COMEY: --trying to find out what's true.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --lead to the conclusion do what you're going to do, don't talk about it?

JAMES COMEY: Yes, except that you're an institution that depends upon public trust. And so, again, those people who say, "You should have just closed the Clinton investigation without saying a word about it," I don't think you're thinking about the public trust in the institutions of justice, and the damage that would have done to people's faith and trust that the justice system is working.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But hasn't the public--

JAMES COMEY: It's the reason that you talk about cases-- again, cases of great interest you talk about all the time. It was really important that the Department of

Justice put out a report about what happened in Ferguson, Missouri. An 80-some-page report.

Now, they could have said, "We don't talk about our investigations," but folks wanted to know what happened in Ferguson, Missouri? For reasons I totally understand. And when you're the Justice Department, you've got to tell people, when you can, "This was done in the right way, and here's what you should know--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But aren't you concerned that that public trust has taken a hit because of the decisions you made?

JAMES COMEY: Oh, of course I am. Yeah, I've thought about it a lot. And I was going to say a million times. Probably haven't thought about it a million times, maybe a thousand or more, and asked myself, "So should I have done something differently?" And I think it's fair to say somebody else in my shoes might have done something differently.

The honest answer is I screwed up a couple of things, but in the main, I think given what I knew at the time, these were the decisions that were best calculated to preserve the values of the institutions. It was terrible for me, terrible. But I still think it was the right thing to do.

And my hope in this book is, not that people agree with me, y-- they may still walk outta this thinking I'm an idiot, but I'm an honest idiot. And I really was deliberative, and didn't do this alone. I had a team of very bright people who argued and fought and debated trying to figure out, "So what's the right thing to do?"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Your general counsel, I believe, thought you shouldn't release the letter, correct?

JAMES COMEY: No. There was o-- there was one senior executive who thought we shouldn't send the second letter, November the 8th, saying, "We have finished looking at these emails and it doesn't change our result." But other than that-- I mean, we debated a ton of different options. The senior team of the FBI, including the general counsel, thought we have to.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Election Day 2016. You didn't vote.

JAMES COMEY: No.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not?

JAMES COMEY: I'm the director of the FBI. I'm trying to be outside of politics so intentionally tried not to follow it a lot. And that I shouldn't be choosing between the candidates. I'm trying to lead an institution that should be separate and other.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Were-- were you aware-- you say you try not to follow it, but you must have been aware of-- what the candidates were saying about the letter in those final ten days.

JAMES COMEY: Yes, I was. Yeah. Because, again, I'm leading an institution that public trust and confidence in that institution really matters. So I try to keep track of, "So what are-- what are folks saying about us and how we're conducting ourselves?" 'Cause even though I was raised not to care what other people think, when you're the director of the FBI or the attorney general, you have to when it relates to the institution you lead.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And take us through that day. Where were you as the returns were coming in?

JAMES COMEY: I don't even remember. I think I was home that day. Yeah, I think I was home that day, that night. 'Cause I think it was a fairly late evening. And I was surprised that Donald Trump was elected president, as I think most-- maybe Donald Trump was too, but as-- as a whole lotta people were.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what part of you is thinking, "I helped elect Donald Trump"?

JAMES COMEY: Well, no part of me, 'cause I don't know the answer to that. But a whole lot of me was thinking, "Oh my God, did we have some role in this? Did we have some impact on the election?" And it's an incredibly painful juxtaposition, but also thinking, "I really wouldn't-a done it any differently.

God, I hope we had no impact. I hope we had no impact." But it-- I know-- I worry it sounds arrogant to say, but it-- it wouldn't change the result. It just makes it more painful to think that we might have had an--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: It wouldn't--

JAMES COMEY: --impact on the--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --change?

JAMES COMEY: It wouldn't. I-- even if I had a time machine, I can't go back in time and as director of the FBI say, "I'm going to make this decision because I don't think Donald Trump will be a good president of the United States." That's not the FBI's role. And so I'm gl-- I'm glad for a lotta reasons I don't have a time machine, but that's what I mean when I say it doesn't-- it doesn't change the result.

We-- we tried to, and I believe did, make these decisions without regard to political Russia. Without regard to how it would affect and who it would affect, based on, "So

what's the right thing to do? Should we speak, or should we conceal? And given the values and traditions of the institutions of justice, which is the right thing to do?"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You said you hoped it didn't change the result, but what does your gut tell you?

JAMES COMEY: I really don't know. I've read a fair amount, 'cause-- 'cause I'm-- again, I hope very much. I'd love to have a group of academics establish it had absolutely no impact on the election. I've read people argue that it had. I don't know.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Nate Silver has a pretty persuasive-- analysis that suggests it made a huge difference.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I-- again, I don't know the answer. And in a way, I care about the answer, and in a way it doesn't matter at all.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And-- just take us inside your house at that point. You-- you've written about this. Your wife, Patrice, Hillary Clinton supporter.

JAMES COMEY: Oh yeah. And-- and the-- the-- I didn't take a poll among all the kids, but I'm pretty sure that at least my four daughters, probably all five of my kids, wanted Hillary Clinton to be the first woman president. I know my amazing spouse did. My)-- my wife and girls marched in the women's march the day after President Trump's inauguration.

There was a lotta passion in this house for Hillary Clinton. And I-- I get that. But again, I hope it illustrates to people that I really wasn't making decisions based on political fortunes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: S-- so what did she say to you? What did you say to her?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't-- I-- she knew enough, Patrice, the pain that I was in that-- and how hard these decisions were that I don't think she spent a lotta time-- I think she got actually where I was. I d-- she didn't spend-- she expressed frustration.

She hated the fact that I had to make these decisions, and 'cause she loves me dearly, she hated the fact that I personally was stepping in front of the institutions to get shot repeatedly. She would say, "Look, I get what you're doing. I get that you're trying to protect the institutions.

But why does it have to be you? Why do you have to be the one that everyone's going to hate?" And my answer was-- "'Cause I'm stuck. I would rather not." Like I said, I would rather Hillary Clinton have used the State Department for her email system. I would rather that Anthony Weiner have not had a laptop at all.

I would rather have had-- I've still never met Hillary Clinton; I would rather never have been involved. But what am I going to do? We were involved. The inspector general sent us a referral, we had to open a case, and we were totally screwed.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If she were sitting right here today, what would you tell her?

JAMES COMEY: Hillary Clinton? I-- I realize it sounds like I'm pumping my book, "I hope you'll read those chapters of the book. Not so that you walk away agreeing with my decisions, but that you understand better where they came from. And-- and frankly, the kinda person who was trying to make those decisions.

Comey tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos he hopes both the Trump and Clinton camp see a deeply flawed human surrounded by other flawed humans trying to make decisions with an eye, not on politics, but on those higher values. Play What Comey says he would tell Hillary Clinton today Even you think they're wrong, that look at how we made those decisions and why." And I-- I think-- look, I haven't talked about this. I've gotten the daylights beat outta me-- this is the first time I've talked about this. And I'm sure a whole lotta people have a view of me based on that.

And what I'd ask them to do is please try to come into those rooms. Read the book and come into those rooms and see how we tried to make these decisions. And if possible, ask yourselves, "What would I have done, and why?" And you may come out thinking, "I'dve done it differently," but I don't think you'll come out thinking that-- as Hillary Clinton wrote in her book, I shived her.

I mean, that sounds like I was trying to knife somebody, I was out to get her. And it's illustration of our polarization here that you've got the Trump camp, which I guess thinks I was trying to save Hillary Clinton. They don't quite explain what I was doing in October.

And then Clinton camp thinks I was trying to shiv Hillary Clinton. Both can't be true, but in our polarized world, people live in separate bubbles. I would hope both camps will read this and, I hope, see a deeply flawed human surrounded by other flawed humans trying to make decisions with an eye, not on politics, but on those higher values.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you wouldn't change the big decisions. What are you sorry about?

JAMES COMEY: Oh, I'm-- well, I'm sorry about a number of thing-- I'm sorry that Seacrest-ed the announcement. I'm sorry that I-- caused all kinds of confusion and pain with the way I described her conduct that led people into all kinds of side roads. I'm deeply sorry that I was involved at all, but-- that's something I can't avoid.

And I'm sorry there wasn't an opportunity, especially with the second one, to explain more. To say, "Look, here's what we're doing." 'Cause I got that chance-- the only time I've actually gotten that chance was in a private setting with the whole U.S. Senate where Senator Franken-- we were th-- I was there to talk about Russia.

But S-- then-Senator Franken stuck his hand up and said, "Can we talk about the elephant in the room? What you did to Hillary Clinton?" And so I turned to Senate Majority Leader McConnell, who was running the meeting, and said, "Can I answer that?" And he said, "Yeah, take all the time you need."

And so I answered, and I laid out what we've laid out. "Look, here's where I was on July 5th and why. Here's October 28th." And-- and Senator Franken actually interrupted and yelled, "But you didn't find anything." And I said, "Senator, you have hindsight bias.

I know now I didn't find anything. But you have to come with me to the 28th of October. Sit there with me. What would you do? I see two doors. I can't find a door that says, "No action." I see two actions: speak or conceal. Speaking would be terrible. Concealing would be catastrophic."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Not necessarily. Tough it out and take your lumps?

JAMES COMEY: Take your lumps. I mean, y-- you lead the institutions of justice that would be maybe forever, but certainly for a generation or more, be unimaginably damaged by conspiring to conceal that you had lied to the American people. And you had restarted the Hillary Clinton investigation in secret in a way that you thought might change the result.

Fair-minded people, and there are a lotta them in America, fair-minded people would look at that and say, I think, "How on earth could you do that? You told us we were done. You told us this was finished. And all of a sudden, it's not finished, and not just in a small way.

You think the result could change. And you didn't tell us that?" And so, again, people can weigh that differently, but that's how I thought about it. And so again, in that-- in that session with the Senate, I got the chance to lay that out. And I was most struck that Senator Chuck Schumer came up to me afterwards, who had been a very, very vocal critic of my decisions, and took my hand, and he had tears in his eyes, and he started poking me in the center of the chest.

He said, "I know you. I know you. You were in an impossible position." He wasn't telling me he agreed with my decisions, but I think once he came with me to October 28th, he understood better. I think President Obama understood it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You met with President Obama after the election?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, he held me back after one of the very last meetings I had with him, after the election, and said he didn't want to talk to me about any particular case, 'cause he was very scrupulous about that. And he said, "But I want to just tell you something generally.

I appointed you to be FBI director because of your integrity and your ability." And then he looked me in the eye and he said, "Nothing has happened, nothing, in the last year that has changed my view of that." And, look, he wasn't telling me, "I agree with what you did."

The emotional moment Comey shared with Obama after the election
The former FBI director talks about what the then-outgoing president told him after Donald Trump won. Play

The emotional moment James Comey shared with President Obama after the 2016 election

He wasn't telling me, "You made the right decision." He was telling me, "I know where it came from. I know you're not a partisan hack. I know you're trying to do the right thing." And it meant a lot to me. I mean, I had not been a political supporter of President Obama's.

I came to deeply respect him, and his higher loyalty to the values I care a lot about. And I g-- I almost got emotional in that moment 'cause, again, I'd been walking around like Bruce Willis in "The Sixth Sense." And have the president of the United States say, "I still respect you for the reasons I did originally," meant a lot to me.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That was a real, in some ways a very raw conversation, in your telling. What else did you tell him?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I said to him-- "Mr. President," first of all, I said, "Thank you, Mr. President. It has been a nightmare. I'm just-- I've just tried to do the right thing." And he said, "I know. I know." And then I said, "I think my wife would kill me if I didn't take this chance to thank you, and to tell you how much I'm going to miss you.

And-- and also to t--" I told him that, "I dread the next four years. But in many ways, I feel great pressure to stay to try and protect the institution I lead."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What were you dreading?

JAMES COMEY: Well, I had some sense of the nature and character of the new president of the United States. And I worried very much that there would be an effort to erode the independence of the FBI. The FBI sits in the executive branch, it should. The FBI director reports to the attorney general and the director of National Intelligence, and they report to the president.

They should. But the FBI always has to be a little bit alien to the executive branch 'cause we have to investigate the executive branch. It's the reason Congress gave the FBI director a ten-year term, to signal that need for independence. Not-- not total independence, but independence of spirit.

And I worried, given what I had seen during the campaign, that-- that that effort to remain apart-- might be challenged in-- in a Trump administration. And-- and I was right, but that's what I worried about.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Even your harshest critics will concede what you're just talking about right now-- you've lived your life trying to be a person of integrity, trying to live by honesty, trying to protect the institutions you serve. But in the words of Eric Holder, you're a good man; good men make mistakes.

JAMES COMEY: Oh, they sure do. And I-- I've made a million of them. But again, I think, even with hindsight, that the process we used to make decisions in the email investigation, and the things we considered, and the ultimate decisions, were the best ones. I could be wrong about that; I don't have a monopoly on wisdom.

But-- but I'm proud of the way we made those decisions. And I keep saying "we." Again, they were my decisions; I'm accountable for them. But we made them by insuring there was a buncha of people banging it around and arguing with each other. And came to a result that we all thought, "Okay, this is the best thing to do in a terrible circumstance."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did it cost you?

JAMES COMEY: What did it cost me? Well, (SIGH) I'm sure the respect of a lotta people that-- who couldn't see what I was seeing, couldn't understand, couldn't possibly understand why I was doing what I've done. It-- in a way, I-- it didn't cost me much beyond that 'cause I don't want to be anything else.

I-- never going to run for office. I wanted to be the FBI director for another six years. It had no impact on my awesome family who still thinks I'm a knucklehead but loves me dearly. And-- but I think that's what it cost me, that it caused a lotta people to question whether I was a political hack.

Whether I was in some way-- acting in an unprincipled way. And that's painful. But at the end of the day, you have to make a decision and make it in a principled way. You can't control what people think about you. You'd like people to understand your reasoning, and I'd be lying if I said I don't hope people will come outta this thinking, "Oh, okay. I understand better." But the end of the day, you gotta look at yourself in the mirror. And you've got to make the decision-- the right decision, but most of all for the right reasons.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So-- so it's-- January 2017. The intelligence community and the F.B.I. have reached their conclusions about what-- what Russia did during the election and so you have to go tell the president-elect. But first, I guess, the day before--

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --you brief President Obama. Take us inside that room.

JAMES COMEY: Sure. It was right-- January 5th in the oval office. Director Clapper, the head of the-- the director of national intelligence, the head of the C.I.A., the head of the N.S.A., and myself met with President Obama, Vice President Biden, and their senior national security team in the oval office, sitting in the sitting area by the fireplace.

The president and the vice president in arm chairs with their back to the fireplace and I was sitting slightly off to the right so the president would have to look slightly left to see me. Director Clapper was sitting in the center and he briefed them on the findings of the joint intelligence community assessment and the conclusions about what Russia had done.

And there were a variety of questions, especially focused on, "So how do we stop it from happening in the future," questions about sources and whatnot and how certain we were. And he conveyed that it was a joint high-confidence assessment, which is very unusual. From analysts from the-- different agencies that the Russians had did this, their goals were to dirty up the American democracy, to hurt Hillary Clinton and to help elect Donald Trump.

And we were going to brief it-- he explained that the next morning, to the gang of eight, the leaders of the House and Senate-- intelligence committees and the speaker and majority leader and minority leader on both sides. And then we were going to New York and brief the president-elect and his team.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You say high confidence. That means you're sure?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, that's the closest the intelligence community-- you never say you're sure in the intelligence business. The top level is high confidence. There's low confidence, medium confidence, high. This was the top of the chart. So you never say you're sure in the intelligence business because you-- you never want to be over-confident. But this was-- their sense that given the variety of sources and methods we had, we had this nailed.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And in that meeting, that's what Russia did. You also discussed with the president this information you had about the president-elect contained in the Steele dossier?

JAMES COMEY: Right. Director Clapper explained to the president and vice president that there was additional material that had-- came from a reliable source and that we had included as an annex in the report, that it was sufficiently separate, that we didn't integrate it into the report, but it was sufficiently reliable that we thought it oughta be part of the entire report.

And there was a portion of it that was particularly salacious that related to allegations around sexual conduct of-- before-- President Trump was a candidate. And the president asked-- President Obama asked, "What's the plan for briefing that material?"

And he explained that we had decided that Director Comey would meet with the president-elect privately after we briefed the president-elect and his team on the general findings so that he could review it-- in a more private, more sensitive setting with the president-elect.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That was James Clapper. How did President Obama respond to that?

JAMES COMEY: He didn't say a word. President Obama has a great poker face. But he simply turned-- so if I'm President Obama, he turned slightly to his left, looked at me, and went like this-- and looked back at Director Clapper. So kind of gave me a-- Groucho Marx is how I thought of it, double eyebrow raise. Didn't say a word, but communicated to me at least-- and I could be misreading it, 'cause I don't know President Obama's eyebrow raises, that sort of-- sympathy and concern. Like, "Good luck with that." And-- and that was it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Could it have been you again?

JAMES COMEY: It's possible. But-- you know, again, I could be misreading it. But I read it as, "You poor bastard." And almost like, "Whoa," and-- but, you know, he didn't explain it and so, like I said, I-- I might be misinterpreting it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Was there any choice there? Why-- if this was salacious and this particular part of the dossier-- unverified-- still unverified by the way?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. So far-- when I got fired, it was unverified.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why tell him?

JAMES COMEY: Because we, the intelligence community, including the F.B.I., knew this information about allegations around prostitutes in Russia. We had been told by the press that they were about to run with it. And then two specific reasons. The-- the way we work in the counterintelligence business is if a adversary has compromising information on someone that they might use, one of the ways we defeat

the adversary is tell the person who might be blackmailed, "We-- the government, we already know about this.

So you're not going to be able to hide it so they don't have leverage on you." And then second, he's going to be president of the United States and the head of the entire executive branch. How could we, the leaders of the intelligence community, know something-- whether it's true or not about him personally, that's going to become public, that the Russians may have and not share it with him. And so the logic of it-- was powerful that we should share it. And the logic, frankly, was powerful that I should do it alone, although I didn't love the idea. And so we decided to do it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you all go up to New York the next day, January 6th, for the meeting in Trump Tower. You had-- one more warning-- from the secretary of Homeland Security.

JAMES COMEY: Right, as I explained in the book, Jeh Johnson, who's been a friend of mine since we were federal prosecutors in Manhattan in the late '80s, called me after the meeting in the oval office with President Obama. Jay had been in the meeting-- and just to tell me that he was worried about this plan for me to brief the president-elect alone about this material.

And I said, "Me too." And he said, "Have you ever met Donald Trump?" And I said, "No." And he said, "Be careful, Jim, be very careful." And it's one of those things that you appreciate a friend saying, it's not really helping me, except to make me feel even more nervous, the lump in my stomach bigger. But, yeah, Jay called me-- and I don't know whether he was calling at President Obama's request, but he seemed to be giving voice to the eyebrow raise.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So what does "be careful" mean in that context?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't know. That's why we-- thanks, bud. It's not really helping me. I-- I took it as, "Just choose your words carefully. Don't say more than you need to, less than you need to, try to get it just right, accomplish your goal, and then get outta there," is how I took it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So as you headed into Trump Tower that day, were you nervous?

JAMES COMEY: Yes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What were you afraid of?

JAMES COMEY: Well, I'm about to meet with a person who doesn't know me, who's just been elected president of the United States. By all accounts, and from my watching him during the-- the campaign, could be volatile. And I'm about to talk to

him about allegations that he was involved with prostitutes in Moscow and that the Russians taped it and have leverage over him.

And I was worried that I'm about to have a situation emerge where the president-elect thinks the F.B.I.'s out to get him somehow. People, in my experience, tend to project onto you their worldview. And even though I did not intend to jam Donald Trump with this, my thinking was, given his approach to the world, he may think I'm pulling a J. Edgar Hoover and assume that I'm trying to dangle this over him to get leverage on him. And so I worried-- I'm going to not only ruin any relationship I might have with the president, but more importantly, create a situation where the president and the-- and the F.B.I. are at war even before he becomes president.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you head up to the top of Trump Tower-- set the scene.

JAMES COMEY: We went in through the back entrance through-- an entrance of-- residences. So we snuck around-- the press didn't see us going in. We went up and met in a conference room somewhere within the Trump Organization. It was a conference room with a glass wall and they'd hung a big thick curtain to block the wall from the hallway.

And I walked in with the director of the C.I.A., the director of the N.S.A., and the director of National Intelligence. And we waited for the president-elect to come. A small conference room, looked kinda ordinary to me. And a few minutes later he walked in, President-elect Trump, along with the incoming vice president and their national security team.

And a group of them sat at the table with us and a group sat at the wall behind me, against the curtain. And Director Clapper ran the meeting and did it exactly as he had done it with the gang of eight earlier that morning on Capitol Hill and with President Obama the day before.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: It was the first time you met Donald Trump. What was your impression?

JAMES COMEY: My impression was he looked exactly like he did on television, except he looked shorter to me than he did on television, but otherwise exactly the same. And the reason I say that is most people look slightly different in person. I don't know whether that's bad or good, but he looked the way I'd seen him look on television.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Which was?

JAMES COMEY: He had-- impressively coifed hair, it looks to be all his. I confess, I stared at it pretty closely and my reaction was, "It most take a heck of a lot of time in the morning, but it's impressively coifed." He looked-- his tie was too long, as it

always is. He looked slightly orange up close with small white—half moons under his eyes, which I assume are from tanning goggles. And otherwise looked as I had expected him to look from tele-- as I thought he looked on television.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You even clocked the size of his hands?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. I-- I say that in my book 'cause I'm trying to be honest, 'cause that's the truth there had been all this controversy and mocking about hand size, I can't remember the details. But as I shook his hand I made a note to check the size and it seemed like he had average-sized hands.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Then comes the briefing. What did you tell them, what was their reaction?

JAMES COMEY: Director Clapper laid out, as I said, exactly as he had for President Obama and the gang of eight. "Here's what the Russians tried to do. They tried to hurt our democracy, they tried to hurt Hillary Clinton, they tried to help elect you. We--" he-- was very specific about this, "We did no analysis, because the intelligence community doesn't, of American politics.

We found no impact on the vote count but we didn't-- we don't have an opinion to offer on whether the Russian effort had an impact on the election." And he laid it all out and the-- the-- President Trump's first question-- President-elect Trump's first question was to confirm that it had no impact on the election.

And-- and Director Clapper explained, as I think he already had, "No, we didn't do that analysis. We found no Russian manipulation of vote count. We didn't do an analysis of whether their work was effective in changing votes, changing the-- the sentiment of the electorate."

And then the conversation, to my surprise, moved into a PR conversation about how the Trump team would position this and what they could say about this. They actually started talking about drafting a press release with us still sitting there. And the reason that was so striking to me is that-- that's just not done.

That the intelligence community does intelligence, the White House does PR and spin, and the searing lesson, as I explained in the book, of the Iraq war is you don't mix the two. That we give you facts and then we leave and then you figure out what you're going to tell people about them, if anything. But it moved right into this, "Let's figure out what to say about it," kinda deal.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You also said you were struck by what they didn't ask?

JAMES COMEY: Very much. No one, to my recollection, asked, "So what-- what's coming next from the Russians?" You're about to lead a country that has an adversary

attacking it and I don't remember any questions about, "So what are they going to do next, how might we stop it? What's the future look like? Because we'll be custodians of the security of this country." There was none of that. It was all, "What can we say about what they did and how it affects the election that we just had."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You-- you said as this was happening, you had a flashback to your early days as a prosecutor?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Again, I-- put this in the book 'cause it's the truth. I had a flashback to my days investigating the Mafia, La Cosa Nostra. And-- and I couldn't figure out why when it first pushed into my head, so I pushed it away, saying, "That's crazy." And then it came back again.

And I pushed it back and it came back again. And I think what it was was the nature of La Cosa Nostra is an effort to make everyone part of the family. There's an expression in the Mafia-- there's a distinction between a friend of yours and a friend of ours. A friend of yours is someone on the outside of the family, a friend of ours, a "amica nostra" is the way they talked about it in Sicilian, is part of the Family, capital F.

And I think the reason it was coming into my head was I felt this effort to make us all-- and maybe this wasn't their intention, but it's the way it felt to me, to make us all "amica nostra." We're all part of the messaging, we're all part of the effort. The boss is at the head of the table and we're going to figure out together how to do this. And I think that's why it brought that strange memory back into my head.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think you shoulda said something then?

JAMES COMEY: Maybe. I mean, I-- I-- I think that's a reasonable question. I should've said, "Hey-- Mr. President-elect, the way it works is we in the intelligence community shouldn't be here for this." I-- I guess that's a reasonable question. I think the reason I didn't, I hope is obvious to folks, is that I was about to-- we had just delivered, "The Russians tried to help get you elected."

And I was about to stay behind to talk about allegations of the president being involved with prostitutes in Moscow. And I thought, "That's gotta be my focus." And so I didn't-- I didn't know where it entered my mind consciously. I didn't spend a lot of time thinking, "Should I be giving them a lesson about how to interact with the intelligence community."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think that briefing convinced the president that the Russians did interfere in the election?

JAMES COMEY: I don't-- I don't know. I don't think so, given things he's said thereafter and some of the things he's said about the intelligence community after that.

I think it convinced members of his staff, but as to him, I-- given what he said afterwards, I don't think so.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did he say anything else about the broader briefing?

JAMES COMEY: In that session? No. Not that I remember.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And then you went-- everybody else left the room--

JAMES COMEY: Yeah-- Director Clapper-- I call him General Clapper, 'cause he was a retired general. General Clapper said-- and-- "Mr. President-elect, there's some additional material that we think it makes sense of Director Comey to brief you on-- privately. And-- and we'll all excuse ourselves in a small group."

And the president-elect then said to me, "Okay, how small." And I said, "Well, I was thinking just the two of us, sir." And then his incoming chief of staff, Reince Priebus, said, "How about me, Reince Priebus, and the vice president?" And I said, turning to President-elect Trump, "It's up to you, sir. I wanted it to be a small group, but it's entirely up to you." And then he said-- I don't know whether he knew what I was going to talk about it, but he said-- "No, no, just the two of us, just the two of us, thanks everybody." And then the group filed out.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Just the two of you. What do you tell him?

JAMES COMEY: I didn't tell him anything. First he began by telling me-- saying nice things to me about how he thought I'd conducted myself honorably during the Clinton e-mail investigation and that he knew that people at the F.B.I. thought very highly of me and he hoped very much that I was going to stay as F.B.I. director.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Unprompted?

JAMES COMEY: Un-- oh, unprompted. And I didn't say, "Thank you," because my view was I already have the job. Congress states a ten year term in order to ensure continuity. And so I appreciate the nice words, but I didn't want to make it seem like I was applying for a job that I already had and intended to have for another six years.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So to be clear, at that point, he was happy with how you had handled the Clinton e-mail investigation?

JAMES COMEY: Well, at that point, he said that. Now, whether-- whether that-- I came to conclude that a lot of times what he said was just kind of pleasantries to begin a conversation, so I don't know whether he really thought I had handled it well. But he said, in substance, "You handled it well, you conducted yourself honorably."

And I know the people at the F.B.I. really like you. And I really hope you're going to stay as director." And that-- when that was finished, I then turned to the topic and said, "Sir, there's a portion of the material that we wanted to brief you privately to make sure you're aware of it because-- the-- we understand the media may be-- gonna publish it very soon."

And then I started to tell him about the allegation was that he had been involved with prostitutes in a hotel in Moscow in 2013 during the visit for the Miss Universe pageant and that the Russians had-- filmed the episode. And he interrupted very defensively and started talking about it, you know, "Do I look like a guy who needs hookers?"

And I assumed he was asking that rhetorically, I didn't answer that, and I just moved on and-- and explained, "Sir, I'm not saying that we credit this, I'm not saying we believe it. We just thought it very important that you know." And I explained, "One of the F.B.I.'s jobs is to protect presidency from coercion. And if there is any effort, one of the things we do is a defensive briefing to let the person who might be the target of that coercion know that this is out there, better equip us to defend ourselves against the adversary."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you tell him you thought it wasn't true or you didn't know if it was true or not?

JAMES COMEY: I said, "We're not saying that-- I'm not saying that I believe the allegations, I'm not saying that I credit it." I never said, "I don't believe it," because I-- I couldn't say one way or another. But I said, "We are not-- I'm not saying we believe the allegations," or I might've used the word "credit the allegations."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How graphic did you get?

JAMES COMEY: I think as graphic as I needed to be. I did not go into the business about-- people peeing on each other, I just thought it was a weird enough experience for me to be talking to the incoming president of the United States about prostitutes in a hotel in Moscow. And so I left that part out. I thought I'd given enough to put him on notice as to what the essence of the material was.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What was the look on his face?

JAMES COMEY: He was very defensive and started to launch into-- for reasons that I don't understand, started going into the list of people who had accused him of touching them improperly, sexual assault and how he hadn't done this, he hadn't done that, he hadn't done that.

And I worried the conversation was about to crash, because I was reading that he was reacting like, "We're investigating you and we're going to go figure out whether you were with prostitutes in Moscow." And-- and so I said something in substance about

how we don't-- it-- "We're not investigating you, sir. This is not something that we're-- we care about, except that you know that this is out there."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you believe his denial?

JAMES COMEY: I don't-- I don't know. I don't-- the nature of an investigator is you don't believe or disbelieve. You ask, "What's my evidence? What is the evidence that establishes me whether someone's telling me the truth or not. And ask this allegation--" I honestly never thought this words would come out of my mouth, but I don't know whether the-- the-- current president of the United States was with prostitutes peeing on each other in Moscow in 2013. It's possible, but I don't know.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How weird was that briefing?

JAMES COMEY: Really weird. I mean, I don't know whether it was weird for President-elect Trump, but I-- it was almost an out-of-body experience for me. I was floating above myself, looking down, saying, "You're sitting here, briefing the incoming president of the United States about prostitutes in Moscow." And of course, Jeh Johnson's voice is banging around in my head. President Obama's eyebrow raise is banging around in my head. I just wanted to get it done and get out of there.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you tell him that the Steele Dossier had been financed by his political opponents?

JAMES COMEY: No. I didn't-- I didn't think I used the term "Steele Dossier," I just talked about additional material.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did he-- but did he have a right to know that?

JAMES COMEY: That it'd been financed by his political opponents? I don't know the answer to that. I-- it wasn't necessary for my goal, which was to alert him that we had this information. Again, I was clear on whether it's true or not, it's important that you know, both because of the counterintelligence reason and so you know that this maybe going to hit the media.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So how did it end?

JAMES COMEY: It ended not long after I said-- it only took a few minutes after I made clear to him, "We're not investigating you." And-- I think he asked something like, "Is there anything else?" And I said, "No, sir." And then we shook hands and I walked out.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You had been warned, at least by some people on your staff, not to tell him, "We're not investigating you." Was that a mistake?

JAMES COMEY: It might have been-- a mistake. The general counsel of the F.B.I. had argued, "Look, it's literally true that we don't have a case open on President-elect Trump. We're looking at other people." And-- and-- but his argument was, "There's a problem with you saying that for two reasons. First, inevitably as we move along in the investigation as-- as to whether anyone was working with the Russians, the campaign's going to have to be a focus and the candidate's always the head of the campaign, so inevitably we're going to have to look at him. And second, you're going to create a duty to correct. But if you tell him he's under investigation and that changes, don't you have to go back and tell him--"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And you thought that was a reasonable prospect?

JAMES COMEY: I didn't know at that point in time whether that would change or not. But-- and I said to the general counsel, look, I get that, that makes sense to me. But I'm very worried about beginning a new administration with the president thinking the F.B.I. is out to get him.

Now in hindsight, given the challenges I had with President Trump and his frustrations that I wouldn't publicly say he's not under investigation, I think the better argument is it was a mistake, I should've listened to the general counsel. But anyhow, that's how I think about it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump thought you were shaking him down?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know that. But I-- it seems reasonable, given his view of the world. Remember, that was what I worried about is that he would think I was pulling a J. Edgar Hoover, to come in there and jam him by raising the prospect of salacious, compromising material.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But you felt you had no choice?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I thought the logic was too strong that-- how could we have this information and conceal it from the incoming president of the United States? And look, if it's true-- again, we don't know whether it's true or not. But if it's true, and as odd as it sounds, it could possibly be true, we have to protect him. We have to protect the presidency. And so part of our-- our role as the F.B.I. is let him know that they may come at you with this.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If it's true, how can you protect him?

JAMES COMEY: Well, if it's true-- if someone knows something bad about you that they're going to maybe use against you and you're in the government and-- and I'm the F.B.I., if I come to you and tell you, "We know all about this," it'll make it harder for them to get you to do stuff based on this secret. Because you know that we know. And so it makes-- it reduces the leverage of the adversary.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Sure enough, a few days later, it does become public.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: BuzzFeed-- publishes the entire-- Steele "dossier"-- as you all had feared it would happen. And that's when you get your first phone call from President Trump.

JAMES COMEY: Yes, that's right. So the following week, the-- as you said, the-- the media published the entire-- thing and President Trump called me at my office at the F.B.I. and he was very upset about the leak of this material and wanted to express his concern about it.

And I explained to him that it wasn't-- that it wasn't government material. That it had been prepared by private parties, the F.B.I. hadn't paid for it, the F.B.I. hadn't commissioned it, and it was all over Washington. "And as you'll remember, sir, as we told we, the media has this and is close to reporting it. So we shouldn't think of it as a leak of-- of classified information. It wasn't classified and it-- that it wasn't government information."

And then he launched into-- I didn't ask about the business with the prostitutes, but he launched into an explanation as to how I should know that wasn't true and that he remembered now, from talking to friends who had been with him, that he'd never stayed overnight at the hotel, he'd just changed clothes there and went to the Miss Universe pageant.

I don't know whether any of this true, but this is what he said. And then went right back without staying overnight. And then he said, "Another reason you know it's not true is I'm a germaphobe. There's no way I'd let people pee on each other around me." And that me caught me so much by surprise I actually let out an audible laugh and-- 'cause it was just one of those-- I was startled by it.

And-- and I remember thinking, "Well, should I say that, 'As I understand the activity sir, it doesn't require an overnight stay. And given that it was allegedly the presidential suite at the Ritz Carlton, I would imagine you could be at a safe distance from the activity--'" all these things are bouncing around my head. But instead of saying it, it just led me to think, "The world's gone crazy.

I'm the director of the F.B.I. and I'm standing at my window, looking out on the darkened Pennsylvania Avenue." And I remember this moment like it was yesterday. And I can see the lit-- Washington Monument that's rising from my vantage point of the F.B.I. just over the Trump-- new Trump hotel. And I just remember thinking, "Everything's gone mad." And then, having finished his explanation, which I hadn't

asked for, he hung up. And I went to find my chief of staff to tell him that the world's gone crazy.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And in fact, he did stay overnight in Moscow.

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. But-- but again, I-- I-- I don't know those facts. But he told me he did not.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So-- so-- at-- at-- at this point, you've had-- two substantive conversations with the president. The bulk of it is about his alleged activities with prostitutes in Moscow.

JAMES COMEY: Yes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And as you say, that seems a little crazy.

JAMES COMEY: It did to me. You could've asked me, when I became F.B.I. director, if I could imagine those conversations. Like, it's hard to imagine them even sitting here. But-- it is-- it is reality today.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The president is inaugurated a week later. I want to try to get inside your head again at that moment, because now you've had these encounters with the president. He's taken the oath of office, you're thinking--

JAMES COMEY: I'm thinking I need to be very careful to protect the independence of the F.B.I. Because I now know-- I've had two one on one conversations with the president of the United States, which is a very unusual thing. Both of them touched on his conduct personally and implicated the F.B.I.

I need to make sure to keep that distance to protect the F.B.I.'s independence, which had been built since Hoover. I mean, Hoover was always over having drinks with presidents and doing all kinds of stuff-- that was-- not appropriate. Gathering information, all that sort of thing on political figures. And the F.B.I., since Watergate, had created itself as an independent force in American life, so I need to be a guardian of that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And that affected you-- a couple of days later when you got invited to the White House. You'd been invited for a reception?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, the-- the-- the weekend of the inauguration, on Sunday, which was also the day of the National Football League Conference Championships. I remember that because of the time of the event. At 5:00, the president posted the law enforcement leaders of the agencies that had helped protect the inauguration, which is a really nice thing to do. And it was at 5:00 in the blue room at the White House.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You didn't want to go?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I didn't want to go for two reasons. First, I worried very much about that independence of the F.B.I. And, remember-- and I'm sure everyone listening remembers, there were a whole lot of people who thought that I had helped elect Donald Trump by what I had done at the end of October.

And so why would I want to go to a public reception-- a potentially public reception with the president two days after he takes office? And then second, I wanted to watch football and the championship games were on and 5:00 was right in the middle-- I'd miss the end of one game and the beginning of another.

My staff said, "No, you have to go. You're the director of the F.B.I. It would be an insult to the other agencies-- secret service, park police, if you don't go. And you can tape the football games and just don't talk to people about them."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And so you--

JAMES COMEY: And so I went.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --you do go and you walk in. You're there as the president walks in. What happens next?

JAMES COMEY: I walked into the blue room, which is a big blue oval room. And I quickly looked around, trying to figure out where-- which way the president would enter and I figured where the doors were. And so I went to the far opposite end, right at the window, where you can look out and see the Washington monument. And I-- so I was now as far away as physically possible without going out the window from the president. And I resolved to stay there and--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Hard for you to hide?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, and I almost got away it here though. And-- the-- you would think that you would notice me, this giraffe standing at the end of the room. But I was standing next to the head of the secret service, who is a normal sized person, and the president and vice president come in and the-- the staff has set up these klieg lights, so I know the media is coming.

And then the media group comes in and the president starts speaking on camera and his eyes start sweeping the room. And I remember the movement of his eyes 'cause I was-- obviously, thought I was going to be spotted. And he went past me with his eyes and settled on the man right next to me, the head of the secret service.

And I was relieved and surprised. And he called the director of the secret service forward, made a big-- display, hugged him, and then had him stand with him in front of the cameras. And then he began talking. And, I know this seems crazy to people, but I was sitting there thinking, "So how did he miss me?"

I'm 6'8". And then I-- I look and right next to me is this blue curtain. And I'm wearing a blue suit the doesn't match perfectly, but close enough. So I'm thinking, "How great is that? I got a little camouflage." And so I start moving over and I pressed myself against the blue curtain, true story.

Thinking -- this is my save. This will save me from having this public embrace with the president. And so then he starts speaking again and his eyes start going again. And my camouflage worked until the very moment it didn't and he sees me and says, "Jim, he's more famous than me," and then calls me forward. And I remember the walk, it seems like a thousand yards across the-- the-- the-- blue room-- the oval blue room. And my family's had a lot of fun watching my face as I walk across, 'cause they know that's my "oh no" face.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, that's not exactly what Patrice said, is it?

JAMES COMEY: Well, I didn't want to say it on television. She said, "That's Jim's 'oh shit' face." And so I'm walking forward thinking that, thinking, "How could he think this is a good idea? That he's going to try to hug me, the guy that a whole lot of people think, although that's not true, but think I tried to get him elected president and did. Isn't he master of television, this is disastrous."

And I'm thinking all this as I'm walking and I have this awkward look on my face. But I was determined there's not going to be a hug, 'cause I'm not a master of television but I knew that would be a real problem. And so I extend my hand and he grabs my hand and he pulls in and back. So he--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So he was going to hug you?

JAMES COMEY: He was going for the hug, going for the hug. And so I'm not an unusually strong person but I work out and so I tighten my abs and my core and I'm thinking, this-- "Unless he's a lot stronger than he looks, he's not getting a hug." And so he pulls and he doesn't get the hug.

Our arms are tense and he gets just far enough that I get something worse than a hug. Because he's just able to lean up to put his face by my right ear-- unfortunately, the cameras were on the left side of my face. And so the whole world saw him kiss me. And he didn't kiss me, he said, "I really look forward to working with you. But the whole world, including my beloved family, saw the president of the United States kiss the man who helped get him elected."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So-- and I know this is speculative, but what do you think is going through his mind? You've briefed him twice, you've spoken with him twice. We know what the subject has been. You've been talking to him about Moscow. Has he forgotten that?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. 'Cause I don't-- I worked with him for five months, I have some insight into the mind of Donald Trump. And so I'll give you my best guess as to it-- what I think it is. I think it's about establishing dominance and making everyone part of the family.

And so, although there would be hits from embracing him, he would embrace me-- he's embracing me, making me his F.B.I. director. He had made the secret service director stay with him up there, almost on display. And after the alleged kiss, which wasn't a kiss, he tried to get me to stay as well, almost to show, "These are my people."

And I backed off, like, "I'm not worthy, I'm not worthy," which inside my head, I was thinking, "I'm not suicidal." And so then I backed, backed, backed up to the end. But if I had to guess-- and I could be wrong. But-- my guess is it's about establishing, "These are my people."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: He follows up with an invitation on January 27th?

JAMES COMEY: Yup. I'm at lunch. I almost never went to lunch as F.B.I. director. I would walk up to the cafeteria and get a sandwich and eat it at my desk. So I'm at my desk, eating my lunch and working. And my assistant, Althea James, says, "There's a call-- coming from the White House." And they put it through and it's the president asking me if I want to come over for dinner that night. And I said-- I had a date with Patrice to get Thai food that night, but I didn't tell him that. I said, "Sure, sir." And he said--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not say no?

JAMES COMEY: Well, it's the president of the United States calling to ask me to a dinner. And I was assuming it was a group dinner that-- 'cause it-- it actually didn't enter my mind that the president would meet alone, again, with the F.B.I. director.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Yeah, but you had been pretty scrupulous. You wouldn't play basketball with President Obama, you only met with him on a non-policy issue once and that was before you were F.B.I. director. You really wanted to keep a wall--

JAMES COMEY: Yup.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --between the F.B.I. and the White House. Can't you just say no?

JAMES COMEY: Maybe? Although, part of the environment was I had-- I remember, I had this concern about having a war with the president and I'd done the brief on hookers thing privately. And so I knew that there would be a worry about, "Where is the F.B.I.?"

Plus, I assumed it would be a group event. And I had been to group events with President Obama. He would have a annual dinner for the senior appointees in the administration. I was one, the director of National Intelligence is another. So I had gone to those.

And so it actually didn't occur to me to say no. I was uncomfortable, but it didn't occur to me. And so I just said to him, "Sir-- certainly, sir." And he said-- "6:00 or 6:30?" And I said, "It's up to you, sir." And he actually say, "And if you're-- if you're busy tonight, I can do it tomorrow. I'm here all weekend."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you knew then it wasn't a group dinner?

JAMES COMEY: Well no, 'cause I assumed he must be having leaders over to get to know them in groups. And the-- and so I said, "Sir, whatever you-- whatever you like." And he said, "Well, why don't we make it 6:30?" And I said, "Sure." And then I called Patrice, broke our date, and-- as luck had it, I had-- an encounter with Clapper, who had left the government but we were giving him a recognition as honorary F.B.I. agent.

And I told him about this invitation and he told-- comforted me by saying, "Yeah, I've heard lots of other people are getting calls to come for dinner." And so then in my head I was-- "Okay, so it's a group thing. He must be having a group thing tonight, a group thing tomorrow night. That's fine." And so I went over there expecting-- a crowd of people.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what did you find?

JAMES COMEY: I stood in the entrance to the green room, which is next to the blue room, and chatted with two Navy stewards who were there.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: This is the residence?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, in the residence. And looked around the room and quickly saw that all the furniture had been moved in the-- in the center of the room. There was a small oval table and there were only two chairs and I could see two place cards. And I could see from where I was standing, one said, "Director Comey." I assume the other was the president. And so that's when I knew that it wasn't a group dinner to get to know the leaders of our different agencies, that it was just the two of us.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did you think was going on?

JAMES COMEY: Something that made me uncomfortable and my best intuition at that point was it's part of an effort to make me part of the team, to make me "amica nostra." And that it made me deeply uncomfortable. And so I just waited. There was no-- there was no saying no at this point.

And the president showed up and had me sit down and it turned out just to be the two of us and that the purpose of the meeting, the dinner was for him to extract from him a promise of loyalty. That instinct was right, it was to make me a friend of ours.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: As you were witting with him, he-- he was just getting used to the trappings of--

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: --of the White House?

JAMES COMEY: I think he was. I think he was. He-- he was-- he took on-- on the plates was a card-- a calligraphy card, so-- very nice script. You always see these at the White House. And it listed the menu for the dinner we were about to have.

And so he-- I remember, he held his up and said, "They write these by hand." And I said, "A calligrapher?" And he kind of gave me this look and he said, "They write them by hand." And so I-- I kinda let it go. And-- and then he talked about-- one of the things he said was how luxurious the White House was, the residence. And he said, "I-- and I know luxury." And-- which I credit. And-- he said, "It's-- it's really beautiful."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How long did it take to get down to business?

JAMES COMEY: Not long. I think it was probably during the salad, before the shrimp scampi. He redirected the conversation-- I think we started talking about how the beautiful the White House was. He redirected the conversation by saying, "So what do you want to do?"

And I kinda gave him this look and then he explained what he meant. And he said, "You know, a lot of people would want to be F.B.I. director and given all you've gone through, I would understand if you want to walk away but it would look like you'd done something wrong if you did that. But I figured I should meet with you and-- and see what you want to do," which was really odd because I think, by that point, at least three times, he had said he hoped I was staying and looked forward to working with me. But there was no acknowledgment of that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think he wanted you to walking away?

JAMES COMEY: No. No, I think he wanted me to say, "Sir, I'd very much like to continue to serve and be your F.B.I. director." And then he would say, "Okay, but I need loyalty, I expect loyalty," which is exactly what he did say, the-- the second part. So I think it was about-- again, this is just a guess but it's an educated guess, that someone had told him or he had concluded that he gave the F.B.I. director job away for free by telling this guy you hope he's going to stay. You oughta get him in front of

you and make sure he's a friend of ours. And-- and have him promise he's going to be loyal, 'cause the F.B.I. is a dangerous organization.

Comey tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos that during a private, one-on-one dinner with the president that Trump said, I need loyalty. Play

Comey says Trump told him, 'I expect loyalty'

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So he asks you what you want and says what he wants?

JAMES COMEY: Correct.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Which was?

JAMES COMEY: He said, "I expect loyalty, I need loyalty." And I did not reply. I just-- we're-- actually, the-- we were probably just about as close as you and I are now, probably exactly the same at this small table. And I just stared at him and had this little narrative with myself inside, saying, "Don't you move, don't you dare move. Don't even blink." Because I was so struck by-- caught by it, but I knew I couldn't say yes, I couldn't nod, and so I just froze and stared at him.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not say no?

JAMES COMEY: That's a fair question. I think because I was caught totally by surprise. And again, I'm operating in an environment where I don't want-- I'm going to be director for another six years. This man's the new president of the United States, I do not need a war with him.

I have to find a way to work with this administration and protect the values of the F.B.I. And so-- and part of it was just sheer surprise. I couldn't think of a clever response. And by the second time he came back to it, he didn't respond at all. We just stared at each other and then he went on eating. And then he came back to-- he didn't-- he noticed that I didn't answer. He came back to it later in the dinner. And by then, I had my wits about me and had a better answer. GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What was the second time?

JAMES COMEY: The second time was later in the conversation. He said, again, "I need loyalty." And I said, "You will always get honesty from me." And he paused and then he said, "Honest loyalty," as if he was proposing some compromise or a deal. And I paused and said, "You'll get that from me." And, of course, in between those two-- the loyalty sandwich, in between those two, I had-- I had an opportunity to explain to him the F.B.I.'s role and how important it was for the F.B.I. to be independent and how I thought about it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But did you cross a line there-- did you cross a line when you promised him honest loyalty? Did-- would it be fair for him to think, "Wait, I have a deal here."

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I-- I don't think so. Given the context and the other things I'd said, I thought-- and look, it was a compromise on my part to try and avoid a really awkward conversation, get out of an awkward conversation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Was it a mistake?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't know. But-- maybe, maybe. And maybe I should've said in the moment, "Sir, as I told you, the F.B.I. has to be--" and then give him the speech again, maybe. But-- and so maybe I should've been-- yeah, that's fair feedback. Maybe I should've been tougher or more direct, especially given what I know now.

At the time, I obviously couldn't see the future. But given what I know now, maybe it would've been better to give a more explicit-- say, "Sir, I can't promise you loyalty. Given the nature of my role, I can promise you I always tell you the truth," which I had already told him. "That's my role. And that I'm not part of it."

I should've given that whole speech then. But in the moment, frankly, it didn't occur to me. And I-- maybe I didn't have the guts to do it. I wanted to get out of this conversation without compromising myself. And I felt like, given all I've told him already, he has to understand what I mean by honest loyalty and he's kidding himself if he thinks I just promised that I'm-- I'm "amica nostra." But-- in hindsight, you're probably right. I probably should have done it differently.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How strange is it for you to sit here and compare the president to a mob boss?

JAMES COMEY: Very strange. And I don't do it lightly. I-- and I'm not trying to that, by the way, suggest that President Trump is out breaking legs and-- you know, shaking down shopkeepers. But instead, what I'm talking about is that leadership culture constantly comes back to me when I think about my experience with the Trump administration.

Comey tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos, What I'm talking about is that leadership culture constantly comes back to me when I think about my experience with the Trump administration.

Play
Comey on comparing President Trump to a mob boss

The-- the loyalty oaths, the boss as the dominant center of everything, it's all about how do you serve the boss, what's in the boss' interests. It's the family, the family, the family, the family. That's why it reminds me so much and not, "So what's the right thing for the country and what are the values of the institutions that we're dealing with?" It's all about here.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What was the rest of the talk like?

JAMES COMEY: I think I described it in the book as, like-- watching a jigsaw puzzle contest with a shot clock, that the president would-- it wasn't a conversation in any meaningful sense, 'cause a conversation's what we're having where you do some talking, I do some talking.

It was him talking almost the entire time, which I've discovered is something he frequently does. And so it would be monologue in this direction, monologue in that direction, monologue in a different direction. And a constant series of assertions that-- about the inauguration crowd, about how great my inauguration speech was, about all the free media-- earned media, I think was his term, that I got during the campaign.

On and on and on and on. Everyone agrees, everyone agrees, I did this, the-- I never assaulted these women, I never made fun of a reporter. And-- I'm sure you're wondering what question did I ask that would prompt those? None, zero. I didn't ask any questions that I recall.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You call them baffling, unnecessary lies.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, that's the things that's-- especially to someone who's-- who's been involved in investigation in the justice system my whole life, is-- to give you an example, he-- at the beginning of the meeting, he tells us-- tells me Reince Priebus, his chief of staff, does not know we're meeting, which I thought was st-- I remember it because I thought, "How could the chief of staff not know the president's meeting with the F.B.I. director?"

And then later in the same meal, near the end, he says, "Reince knows we're having dinner, so follow-up with Reince." Just-- so one of those things is not true. One of those things is a lie, but it reminded me of the inauguration crowd thing. Right, that it's-- his inauguration crowd was bigger than that Barack Obama's first inauguration.

That's just not true. That's not a perspective, that's not a view, that's just a lie. And-- and yet he would say it and, "Everyone agrees, everyone says, everyone believes," and the-- the danger sort of occurred to me is-- 'cause you don't have a chance to speak. That's washing over you, washing over you, washing over you.

Did you just agree to that? Did you just agree that he didn't make fun of a disabled reporter because you-- because you didn't speak? Well, you did have a chance to speak because there was no gap at all in the words. But I-- I have an encounter with him two weeks later where I learn from that and try to interrupt him to tell him I don't agree with him. But in this conversation, my first detail conversation, he's just rolling on, talking about all kinds of things.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you're listening. Are you thinking, "President Trump's a liar?"

JAMES COMEY: Yes, yeah. I-- and I-- and I had, obviously, concerns about that earlier, having watched him on the campaign that he is someone who is-- for whom the truth is not a high value. And-- and obviously, there were examples of that in the dinner.

The Priebus thing is-- is an example of it. The-- the inauguration thing is an example of it. I'm sure there are others in the conversation. But yes, that he is-- that sometimes he's lying in ways that are obvious, sometimes he's saying things that we may not know are true or false and then there's a spectrum in between.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And then unprompted, he brings up the golden shower again.

JAMES COMEY: Correct, yeah. He brings it up and says he may want me to investigate it to prove that it didn't happen. And then he says-- something that distracted me. 'Cause he said, you know, "If there's even a 1 percent chance my wife thinks that's true, that's terrible."

And I-- and I remember thinking, "How could your wife think there's a 1 percent chance you were with prostitutes peeing on each other in Moscow?" I'm a flawed human being, but there is literally zero chance that my wife would think that was true. So what kind of marriage to what kind of man does your wife think there's only a 99 percent chance you didn't do that?

And the reason I'm recounting this is I remember-- I wasn't listening to him, 'cause I'm running this through my head, like, how could that possibly be true? And I said to him, "Sir--" when he started talking about it, "I may order you to investigate that," I said, "Sir, that's up to you. But you'd want to be careful about that, because it might create a narrative that we're investigating you personally. And second, it's very difficult to prove something didn't happen."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And did he accept that?

JAMES COMEY: He said he would think about it. And he said, "I hope you'll think about it too."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You notice something else-- during that dinner. You say the president didn't laugh.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, not at all. And I was struck by it. So struck by it, it stayed with me, that I've never seen him laugh. Not in public, not in private. And at a dinner with someone-- I mean, I'm not a comedian but I occasionally say something that's funny that people chuckle with each other.

But I never saw anything that resembled a laugh. And I could over interpret that, I could be-- also we're missing something that-- that maybe he's-- he's breaking up in

stitches with other people other than the F.B.I. director, but I also tried-- after I got fired, I thought-- that stayed with me. And so I went and tried to find examples of videos where he's laughing and I could only find that really wasn't a genuine laugh.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The dinner ends, you immediately write it up. Why?

JAMES COMEY: Because I knew, given the nature of the conversation and the nature of the person I was talking to, that to protect the F.B.I. and to protect myself, I would need to remember very accurately what we talked about it. And as the F.B.I. director, you have thousands of conversations.

And-- and so the detail can get lost over time. I knew that, given that I worried he might not tell the truth about our encounter and given that it touched on him personally, that I thought, "You know, I need to have a written record of this." And so I went home, on my personal computer, and created a memo and kept a copy of it in my personal safe at home and left another copy of it at the F.B.I. Because it was about both protecting the F.B.I. and protecting me.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think President Trump got what we wanted out of that dinner?

JAMES COMEY: No. And I think he knew that because it was a later point when he was frustrated with me that I wouldn't get out-- as he said, get out that I'm not under investigation, where he tried to recall the loyalty pledge, I think, from the context. Where he said, "You know, I've been very loyal to you, 'cause we had that thing."

And I-- I think what he was doing was trying to recall our encounter at that dinner and it coming up in his memory as, "Actually, the guy didn't promise to be loyal to me. He promised me honest loyalty and-- and that's actually what he's giving me now by telling me, 'You oughta have your lawyer call the Department of Justice.'"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: About 10 days later you're back in the White House. You're-- meeting with Reince-- previously the chief of staff-- when he suggested you go meet with the president again.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. This was a follow-up meeting to the dinner from the 27th. And it's us talking about a variety of topics, some of which were classified, but one of which was, so how should it work? How does the F.B.I. appropriately interact with the White House. And I was explaining it has to be through the Justice Department, it's important that there be a regular channel, except for national security emergencies or national security policy issues.

And at the end of that conversation, which was designed to explain-- and Priebus, to his credit, seemed to want to get it right. But at the end, he asked me whether I wanted

to see the president. And I said, "No, that's okay. I'm sure he's got plenty to do." And he said, "I'm sure he'd love to see you." And I said, "No, n-- that's fine."

He said, "Sit. Sit." And then he left and-- went down the hall, apparently to the Oval Office, and came back and said, "He's in the Oval. He'd love to see you." And I said, without expression, "Great." And then he takes me down to the Oval Office and the president was just finishing a conversation with the then-s-- Press Secretary Sean Spicer. And I came in and sat down.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Let me stop you there. You've been in the Oval Office several times in your career. You served several presidents. How is it different?

JAMES COMEY: It was different-- well I noticed right away the curtains were different. He had hung bright, gold curtains, which I found out later were actually Bill Clinton's Oval Office curtains, excuse me, since changed. And-- but most striking was that he was sitting behind the resolute desk, the big-- the president's desk, which I had actually never seen Presidents Bush or Obama do during a meeting.

They would be there sometimes for phone calls, I gather, but when I was there they always sat in the open sitting area, which made sense to me as someone who tries to get people as a leader to tell you the truth. It's much easier in an informal setting. But I noticed he was behind the desk with-- both arms on the table top, on the desktop. And so I sat-- so there's a gigantic block of wood between us, I sat in a little wooden chair right up against the desk. And the conversation started and-- and Reince was trying to steer it, in part, towards the Steele dossier, and the president wasn't interested in that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why did Reince want to talk about that?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know for sure. I don't-- I don't know. He seemed to want to bring the topic up. I-- I don't-- I don't know exactly. I--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You know, you mentioned something about-- since you brought up the Steele dossier again, you mentioned that the parts about-- the prostitutes was-- unverified. You don't know whether they're true or not. What about the rest of the Steele dossier? Has it checked out? Is it a credible document?

JAMES COMEY: The answer is, I don't know. When I left the F.B.I when I was fired in early May of last year, an effort was underway by the F.B.I. to try to verify as much as pos-- rule in or rule out what-- and that work was still ongoing. So I don't know what the answer is. It came from a credible source.

And as I said, its central premise was corroborated, that there was an effort by the Russians to influence the election and that there had been some connections between people associated with the Trump campaign and the Russian effort, in particular the Papadopoulos information that started the F.B.I.'s investigation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So connections between the Trump campaign and Russia had been corroborated by the time you left the F.B.I.?

JAMES COMEY: I think all I can say is that-- the-- the work was still underway, the investigation began because of inf-- reliable information that George Papadopoulos was having conversations about obtaining information from the Russians. That's probably as far as I can go at this point.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So where did the conversation go?

JAMES COMEY: The president was talking about something that had happened during an airing of a interview he did with Bill O'Reilly on Fox--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Oh the Super Bowl interview --

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. The Super Bowl pre-game show where-- and I hadn't asked any questions about this, but the president was just talking about it, he had given an answer to Bill O'Reilly that had been much criticized across the political spectrum when he had said, in response to a question, that he respected Vladimir Putin and said, "That doesn't mean I'm going to get along with him."

And then O'Reilly responded, "But he's a killer." And the president responded, in substance, "But we're killers, too. You think our country's so innocent." I forget the exact words, but that's the gist of it. And that moral equivalence, between the people of our government and Putin's thugs, had generated a lot of controversy.

And so the president was, as I said when I described the dinner, just in a monologue talking about how that was a great answer, what was he supposed to do, it was a hard question, he gave his best answer. And just going on and on and on. Basically we're all agreeing with this if we don't speak.

And having seen it happen during the dinner I thought, "I can't let that happen," 'cause I don't think it was a hard question. I think the second part of his answer is terrible. And so he gave me an opening at some point by saying like, "Yeah, you agree it was a good answer--"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So the president wants you to say this was a good answer.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. In fact, he was telling me it was a good answer and then said-- gave me an opening by saying, "You think it was a great answer. You think it was a good answer." And then he was starting to move on. And I jumped in and I said, "Mr. President, the first part of the answer was fine, not the second part. We're not the kind of killers that Putin is."

And when I said that, the weather changed in the room. And like a shadow crossed his face and his eyes got this strange, kinda hard look. And I thought in that moment, "I've just done something unusual maybe." And then (SNAP) it passed and the meeting was over. And, "Thanks for coming in," and-- and Priebus walked me out. It was like--

In an exclusive interview with ABC News George Stephanopoulos, the former FBI director said President Trump's eyes got this strange, kinda hard look after he interrupted and criticized the president. Play

The moment Comey thinks Trump turned on him

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You had another mob flashback.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I did. Although in that moment I was thinking, "I just succeeded," although I hadn't intended to, in ending any personal relationship between me and the president by th-- by interrupting him and also criticizing him to his face. And I went back and told my staff that it happened, and then I thought-- and told them, "That's not a bad thing, because it will help us keep a distance that we need to keep from him."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You-- you saw it right there, and we talked about this earlier-- why is President Trump so reluctant to call out Vladimir Putin?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I'm struck by it and I'm struck by it both in public and in private. Because I can understand the arguments why the president of the United States might not want to criticize the leader of another country because there's always good reasons to try and build better relationships, I suppose, even when that other leader is someone who is killing his own citizens and engaging in-- in attacks against our country. But you would think that in private-- talking to the F.B.I. director, whose job it is to thwart Russian attacks, you might acknowledge that this enemy of ours is an enemy of ours. But I never saw. And so I don't know the reason. I really don't.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think the Russians have something on Donald Trump?

JAMES COMEY: I think it's possible. I don't know. These are more words I never thought I'd utter about a president of the United States, but it's possible.

These are more words I never thought I'd utter about a President of the United States, but it's possible, the former FBI director told ABC News George Stephanopoulos in an exclusive interview. Play

Comey: 'It's possible' the Russians have something on President Trump

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That's stunning. You can't say for certain that the president of the United States is not compromised by the Russians?

JAMES COMEY: It is stunning and I wish I wasn't saying it, but it's just-- it's the truth. I cannot say that. It always struck me and still strikes me as unlikely, and I

woulda been able to say with high confidence about any other president I dealt with, but I can't. It's possible.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: February 14th, you're back in the Oval Office?

JAMES COMEY: Back again. Valentine's Day. For--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why?

JAMES COMEY: We were there for a briefing, which was a very good idea, to give the new president an understanding of the terrorism threat in the United States, which is the F.B.I.'s primary responsibility. And so I was there was the vice president and leaders of the counter terrorism agencies in a horseshoe of chairs ar-- again, he's behind the desk, in a horseshoe of chairs around the desk to tell him, "Look, here's what we're worried about in the United States."

And-- so I did most of the talking during that briefing and gave some, I thought, some pretty eye-opening insight into some threats that we don't talk about a lot, but the president was kind of quiet, which is unusual, and unengaged. And-- and then ended the meeting by thanking everybody and s-- and pointing at me saying, "I just want to talk to Jim." And excused everyone, including the vice president.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: They didn't want to leave.

JAMES COMEY: Well I know the attorney general didn't want to leave because-- he ac-- he was-- I'm sitting here, he was sitting off to my right and the door by the grandfather clock was off to my left. President was sitting where you are. And the attorney general came around and stood right by my chair and lingered. Clearly, his body language leads-- to my mind said he didn't want to leave.

And then the president said, "Thanks, Jeff. I just want to talk to Jim. Thank you." And then he walked off. And then staff had been sitting on the couches and chairs behind us, and one of the people back there, been-- Jared Kushner, the president's son in law, and he came to my left elbow and stood after the attorney general left and started chatting with me about the e-mail investigation, just pleasantries about how hard that must have been, and lingering as well. And then the president said, "Thanks, Jared. Thank you. Just want to talk to Jim." And so-- he was excused.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You're alone in the Oval Office?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What happens next?

JAMES COMEY: I didn't know what was going to happen next, but I knew that whatever it was, it was really, really important that I remember everything that was

said, and as best I could the exact words that were said. Because why would you kick out the attorney general, who's my boss, and the vice president of the United States to speak to me? Something was going to happen that was going to be important to remember--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: He knows he's going to say something that others shouldn't hear.

JAMES COMEY: That was my read, that it's-- it's so unusual that-- first of all, it's unusual for the attorney general-- excuse me, for the F.B.I. director and the president to be alone at all. But to kick out the vice president of the United States and the attorney general, who I work for, so you could talk to me alone, something was up that was really important. And that it might well be that he knew what everybody was going to talk about was something that he shouldn't be talking about with the others. And so my antennae were up and I just-- listened.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what he wanted to talk about was Mike Flynn.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. That's how he began it. "I want to talk about Mike Flynn." And he started explaining to me-- that Flynn was a good guy and that he had to be let go 'cause he was-- had lied to the vice president and he-- said he had other concerns about him, which he didn't in that meeting spell out.

And then he-- got a little bit distracted, the conversation moved off to leaks a little bit. And he talked about how bad leaks were of classified information. And I agreed. And we talked about that for a bit. And while that conversation was going on, Reince Priebus opened the door to my left, by the grandfather clock, and I turned and I can see standing waiting was a big group of people, including the vice president. And the president-- waved him away and had him close the door. And then after the interruption came back to Flynn.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So that-- that prompted him to get back to business.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Get back to the point. He-- he had wandered off on an important topic of leaks and-- and urging me to talk to the attorney general about being more aggressive in pursuing leaks of classified information, all of which is fine. And then the interruption got him back to Mike Flynn, and that's when he asked me-- said he hopes I can let it go.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And when he said that, you thought?

JAMES COMEY: He's asking me to drop the criminal investigation of his, now former, national security advisor.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Direction?

JAMES COMEY: I took it as a direction. He's-- his words were, though, "I hope you can let it go." But the context where I've been-- where everyone's been kicked out, and it was just the two of us, the president of the United States, I took the expression of hope as, "This is what I want you to do." This--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The president says he didn't say that.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Well what am I going to do? He did. That's why I was-- when he tweeted that there might be tapes, I was-- I meant what I said when I said, "Lordy, I hope there are tapes because I know what happened in that-- in that meeting." And I testified about it under oath thinking there might be tapes. And so I'd be a crazy person to make it up. And I wrote it down immediately after that meeting.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: He-- he-- he later said there weren't tapes in a tweet several weeks later after it hung out there for a long, long time. Which statement do you believe?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I-- I mean, I would assume one of the reasons, although it was a delayed revelation, that I wanted to get out into public in-- that he had-- that we had had this encounter, he'd asked me to let it go, is that if there were tapes only a special prosecutor was going to go get 'em. And so I don't know. I have no insight into whether Former Director Mueller and his team subpoenaed the White House for tapes. I have no idea.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So he says, "I hope you can let it go." What do you say?

JAMES COMEY: He had said, "He's a good guy, I hope you can let it go," I think those are the exact words. But he said-- and I just said, "I agree he's a good guy," or I said, "he's a good guy." And so then full-stop. And there was a brief pause. And then the meeting was over.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Should you have said more there? Should you have said, "Mr. President, I can't discuss this with you. You're doing something improper?"

JAMES COMEY: Maybe. I mean, that-- that's also a fair criticism. Maybe I should have. Although, as I've thought about it since, if he didn't know he was doing something improper, why did he kick out the attorney general and the vice president of the United States and the leaders of the intelligence community? I mean, why am I alone if he's-- doesn't know the nature of the request?

But it's possible that in the moment I shoulda-- you know, another person would have said, "Sir, you can't ask me that. That's a criminal investigation. That could be obstruction of justice." Again, it's one of these deals where I'm so-- even though I knew something important was going to happen, it didn't occur to me he was going to ask me to drop a criminal investigation. And so a little bit of it is the shock of it, and

part of it is just from the environment I think I had a good gut sense that he knows what he's doing.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: With that direction, was President Trump obstructing justice?

JAMES COMEY: Possibly. I mean, it's certainly some evidence of obstruction of justice. It would depend and-- and I'm just a witness in this case, not the investigator or prosecutor, it would depend upon other things that reflected on his intent.

Comey tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos, Possibly. I mean its certainly some evidence of obstruction of justice.

Play
Comey interview: Was President Trump obstructing justice?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: I wonder if you even should have agreed at that point that Flynn is a good guy. By February 14th, did you know that Mike Flynn had lied to the F.B.I.?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So was it a mistake to even agree with the president on that point?

JAMES COMEY: Maybe. I mean, I-- I actually-- good people do lie, and my sense of Flynn was he was a good guy, that I sat with him and chatted with him when he was head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. And so the fact that someone lies doesn't necessarily make them a bad person. But I think mostly it was me trying to get outta the conversation, give him a piece of what he said that's harmless so that I cannot give him the rest.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But you knew at this point that Mike Flynn was in some jeopardy.

JAMES COMEY: Yes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Serious jeopardy.

JAMES COMEY: Yes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did the president know that?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. That is obviously an area that a special prosecutor would want to investigate. I don't know the answer to that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: There's been some reporting that-- at-- at-- at one point you told the Congress that the agency who interviewed Mike Flynn didn't believe that he had lied.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I saw that. And that-- I don't know where that's coming from. That-- unless I'm-- I-- I-- said something that people misunderstood, I don't remember even intending to say that. So my recollection is I never said that to anybody.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So at this point-- the president is now, given what you thought was a direction-- you didn't step in and say, "Listen, you shouldn't do that, Mr. President," at some point in your mind, as you're writing these notes, have you shifted to collecting evidence of a possible crime?

JAMES COMEY: Well, yes, in a sense. I mean, I am recording it bec-- for the s-- same reason I recorded the earlier one, but it's even more important that I record this one because the conversation will likely come back some day and he may well lie about it. And so I need to remember exactly what was said there. It could be evidence of a crime. It was really important that it be well documented.

I shared it with-- my colleagues at the F.B.I. But something else was true, it was important that we did not intend to abide his direction, we were not going to let it go, no matter what he said. And so it was really important that we not let the investigators yet know this had happened, because we worried it might chill them in some way if you hear the president wants your case to go away.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you're holding this evidence. You share it with your deputy, your general counsel.

JAMES COMEY: Uh-huh (AFFIRM).

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You don't share it with the attorney general.

JAMES COMEY: No.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not?

JAMES COMEY: We thought-- rightly, he was about to recuse himself on anything related to Russia and so that didn't make sense. The harder question was, should we tell the person who is acting in the role as deputy attorney general, which was a U.S. attorney who was there temporarily? And decided that didn't make any sense either, that we would wait until we got a new-- there's nothing to be done, since there was no way to corroborate it, the idea of tapes didn't occur to us, that we would be getting new leadership a that deputy attorney general level. And then the department would figure out how they were going to supervise all the Russia stuff.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So at this point it's almost as if there's an investigation within the investigation.

JAMES COMEY: Well there's a box within the investigation where we're holding a piece of information so that we can figure out what to do about it later. So it's-- we are walling it off, since we couldn't think-- the leaders of the F.B.I. couldn't think of what logical investigations you would do now, that you needed to do right now, so there would be no harm in holding it and then figuring out what to do with it as the investigation went on.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So i-- i-- i-- if the president hadn't fired you, would that information still be boxed up?

JAMES COMEY: Oh no. No. 'Cause we'd have-- we'd have gotten guidance at some point as to how they were going to lead the Russia investigation and then have to figure out what investigation we could do to try to corroborate that. What would we do with that? But firing me certainly accelerated it, in a way it wouldn't have been accelerated before.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What were you thinking as you left the Oval Office that day?

JAMES COMEY: That something really important just happened and that I was a little-- another one of those outta-body experiences, like, "Really? The president just kicked out the attorney general to ask me to drop a criminal investigation." Wow, the world s-- continues to go crazy.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Calls you been-- calls you back a couple weeks later. The next phone call was-- and that was just kind of a check-in. Right?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Said the world had gone crazy. I was about to get on a helicopter and the president called me just to, he didn't say this, but I heard it in my own head as just, "Hey, what's up?" And it was to find out, "So how are you doing?" I said, "Great, sir. How are you doing?" And it was just a check-in.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And that was March 1st. Did you ever look back-- at-- at the day and-- and-- get any sense of what might have prompted that phone call?

JAMES COMEY: No, I never did.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: He then called you again-- it was actually a few weeks later-- March 30th. He's more agitated now--

JAMES COMEY: Yes.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why?

JAMES COMEY: I think two reasons. M-- most prominently that there had been a hearing where, at the Department of Justice direction, I had confirmed for the first

time that we had open-- counter intelligence investigation to understand whether any Americans associated with the Trump campaign were working with the Russians. And-- and so that obviously caught his attention.

And then I think there continued to be a lotta stuff in the news about the Russia investigation. So he was calling me to tell me how frustrating he found that and it was getting in the way of his ability to make deals for the country. And he wanted to lift the cloud, he called it a cloud. And so wanted me to get out that he wasn't under investigation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So if he's not under investigation, you've told him, why not tell the country?

JAMES COMEY: Well for-- for the reasons that the F.B.I. general counsel was concerned about me in the first instance telling then President-elect Trump he wasn't under investigation, it-- it was-- potentially misleading and also would create a duty to correct that. And there was a challenge also with, so what's the limiting principle? If they ask, "Is the vice president under investigation," do you answer that?

And then if they say, "Is the attorney general under investigation," do you answer that? And-- where do you stop? And so the Department of Justice was thinking about it and had decided, in connection with my testimony, that they would only authorize me to say there was an investigation but not to comment on who was under investigation. But they did one other thing, they had me tell the leaders of the intelligence committees exactly who we were investigating, the-- which is unusual, the identities of the Americans which did not include the president.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What part of you is thinking also, "I am collecting evidence on the president"?

JAMES COMEY: Well part of me is thinking that because of the obstruc-- potential obstruction issue, but also I continued to believe that there was force to the F.B.I. general counsel's argument that we're going to have to look at the president. I-- even if you-- even if you took the-- the f-- my conversation with him about Flynn as a potential obstruction, you put it off to the side and said, "Well that's different than the Russia investigation," even on the Russia investigation there was continuing s-- and stronger force to the argument that you're inevitably going to look at his conduct, 'cause he's the head of the campaign.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And for at least a period of time they're trying to build a tower in Moscow.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: April 11th. Final phone call.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. This was a follow-up where he's-- I think it's the only phone call or contact that I had with him that involved no preamble talking about how awesome I am and how great it is-- or he just began by expressing his frustration-- no. His voice was frustrated, his-- he began by asking, "So what did you do with my request to get out that I'm not under investigation, to lift the cloud?"

And I explained to him that I had referred it to the acting deputy attorney general and I hadn't heard back. And that-- that was frustrating to him. And then I explained to him how it should work. He should have the White House counsel contact the Justice Department if he wants to find out-- he has a request to make. And that was the last time I spoke to him.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But isn't that where he said, "We had that thing"?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. He said, "'Cause I've been very good to you. I've been loyal to you," words like that. "We had that thing. You know?" And then he pulled up short, because the-- there was no pledge of loyalty.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: In his mind when he says, "We had that thing," does he think he made you F.B.I. director, kept you F.B.I. director, that's why you owe him?

JAMES COMEY: I-- I-- I could be wrong about this, but I'll tell you what my reaction was, he's reaching for the-- the goal of that loyalty dinner, that he's remembering that he had a dinner with me and he's starting to say, "I've been very loyal to you and you promised to be loyal to me."

And then he pulls up short because if he's replaying the dinner in his head, he remembers the awkward stare and then he remembers that weird formulation about always be honest and then honest loyalty. And again, I could be wrong about that, but my gut told me that's what he's reaching for and he's pulling up short because, "We both know I never promised to be loyal to you, in the way you understand it."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And then on Friday, May 9th, your tenure as F.B.I. director-- excuse me-- then on May 9th your tenure as F.B.I. director ends.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. When I'm in Los Angeles at the-- F.B.I. field office in Los Angeles, about to go to a diversity recruiting event.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And what happened?

JAMES COMEY: I was doing what I did many, many times visiting F.B.I. offices, I was walking around thanking everybody personally. And there was a group of employees who didn't have desks that I could visit, they were the custodial employees and then the communications room employee. And so they were all s-- in a group in a big, central room and I was standing talking to them.

And the room had televisions on the wall at the very back. And I was in the middle of thanking them for being part of the F.B.I. and its mission and explaining everybody owns the mission, they are no support employees. And I saw, "Comey resigns," on the back screens. And one of the many great--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Resigns?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, it said, "Resigns." And one of the many great things about the F.B.I. is we have some hilarious pranksters in that organization, and so I thought it was a scam by someone on my staff. So I turn to the-- them and I said, "Someone put a lotta work into that." And then I continued talking.

And then the-- that changed on the screens, which showed the different networks, changed to, "Comey fired." And the-- now I'm staring it and the-- the audience could see my face change, so they start turning around looking at the back. And I said, "Look, I don't know whether that's true or not. I'm going to go find out."

"But what I want to say to you won't change whether or not-- that's true." And then I finished talking about the mission of the F.B.I., how everybody has to be part of it. And I thanked them for their work, I shook all their hands, then I went into a room to find out have I been fired, because I did not expect to be fired.

Comey opens up about the shocking way he found out he was fired by Trump
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And who told you?

JAMES COMEY: Eventually my assistant, Althea James-- there was an actual person down on Pennsylvania Avenue knocking on the front door of the F.B.I. with a letter from the president. And she somehow got the F.B.I. police to go down and get it, scanned it, e-mailed it to me. And this took probably a half hour or so. Said, "Yeah, I've been fired. "President of the United States, there's a letter from him saying I'm fired effective immediately."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you're looking at that letter, what's your first thought?

JAMES COMEY: That's crazy. How could that be? But they also, I think, s-- attached to it a letter from the attorney general and a letter from the-- the deputy attorney general, purporting to lay out the reasons I was fired. And so I think it at-- I think I saw those actually the same time, and my reaction was, "That makes no sense at all."

And-- and then I took a call from Patrice who called saying the kids and she had seen it, "What's going on?" I said, "I don't know. We're trying to find out." My friend Pat Fitzgerald called from Chicago, I said the same thing. And then John Kelly, who was then the secretary of Homeland Security, called me.

In an exclusive interview with ABC News George Stephanopoulos, Comey told Kelly We need you to stay and serve for the country. Play
Comey says John Kelly intended to resign following his firing
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Now White House chief of staff.

JAMES COMEY: Now White House chief of staff.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did he say?

JAMES COMEY: He was very upset. He was very emotional and said he had seen the news and that he intended to resign because he wouldn't work for people who would treat someone like me in such a dishonorable way and that he was going to quit.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did you tell him?

JAMES COMEY: Please don't do that. Please don't do that, John. And I knew him well and still-- knew-- thought highly of him then, still think highly of him, and I said, "Please don't do that. This president needs people of character and principle around him, especially this president. Please don't do that." And I said, "We need you to stay and serve for the country."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If he called you today saying he intended to quit, what would you tell him?

JAMES COMEY: I understand. I-- I think you've-- you've sacrificed as much as you really can of yourself for the country. And-- no one would begrudge you leaving. You've done your absolute best. It's-- it's come at a cost to you, but-- that no one can blame you.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: I want to get back to the story -- but one more question. I think it's to an important point that-- when you're talking about being an ethical leader, at what point do people serve in order to protect the institution, to protect the country, and at what point does it cross over into enabling bad behavior?

JAMES COMEY: That is the question that people have to ask themselves. And-- and there's no easy way to define it in the abstract, that you-- the challenge of this president is that he will stain everyone around him. And the question is, how much stain is too much stain and how much stain eventually makes you unable to accomplish your goal of protecting the country and serving the country? So I don't know. And it-- it-- it would be hard for anybody to answer that. But everyone's gotta answer that individually.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Could you imagine if you hadn't been fired on May 9th-- if you hadn't been fired on May 9th, would you still be working for President Trump?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. I-- I would-- yes, I would. I-- as I told President Obama, I was dreading it and I-- I would be im-- an unhappy F.B.I. director, but in a way proud of the organization and in my role in trying to protect it. And the current F.B.I. director is a friend of mine, is an honorable person.

I'm so glad that he's serving, 'cause I know he cares about the institutional values the way I do. It's hard, you gotta constantly worry about efforts to compromise you and compromise your institution. But in the end, to answer your question, that's-- that is question and that's one that everybody has to answer individually.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You say you were surprised as you read the letter. Weren't you angry?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I don't remember being angry. I remember just thinking, "This is a lie." The stuff about, you know, being fired because of the Hillary Clinton e-mail investigation, that makes no sense at all. And then, of course, I quickly saw on the news that, you know, the White House saying that the F.B.I. was in tatters and the workforce-- it was relieved that I was fired. More and more lies. And so I was worried about the organization, worried about the people-- who I'm supposed to meet with right after that and confused. I don't remember being angry in that moment.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Also had to find a way to get home.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. It-- 'cause I'm no longer F.B.I. director, so how do I get home? I-- I actually gave thought to renting a convertible and driving almost 3,000 miles, something I've never done. I've had friends drive across country, but I'm not single or crazy so I didn't do it. And I left it to the-- who-- my deputy, who immediately had become the acting director of the F.B.I., to figure that out.

And the-- the head of my security detail, who's an amazing person, said, "Sir, we're going to figure this out. But if I have to put you in handcuffs, we're taking you back on the F.B.I. plane." And I said, "Well look, I want to do whatever is appropriate under the law and the regulations, so you all figure that out." And they figured out that they had an obligation to protect me and so they would bring me back on the plane.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So you're in that private jet basically alone.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What did you do?

JAMES COMEY: I broke F.B.I. rules. I was no longer an employee so I wasn't breaking the rules. So I took a bottle of red wine out of my suitcase that I was bringing back from California, a California pinot noir, and I drank red wine from a paper coffee cup and just looked out at the lights of the country I love so much as we flew home.

And then I-- as-- we got close to the airport in Washington, I asked the pilots could I sit up with them, 'cause I'd never done it. Been all over the world with these pilots and sat in the passenger's seat. Hundreds of flights, I'd never sat up there and watched them do their work. So they put the headphones on me and I sat on a jump seat between the two pilots and watched them land along the Potomac. And-- and then we shook hands with tears in our eyes and then I left and get driven home.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: That's it. The pinnacle of your professional career, it's over--

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Yeah. Over in a flash. Yeah. Makes no sense at all. But--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Did you-- realize then, or could you realize then, the consequences of you being fired?

JAMES COMEY: No. I was a bit numb at the time. And I thought, "It's crazy to fire me." I'm leading the investigation of Russian influence and particularly whether the-- anyone in the Trump orbit had coordinated and conspired with the Russians. That makes no sense at all. And the reasons they've given make no sense at all, are clearly a pretense.

But I was numb enough that I just thought, "Well that's the president's legal right to fire me and so I gotta figure out what I'm going to do with the rest of my life." And so I was trying to put it out of my mind and just sleep and exercise and hang out with my wife and kids. And it wasn't until the president tweeted at me that Friday morning after I was fired that, "James Comey better hope there aren't tapes of our conversations," that I sorta snapped back to the present.

In fact, it wasn't even then. I snapped back three days later in the middle of the night. I woke up in the middle of the night and the thought hit me like a lightning bolt, like, "Wait a minute. If there are tapes, he will be heard on that tape in the Oval Office asking me to let it go. There is corroboration or could be corroboration for the thing we thought we'll never be able to corroborate."

Comey tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos after he was fired, he realized if there were possible tapes it could prove obstruction of justice. Play

Comey on Trump tweeting about possible 'tapes'

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Of a possible crime.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. Of possible obstruction of justice. Somebody's gotta go get those tapes. I trust the F.B.I., right, 'cause they'll see what I see. But I don't trust the leadership of the Department of Justice to do it. And so--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not?

JAMES COMEY: Well the attorney general was recused and the deputy attorney general, in my view, had acted dishonorably by putting out this pretext about why I was fired. So I thought, "Well he's 'amica nostra.' Right? He's part of the family now. I can't trust him." And so what can I do? I can do something now.

I'm a private citizen and I have in my safe downstairs an unclassified memo about that conversation. And I'm a private citizen, I can tell people about conversations with the president that are unclassified. And so I'm going to do it. And so I asked a friend of mine to get it out to a reporter. And my goal was to prompt the Department of Justice to appoint a special prosecutor, go get the tapes. That's all I was thinking about was the tapes. Go get the tapes. Go get the tapes--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You-- you documented every encounter you had with President Trump going back to the time he was president-elect from the Trump Tower meeting.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. I think there's a written record of-- we-- and I've left it out, we-- he and I had one conversation on the phone, it was about a classified topic that was totally appropriate and-- and so I don't know whether I did a memo on that. But nearly every encounter I documented, either with a memo-- and some of them were classified-- memos and so I obviously created them at the F.B.I. and left them at the F.B.I.

But for the unclassified encounters, I wrote them up on my personal computer, printed them on my printer, with my paper, and kept a copy here. But because I also want to protect the bureau, I left a copy at the F.B.I. But thank goodness I kept a copy here, because I was banned from the property.

One of the orders that was issued is I was never to be allowed back on F.B.I. property, like I had killed somebody. So my staff had to box my stuff up and send it home. But I had the memo in my safe, my unclassified memo. And I thought, "If I get that out, that'll put tremendous pressure on the Department of Justice to have somebody go get the tapes before President Trump could destroy them--"

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And those tapes, in your mind, would be evidence of a possible crime.

JAMES COMEY: Yes. And I would be heard on those tapes in that conversation with the president, and he would be heard saying, "I hope you can let it go." And I would be heard saying, "I agree he's a good guy."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: President's tweeted innumerable times calling you a leaker-- because of that. First of all, what's your response to President Trump?

JAMES COMEY: Look, it's true, I mean, I'm the one who testified about it, that's how people know about it, that I gave that unclassified-- this is a whole nother

conversation about whether you can leak unclassified information, I don't want to get involved in that. I gave that unclassified memo to my mind, who was also acting as my lawyer, but this wasn't a lawyer task, and asked him to give it to a reporter. That is entirely appropriate.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why not do it yourself? Why not do it openly, transparently?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. For one very practical reason. At the end of my driveway was a horde of media and my thought was, "If I do it myself, it'll be like feeding seagulls at the beach." That if I give it to one reporter then what's my answer to all the others about why I won't answer their questions? How do I fence it off--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But-- but how do you-- how do you weight that inconvenience against the ethics of being more open?

JAMES COMEY: I-- well I-- I guess that's fair criticism, but my reaction was, "I'm going to get the information out." I know the information is true and if I'm ever asked about it, of course I'll tell the truth about it. Which is-- the first time I was asked about it I did.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: President also-- several different tweets calls you a liar.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And?

JAMES COMEY: What am I going to do? Yeah. People have to make their own judgments about other people. I would ask people-- when I-- whenever we would evaluate a witness you'd always say, "So what's their body of work? So what are they like? What's their pattern and practice? Is their story internally consistent? Did they document it?" All of those questions. But I'm not going to make that argument for myself.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: The day after you were fired-- president is meeting in the Oval Office with the Russian foreign minister. Calls you a nut job. Says the pressure's been relieved now, the pressure on him has been relieved. What did you think when you saw that?

JAMES COMEY: Wow, was my reaction. First of all, what are the Russians doing in the Oval Office? One, as a counter intelligence person I'm thinking, "That's crazy--" without any Americans being present, one. And, two, it-- the pretense is melting away, the bit about, "You were fired because of how you handled the e-mail investigation," is melting away. You were fired because of the Russia investigation. That's the substance of what I heard those words as.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And then that Lester Holt interview.

JAMES COMEY: Right. Same thing. The pretense has now melted.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: So if there is evidence of a crime, you want it out there, you want there to be an investigation, you wanted a special counsel.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I did.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Why exactly?

JAMES COMEY: Because I wanted someone without political conflict, someone who is not "amica nostra," to find the facts. And I don't know what they'll find. I don't know whether Bob Mueller s-- and his people will conclude that President Trump committed a crime or not. I don't really care, so long as it's done in the right way, confidently, honestly and independently.

And I know the F.B.I. would be that way, and now I know the prosecutors will be that way. And whatever they find, the American people can rely on because they will find the truth. Again, I don't sit here saying, "I hope the trust is that," or, "I hope the truth is this." I just want them to find the truth. And I'm confident that they will, unless he's interfered with in some way.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You've been interviewed by Robert Mueller?

JAMES COMEY: I'm not going to talk about my contact with the special counsel.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You're free to do to that. Correct?

JAMES COMEY: Yes, but I also want to make sure that I-- don't-- I don't do anything that might get in the way of their ability to be effective.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think there's any chance that-- that writing this book will get in the way?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I hope not. I mean, because I've tried to be consistent. What you worry about with interviews or with-- with-- with a witness writing a book is, does their story change? And again, that's the virtue of the memos, is that I've tried to be true to the memos and not create inconsistent statements.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And you also had to testify to Congress about all that-- a few weeks later. That was a dramatic moment-- for the country, it appeared to be a powerful, personal moment for you. What were you trying to do there?

JAMES COMEY: I was trying to speak at the beginning of that to the people of the F.B.I., because one of the things that happened with me being banned by the president from the property is I never got to say, "Goodbye," to those people. And when I said the stuff was lies about the F.B.I. being in tatters and being glad to get rid of me, I meant it.

I was very, very close to that workforce and they were very close to me. And I know this 'cause of the boxes and boxes of letters and cards they've sent me. But I never got a chance to say, "Thank you," and to frame it and say, "keep up with your mission," those kinds of things. And so I thought, "This is the chance."

And I wrote the substantive information that the Senate committee wanted in advance so that I could talk in my opening to the people of the F.B.I. And I wanted to do it from heart, and so I didn't use any notes. A s-- decision I was regretting standing there with butterflies in my stomach before walking out. And it was emotional for me because I love that organization, I love the mission, I love those people.

And-- and so saying, "Goodbye," to them was an emotional thing for me. And I almost didn't get through it. I started to choke up talking about them. But I knew it would mean a lot to them, and I knew it would offer me a measure of closure. And it just really wasn't what the Senate committee wanted to hear, but I thought, "I have an opportunity now," and so I took it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: It is so clear how much you love the F.B.I. Are you convince you didn't hurt it?

JAMES COMEY: No. I'm convinced-- well I guess it's easy to convince yourself, but I'm convinced that it was hurt as little as possible by virtue of what I did and that it would have been hurt more in other ways. But no, I-- I think making the decisions I had to make hurt the organization.

The F.B.I.-- you know, and the presidency of Donald Trump hurts the organization. The organization's not politicized, that stuff is all nonsense. It's an apolitical organization, but it's subject now to extraordinary attack. And I trace that all the way back to the beginning of the e-mail investigation.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And can it survive the attacks?

JAMES COMEY: Yes, it can survive the attacks. It'll take a while to recover, and damage will be done to the country, because the essence of the F.B.I. is a special agent knocking on a door and talking to a crime victim and convincing them to come forward or standing up in a courtroom and telling a jury, "I found this in the left-hand drawer of this fraudster's desk," and being believed at the door and in the courtroom.

And the constant attacks, constant attacks, risks undermining that. And that's why-- my concern about the attacks on the F.B.I. is not a political thing, we all need that

organization as a country. Everyone should want the F.B.I. to be that other in American life. And right now it's the Republicans who are attacking it.

Democrats are doing a whole lot of attacking last year because the teams are on different sides. We have to recognize, we want an organization that is not on anyone's side. That's in the national interest. And I hope people can rise above, come back to the title of the book, have a higher loyalty above your tribe to the things that matter for the country.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Before we broke, you mentioned that they didn't trust the Justice Department. What do you make of the attorney general?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know what to make of him. I mean, I only worked with him very briefly before I was fired. My sense of him, maybe it's unfair to him, was that he was over matched for the job. And-- that the job was f-- much, much bigger than he was. And that he was going to struggle in it. That's my sense.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And you also said that the deputy attorney general, who's now running the Russia investigation, you said what he put out in support of your firing was just a pretext, and the pretense then fell away. So can the American people have confidence in the man who's supervising the Russia investigation?

JAMES COMEY: Yes, in this sense. First of all, the American people can have complete confidence in Robert Mueller. As I said-- earlier, he and I are not close friends, but I've known him and watched his work--

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You've had dinner, played golf?

JAMES COMEY: Yeah. I think we played golf once in our 25 years. And-- sorry, and-- and I've had dinner with him maybe once or twice. So I know him and I can s-- and I-- we're friendly. But I know his work most of all. And I've watched it closely. He's not on anybody's side. He does not care about anything except the truth. And so they can have great confidence if Bob Mueller is let-- left in place to do his job, he will find the truth.

And again, I don't know what that will be. He may conclude that there is nothing that touches President Trump or any of his senior people. And that's fine, so long as he's able to find that truth. And so that's the most important thing. And I also think the deputy attorney general-- I don't know this, but has likely learned a painful lesson from the way he handled my firing. And so it gives him all the more reason to act honorably in overseeing Director Mueller.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What will-- what will it mean if President Trump is tries to fire Robert Mueller?

JAMES COMEY: It would, I hope, set off alarm bells that this is his most serious attack yet on the rule of law. And it would be something that our entire country-- again, Democrats and Republicans, that is higher than all the normal fights about policy. That is about the values of this country and the rule of law. And it would be to the everlasting shame of partisans if they were unable to see that higher level and to protect it.

Comey told ABC News George Stephanopoulos in an exclusive interview that thinks the president would not fire special counsel Robert Mueller. Play
Comey thinks firing Mueller would be an 'attack on the rule of law'
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think the deputy attorney general'll carry out that order?

JAMES COMEY: No. I don't. I think, given his experience with me, that-- that he has an opportunity in overseeing Bob Mueller to restore some of his professional reputation. And I'm m-- highly confident that he would refuse to abide that order.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And if Robert Mueller decides to bring a case, would you be a witness for the prosecution?

JAMES COMEY: Sure, if he asked me to be. I'm a fact witness. That relates to-- I'm sure, to an obstruction investigation. Where that's going to go, I don't know. But potentially, I'd be-- I'd be a witness.

Comey Tells ABC News George Stephanopoulos that if Mueller did decide to bring a case, he would agree to be a witness. Play

Would Comey be a witness for Robert Mueller?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Are there things you don't know that you haven't said that could damage President Trump?

JAMES COMEY: Things that I don't know that I haven't said?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Thing-- I'm sorry. Are there-- are there things that you know but haven't said that could damage President Trump?

JAMES COMEY: That's a good question. I don't think so. I don't think I'm holding back on you. I'm not talking about the details of investigations. But I left a long time ago. And there's been a lotta work done since the day I was fired. And so I don't-- I have no idea what Bob Mueller has.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But you read the papers. You follow the investigation. Do you think people tied to President Trump colluded with the Russians?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know is the honest answer. That-- that was th-- what we were trying to investigate at the time. Was anyone aiding the Russians, conspiring

with the Russians? There's no doubt there was smoke around that. Whether there's fire, I-- I didn't stay long enough to know.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You write that President Trump is unethical, untethered to the truth. Is Donald Trump unfit to be president?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. But not in the way m-- I often hear people talk about it. I don't buy this stuff about him being mentally incompetent or early stages of dementia. He strikes me as a person of above average intelligence who's tracking conversations and knows what's going on. I don't think he's medically unfit to be president. I think he's morally unfit to be president.

I think hes morally unfit to be president, said the former FBI director told ABC News George Stephanopoulos in an exclusive interview.

Play
Comey thinks Donald Trump is unfit to be president

A person who sees moral equivalence in Charlottesville, who talks about and treats women like they're pieces of meat, who lies constantly about matters big and small and insists the American people believe it, that person's not fit to be president of the United States, on moral grounds. And that's not a policy statement. Again, I don't care what your views are on guns or immigration or taxes.

There's something more important than that that should unite all of us, and that is our president must embody respect and adhere to the values that are at the core of this country. The most important being truth. This president is not able to do that. He is morally unfit to be president.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You're the former director of the F.B.I. You've served in senior positions in the Department of Justice for Republican and Democratic presidents. And you think Donald Trump is unfit-- s-- the bottom line standard, unfit to be president?

JAMES COMEY: I do. I do. And I-- I-- I hope one of the things that comes outta the Trump administration his first term is a recognition that, as much as we fight about those policy issues in this country, what's at the core of this nation, we are just a collection of ideas. And at the core of those ideas is that there is a thing called truth.

There is the rule of law. There is integrity. Those things matter before any fights about policies. And people who tell themselves, "Well, yes, Donald Trump is unethical but I'm getting the right Supreme Court justice or the right regulatory rollback," are kidding themselves because if we lose that tether to the truth, if that stops being the norm at the heart of our public life, what are we?

Where are we as a country? So I worry sometimes people think I'm talking about politics. Not in the way we normally talk about in this country. But I hope in the most important way. Values matter. This president does not reflect the values of this country.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: If you are right, what is the remedy? Should Donald Trump be impeached?

JAMES COMEY: Impeachment is-- is a question of law and fact and politics. And so that'll be determined by people gather--

Former FBI director James Comey gave ABC News chief anchor George Stephanopoulos a strange answer. Play

Comey weighs in on if he thinks Trump will be impeached

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You're a citizen. You have a judgment.

JAMES COMEY: Yeah, I'll tell you, I'll give you a strange answer. I hope not because I think impeaching and removing Donald Trump from office would let the American people off the hook and have something happen indirectly that I believe they're duty bound to do directly. People in this country need to stand up and go to the voting booth and vote their values.

We'll fight about guns. We'll fight about taxes. We'll fight about all those other things down the road. But you cannot have, as president of the United States, someone who does not reflect the values that I believe Republicans treasure and Democrats treasure and Independents treasure. That is the core of this country. That's our foundation. And so impeachment, in a way, would short circuit that.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: But-- but if Robert Mueller finds evidence of obstruction of justice, what is the remedy?

JAMES COMEY: Well, sure. Tha-- I-- I didn't mean to say that I want them to stop doing their investigation or whatever flows from that. But in a way, as a citizen, I think we owe it to each other to get off the couch and think about what unites us. I think about the people who supported Trump, and continue to support Trump.

A lotta them come from families with a proud history of military service. And that's a wonderful thing. What did their fathers and grandfathers fight and die for? Not for immigration policy. Not for a tax policy. Not for Supreme Court justice. They fought and died for a set of ideas. The rule of law. Freedom of speech. Freedom of religion. The truth.

That's what they fought and died for. And at some point, we have to focus on that and make sure that whoever's leading us embodies those and we judge that leader by their tether to those values. Then we'll go back to fighting like cats and dogs about all the things we normally fight about.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: I've talked to a lotta people who've watched you for a long time-- worked with you, admire you. And some of them come out with-- with this storyline on James Comey. "Here was a guy who loved being F.B.I. director. He

wanted to keep that job more than anything else in the world. That's why he didn't speak up on several different occasions when he should've spoken up-- about President Trump. And that's why he's speaking out now. He got fired. He's angry."

JAMES COMEY: I get that. I mean, I get why people would think that. That's just not right though. I mean, if all I cared about was getting the job and going along, getting along, it's hard to explain some of the things I did during 2016. My goal with President Trump was to try and find a way to work with a new administration and protect the integrity of the F.B.I. That was my goal. I'm sure I did it imperfectly. You've pointed out w-- I think reasonable ways in which I could've done it better or differently. That was my goal.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: At any point did you think, "I should resign"?

JAMES COMEY: No. In fact, at any point I thought, "I have to stay to protect this institution."

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Are you braced for a s-- tweet storm from President Trump?

JAMES COMEY: Sure. I don't follow him on Twitter, but I'm sure it's going to come. And that's okay. I mean, that's okay.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You close the book with a very vivid image describing the Trump presidency. What is that?

JAMES COMEY: I think of it as a forest fire. That forest fires do tremendous damage. His presidency is doing, and will do, tremendous damage to our norms and our values, especially the truth. And so that's bad. And terrible things happen in forest fires.

But I'm an optimistic person. And so I choose to see the opportunity in a forest fire 'cause what forest fires do is allow things to grow that never could've grown. Were crowded out, didn't have the light or the water to grow. And so I see already things growing and flourishing that didn't before this fire.

I see the kids marching in the streets, including my own kids, about guns. I see all kinds of civil society getting engaged. I see parents talking to their kids about truth telling and prejudice and bias and respect. That was not happening three or four years ago. And so there's a lot of good growing.

And I also see the Courts and Congress getting involved in ways they hadn't before. So I choose to see opportunity. I think this forest fire will leave us better and stronger, as did the last forest fire. Watergate was a forest fire. It re-balanced power among the branches of government. I think we're going to see that. And I think we're going to be better for it.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Couple years back, you gave a speech I think to the F.B.I. personnel saying, "If we fall in love with our own virtue, we can go sideways." At any point over the last two years, did you fall prey to that? Did you fall in love with your own virtue?

JAMES COMEY: I don't think so. But I worried about it constantly. And-- and the guardrail for that, because that's a big worry I have about myself, was to surround myself with people who will hit that. Hit at the certainty. Hit at the pride to make sure I've thought about things well.

I hope people read the book for a number of reasons. It's about leadership and shows the importance of surrounding yourself with people who will poke at you, who will insist that you see the truth about other stuff. But most of all, about yourself 'cause I have a lotta strengths, I have a lotta weaknesses. And I want to make sure the people around me know that and help me guardrail against those weaknesses.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: How does this end?

JAMES COMEY: How does-- you mean m-- how does my involvement end?

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Let's say two th-- f-- first of all, for the country, how does this end?

JAMES COMEY: I think most likely, in a very important presidential election-- the next presidential election, where I do hope people of all political stripes will realize what unites us is actually more important than what divides us. And that we have to choose a leader-- I don't care what party a leader's from. We have to choose a leader who will embody the s-- values-- the values of this country. That's how I hope it ends.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And for James Comey?

JAMES COMEY: I'm going to teach. I'm going to travel around and speak about leadership. I want to be useful, especially to young people. It's really fun to engage with young people. Talk about people who will poke and prod you. But I want to offer them a vision of here's what it should look like.

I've never quite gotten there, but here's what it should look like. Don't withdraw. Get into the public square. Be part of the life of this country 'cause we need you so badly. And when you do it, think about what matters most of all. And that is the values involved in your institutions.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Thanks very much.

JAMES COMEY: Thanks, George.

President Donald Trump sat down for an interview Thursday morning with four reporters from The Wall Street Journal: Rebecca Ballhaus, Michael C. Bender, Peter Nicholas and Louise Radnofsky. White House attendees included Communications Director Hope Hicks, Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders and Director of the National Economic Council Gary Cohn.

Here is the expedited transcript of that interview. Portions of the interview were off the record, and have been excluded from this transcript.

The Wall Street Journal: Yes, actually that seems as good a place as any to start, maybe, in Davos...

President Donald Trump: Sure.

WSJ:...and if you could talk a little bit about your decision to go and the message you're trying to send there and if you have thoughts about what you're going to say.

Mr. Trump: Well, I think more than anything else it's the great success that we've had in the last year. And you know if you remember the first quarter was a very low GDP, when Obama's last quarter. It was the slowest growing recovery, a very minor recovery, but it's the worst recovery they've had since the Great Depression. And our country was headed in the wrong direction.

WSJ Interview: Trump Signals Openness to North Korea Diplomacy

The Wall Street Journal interviewed President Trump in the Oval Office on Thursday. Mr. Trump spoke about his relationship with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and signaled openness to diplomacy with North Korea. WSJ's Gerald F. Seib gives us more insight from the interview. Photo: Getty

We were going down, we were going down a long way. I believe if the opposing party got in, I believe the stock market would have fallen 50 percent instead of gone up to the number it's gone up. The regulations were choking people, choking companies like never before. It was out of control and they were only going to get worse.

The cutting of regulation and all of the many things that we've done, including being a cheerleader for the country—and perhaps that's part of the reason I'm going to Davos also—but being a cheerleader for the country. Yesterday it was announced that Toyota is coming in with a very big plant in Alabama. It's going to cost—they're going to spend billions of dollars, four thousand jobs, create 300,000 cars a year within the country, which is what I want.

Prime Minister Abe told me about it, I pressed him very hard. I said, 'We got to get your companies building here. We don't want a building in Japan; we want to build them here. We have a lot of plants opening, car plants opening; we have a lot of things happening that would've never happened under the Democrats.'

And I just think I want to tell the story of what's happening in the United States. A lot of tremendous things are happening in the United States, including the fact that you can now live without being strangled by regulation. You people actually wrote one of the best stories that I've ever seen on regulation; you said more than any president in history.

That was the full pager, that wasn't...

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump:...I mean I actually read it because I've never seen a full page—it's actually a full page article.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: But, it was a full pager and essentially said there's never been a president that's been anywhere close on regulation. And you know, just so we understand. We need regulation, but we don't need 19 different roadblocks getting to the same place and that's what we had. And we have a long way to go, we're cutting actually quite a bit of additional regulation. We're looking at Dodd-Frank very strongly and I think we'll have something on that.

I think it's going to be bipartisan and we're looking at other things and the bottom line is that the spirit in the country—you saw small business yesterday came out with the most enthusiastic they've ever been in the history of the report, which is a very old report.

Business, generally, manufacturing the same thing, but we have companies pouring back into this country and you saw that yesterday with Toyota.

WSJ: Did you see the other economy news yesterday? The markets did dip a little bit after some news suggesting that you were going to maybe pull out of Nafta. I wonder where you're at on Nafta and if you're concerned about the impact pulling out and renegotiating could have on the market.

Mr. Trump: I'm not sure that markets would dip; I think that markets would—I can tell you I'm not sure about world markets, but I can tell you I think the American market would go up if I terminated Nafta and renegotiated a new deal.

We are—when I campaigned I said we'll either renegotiate Nafta or I'll terminate it.

And nothing's changed, I have fulfilled many of my campaign promises. One of the promises that you know is being very seriously negotiated right now is the wall and the wall will happen. And if you look—point, after point, after point—now we've had some turns. You always have to have flexibility. As an example, we've been much

tougher on China, but not nearly as tough as I would be, but they are helping us a lot with North Korea.

And you see in North Korea what's happening with North Korea all of a sudden. China's been helping us a lot, so you can veer a little bit differently, but for the most part everything I've said I've done.

WSJ: And a question on China for you, just to follow up on Nafta, withdrawal is still on the table for you?

Mr. Trump: If we don't make the right deal, I will terminate Nafta. OK?

Now, do I want to? No, I'd rather leave it, but I feel that if that if—you know, the United States has been treated very, very badly. That has been a terrible agreement for us, and if we don't make a good deal for our country—we lose \$71 billion in trade deficits with Mexico. We lose \$17 billion with Canada. If we don't make a fair deal for the United States and the United States taxpayer, then I will terminate it.

WSJ: Do you have a timetable on that? I know there's another round of talks coming up here this month.

Mr. Trump: No, but, you know, I'm leaving it a little flexible because they have an election coming up. So I understand a lot of things are hard to negotiate prior to an election. They have an election coming up fairly shortly, and I understand that that makes it a little bit difficult for them, and I'm not looking to make the other side—so we'll either make a deal or—there's no rush, but I will say that if we don't make a fair deal for this country, a Trump deal, then we're not going to have—then we're going to have a—I will terminate.

With that being said, I would rather be able to negotiate. We've made a lot of headway. We're moving along nicely. Bob Lighthizer and others are working very hard, and we'll see what happens.

But tremendous numbers of, you talk about auto plants like yesterday, but how about all the plants that have been taken out of this country and moved to Mexico. Like taking candy from a baby. No, I won't let that happen.

WSJ: And you mentioned the link between China and North Korea. We talked about that a little bit the last time we were in here.

Mr. Trump: Right.

WSJ: Is that—does that link still exist for you? Do you feel like China's been helpful enough...

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: Not helpful enough, but they've been very helpful. Let's put it this way, they've done more for me than they ever have for any American president. They still haven't done enough. But they've done more for me than they have, by far, for any—I have a very good relationship with President Xi. I like him. He likes me. We have a great chemistry together. He's—China has done far more for us than they ever have for any American president. With that being said, it's not enough. They have to do more.

WSJ: So when it comes to some of the decisions you have this month on aluminum, steel, the 301 case, does that...

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: For instance, at the very beginning, you know Obama felt—President Obama felt it was his biggest problem is North Korea. He said that openly. He said that to me, but he said that openly. It is a big problem, and they should not have left me with that problem. That should have been a problem that was solved by Obama, or Bush, or Clinton or anybody, because the longer it went, the worse, the more difficult the problem got. This should not have been a problem left on my desk, but it is, and I get things solved. And one way or the other, that problem is going to be solved.

China has been helping us, and I appreciate the help, but they can do much more.

WSJ: Are you worried, Mr. President, that sending—delaying military exercises on the peninsula for the Olympics sends the wrong message to the North?

Mr. Trump: Say it again?

WSJ: Are you concerned that delaying military exercises on the Korean Peninsula for the Olympics sends the wrong message to the North Koreans, that you're in some way bending to them?

Mr. Trump: You're the first one that's asked that question. No, I don't think anybody thinks that I'm bending. I think that people that, if anything, I'm being too tough.

No, I think it's inappropriate to have the Olympics, have millions of people going to the Olympics hopefully, have North Korea going to the Olympics, and we're having exercises on the beach. No, I think that it doesn't—I think it sends a good message to North Korea, not a bad message. I think it would be totally inappropriate to do that during the Olympics.

WSJ: You think North Korea is trying to drive a wedge between the two countries, between you and President Moon?

Mr. Trump: I'll let you know in—within the next 12 months, OK, Mike?

WSJ: Sure.

Mr. Trump: I will let you know. But if I were them I would try. But the difference is I'm president; other people aren't. And I know more about wedges than any human being that's ever lived, but I'll let you know. But I'll tell you, you know, when you talk about driving a wedge, we also have a thing called trade. And South Korea—brilliantly makes—we have a trade deficit with South Korea of \$31 billion a year. That's a pretty strong bargaining chip to me.

With that being said, President Xi has been extremely generous with what he's said, I like him a lot. I have a great relationship with him, as you know I have a great relationship with Prime Minister Abe of Japan and I probably have a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un of North Korea.

I have relationships with people, I think you people are surprised.

WSJ: Just to be clear, you haven't spoken to the North Korean leader, I mean when you say a relationship with Korea—

Mr. Trump: I don't want to comment on it—I don't want to comment, I'm not saying I have or I haven't. But I just don't—

WSJ: Some people would see your tweets, which are sometimes combative towards Kim Jong Un...

Mr. Trump: Sure, you see that a lot with me and then all of a sudden somebody's my best friend. I could give you 20 examples. You give me 30. I'm a very flexible person.

WSJ: Speaking of being flexible it sounds as if there's an immigration deal that has been struck amongst senators on the hill that's been sent to the White House for approval?

Mr. Trump: Getting close.

WSJ: Have you—have you seen anything from the Senate yet?

Mr. Trump: No but it's getting close. They—want, I feel, you know, I have great feeling for DACA. I think that we should be able to do something with DACA. I think it's foolish if we don't, they've been here a long time, they're no longer children, you know. People talk of them as children, I mean some are 41 years old and older. But some are in their teens, and late teens, but nevertheless I think we should do something with DACA and I think we should do something to help people.

It wasn't their fault, their parents came in, it wasn't their fault. So we're in the process of trying to work something out. I hope we can do it. I don't think it has to take that

long. The lottery system is a disaster, we have to get rid of the lottery system. The—as you know chain is—chain migration is a horrible situation. You’ve seen the ads, you’ve seen everything, you know all about chain.

This person on the west side that killed eight people and badly, you heard me say yesterday, badly, badly wounded about 12. I mean people losing arms and legs—nobody even talks about that. But they say killed eight and that’s it. I mean you have people—ones walking around without—missing two legs. And the person was running to stay in shape and now he’s missing two legs. Think of it.

But this person, who should’ve never been allowed into this country, came in through the lottery. When they interviewed his neighborhood, they say he was horrible. You’d say good morning to him and he’d start cursing at you. They didn’t want him so they sent him through the lottery, you know, congratulations United States.

So the lottery has to end, chain migration—he brought in they say 22 people through the chain. So we have 22 of his relatives, why? And I honestly think that the Democrats are with us on that. We’ll find out. I mean who wouldn’t be? Who wouldn’t be? Unless it’s somebody that didn’t love our country, and the Democrats love our country. We have different views but the Democrats love our country.

So yeah, I think, Michael, I think we have a good chance to make a deal. We have to have a wall. We don’t have a wall, we’re not doing the deal.

WSJ: Do you have to have a completely funded wall or—would \$1.6 billion be enough?

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: Let me, let me tell you something about the wall. So I’ve always said we have to have a wall. I’ve also said Mexico’s got to pay for it—sometimes you know on occasion, I’d add who’s going to pay for it? Mexico. Well they will pay for it, OK? There are many forms of payment. I could name 10 right now. There are many forms of payment, I didn’t say how.

WSJ: Could you give us an example?

Mr. Trump: They can pay for it through, as an example, they can pay for it indirectly through Nafta. OK? You know, we make a good deal on Nafta, say I’m going to take a small percentage of that money and it’s going to go toward the wall. Guess what? Mexico’s paying. Now Mexico may not want to make the Nafta deal and which is OK, then I’ll terminate Nafta...which I think would be frankly a positive for our country. I don’t think it’s a positive for Mexico, I don’t think it’s a positive for the world. But it’s a positive for our country because I’d make a much better deal. There is no deal that I can make on Nafta that’s as good as if I terminate Nafta and make a

new deal. OK? But I feel that we have a chance of making a reasonable deal, the way it is now.

WSJ: On immigration—could you see yourself signing a bill....

Mr. Trump: The other thing...so the wall. The wall's never meant to be 2,100 miles long. We have mountains that are far better than a wall, we have violent rivers that nobody goes near, we have areas...

But, you don't need a wall where you have a natural barrier that's far greater than any wall you could build, OK? Because somebody said oh, he's going to make the wall smaller. I'm not going to make it smaller. The wall was always going to be a wall where we needed it. And there are some areas that are far greater than any wall we could build. So, maybe someday somebody could make that clear, Sarah, will you make that clear please?

I saw on television, Donald Trump is going to make the wall smaller; no, the wall's identical. The other thing about the wall is we've spent a great deal of time with the Border Patrol and with the ICE agents and they know this stuff better than anybody, they're unbelievable.

They both endorsed me, the only time they've ever endorsed a presidential candidate, OK? And they endorsed us unanimously. I had meetings with them, they need see-through. So, we need a form of fence or window. I said why you need that—makes so much sense? They said because we have to see who's on the other side.

If you have a wall this thick and it's solid concrete from ground to 32 feet high which is a high wall, much higher than people planned. You go 32 feet up and you don't know who's over here. You're here, you've got the wall and there's some other people here.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: If you don't know who's there, you've got a problem.

WSJ: Well, the other day after your meeting when you talked about wanting to see a deal from Congress. In particular, I'm thinking of the tweets from Ann Coulter. You know, a straight—I mean, they want a wall. Do you feel that you have some room to negotiate here with your own base, when it comes to the wall?

Mr. Trump: I don't have to because the wall is the same wall I've always talked about. I can understand why I have to have see-through.

WSJ: OK.

Mr. Trump: If I'm standing here, I want to be able to see 200 yards out. I want to be able to see, I don't want to have a piece of concrete that I can't see.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: Now on the wall we have cameras and we have highly sophisticated equipment, but the wall—the Border Patrol tells me the other way's more expensive. It's not less expensive. We have to have vision through the wall.

WSJ: But...

Mr. Trump: This is going to be state of the art wall; this will be state of the art. But, I can fully understand why you'd have to have vision. I'd like to be able to see three or four hundred yards instead of we're at a wall we have no idea who's on the other side. Does this make sense or am I just wasting my time.

Hope Hicks: It's what you've always talked; it's consistent with what you've always said.

Mr. Trump: No, this is the same. I hope I don't read tomorrow, Trump is going to make the wall, I always said, we need a wall.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: I never said the wall's going to be two thousand, but there are—there is a vast amount of territory where nobody comes through.

WSJ: There's this famous metaphor in politics about Nixon going to China.

Mr. Trump: Right.

WSJ: Is there a possibility that Donald Trump could sign a comprehensive immigration bill which would provide a path to legal status, citizenship for 11 million people who are here illegally?

Mr. Trump: Well, I'm not talking amnesty at all. I'm not talking amnesty at all, that's the other thing. No, I think my base is with me. My base feels that these 800 thousand young people should not be thrown out of the country, OK? My base is with me and now I you know; and I think my base actually gets bigger.

And I'm not doing it because of the base or anything else, I'm doing it from the standpoint of heart, I'm doing it from the standpoint of common sense. I'm doing it from another standpoint too. You have a lot of people of those 800, they work hard, they have jobs. We need workers in this country; we need people to come in and work because I have a lot of companies moving in.

And I'm getting a lot of questions like we want to move to Wisconsin, we wanted—like Wisconsin, I have Foxconn coming to Wisconsin; that's my deal. You know the head of Foxconn, you know he's a friend of mine. He's still only moving there because of me. And the governor has been fantastic.

The governor of Wisconsin has been fantastic in their presentations and everything else. But I'm the one who got them to look at it. Now we need people because they're going to have thousands of people working it's going to be a—you know—that's—that's the company that makes the Apple iPhone.

WSJ: Yeah.

Mr. Trump: Is that—they're going to build them here, they're going to build other things here too.

We need people so we have to be a little bit flexible. I don't want to be so—I've had another pledge that I'm going to move companies back into this country. I don't want to make it so tough that they can't come back in.

Would you say that's a correct statement, Gary, we have to have people.

Gary Cohn: Yeah.

WSJ: So when you say you have to have people, clearly there's the 800,000 'Dreamers,' but there's also the larger group of people who are currently in the country...

Mr. Trump: That's a different discussion.

WSJ: So, you said on Tuesday...

Mr. Trump: That's comprehensive—well, if we could do that, that's fine. I don't know that that's going to be possible.

There's a lot of—there's a lot of—there's a big difference—first of all, there's a big difference between DACA and Dreamers, OK?

Dreamers are different. And I want American kids to be Dreamers also, by the way. I want American kids to be Dreamers also.

But there's a big difference between DACA and Dreamers. And a lot of times when I was with certain Democrats they kept using the word dreamer. I said, "Please, use the word DACA." You know it's a totally different word.

WSJ: Sure.

Mr. Trump: OK, people think they're interchangeable, but they're not.

So—I—I think we have a very good chance of making a deal on DACA, I would like to be able to do it; I think that the people that are Trump supporters agree with me on it. I would never do it without a wall, the wall is the wall and it's the same wall that we're always talking about. It's—you know, wherever we need, we don't need it where you have mountains; you don't need it where you have rivers and—you know, vicious rivers.

So—so we have sort of natural barriers.

WSJ: Barriers, yeah.

Mr. Trump: And, obviously, we never intended (inaudible).

WSJ: Just to be really clear, because I don't want to have any misunderstanding.

Mr. Trump: Yeah, be really clear, I'd like to—because I love The Wall Street Journal. I hope that you guys are clear. OK.

WSJ: For sure.

When—on Tuesday you said that you supported the idea of signing comprehensive immigration reform...

Mr. Trump: No, no I support the idea of discussing it.

WSJ: OK.

Mr. Trump: And, maybe, it's possible to get it. You know, that's what I do, I make deals. Despite what you read with—by these people that don't know me, that were never interviewed by—to me, you know.

White House official: But first we have to (inaudible).

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: The man with the three hour interview, he spent three hours—the man who said he spent three hours in the Oval Office who I never met once in the White House. OK, you know—despite all these characters that are—that's something you can talk about, is the libel laws, because we've got to increase our libel laws so when people make misstatements, like yourselves, but when people make misstatements somebody has some, you know, recourse.

WSJ: Do you have a plan for that, Mr. President?

Mr. Trump: Yeah, I do, I would—I would say—I don't know that I'll be able to get it though—but I think that when somebody makes false statements and libelous statements, whether it's in a book or a newspaper or anything else. When they have phony sources, when the sources don't exist, yeah I think they should have a liability.

WSJ: Do you think Congress needs to make new libel laws?

Mr. Trump: I don't know if Congress has the guts to do that.

WSJ: But do you want them to?

Mr. Trump: I would like to see that. Yeah, I'd like to be able to—look, nobody gets more false press than I do. Nobody—nobody gets—nobody comes close. In history—in the history of this country nobody's gotten more false press and you guys all know it.

WSJ: Why—why do you think that is?

Mr. Trump: They dislike me, the liberal media dislikes me. I mean I watch people—I was always the best at what I did, I was the—I was, you know, I went to the—I went to the Wharton School of Finance, did well. I went out, I—I started in Brooklyn, in a Brooklyn office with my father, I became one of the most successful real-estate developers, one of the most successful business people. I created maybe the greatest brand.

I then go into, in addition to that, part-time, like five percent a week, I open up a television show. As you know, the Apprentice on many evenings was the number one show on all of television, a tremendous success. It went on for 12 years, a tremendous success. They wanted to sign me for another three years and I said, no, I can't do that.

That's one of the reasons NBC hates me so much. NBC hates me so much they wanted—they were desperate to sign me for—for three more years.

WSJ: Mr. President, you made reference to the book. Steve Bannon ...

Mr. Trump: Just—and so—so I was successful, successful, successful. I was always the best athlete, people don't know that. But I was successful at everything I ever did and then I run for president, first time—first time, not three times, not six times. I ran for president first time and lo and behold, I win. And then people say oh, is he a smart person? I'm smarter than all of them put together, but they can't admit it. They had a bad year.

WSJ: You mention the book—Steve Bannon was somebody important to your campaign, worked in the White House, was on the National Security Council for a while. Do you feel betrayed by him?

Mr. Trump: Yes, I do. I feel betrayed because you're not supposed to do that, but I have many people that work for me who were far more important than Steve, right there.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: And others, I mean I could take you around to the back and I could show you many people, If you don't—and some of them you wouldn't know their names so (inaudible). Steve was—I always liked Steve, but Steve became very ineffective because he was such a lightning rod.

And Steve, in the end I fired Steve.

WSJ: Is that relationship permanently broken between you and Steve?

Mr. Trump: You never know, you know again, the word—I don't know what the word permanent means, OK? I never know what the word permanent means. We'll see what happens, but Steve had nothing to do with my win. Well, certainly very little.

Steve's greatest asset is he was able to convince a corrupt media that he was responsible for my win. Hope, just out of curiosity, you were there from day one. What do you think Steve in a percentage had to do with my victory?

I mean he was there. Corey [Lewandowski] had more to do with it.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: David had more to do with it. Many people—I mean, there were many people—it's a little before Sarah's time. If you were here, you would have had more to do with it. No, I talked to Steve very little; I didn't know Steve well, believe it or not. They made it sound like—I mean when that guy wrote the book about Steve.

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: Don't forget, I had vanquished 17 governors, senators plus a couple of very smart people, like Ben and Carly and others. I had vanquished them easily—easily. I won every debate based on the polls. You know, they do polls—seven or eight polls. Time Magazine—Time Magazine's not a fan of mine.

Drudge, Time Magazine they have seven polls. I don't think, I may be wrong—I don't think you'll find one poll that I ever lost in any of the 14, 15 debates. Including the presidential debate, you know with her, the three. Steve Bannon, I just wish him well...

WSJ: Sir can I ask you—

Mr. Trump: ...but he had nothing to do with my—he was involved, but he had nothing to do with our victory. And he was there two months—what was it two months after? So, I beat 17 people, OK? So, Michael, you know politics, perhaps better than me.

WSJ: Not better.

Mr. Trump: You've been doing it longer, OK? That's the other thing I've only been doing this for two years, two and a half years, OK? You know, it's pretty good. When they said Jeb Bush was off his game; Trump killed him in the debate. Jeb was off his game because he hasn't been governor now. He's been out of politics for eight years. Oh, really? I've been out of politics for—I was never in politics.

So, sort of interesting, but when I won against the 17 people, you can't then say that oh, gee, somebody comes in two months after I won, and he gives me new policy, new idea. I can't change those ideas, those ideas are wedded.

WSJ: What seemed like the most egregious thing that Steve said was that was some of the things about your son and the Russian meetings.

Mr. Trump: What he said about my son is horrible. My son had a brief meeting based on the fact that he thought whatever he thought. And he—somebody said bad stuff on an opponent. I don't know of one politician in Washington—if you're a politician and somebody called up that they have information on your opponent that might be negative.

I'm not sure, but I don't think there's one politician in all of Washington that would not take that would not take that meeting, number one. Number two, after the meeting was over nothing happened. In other words, it wasn't like OK let's meet again in a month and let's plan out the—nothing happened, it was a dead meeting.

WSJ: Did you ever hear about the meeting during the campaign?

Mr. Trump: No, I never did; I never knew about it.

White House official: Excuse me, I just—we have about two or three minutes left and you've got to go to a meeting.

Mr. Trump: Oh I do?

White House official: Yes, you have an 11:15. So, I can push it about five minutes, but that's all we've got. So you're running out of time.

WSJ: I'd like to ask a couple of questions about your tweets on the Russia investigation.

Mr. Trump: Yes.

WSJ: You had tweeted yesterday that you wanted Republicans in Congress to take control of the investigations. They control Congress. Do you want them to shut down those investigations?

Mr. Trump: No, I think—I just want them to—look, all I see of these Democrats, like Adam Schiff—it's all he does, he'll have a meeting, and then he'll leave, and he'll call up the meeting, and then I'll have a meeting and then he'll leave. He left meetings where people are being interviewed, and then all of a sudden they say a story about what's going on inside the meetings.

It's probably illegal, what he's doing. But the Democrats know it's a hoax. It's an excuse for them having lost the election. They know it's a hoax. And yet, they are milking it to a fare-thee-well and I think the Republicans— although I will say that over the last month the Republicans have started to get very tough. Because they realize there's no collusion whatsoever. There's no collusion.

WSJ: Do you think they're close to ending the probe?

Mr. Trump: I hope so. Hey, look, I got elected president. I won easily, 306 or 304, depending on your definition, to 223. I won a race that should never be won by a Republican because it's so stacked in the Democrats' favor. I mean, if you figure California, New York, and Illinois, you start off with losing that—you have to run the entire East Coast and every— and the entire Midwest.

I won an election that should never be won, because the Electoral College is far harder to win than the popular vote. The popular vote, for me, would have been much easier.

WSJ: But just to be clear, you're not asking for them to shut those congressional investigations down?

Mr. Trump: No, I just want them to be tough, be strong. I also think that primary collusion, because there was no collusion on our side, the collusion was on the Democrat side with the Russians. And what went on with the FBI, where a man is tweeting to his lover that if she loses, we'll essentially go back to the—we'll go to the insurance policy, which is—if they lose, we'll go to phase 2, and we'll get this guy out of office.

I mean, this is the FBI we're talking about. I think that is—that is treason. See, that's treason right there.

WSJ: Does any of that make you less...

Mr. Trump: By the way, that's a treasonous act. What he tweeted to his lover is a treasonous act.

WSJ: Does any of that make you less likely or less inclined to testify before Mueller, or talk to Mueller's people?

Mr. Trump: Look, there has never been in the history of this country an administration that, number one, did nothing wrong, and number two, was more open with a special counsel. We have—my lawyers are very good people. We made a decision right at the beginning. And it wasn't their original idea. They figured, like, well, we'll fight this (inaudible).

After they looked at all the letters, all the facts, every email, they saw nothing. They said, "We should be open." There has never been a more—they said, "You never did anything wrong." To be honest, they probably were surprised, OK? As most lawyers would be. They said, "You never did anything wrong."

And they said, and I agree with them, "We should be upfront, give them a"—we gave them everything.

WSJ: So if asked if...

Mr. Trump: There has never been, in the history—in the history of an administration anybody that was more open than we were. You understand that?

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: We gave them everything. We didn't go to court and say, "You can't have this document, you can't have"—and what we gave them showed—I never got a phone call from Russia. I didn't have a tweet. I didn't have a—I had nothing. I didn't have an email. I didn't have a meeting. I didn't have—did I have one meeting with—about Russia? And...

WSJ: Well, Mueller's also looking at some other areas, right? Like obstruction of justice...

Mr. Trump: Well allow—let me—(inaudible). So, they make up a crime, and the crime doesn't exist. And then they say obstruction. And how could there be obstruction on firing Comey? When the man who's in charge of it wrote a letter that was far stronger than anything I would have written. He was in charge—Deputy Rosenstein. He wrote a letter that's far stronger than even what I say.

And here's another thing. A friend of mine brought this up the other day. Comey. Comey has proven to be a liar and a leaker. Proven. He tries to act like a choir boy. What he did with Hillary Clinton is outrageous. He saved her life, because all of those

charges—I call it “Comey one, two, and three,” all of those charges and Comey won, she was guilty of. She should have been taken out of the campaign and been on trial.

He didn’t do that. He saved her life. But here’s the way you look at Comey. Everybody hated Comey, and Comey—by the way, the FBI, say what you want, go back to look at the day around Hillary—the FBI was in turmoil. Everybody hated Comey. The Democrats wanted him fired. Everybody wanted him out. You look at what Schumer said about him, you look at what everybody said. As soon as I fired him they said, “oh, he’s wonderful—he’s wonderful, how could you do that.”

So there’s no—you have a no-crime that was created, you have a phony crime and then they talk about obstruction. And how can they talk about obstruction when I was the most open person, in history, in terms of—there’s never been a paper we didn’t give them, there’s never been a question we didn’t answer.

Now, I could of done it differently. I’ve been, you know, pretty successful in the courts over the years, I’ve been a very successful person, you can check—USA Today said, “he does great in the courts,” OK?

Unknown: Sorry to interrupt. We have to—you’re late for your meeting. No, I know, finish this thought and then if—I’d love to get like an infrastructure or tax question in before you guys go—I know that was sort of the premise of the meeting.

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: They don’t want to talk about that—they don’t want to talk about the biggest tax bill (inaudible).

Unknown: But, we just have about two minutes left, so— you finish, yeah.

Mr. Trump: OK, all right, well we’ll do as much as we can.

So, just to finish, everybody wanted Comey fired. And then, when I fired, I never forget, when I fired, all these people that had just said, “You’ve got fire Comey”, they said, “oh, he just fired Comey.” Well now they’re—the—on the other side, they’re Democrats. So all of a sudden they change.

All you have to do is take a look, seriously—take a look at all these people, they all wanted him fired. And the FBI was a mess. When he announced the Hillary Clinton fiasco where she was guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty and then where they did the interview with no tape recorder, with no swearing in, with no this, with no that—you know the story.

But take a look at all of these people that became critics of my firing, they all wanted him fired. And they wanted him fired until I said, “he’s fired.” But the deputy,

Rosenstein, who is in charge, he wrote a letter that was possibly or probably stronger than anything I would have written or did write.

WSJ: So you're saying there was no obstruction, if Mueller asks you to come in and talk about it, would you—

(CROSSTALK)

Mr. Trump: Of course there was no obstruction—excuse me. Of course there was no obstruction. But there was no crime. So now they're saying, could there be—now, I haven't even heard that they're looking at obstruct—I don't know that they're looking at obstruction.

But how can you—I'm sorry, this is the most open dialogue ever, I've given everything, number one. That's not obstruction.

The other thing is, everybody wanted Comey fired. And, another thing, and this is just a few, Comey has proven to be a leaker and a liar and, if anything, I should get credit for firing him because it turned out I was right because many things have been found out about Comey that—I mean, I should be given credit for having great insight because many things have been found out about Comey that would never have been found out if I didn't fire him.

WSJ: (Inaudible) infrastructure (inaudible).

Mr. Trump: But just so you understand...

WSJ: Oh, sorry.

Mr. Trump: ...The deputy attorney general, who's in charge of the case, wanted—all you have to do is read his letter. So that's—there's no obstruction there.

WSJ: How about a welfare and a tax question real quick before we wrap it up?

Mr. Trump: Yeah, go ahead.

Unknown: Yeah, let's finish on that and then you really do have to go, you've got a Roosevelt Room full of people waiting for you. So go ahead.

Mr. Trump: I do?

Unknown: Yes, you do.

Mr. Trump: OK, get me a list of those people.

Unknown: Yes, sir.

Mr. Trump: I'll see the level of it.

(LAUGHTER)

I do enjoy this, actually.

WSJ: Yeah, this is fun, thank you for taking the time.

Mr. Trump: I do ask you this, treat me fairly.

WSJ: We always do.

Mr. Trump: We'll do it—every month we'll do one of these. But—because I do respect and I love and I think [WSJ editor in chief] Gerard [Baker]—I always call him the most elegant debate—I thought it was the best debate, maybe because I like that one good from my standpoint.

WSJ: Yeah.

Mr. Trump: But I thought he was very elegant. I always say, “You're the elegant host.”

I went through some that weren't so elegant. But all I'm asking is one thing, you know what I'm saying, it's very easy, treat me fairly.

WSJ: We do.

So I just want to be crystal clear about this, you're open to discussing comprehensive immigration reform, are you open to discussing a path to citizenship as part of that?

Mr. Trump: Ready? Comprehensive immigration reform is a far step from DACA. I am always open to discussing everything but that doesn't mean we're going to get anywhere close to getting it done.

I'd love to get something done if it's appropriate. But there's no—I think we will get DACA, I really believe we're getting close to DACA and I'm dealing with some great people on the Democrat side. I'm dealing with some people that I really have gotten to like.

WSJ: Who?

Mr. Trump: And I really believe they have good intention. After we're finished with DACA, assuming that gets done, I would certainly be open to discussing—you know, the comprehensive immigration. I don't know that we'll be able to make a deal on that one.

WSJ: Got it. And so on this—this welfare...

Mr. Trump: You understand what I mean.

WSJ: Yes, I now—I think we're nice and clear on that one.

Mr. Trump: So that's a very different—very different topic.

WSJ: Yeah, do you think welfare reform or infrastructure is more feasible?

Mr. Trump: Well I think we're going to start with infrastructure. We're very far down the line. Gary [Cohn] actually met with Elizabeth Warren yesterday and I heard, actually, had a very good conversation. My team met—Gary, you had a whole group of people—and they had a good conversation. We'll start with infrastructure and we'll see. If we do infrastructure I think that has to be bipartisan—and I think it will be. I think we'll have a lot of Democrat support.

And I think with welfare reform that will have to be bipartisan. You know, we only have a majority of one and unless we get more Republicans in the next election or the next two elections we won't be able to do that and as Republicans we're going to have to have a bipartisan.

So, if we do welfare reform it's going to have to be bipartisan.

WSJ: And just so we understand, what programs are welfare reform targets?

Mr. Trump: Well, I'd rather talk to you about that later because honestly, we're doing infrastructure first; OK? We'll do that again.

WSJ: Infrastructure—would that be a trillion-dollar direct federal outlay? Or is that a public/private partnership?

Mr. Trump: It's going to be a combination of public/private which is now the new hot topic. We'll be putting up approximately \$200 billion. It could be as much as \$1.8 trillion spent. We have many, many, wealthy countries, some of whom our country made wealthy, but we have many countries, any people that really want to put up tremendous amounts of money for the infrastructure. That gets it built faster, gets it built better, gets it built on time, on budget and the United States won't be putting up all of the money.

WSJ: Where does the federal share come from?

Mr. Trump: The \$200 billion?

WSJ: Yes.

Mr. Trump: Well, that's not a large amount. I mean—think of this—I hate to say it but it's not my fault and I did not want to go into Iraq, by the way. But as of two months ago we're into the Middle East for \$7 trillion. We made a lot of headway in the Middle East, by the way. I've knocked out ISIS and Syria and Iraq and all but—and we're doing well in Afghanistan for the first time ever. But you'll see the results over the next three or four months like you won't believe.

WSJ: You're not talking about taking it out of the military budget?

Mr. Trump: No, never out of the military. No—no, no. Nothing comes out of the military. We're making the military strong, again. Just the opposite—we're building the military budget very substantially; you know that.

WSJ: I mean do you have to find cuts or is this new spending? Would you be willing to spend new money on this?

Mr. Trump: No. This will be—this will be money that we will find. There's a lot of places to find \$200 billion. There are not a lot of places to find \$1.8 trillion. I see Gary shaking his head, yes; correct? \$200 billion sounds like a lot but relative to what we're talking about it's a number that we can easily handle.

Whereas again people will come in and put up vast amounts of money. They will supervise the projects, they will make sure they get built on time, on budget—or below budget which is even better. And so, what we're talking about is about \$200 billion. And, Gary, am I right when I say \$1.7 trillion to \$1.8 trillion?

Mr. Cohn: Exactly right, sir.

Mr. Trump: Approximately—so it will be actually \$1.8 trillion of investment in our infrastructure which will largely rebuild our infrastructure.

That will include bridges, roadways, tunnels; it will include many things. One of the things we're doing separate of that will be air-traffic control. Our air-traffic control is from a different planet. It's horrible. It's a horrible mess.

Our air-traffic control doesn't work. They have spent billions and billions of dollars on it over the last seven years. Billions and it's worthless. They had many different contractors doing many different locations using all different computers and computer companies. And when they hooked it up it didn't work. So, I'm good at that stuff—we'll fix it.

WSJ: One last quick question.

Mr. Trump: Go ahead.

WSJ: I just want to get a tax one in here too.

Mr. Trump: The tax bill has turned out to be far greater than we ever anticipated.

WSJ: Can you talk about it in a midterm framework here? Are you going to go out and sell this for the Republicans?

Mr. Trump: It's selling itself, Michael. Michael, it's selling itself.

WSJ: Do you plan to help in the midterms?

Mr. Trump: One thing nobody anticipated was that these companies would come in and pay all of this money to the employees—to millions and millions of employees. And AT&T started it, but it was picked up by Comcast and another one.

Many are announcing today—and the ones that aren't announcing you know what's happening? The employees are going, what about us? Did you forget us—to the ones that—that was never anticipated. That was just one of the many benefits. You know this bill—and I said from the beginning this bill will be so good—and the Democrats are very concerned. They're very concerned. This bill has turned out to be even better than we thought. It's really having a big—and I'm also hearing a lot of people are bringing money back in. You know, the \$4 trillion that we're talking about or whatever it may be. Nobody even knows what it is, but it's a big number.

WSJ: Just on the midterms, are there concrete steps that the administration is taking to make sure Russia doesn't interfere in the 2018 elections?

Mr. Trump: We're going to be very careful. We're going to be very, very, careful about Russia—and about anybody else, by the way.

WSJ: What are you doing to make sure?

Mr. Trump: We are absolutely—at the appropriate time and first of all we're working on different solutions.

And as you know the last election was not affected in terms of votes—and I think you do understand that everybody—even the Democrats agree to that—a lot of people don't write it. But we are looking at all sorts of failsafes and we are going to make sure that no country including Russia can have anything to do with the result of the midterms or any other election; OK? That's what our country is all about.

Unknown: Thank you, guys, so much.

WSJ: Thank you, (inaudible). Thank you, Mr. President.

WSJ: Mr. President, do you expect Rex Tillerson to stay on?

Mr. Trump: Yeah, Rex and I are getting along very well.

WSJ: And Gary Cohn, and...

Mr. Trump: I don't know, Gary, are you staying on?

Unknown: Gary, are you staying?

Mr. Cohn: Very happy. We were—we're doing great things on the economy.

WSJ: Well usually, it's—the New Year mark is a time when—when—when there's—

Mr. Trump: Oh, I know it's the time. But look, hey, Gary may leave and Rex may leave but I don't anticipate it. I hope Gary stays and we'll see.

WSJ: H.R.—H.R. McMaster?

Unknown: Guys, thank you—

Mr. Trump: You know what? I like him. I like him. I like them all.

WSJ: OK.

Mr. Trump: We'll find out. But people do leave. You guys may leave The Wall Street Journal, right?

WSJ: Thank you very, very much.

Mr. Trump: Thank you very much.

1

KEIR STARMER
ANDREW MARR SHOW
10TH JUNE 2018
KEIR STARMER

AM: You've let her off the hook basically, haven't you?

KS: No, we've pushed the Prime Minister all the way on the really big issues, and the two most important for this week are the customs union and a meaningful vote. And if – and I urge Tory MPs who care about this to vote for those amendments – if Tory MPs who do care about those amendments vote with us there is a real chance for parliament to change the course of the Brexit negotiation and to bring some order where there's real chaos, because on this question of a customs union we're going backwards and forwards for months on end. The government's no further forward. So on the really big vote, which is customs union, on the meaningful vote, which allows parliament to decide what happens if Article 50 is voted down, they're the really big ones toAM: You say they're the really big ones but nearly half of the Labour peers voted for Britain to stay inside the European Economic Area, the EEA.

KS: Yeah.

AM: And many people saw that as an absolutely crunch vote, and you are ordering Labour MPs, many of whom agree with their, the peers, to abstain. Why?

KS: Well, I'm sympathetic to the argument that we need a single market deal. I think a lot of discussion this morning has been about the Northern Ireland border. In order to make good on the solemn commitment that there shouldn't be a hard border in Northern Ireland you need two things, you need to be in a customs union –

AM: Which the EEA would give you.

KS: - in a customs union and – well, I'll come back to that. You need to be in a customs union with the EU, and you need a single market deal. And that's why we put down the amendment -

AM: That the EEA would give you.

2

KEIR STARMER

KS: - which is the amendment we're - Well, you say that Andrew, but the EEA is the agreement hatched out in 1992 by Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, and I went to Norway. In fact, if you're in the EEA you are not in a customs union with the EU, and to test that proposition, because I think this is really important and you put it to me, to test that proposition I went to Norway and then I went to the Norway-Sweden border to see for myself what does a border, what's an EEA border look like? There is infrastructure

there, there are checks there, you have to hand in your papers. It is totally incompatible with a solemn commitment to no hard border in Northern Ireland.

AM: So you're going to get less of a border than if we were inside the EEA.

KS: Well, the EEA –

AM: I just don't understand how you are going to do it.

KS: The EEA on its own is a group of countries that are outside of a customs union, so the amendment –

AM: It's a kind of annexe to the EU.

KS: The amendment that we have put down is one which doesn't tie us to a model that won't work for Britain. The Norway model works for Norway. I can see why people are attracted to it. But it won't work for the United Kingdom. So we've put down one that doesn't tie to one, but does answer the question should there be a single market deal, by saying yes, there should, and it needs to go together with the customs union arrangement that we put on the table some months ago.

AM: The trouble with the motion that you've put down is it says you want all those good things, you want frictionless access and jobs and so forth, but you also want an end to free movement, and again and again, almost everybody with any authority inside the EU, up to and including President Macron of France, has made it crystal clear you can't have that.

3

KEIR STARMER

KS: Well, what we say in our amendment is that we recognise there are going to have to be shared regulations and shared institutions. And again, in Northern Ireland you can't have standards one side of the border with different standards the other side of the border. Everybody, I think, knows and understands that. So, we're answering that question. On the question of freedom of movement, of course that's going to have to be part of the negotiations. In our manifesto we made it clear that freedom of movement will end when we leave the EU. The question is what comes next. And we need to spell that out and it needs to be spelt out against a changing position in Europe. As Gordon Brown -

AM: You're saying basically we want all the advantages plus we want no freedom of movement.

KS: No, Andrew, Andrew, the obligations –

AM: Yes, yes, that's what you're saying.

KS: - the obligations of the single market are that you share regulations, you have common standards and that you have shared institutions.

AM: And you're part of the four freedoms, which includes freedom

of movement.

KS: Now, we're facing up to that. We would have to negotiate on the four freedoms, freedom of movement. We need to set out what we want, because this conversation is in a vacuum at the moment. What is very likely, it seems to me, in the 21st century, that we're going to need an immigration policy that does allow people to cross borders across the UK – across the EU to work. We want people to be able to join their families. We want the best students to come to the UK. So we need to spell out what actually we're asking for, whilst negotiating with the EU against a changing backdrop. As you heard earlier on, in France there's great concern that freedom of movement should change so far as workers are concerned across borders. There's lots of work on labour market enforcement. If you talk to the EU 27, there is lots

4

KEIR STARMER

of shared concern about what the future of freedom of movement is. That's the debate that ought to be going on. That's the debate that ought to have happened over the last 18 months.

AM: Well, you mentioned the customs union. Do you accept that if the EU is a customs union there has to be a border somewhere?

KS: Yes, around the customs union countries, at the edge of the customs -

AM: So where should the border be?

KS: Well, our proposal is that the UK as a whole is in a customs union with the EU, and that mean there wouldn't be a border either in Northern Ireland or in the Irish Sea.

AM: So, you say that, but we would also have to be part of the single market for that, for there to be no border, because of all the regulatory requirements.

KS: Yes, I accept that. In other words –

AM: So we would be inside the single market and inside the customs union.

KS: Well, we would be – we would have a customs union with the EU. We're going to have to have a new agreement. We need a single market deal. At the moment both the customs union arrangements and the single market arrangements are hardwired into the membership agreement. We're leaving that, we need to recreate the right agreement for the UK, which will be a new agreement. And that really is – that should've been the focus of what we're discussing –

AM: A lot of your own MPs have looked at this as well, very, very closely, and they still think that the EEA, this annexe agreement, is by far the best way of doing it. Neil Kinnock, former party leader, said this week, he said, "not continuing in the EEA would mean endangering, sacrificing thousands of skilled and decently

paid good jobs, and with them the life chances of countless families and communities. It would be a serious evasion of duty if Labour did not seize this chance to protect our country from the rockslide of a hard Brexit.”

5

KEIR STARMER

KS: Well, I understand the concern that Neil Kinnock and others are expressing, because -

AM: But you're not responding to it.

KS: the chaos - I mean, people are genuinely concerned, more than at any time I can remember in this process, about whether this government is actually capable now of bringing home a deal. Most people are saying to me, “we recognise the EEA, the Norway model, isn't actually the right model.” Almost everybody's saying that. It'd have to be massively changed. It doesn't have a customs union. Agriculture is left out. What they're saying to me is, “we know it's not quite the right model but we're going to cling onto it because we're now so worried about what the government is doing.” What I'm saying is let's step back, let's accept the challenge about the single market, but set it out in a way that makes sense for the 21st century for the UK.

AM: As a result of doing that, and putting down your own front bench Labour motion instead, which will not be backed by many Labour, many Tory rebels, as we're reading today in the papers, you are ensuring that Theresa May is not going to be defeated on anything substantial this week and goes on. You had a chance to bring the government down and you've skipped it.

KS: Well, Andrew, two answers to that. The first, as I think you and others know very well, there are a number of Labour MPs who are very concerned about the EEA who will not vote for it, and therefore we can't pretend this is a winnable vote. But let me answer more, let me answer more substantially because this is a really important issue. We have laid the same amendment to the Customs Bill and the Trade Bill, which are now supposedly coming back before the summer, so in the next three, four weeks, and they are different Bills where we can have a substantive vote and where Tory rebels who care about the single market can lay down their own amendments and we can vote on it then. So the idea that this Tuesday or this Wednesday is the last chance saloon on a single market deal is misconceived. There will be another

6

KEIR STARMER

chance with those Bills. I hope we get significant victories this week on the things that matter, which is the meaningful vote, the customs union. That will be the test, and I do urge Tory MPs who care about this – I know it's difficult – to back those amendments,

and we will back those amendments, and if that happens that will be a defining change this week, and it could happen if those Tory MPs vote with us, and I urge them to do so.

AM: Keir Starmer, thanks very much for talking to us.

(ends)

CNN LARRY KING LIVE

Unthinkable: The Alzheimer's Epidemic

Aired May 7, 2011 - 20:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight, Alzheimer's. A fatal disease that destroys your mind and your memory.

MARIA SHRIVER, FATHER DIES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: It's really challenging to look at your father or your mother and have them not know who you are.

TERRELL OWENS, NFL STAR, GRANDMOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: I'm trying to hold it together now.

KING: A looming epidemic.

RON REAGAN., PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SON: It's basically a coin flip as to whether or not you will have Alzheimer's.

KING: More than five million Americans have it. And the numbers are rising.

SETH ROGEN, ACTOR, FIANCEE'S MOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: More and more people in our generation are going to have to deal with it.

KING: There is no cure.

DR. RONALD PETERSEN, DIRECTOR, MAYO CLINIC ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH CENTER: This is the disease entity that is going to cripple the system.

KING: But there is hope.

LEEZA GIBBONS, MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: We will be victorious. We have to be.

ROGEN: We felt so --

KING: Seth Rogen, Angie Dickinson, Terrell Owens, Maria Shriver, Laura Bush, Leeza Gibbons open up about their own experiences with the disease.

Plus, Ron Reagan and I travel to a cutting-edge facility to see how people are diagnosed. One of us will take an Alzheimer's evaluation. One of us will not.

It's UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Tonight's show is an important topic. According to the Alzheimer's Association, every 69 seconds another person is diagnosed with this horrifying disease.

It's the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. It has no known cure, which is why new guidelines have just been released to include people who have no symptoms yet or are only showing mild symptoms of it.

Tonight those who've experienced Alzheimer's firsthand share their stories.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ROGEN: We felt so alone in this.

ANGIE DICKINSON, ACTRESS, SISTER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: It was horrible.

OWENS: You know I just hold on to the good memories.

KING (voice-over): These are the faces and voices of those touched by Alzheimer's disease. They are actors.

ROGEN: No one we knew had experienced anything like this at this age.

DICKINSON: It was horrible to watch her be afflicted. You know. I would just sometimes just break down crying.

KING: And athletes.

OWENS: You know for me to sit here and talk, I get emotional. But I just -- I just enjoy the moment, you know, that I had with her.

KING: They are from famed political families.

SHRIVER: I think anybody who's not concerned about Alzheimer's is in denial.

LAURA BUSH, FORMER FIRST LADY, FATHER DIES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: I call Alzheimer's the sad good-bye.

KING: And they're from families just like yours.

JACKIE SINGER, PARENTS HAVE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: We were so overwhelmed.

KING: Rich or poor, famous or anonymous, Alzheimer's can strike anyone and the outcome is always the same.

GIBBONS: There is nothing more helpless and nothing more alone than knowing that someone you love has this diagnosis.

PETERSEN: Alzheimer's disease is probably the looming epidemic on the horizon for the United States as well as perhaps the world in general. KING: Dr. Ronald Petersen is director of the Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center.

PETERSEN: There are probably 5.4 million people with Alzheimer's disease in the U.S. right now. And with the baby boomers, aging into the period of risk, this number is going to skyrocket.

This is the disease entity that is going to cripple the system in the next decade if we don't address it head-on at this point in time.

KING: For years the disease did not get the attention it deserved but in 1994, Ronald Reagan announced to the world that it had been diagnosed in him. The president put a very public face on what was often a very private matter.

Dr. Petersen was Ronald Reagan's Alzheimer's doctor.

PETERSEN: If he can get Alzheimer's disease, I can get Alzheimer's disease, so I think that opened up some doors for us and increased the public awareness of the frequency of individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

REAGAN: This is something that affects all of us, really.

KING: Ron Reagan Jr. says his interest in Alzheimer's began with his father's diagnosis.

REAGAN: I mean, if you think about the fact that by the age of 85, it's basically a coin flip as to whether or not you will have Alzheimer's or not. You know the chances of either getting the disease or having to be a caretaker for someone who has the disease is -- the odds are pretty good.

KING: We asked the president's son to share his story to help others understand what it's like for a family to experience it.

(On camera): So what was life like when you would visit it?

REAGAN: His personality remained really until the end. He was this very sort of warm presence in the room, even when he couldn't really express himself, which is, of course, a tragic irony for somebody who's known as the great communicator.

DR. JEFFREY CUMMINGS, DIRECTOR, CLEVELAND CLINIC LOU RUVO CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH: This is really a terrible disease. It undermines human dignity. It undermines that sense of self, you know, who we know we are is because of our memory and who we have been until this moment in our lives. And now that is beginning to be erased by the disease.

KING (voice-over): This diagnosis, Alzheimer's, was named after the German doctor who first discovered it in 1906 in the brain tissue of a woman in her 50s. What we know about the disease hasn't changed much. Doctors still do not have a cure. And only a few effective therapies exist.

It tends to strike people in their 60s and 70s, but it can even surface earlier. Essentially erasing their memories. Destroying their brain cells. Leaving them as a shell of who they once were. Until it eventually kills them. And helpless family members are left to watch it happen before their eyes.

And with warnings that the number of cases will triple by 2050 as the population ages, it's a growing disease that has doctors sounding an alarm.

CUMMINGS: We have not somehow impressed on people how common it is, how terrible it is and how much we need to combat it.

KING: Dr. Jeffrey Cummings of the Cleveland Clinic says the medical community is far behind where it needs to be.

CUMMINGS: We spend \$6 billion a year on cancer. We spend \$3 billion a year on HIV/AIDS research. We spend \$500 million a year only on Alzheimer's disease research. And it is just as much of a killer as HIV or cancer is.

REAGAN: Imagine your own mind, which is really how you relate to the world, your mind creates the world for you in a sense, and now it's betraying you.

KING (on camera): During the failing years, I saw your mother a lot, quite a bit. How do you -- how do you assess how she handled it and how did you deal with it?

REAGAN: Well, she, of course, bore a much greater burden than I did. She was there, you know, every day, day in, day out. This is her spouse. This is the person she's been

married to for, you know, 50- some odd years ultimately. And you know, the pain, the agony of seeing somebody you love that deeply fading away like that.

KING (voice-over): Ten years after his diagnosis, President Reagan died. For the Reagan family, it was both a relief and an unbearable loss.

REAGAN: I was with him when he died. Yes, he opened his eyes, looked at his wife for the last time.

KING (on camera): Was there a sign in the eyes?

REAGAN: Yes, yes. He looked at his wife -- he looked at my mother remarkably. I mean, it was -- it was something. It was something to see.

KING: Do you think his death helped Alzheimer's?

REAGAN: I would like to think so and I think he would like to think so. I know that he felt that way. Felt important. It was important that he write that letter to the American public.

KING (voice-over): President Reagan wanted to use that letter to tell the American people of his fate.

REAGAN: "My fellow Americans, I have recently been told I'm one the millions of Americans who will be afflicted with Alzheimer's disease."

KING: And to help the millions of others who would also share it.

REAGAN: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. I know that for America, there will always be a bright dawn ahead. Thank you, my friends. Sincerely, Ronald Reagan."

Sorry. I can never get through that.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Seventeen years after President Reagan put a public face on Alzheimer's, are we closer to finding a cure?

Ron Reagan and I learn about Alzheimer's testing and how doctors determine if you're at risk. One of us took a brain scan. One of us did not. Find out who did and didn't and why.

But first, actor Seth Rogen and football star Terrell Owens open up on their own Alzheimer's battles.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROGEN: We had turned on the TV and seen someone else who was around our age talking about it, it would have made us feel a lot better.

OWENS: To this day she's never, you know, seen me play a football game.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Up next, on a Larry King special UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Alzheimer's is often thought of as an older person's problem, but each year younger people are finding themselves face to face with the issue in a very real way.

NFL star Terrell Owens is helping take care of the grandmother who helped raise him. He'll tell us how devastating it is when he visits her. And she doesn't know who he is. Or what he's accomplished.

But first, actor Seth Rogen and his fiancée Lauren Miller open up about their story. Both are in their late 20s. And like most young, had not thought much about Alzheimer's until Lauren's mom was diagnosed a few years ago.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LAUREN MILLER, MOTHER HAS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: She was diagnosed at 55. And now she's 59. She was a teacher her whole life and had to retire at 57. My dad, who retired also to take care of her. And now they, you know, just deal with it every day. ROGEN: It's terrible to see it happen. And I feel so bad for her father just to see -- I mean, I've seen a few times here or there she clearly doesn't really know who he is and why he's trying so hard to take care of her.

KING: Lauren's dad has become one of the estimated 15 million unpaid caregivers who give up so much of their own lives to now care for their loved ones.

MILLER: He does her hair. I mean, he takes her shopping if she needs something to wear. And my dad does not like shopping. And he's just amazing. You know I don't think you are 62 years old and, you know, one day out of retirement think that you're going to be taking care of your spouse with Alzheimer's.

KING (on camera): Are you angry about it?

MILLER: Very. It's pretty unfair. But, you know, I think the things that make me angry are that, unfortunately, this disease gets very little attention, especially with people, you know, that are our age. They know very little about it.

ROGEN: If there's one thing that like, you know, we represent it is that more and more people in our generation are going to have to deal with it, you know. We're dealing with it before most people will have to, but as you get older and you see it happening to your parents and ultimately realize it could happen to yourself and your friends, it becomes much more real and not some imaginary old person problem, you know?

KING: Why have you decided to be public about it?

MILLER: It's just become much more important to us to bring an awareness to it because we've seen firsthand how terrible it is.

ROGEN: We felt so alone in this. You know, no one we knew had experienced anything like this at this age. And I just know that if we had turned on the TV and seen someone else who was around our age talking about it, it would have made us feel a lot better.

OWENS: I grew up with my grandmother, lived with her, and pretty much she's the reason, you know, why I am who I am today.

KING (voice-over): Terrell Owens, the flamboyant wide receiver of the Cincinnati Bengals is also speaking out for his grandmother who helped raise the football star after his parents split up.

(On camera): Did she go to your high school games?

OWENS: Not much. Not much. My grandmother was very, very strict and she really didn't care for the sports world. You know, too much.

KING: No?

OWENS: She saw that as an avenue of me getting out of the house and getting in trouble. She just didn't really understand. KING (voice-over): T.O., a college athlete, was drafted into the NFL in 1996. The same year his grandmother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

OWENS: It got to a point where, you know, she was kind of starting to wander off a little bit. She'd start misplacing, you know, her purse and things of that nature. My rookie season I remember exactly where I was when I got a phone call from my mom.

And that's when they said she had early stages of dementia, or what have you. And so, put her on the phone and she started talking. And her voice sounded pretty much like - like a battery going dead? You know?

KING (on camera): Really?

OWENS: And -- yes. So I knew there was something wrong.

KING: When you went home to see her, what was it like?

OWENS: It got to the point where she didn't really notice or realize what I had become, you know as --

KING: Or you were playing?

OWENS: Right. Exactly. So to this day she's never, you know, seen me play a football game and really be conscious of --

KING: Does she still know who you are?

OWENS: Not anymore.

KING: Now here's a woman who helped raise you, right? A important part of your life. What is it like when you're with her and she don't know who you are? What's it like for you?

OWENS: You know, I'm -- it's -- I'm trying to hold it together now, but it's -- you know, I just hold on to the good memories.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Coming up next, Maria Shriver speaks out publicly for first time since her father's death from Alzheimer's disease earlier this year.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SHRIVER: It's just one of those diseases that there is no coming back from.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: And later, if you were at risk for Alzheimer's in the future, would you want to know? Ron Reagan and I traveled to the Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. One of us agrees to an evaluation, one of us does not. Find out what happened as Larry King special UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Three incredible women open up about their personal stories of dealing with Alzheimer's disease. Former First Lady Laura Bush's father died of Alzheimer's in 1995. Actress Angie Dickinson's sister was diagnosed in 1984. She was only 55 years old. And Maria Shriver, speaking out tonight for the first time since her father, Sarge Shriver, died of Alzheimer's in January.

Maria opens up about her dad, her thoughts on Alzheimer's research, and why the disease is especially hard on women.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KING (on camera): How's the family doing?

SHRIVER: Well, it's a lot of changes. I'd say I've lost both my parents and my uncle in the last year and a half, so it's an adjustment period.

KING: You called Alzheimer's a defining challenge.

SHRIVER: Mm-hmm.

KING: Explain.

SHRIVER: Well, I think it is the defining challenge of our era and certainly of the baby boom era. The numbers are staggering. The costs to the nation are staggering. The costs to individual families are staggering. And it is -- I call it a mind-blowing disease because not only does it blow the mind of the person who gets it, but it blows the mind of everybody who loves that person.

KING (voice-over): Sergeant Shriver was another Kennedy family politician, the driving force behind the Peace Corps and the 1972 Democratic vice presidential candidate.

(On camera): Your dad was such an amazing guy.

SHRIVER: Yes.

KING: Did it come on quickly?

SHRIVER: Well, I don't think it might have for him, but for us, it was -- and I think from everybody I've spoken to, you slowly begin to notice or you think maybe but maybe not. And I think there's a lot of denial before you actually accept that a loved one has Alzheimer's.

KING: Was there a moment for you?

SHRIVER: No. There was no moment. There was just a slow realization and then a really long journey.

KING: Long good-bye. SHRIVER: Well, I think it's -- or a new hello every day. That's what I say, because you're meeting that person and that person's meeting you anew every day.

KING: What's it like, though, to have a father you love not know you?

SHRIVER: It's challenging. It's really challenging to look at your father or your mother and have them not know who you are and have to introduce yourself to them over and over again. Even though they look like your parent, they're not your parent. They become really your child.

KING (voice-over): As her dad's condition worsened, Maria took action. She used her training as a journalist and her position as California's first lady to bring attention to the disease, publishing a ground-breaking study looking at how Alzheimer's affects the economy, families and especially American women.

SHRIVER: "The Shriver Report" was the first report to really place Alzheimer's as a women's disease. It took on redefining it, saying that, for example, you know, the majority of people with it were women, the majority of people doing the caretaking were women.

We looked at the policies that were in place. We look at how women were able now to or not able to be primary breadwinners, primary parents and primary caretakers, and how society and institutions have not kept up with where women find themselves.

KING: Are you concerned for yourself?

SHRIVER: Absolutely. I think anybody who's not concerned about Alzheimer's is in denial. Everybody I've talked to who has a parent with Alzheimer's or a brother or sister is scared to death.

KING (voice-over): Laura Bush's father started showing signs of memory loss in the '90s.

BUSH: My dad really started to get sick. And I think we didn't know then that it was Alzheimer's. And it was really when my dad couldn't fill out bank deposit slips anymore that my mother sort of realized something was the matter. Slowly we saw him start to fail. And forget things.

His Alzheimer's never got so bad that he didn't know me. But he did on the very last Thanksgiving that we spent with him, after George had been elected governor, but before he'd been inaugurated.

We were in their living room and my dad said, who's that over there? And I said, well, dad, that's my husband, George Bush. And he said, you married George Bush? And I said, yes. And he laughed and said, I think I'll ask him for a loan. He never lost his sense of humor.

KING: Mrs. Bush says that her dad's disease progressed slowly but it became a burden for her mother who took care of him. She says the most important thing for families is to make sure they don't do this alone. BUSH: It's very important for caregivers to be sure they get help. Start to ask for help, look around for ways your family can come in and give you a little bit of a respite or friends can.

And that's, I think, the really hard part of caring for somebody. And I want to urge people to look around and see how you can help. For family members, for myself, I should have -- I felt like I should have been there more often for my mother.

KING: Angie Dickinson's been speaking out about Alzheimer's for decades.

DICKINSON: You don't do well with Alzheimer's. You just get worse and worse.

KING: She first talked about it on our show in 1991 after her sister was diagnosed at age 55.

DICKINSON: Everything is memory.

Mary Lou was absolutely wonderful. She was gorgeous. She was loving. She was gentle. She was a tender soul.

KING (on camera): You've spoken about her publicly for more than 20 years. Why?

DICKINSON: I want everyone to know, so that they can help and be helped.

KING (voice-over): Like many others, Dickinson noticed her sister's memory failing. She'd get lost driving, forget words, even holidays.

DICKINSON: I opened her trunk of her car and Christmas presents were in there. And it was spring or summer. That she had never took out. So I started to watch for the signs.

KING (on camera): Did it deteriorate fast?

DICKINSON: Yes. She went down fast.

KING: Did she lose recognition of you?

DICKINSON: Oh, yes. Oh, sure.

KING: What was it like for you?

DICKINSON: Well, I knew that was coming. I -- I was only sad for her. I wasn't sad for myself.

KING: But it is the long good-byes.

DICKINSON: Yes, it is. Yes. But you pray for the good-bye to come as soon as possible.

KING: You do?

DICKINSON: Absolutely.

KING: What would you say to people who are about to confront it as a family member?

DICKINSON: Well, I would say love them and I don't mean just love them with your soul and your head, love them with your arms and your company and your touch and whatever pleasure still might be there for them. And don't ever let up. Just stay as close as possible. Comforting them all the way because they're lost.

KING: And what would you say to someone diagnosed with it?

DICKINSON: I would say, oh, shit.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: When we come back, Leeza Gibbons on the pain of being a caregiver and watching the person you love slowly fade away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GIBBONS: It is a stab to the heart the likes of which I have never experienced before.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: We'll be back with more right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DON LEMON, CNN ANCHOR: I'm Don Lemon at the CNN world headquarters. Here are your headlines this hour.

A day of prayer for victims of the devastating tornadoes in the south. The death toll across six states now stands at 339.

Alabama took the hardest hit losing 250 people to the twisters. Senior administration officials today toured some of the worst hit places. Their primary message was to reassure survivors they will not be forgotten and the federal government will provide needed assistance.

Flooding is the problem in other places. A tiny Illinois town of Cairo facing pressure from rising waters on both the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The Army Corps of Engineers is considering blowing up a levee in Missouri to ease the pressure.

That might save the town but it would send floodwaters pouring across thousands of acres of Missouri farmland. Missouri has already lost one court case to stop that demolition. It's now asking the U.S. Supreme Court to step in.

Those are your headlines this hour. "UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC" continues right now.

KING: Alzheimer's affects more than just the person with the disease. Millions of family members suddenly find themselves as caregivers, having to drop everything to deal with the illness.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, some 15 million people, family members and friends, provided 17 billion hours or \$202 billion of unpaid care to those with Alzheimer's disease last year.

Leeza Gibbons has made caring for the caregiver her cause after losing both her grandmother and her mother to the disease.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GIBBONS: No matter how smart you think you are, how educated you might be, how much money you might have, there is nothing more helpless and nothing more alone than knowing that someone you love has this diagnosis.

My mom started showing symptoms in her late 50s. By the time she was 63, Larry, we had a diagnosis. Ten years later she was gone.

KING (on camera): What was it like for you when she didn't know you?

GIBBONS: That's the cruelest moment. I'm sure everyone would tell you the same thing. And after she was diagnosed and I was home in South Carolina helping her make the bed and I said, mom, I can never get the corner of the bed as great as you do. And she said, you're such a nice lady. What's your name?

It is a stab to the heart, the likes of which I have never experienced before.

KING (voice-over): Leeza helped her father care for her mom while trying to maintain her own life and career. She knows what a burden it was for her family and millions of others.

GIBBONS: Many times the caregivers, because of what we call compassion fatigue, are sicker than their diagnosed loved ones. They're under assault. And my dad was under assault. We all were.

KING: After feeling that assault firsthand, Leeza started a memory foundation and opened Leeza's Place. There are eight locations around the country. It's a facility for people to get help and bond with others in similar situations. It's a place for caretakers to catch their breath.

GIBBONS: We care for the people who care for people. It's all about knowing that this is a journey that you cannot take by yourself.

KING: Being a caregiver for an Alzheimer's patient is often an emotionally, spiritually, and physically and exhausting experience.

GIBBONS: The caregivers have to know that the best way to love their diagnosed family member is to nourish themselves, mind, body, soul and spirit. And that's counterintuitive. These caregivers will give everything they have, but it's hard to get them to focus on their own needs.

KING: Molly Miller and Jackie Singer know too well the burden of being a caregiver. The twin sisters from Las Vegas are caring for their parents. Both diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease just six weeks apart from each other last summer.

SINGER: We weren't -- I can honestly say that we weren't familiar with many of the symptoms of Alzheimer's. Actually, all we had ever seen as far as the media was concerned and what we had read about Alzheimer's was apparently a later stage in Alzheimer's, which is a serious memory deficit.

We didn't know about what we later discovered were symptoms of Alzheimer's. We didn't know that things like maybe slight paranoia, maybe losing interest in things.

KING: Their parents had been married 69 years. As the disease took hold, their mother had trouble recognizing their father.

MOLLY MILLER, PARENTS HAVE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: He's right here, mom. Right here.

She wanted that man out of her house. She didn't know who he was. And she's strong enough that she was able to convince him that he wasn't her husband. And he --

So got so confused.

M. MILLER: He would ask us, where's my first wife?

KING: Their father responded to medication but their mother did not. Both parents who are independent up until a few months ago now need constant supervision.

M. MILLER: It's heartbreaking.

SINGER: We were -- we were so overwhelmed. It happened -- it happened very fast. When we realized -- it caught us off guard. We were so overwhelmed that all we wanted to do was try and get them help as fast as we could.

KING: Between Molly, Jackie and Jackie's twin daughters, the family has set up round-the-clock shifts, tending to their parents' every need.

SINGER: At this point right now we really have no life of our own. A typical day for us involves 24/7 care for them, just figuring out who's doing what.

In three weeks she went from feeding her own dog, like she said, dressing herself to being able to do nothing. Nothing. Not lift a comb, not wash your face, not hold a toothbrush, nothing.

M. MILLER: Toothbrush was very foreign.

SINGER: Right. And also questioning, what were these things. She'll turn around and say to me, this is so humiliating.

M. MILLER: She knows that. SINGER: She knows.

M. MILLER: This is so degrading.

SINGER: These are things I used to do myself.

M. MILLER: You shouldn't have to help me.

KING: Molly and Jackie are watching their parents slowly fade away.

M. MILLER: She asked me this morning, do you have a mother? I said, yes. That's good. You're a nice girl.

SINGER: Those are the things that can be difficult, yet we know that that's not really her.

M. MILLER: No.

SINGER: We've always had such a close relationship with her that we know that it's not her. You know, it tears you up. But it's not her.

M. MILLER: We feel like we've lost her already.

SINGER: We have. And we know it. So all we can do is make her life as comfortable and as peaceful and as joyful as possible. We may be crying now. It's been -- it's for us. It's for the loss that we know we're experiencing already.

But the truth is, there's also a lot of humor in this sometimes. There's a lot of times where we just laugh and she laughs with us. So even though it's hard for us, if we can bring her comfort and we can be there for them, that's what it's about.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: Molly and Jackie's mom passed away last month. The family continues to care for their father. We offer them our heartfelt condolences.

Ron Reagan and I visit the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas to see how doctors are treating the disease. One of us will be evaluated. The other will not. That's next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Would you want to know if you were at risk for Alzheimer's?

To learn more about the disease and how doctors diagnose it, I went to the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. We asked Ron Reagan to come along with me to see how testing and treatments have changed since his father was diagnosed.

Well, one of us decided to take an evaluation to see if we were at risk. The other did not. We'll show you that in just a moment. But first, Larry Ruvo is the man behind this amazing center after his father died of it. He decided to do something to make sure others didn't go through the same frustrations his family experienced.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LARRY RUVO, FATHER DIED OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: He was showing signs but we didn't know it was Alzheimer's and had no idea at that time that much about the disease. We were on the way back to the airport and he -- just the two of us were in the car and he looked at me and he says, how long do you think I have? And I said, I don't know about this disease to tell you but we're going to sure investigate it and look.

I was angry that there wasn't information that -- I knew other people had this disease in their families and why wasn't there information readily available in.

KING: So Larry Ruvo, a famed Las Vegas businessman, started making calls, gathering information, raising money. His self-described Alzheimer's obsession led to the building of this \$80 million medical facility in downtown Las Vegas, designed, by the way, by world famous architect Frank Gehry.

To many people, it looks as if it's a giant stainless steel covered brain. Ruvo, a quintessential marketer, says the high profile project was all about getting people's attention.

RUVO: We knew that the world was going to know, we were going to build something in Las Vegas that was going to change the course of the disease.

KING: This state-of-the-art facility treats Alzheimer's and other diseases of the brain. Larry drew upon his own family's experiences to make sure patients here are treated with dignity and respect.

RUVO: There are no waiting rooms in our facility. And when my father went down for his original diagnosis he was in a waiting room with three other patients who are -- had been in stage three of the disease. I said that if I ever had an opportunity to help anybody at all, I would never commingle stage one with stage two with stage three of the disease.

KING: Larry partnered with the Cleveland Clinic and brought in some of the best brain doctors in the United States to work here.

Dr. Jeff Cummings heads up Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health.

(On camera): The first signs people say, the -- I don't know if it's a joke, if you forget where you lost your key, that's not Alzheimer's. If you forget what the key is for, that is Alzheimer's, is it that simple?

CUMMINGS: Well, that's not a bad -- not a bad way of thinking about it. Certainly memory loss is the first thing that occurs in the huge majority of cases.

KING: But everybody getting older loses memory. CUMMINGS: But it's the repeated not learning that's important. So, if you ask me, when are we going to the show tonight, and I tell you, you're likely to remember that. If you keep asking that question and don't lay down that memory, that's Alzheimer's disease.

KING (voice-over): The exact cause of Alzheimer's is still unknown but protein deposits called plaques and tangles are believed to play a big role in the destruction of brain cells, causing symptoms of the disease.

CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta explains.

DR. SANJAY GUPTA, CNN CHIEF MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT: When you look deep inside the brain, what you're looking for typically are neurons. People typically know that word. That's the brain cells, so to speak. And they're conducting signals all the time. This is what makes --

(CROSSTALK)

KING (on camera): Goes through the body, right?

GUPTA: Yes. They go to each other and they go to the rest of the body. Then all of a sudden you can see what's happened here, Larry.

Two things. First of all you've got these proteins. They're called plaques and tangles, and those cells in there, not only do they stop working well but they actually start to die. So part of your brain actually is shrinking away in addition to not working well.

KING: Is that the memory part?

GUPTA: The memory part is often affected first. But what people often don't realize about Alzheimer's is that it really does affect the whole brain so people start having all sorts of different problems with movements --

KING: Headaches?

GUPTA: They can have headaches. But their movement, their swallowing, their ability to have -- you know, normal respirations, control their heart rate, their heartbeat, all of that. So that's why Alzheimer's is typically fatal.

KING (voice-over): Back at the Ruvo Center, Ron Reagan and I wanted to see how doctors make their diagnosis.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Right this way.

KING: Between the two of us, only one decided to be tested to see if we were at risk. That's me getting ready for an MRI. It's just one part of the evaluation. Ron Reagan decided not to participate.

First step was taking a scan of my brain. It's a 40-minute process as the technicians search for any signs that brain shrinkage has occurred. CUMMINGS: The MRI is one way of our looking at the structure of the brain. And we know that when Alzheimer's strikes, it strikes the memory portions of the brain first. So we can look at those memory portions and see if they're shrunken. And if they are, that's important evidence that the person has Alzheimer's.

KING: This is a scan of my brain. Later we'll tell you what Dr. Cummings saw.

Another part of the exam is memory testing. Since Alzheimer's affects the ability to learn and remember new information, Dr. Cummings is looking at my memory and recall skills.

KING (on camera): Grass. Engine.

CUMMINGS: Good. Now, tell me as many of those words as you can remember.

KING: Butter, arm, short --

CUMMINGS: Brain controls everything we are, Larry. Our memory, our thinking, our emotions, our movement, everything we are as human beings is controlled by the brain and that is eroded in the course of Alzheimer's.

KING (voice-over): There is no official test to tell if you will get the disease. Only if you're showing symptoms. And for now, the brain scan is only effective on people over age 60. Doctors are not ready to use these tests as screening tools like, say, a mammogram, just yet.

Ron Reagan watched me take the tests on this day, decided he didn't want to take any of his own.

(On camera): You don't want to know if you'll get it?

REAGAN: Until they come up with a cure or a real definite treatment, I'd just as soon remain blissfully ignorant.

KING: How well is our understanding of it improving?

CUMMINGS: I think we've made enormous strides in terms of understanding Alzheimer's disease. We know that there are several proteins involved. We know the cells are dying. We know that the clearance of the protein is reduced.

We have new tests that can show us the protein abnormalities in the brain. We're making definite strides in terms of the new therapeutics that are emerging. We don't know enough. We need a lot more research. But we're really making progress.

KING (voice-over): To change that researchers are studying segments of the population to see how they age, hoping to uncover clues as to what causes Alzheimer's in some but not others.

Dr. Petersen of the Mayo Clinic. PETERSEN: A great deal of research right now on Alzheimer's disease is focusing on imaging tests such as MRI scans, PET scans, even

PET scans that can pick up the protein in the brain that's thought to be responsible for the disease as well as other biomarkers.

KING: The idea is to isolate early signs of Alzheimer's in patients with enough time to treat it before symptoms affect the individual.

PETERSEN: It's like we did with heart disease. So we don't wait for people to have heart attacks to address their cardiovascular problems. We look at people who have elevated cholesterol, people who have diabetes, people who have been smokers in the past to try and develop a prediction picture as to who's going to develop the disease.

Again, intervening as soon as possible to try to forestall those clinical events.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: So now we know more about what Alzheimer's is, how it affects you and what it does to your family. But can you prevent it? Or at least decrease the risk of getting it?

Plus, we'll go over my Alzheimer's results next on a Larry King special

UNTHINKABLE: THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Doctors are suggesting ways for people to begin protecting themselves from Alzheimer's. There are a number of steps you can take that may decrease your chance of getting it later in life. You do not have to wait for symptoms to appear before taking action.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SANDY PARKER, RICHARD PARKER'S WIFE: That was at Barbara's wedding.

KING (voice-over): Richard Parker was diagnosed with memory problems several years ago which could eventually lead to Alzheimer's. He is a former child actor who starred in movies with Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. He says he had a photographic memory.

RICHARD PARKER, PARTICIPATING IN ALZHEIMER'S CLINICAL TRIAL: When you can remember things that -- and you remember them well, it just becomes natural but all of a sudden when you can't remember things and remember them as well as you used to, then it becomes a concern.

KING: His wife, Sandy, convinced him to see a doctor when she noticed him having some memory difficulty. He's been on medication for several years, which he says has

helped slow down his loss. But more than anything, he's kept his mind and body active.

PARKER: I've always worked out. I just like it. It's just become a part of me. I do it every day. I try to walk my five miles. And when I do, I'd normally stop each mile around and I do 25 pushups until I've done 150. PETERSEN: What's become apparent in the last few years is that the development of Alzheimer's disease need not be a passive process. That is, let's just wait and see what happens down the road. But rather through lifestyle changes we can have an impact on our individual likelihood of developing cognitive impairment in the future.

So research is showing us now that lifestyle modifications such as aerobic exercise, staying active intellectually, engaging in a heart- healthy diet and staying involved in your social networks may very well postpone the likelihood of your developing cognitive impairment and maybe even Alzheimer's disease in the future.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: So what can you do? If you or your family have any concerns, talk to your doctor so you can be tested. Also, doctors suggest keeping your mind and body active, exercise, go on hikes, take up gardening, consume a low-fat diet, eat foods high in antioxidants like blueberries and other darkly colored fruits and vegetables. Engage your mind and memory, challenge yourself with crossword puzzles and games, keep yourself socially and mentally stimulated. Attend lectures or plays.

As someone in the age range of risk, I try to follow all of these practices.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CUMMINGS: There's no atrophy specific to those areas of the brain that are affected in Alzheimer's disease.

KING: And Dr. Cummings tells me my brain scan shows no visible symptoms of Alzheimer's disease or early memory loss. But for the millions of people who currently have the disease, for the millions about to be diagnosed and for the millions of family members caring for their loved ones, there is hope.

Research facilities around the world like the Mayo Clinic and the Cleveland Clinic are collaborating to find a cure.

With attention and activism, science is working to one day stop the UNTHINKABLE:
THE ALZHEIMER'S EPIDEMIC.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: If you're concerned about your memory or the memory of someone you know, talk to your doctor. The earlier a professional can make a diagnosis, the better the possibility of effective treatment.

If you're a family member or someone with the disease, there are organizations that can help you. The Alzheimer's Association is a pretty good place to start.

We'd like to thank everyone who opened up their lives to share these stories tonight. We thank you for watching. Good night, good health.

1

PLEASE NOTE "THE ANDREW MARR SHOW" MUST BE CREDITED IF ANY PART OF THIS TRANSCRIPT IS USED
THE ANDREW MARR SHOW

INTERVIEW:

DAMIAN GREEN
POLICING MINISTER
OCTOBER 20th 2013

ANDREW MARR:

Now was Andrew Mitchell stitched up? That's the question being asked at Westminster with MPs of all parties now concerned that the former Conservative Chief Whip at the centre of the Plebgate affair may have been the victim of a police conspiracy. The story has taken some pretty extraordinary twists and turns over the past year or so, but what does it all say about the force at large? In simple terms, can we trust our police? I'm joined now by the Policing Minister, Damien Green.

Welcome.

DAMIAN GREEN:

Good morning.

ANDREW MARR:

Do you believe that there was a conspiracy in all of this?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well the actual conspiracy is still being investigated (if there is one) by the Crown Prosecution Service ...

ANDREW MARR:

2

Indeed.

DAMIAN GREEN:

... so we don't know yet and we will see what they say.

ANDREW MARR:

Yeah.

DAMIAN GREEN:

Clearly what happened when those three police federation reps came out of his meeting in Sutton Coldfield and, to put it mildly, said things that don't seem to be borne out by the transcript of the meeting - that's disturbing.

ANDREW MARR:

If Andrew Mitchell hadn't listened to his wife and taped that meeting with serving police officers, he would be still hung out to dry. I mean that's a very, very worrying thing for a lot of people. If it can happen to him, it could happen to anyone. As he himself says, it could happen to a kid in Handsworth.

DAMIAN GREEN:

I mean I think that's the key point -

ANDREW MARR:

Yeah.

DAMIAN GREEN:

... we all want to have confidence in the police. Andrew Mitchell clearly can

command the resources that other people might not be able to, to prove that what the police or what individual police officers said about him wasn't true, so that's the key underlying issue.

ANDREW MARR:

We know that. We also seem to know that their chief constables then changed the
3

reports, so that didn't come out, so there was a cover-up of the cover-up. If it turns out that that's true, can those chief constables survive?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well let's see what the chief constables have to say. We haven't yet ...

ANDREW MARR:

(over) They're coming to Parliament ...

DAMIAN GREEN:

(over) ... heard their side of the story. They're appearing before a select committee on Wednesday, so let's see what happens then and we can all judge on what they say. I think ... I mean there is ... One of the key points to make is that if police officers behave badly, then it is really serious for confidence in the police, but it is a very, very small minority that do behave badly. By and large the police do their job well, crime is falling. And I was at the Police Bravery Awards last Thursday where you heard story after story of everyday heroism.

ANDREW MARR:

Lots of great police. Some bad apples though. And if chief constables are engaged in cover-ups, that's particularly serious, isn't it?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well at all levels it's serious. We all want to have confidence in the police.

ANDREW MARR:

Do you think there's a crisis of confidence in the police as a result of this and other ... Hillsborough and so many other things too?

DAMIAN GREEN:

(over) Well I'm interested in ... Absolutely, I mean this is one incident among many. Ian Tomlinson, as you say, Hillsborough. And what's interesting is that even today, earlier on in the programme you pointed out the poll in today's Sunday Times which shows that 66 per cent of people still have trust in the police. That's quite a high
4

number and it ought to be. It's lower than it used to be. So what needs to be done are practical measures to make sure that the relatively small, the very small minority who do behave badly can be dealt with properly.

ANDREW MARR:

So there is a worry out there. Is there anything you can do to address that worry, that ... Not crisis of confidence - that's perhaps putting it too strongly - but ebbing confidence in the police?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Yes there is and that's what we are doing. I think one of the key changes we need to make is to stop the police investigating serious and sensitive complaints against them.

Clearly the Andrew Mitchell affair would fall under this. So what we're doing is increasing the powers of the Independent Police Complaints Commission, and increasingly the resources for it, so that it can do much more work independently of the police, so you don't have the police looking at the ?? complaints.

ANDREW MARR:

(over) So the IPCC is not working properly at the moment, you feel?

DAMIAN GREEN:

The IPCC needs more powers, it needs more resources. We're giving them both because I think it's that independent investigation of complaints that's key.

ANDREW MARR:

What about the culture inside the police, towards the top of the police - the institutional cultures. Is there anything you can do to tackle that?

DAMIAN GREEN:

There are two big things we're doing to change that because, you're right, it's not just a question of following rules; it's a question of having a culture of honesty and openness and transparency. The two big things we're doing there are introducing direct entry at senior levels, at superintendent and inspector levels as well as potentially at chief constable level.

5

ANDREW MARR:

To whom? Opening it to whom - to anyone or ...?

DAMIAN GREEN:

To anyone. So that ... So if you are ...

ANDREW MARR:

(over) So I could go off and be a chief constable?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well, yes, if ...

ANDREW MARR:

You're nicked, Damian Green.

DAMIAN GREEN:

Absolutely...

ANDREW MARR:

As you have been before, of course.

DAMIAN GREEN:

... well I've had that in the past as well in another less than glorious episode for the police.

ANDREW MARR:

Indeed.

DAMIAN GREEN:

So what we want is people to come who have not had to start on the beat as a police constable and work their way up for 25 years, so that people who've got the relevant skills can enter at various levels of the profession.

6

ANDREW MARR:

(over) Business people, former head teachers from schools ...

DAMIAN GREEN:

Former army officers.

ANDREW MARR:

... even, dare I say it, journalists could become chief police officers?

DAMIAN GREEN:

If journalists had the relevant skill set, which you may wish to discuss.

ANDREW MARR:

(laughs) If.

DAMIAN GREEN:

There's a big if there. But in all seriousness, the fact that people will bring a new attitude and a new background, I think that will help the police service a lot because it will open it up. And people will come in and ask that basic question everyone does in a new organisation of "Why do you do it that way?" and when they hear the response, "That's the way we've always done it", then they will question it.

ANDREW MARR:

Very interesting. What about looking again at the police code of ethics and freshening that up?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well that's happening. The new College of Policing, which is one of our reforms that I think doesn't get enough attention because it's a very big change, the college is there to set standards and improve standards throughout the police. One of the first things they're doing is consulting on a new code of ethics. They'll be announcing it in a few weeks time. It'll be very, very timely. And that will not only set out very clearly how police officers should operate. One of the key changes is that every time they're promoted, they will have to show that it's still ingrained in them. That's done in other

7

organisations like the military. It's not been done in the police before.

ANDREW MARR:

And so do you have any simple message to people watching who will simply say if the police can tell untruths about a senior Conservative politician and then hide what has happened, distort the evidence, it could happen to anyone, it could happen to me, I no longer trust the police? What do you say to them - overall message?

DAMIAN GREEN:

My simple message is twofold, if you like. That the vast majority of the police are honest, decent people doing a dangerous job very well and that we are improving the system so that those few who break the rules will be much better controlled, will be inspected independently, will have to sign up to a code of ethics, and that we're changing a culture inside the police so that it's much less inward looking than it used to be.

ANDREW MARR:

Is Andrew Mitchell going to get an apology from anybody?

DAMIAN GREEN:

I hope so. He deserves an apology.

ANDREW MARR:

From whom?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well let's start with the people who left his office and said things that, if you read the

transcript, were palpably untrue.

ANDREW MARR:

So those three police officers should apologise?

DAMIAN GREEN:

Those ... Absolutely those three should apologise.

8

ANDREW MARR:

What about the person who kicked him out of his job in the first place? Should he apologise? I'm thinking of a guy called David Cameron.

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well he didn't because Andrew Mitchell resigned. David Cameron...

ANDREW MARR:

Ish-ish.

DAMIAN GREEN:

Well no, he ...

ANDREW MARR:

He was resigned.

DAMIAN GREEN:

No, I don't think so. He resigned. But you know let's do this in order. Let's find out what the facts are, what the CPS say, whether there was a criminal conspiracy, whether there's more police disciplinary action to be taken against those at the gates of Downing Street. All those questions need to be answered first.

ANDREW MARR:

There'll be a whole plethora of apologies after that. Damian Green, thank you very much indeed for joining us.

INTERVIEW ENDS

With NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.
Part 1. The Kremlin, Moscow, March 1, 2018

Megyn Kelly: So, thank you very much for doing this, Mr President. I thought that we'd start with some of the news you made today at your State of the Nation Address, then we will move into some facts about you in preparation for our long piece that we are putting together, and then tomorrow when we will have a longer time together, we will talk about more substantive issues together, if that is ok with you.

Vladimir Putin: Fine.

Megyn Kelly: You announced today that Russia has developed new nuclear-capable weapons systems, including an intercontinental ballistic missile that you say renders defence systems useless. Several analysts in the West have said this is a declaration of a new Cold War. Are we in a new arms race right now?

Vladimir Putin: In my opinion, the people you have mentioned are not analysts. What they do is propaganda. Why? Because everything I spoke about today was done not on our initiative, it is a response to the US ballistic missile defence programme and Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002.

If we speak of the arms race, it began at that very moment, when the United States pulled out of the ABM Treaty. We wanted to prevent this. We called on our American partners to work together on these programmes.

Firstly, we asked them not to withdraw from the treaty, not to destroy it. But the US pulled out. It was not us who did this but the US.

Yet we again suggested we work together even after this. I told my colleague then, "Imagine what would happen if Russia and the US joined forces in the crucial area of strategic security. The world would change for a long period to come, and the level of global security would rise to an all-time high." The reply was, "This is very interesting." But they ultimately rejected all our proposals.

Then I said, "You understand that we will have to improve our offensive arms systems to maintain a balance and to have the ability to overcome your BMD systems." They replied that they were not developing the BMD systems to counter us, that we were free to do as we pleased, and that they would not view our actions as spearheaded against the US.

Megyn Kelly: That happened right after 9/11, three months after 9/11.

Vladimir Putin: No, it was after the US withdrew from the ABM Treaty in 2002, and the conversations I mentioned were in 2003–2004.

Megyn Kelly: At the time that happened, I believe you were quoted as saying that you thought it was a mistake on the part of the United States, but not a threat. Do you perceive the United States as a threat today?

Vladimir Putin: We have always said that developing the missile defence system creates a threat to us. We have always said that. Our American partners would not publicly admit it, claiming that the system was spearheaded mainly against Iran. But eventually, in conversations and during talks they admitted that, of course, the system will destroy our nuclear deterrence potential.

Imagine the situation. What was the point of signing the treaty back in 1972? The United States and the Soviet Union had only two regions that they defended from missile attacks: one in the United States and one in the Soviet Union. That created a threat for a potential aggressor who would be struck in response. In 2002, the United States said, "We do not need this anymore. We will create anything we want, globally, all over the world."

Megyn Kelly: Again, it was in the wake of 9/11, just to make it clear. 9/11 happened on September 11, 2001, and the United States was reassessing its security posture in the world for good reason, wouldn't you admit?

Vladimir Putin: No, not for good reason. This is complete nonsense. Because the missile defence system protects from the kind of ballistic missiles that no terrorists have in their arsenal. This is an explanation for the housewives watching your programme. But if these housewives can hear what I am saying, if you show it to them and they hear me, they will understand that 9/11 and the missile defence system are completely unrelated. To defend themselves from terrorist attacks, the major powers must join their efforts against the terrorists rather than create threats for each other.

With NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

With NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

Megyn Kelly: About the weapon that you announced today, the ICBM, have you actually tested it and it works? Because some analysts are suggesting that you have tested it, and it failed. And that is why you only showed animations of it today, and have not yet produced any actual videos.

Vladimir Putin: I spoke about several systems today. Which one are you referring to, the heavy-duty intercontinental ballistic missile?

Megyn Kelly: Yes, the one that you claimed renders defence systems useless.

Vladimir Putin: All the systems I mentioned today easily overcome missile defence. Each one of them. This is the point of all these developments.

Megyn Kelly: But you have tested it?

Vladimir Putin: Yes, of course.

Megyn Kelly: And it worked?

Vladimir Putin: It did, very well.

Some of these systems require additional work. Some of them are already deployed. Some are in serial production.

Getting back to the beginning of our conversation, there is a missile defence system deployed in Alaska. The distance between Russia's Chukotka and Alaska is only 60 kilometres.

Two systems are being deployed in Eastern Europe. One is already in place in Romania. Construction of another one is almost finished in Poland. There is also the navy. US ships are based very close to Russian shores both in the south and the north.

Imagine if we placed our missile systems along the US-Mexico or the US-Canada border in their territories on both sides and brought our ships in from both sides. What would you say? Would you take action? Meanwhile we would respond that you are escalating the arms race? Ridiculous, isn't it? This is exactly what is happening.

Megyn Kelly: Just to come back. Are you saying that we are in a new arms race?

Vladimir Putin: I want to say that the United States, when it withdrew from the ABM Treaty in 2002, forced us to begin developing new weapon systems. We told our partners about it, and they said, "Do whatever you like." Fine, that is what we did – so enjoy.

Megyn Kelly: You disclosed that Russia was developing an intercontinental ballistic missile that was powered by nukes that could render defence systems useless?

Vladimir Putin: Of course not. I did not know at the time how we could respond, to be honest. So it seems that our partners believed we would have nothing to respond with. Our economy was in dire straits, as well as the defence sector and the army. Therefore, I do not think anybody could have thought that in such a short period of time we would be able to make such a gigantic leap in the development of strategic weapons. I think the CIA must have told the US President that we would not do anything in response. While the Pentagon said something like, "And we will develop a powerful cutting-edge global anti-missile system." So they did.

But I will answer your question directly. I can tell you what we told our American partners, what I said personally at the time.

Megyn Kelly: Just to clarify, do you mean George W. Bush?

Vladimir Putin: Who was President in 2002, 2003 and 2004?

Megyn Kelly: But did this happen continuously or just during that timeframe?

Vladimir Putin: Actually, we kept going on about it for 15 years. I said, almost literally, that we would not develop a system of anti-missile defence the way you are doing. Firstly, because it is too expensive, and we do not have the resources. And secondly, we do not know yet how it would work: you do not know, and we certainly do not either.

But, to preserve the strategic balance so that you would not be able to zero out our nuclear deterrence forces, we will develop strike systems that will be able to break your anti-missile systems.

We said this plainly and openly, without any aggression, I just told stated we would do. Nothing personal.

And the response was, “We are not doing this against you, but you do whatever you want and we will presume that it is not directed against us, not against the United States.”

Megyn Kelly: Let us talk about present day and going forward, because what you said today was that you would use these weapons if Russia or her allies come under attack. And the question is whether you meant any attack or only a nuclear attack on Russia or its allies?

Vladimir Putin: I heard you.

I would also like to say that in 2004 – I mentioned this today –I said at a news conference that we will be developing weapons and even mentioned a concrete missile system, Avangard as we call it.

It is called Avangard now, but then I simply spoke of how it would work. I openly said how it would work. We hoped that this would be heard and the US would discuss it with us and discuss cooperation. But no, it was as if they had not heard us. Strategic offensive arms reduction and an antimissile defence system are different things.

Megyn Kelly: So, you didn't feel like you needed to disclose.

Vladimir Putin: We will be reducing the number of delivery vehicles and warheads under the New START Treaty. This means that the numbers will be reduced on both sides, but at the same time, one party, the United States, will be developing antimissile systems.

This will ultimately lead to a situation where all our nuclear missiles, Russia's entire missile potential will be reduced to zero. This is why we have always linked this. This is how it was in the Soviet-American times; these are natural things, everyone understands this.

Megyn Kelly: But is it your contention that the 4,000 nukes that Russia now has cannot penetrate the existing military defence system?

Vladimir Putin: They can. Today they can. But you are developing your antimissile systems. Antimissiles' range is increasing, and so is their accuracy. These weapons are being upgraded. This is why we need to respond to this appropriately, so that we are able to penetrate the system not only today but also tomorrow, when you acquire new weapons.

Megyn Kelly: That is why it would be a big deal if you really did have a nuclear-powered ICBM, which people are questioning, whether you have a usable one right now. When you said earlier that you have some that had tested positively and were excellent, you said others had not. So, for the record, right now, do you have a workable ICBM that is powered by nukes that you have tested successfully?

Vladimir Putin: Look, I did not say that the testing of some of these systems had been unsuccessful. All the tests were successful. It is just that each of these weapon systems is at a different stage of readiness. One is already on alert duty in line units. Another is in the same status. The work is proceeding on schedule with regard to some systems. We have no doubt that they will be in service, just as we had no doubt in 2004 that we would make a missile with the so-called cruise glide re-entry vehicle.

You have been referring all the time to intercontinental ballistic missiles, new missiles...

During an interview to American TV channel NBC.

During an interview to American TV channel NBC.

Megyn Kelly: You keep mentioning ICBMs.

Vladimir Putin: No. I am saying that we are developing just one brand of new heavy missile, which will replace a missile that we call Voyevoda, and you have dubbed it Satan. We will replace it with a new and more powerful missile. Here it is: a ballistic missile. All the other missiles are not ballistic.

Therein lies the entire meaning of this, because any antimissile defence system operates against ballistic missiles. But we have created a set of new strategic weapons that do not follow ballistic trajectories and the antimissile defence systems are powerless against them. This means that the US taxpayers' money has been wasted.

Megyn Kelly: But again, you say that you are going to use these weapons, these nuclear-powered weapons if Russia or its allies come under attack. Any attack or only a nuclear one?

Vladimir Putin: There are two reasons why we would respond with our nuclear deterrence forces: a nuclear attack on the Russian Federation or a conventional attack on the Russian Federation, given that it jeopardises the state's existence.

Megyn Kelly: That is consistent with the existing Russian doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons.

Vladimir Putin: Exactly, there are two possible reasons for a nuclear retaliation.

Megyn Kelly: Are you interested in new talks to extend the new strategic arms control treaty?

Vladimir Putin: The START-3 Treaty will expire soon. We are ready to continue this dialogue. What do we consider important? We agree to a reduction or to retaining current terms, to a reduction in delivery vehicles and warheads. However, today, when we are acquiring weapons that can easily breach all anti-ballistic missile systems, we no longer consider the reduction of ballistic missiles and warheads to be highly critical.

Megyn Kelly: So will these weapons be part of those discussions?

Vladimir Putin: In the context that the number of delivery vehicles and the number of warheads they can or will carry should, of course, be included in the grand total. And we will show you from a distance what this will look like.

Our military experts know how to conduct these inspections. In this sense, there are fine-tuned mechanisms and a sufficiently high level of trust. Generally, military experts are working together professionally. Politicians talk a lot, but military experts know what they are doing.

Megyn Kelly: You are a politician

Vladimir Putin: I am also an officer, and I am the Commander-in-Chief. I also served as a military intelligence officer for 17 years.

Megyn Kelly: Are you proud of that fact? Do you like the fact that you were in the KGB? Do you like people to know that?

Vladimir Putin: I do not see it from an emotional perspective. This gave me a lot of experience in the most diverse fields. I found it useful when I moved on to the civilian sector. Of course, this positive experience helped me in this sense.

Megyn Kelly: How so? How did it help?

Vladimir Putin: You know, after I left the intelligence service, I worked as Assistant Rector at St Petersburg University. I worked with people, established contacts, motivated people to act and brought them together. This is very important in the academic environment. Later, I was Deputy Mayor of St Petersburg. I assumed even greater and broader responsibility. I dealt with St Petersburg's international ties, and that is a metropolis with a population of five million people. While working in this capacity in St Petersburg, I first met Henry Kissinger. Of course, all this helped me in my work at that time, and my additional experience later helped me in my work in Moscow.

Megyn Kelly: Do you think it gives you an advantage over your adversaries and your allies?

Vladimir Putin: It is hard for me to say. I have no other experience. The only thing I know is that my partners, including heads of state and government, are exceptional and outstanding people. They have gone through stringent selection and elimination procedures. There are no chance people at this level. And each of them has his or her own advantages.

Megyn Kelly: What about that? You have been in power for a long time here in Russia, poised to go into another term as president. You have had four American presidents come and go during that time. I am wondering if you had a favourite, if there was one you liked more than the others?

Vladimir Putin: I am sorry, but this is not a very tactful question. Each of my partners is good in their own right. In all, we had good relations with practically all of them. With Bill Clinton, though he was leaving office, we were able to work together for several months. Then with presidents Bush, Obama, and with the current President too, but to a lesser extent, of course. All of them have something to respect them for. At the same time, we can argue and disagree with each other, and it happens often, we have diverging views on many issues, even on key ones, but we nevertheless managed to maintain normal, human relations. If it were not for that, it would have been not only harder, but much worse for everyone.

Megyn Kelly: How important do you think it is to project strength as a President?

Vladimir Putin: It is important not to project strength, but to show it. It is also important how we understand power. It does not mean banging the table with a fist or yelling. I think power has several dimensions.

Firstly, one should be confident that he is doing the right thing. Secondly, he must be ready to go all the way to achieve the goals.

Megyn Kelly: I wonder this because one of the images that we see of you in the United States is without the shirt on a horse. What is that about?

Vladimir Putin: Well, I have breaks. There are your Russian colleagues, there is the internet. But we do not do this on purpose. They take the photos they like. I have lots of photos of me in the office, working with documents, but nobody is interested in them.

Megyn Kelly: (Laughs.) You are saying they like the shirtless photos?

Vladimir Putin: You know, I have seen “photos” of me riding a bear. I have not ridden a bear yet, but there are such photos already.

Megyn Kelly: Now what about you personally? Your elections are coming up in two weeks. You are 65 years old now. Most people would be slowing down a little in their lives. Do you see that for yourself at all in the future?

Vladimir Putin: First, there are many politicians around the world who are older than I am and who are still working active.

Megyn Kelly: Including in my country.

Vladimir Putin: Not only in the United States, in other countries, too. There are many such people, in Europe and everywhere in the world. But if a person assumes the highest offices, he must work as if he is doing it for the first and last day of his life.

There is the Constitution. I have never violated it and have never changed it. Of course, if voters give me the opportunity to serve another term, I will do it to the best of my ability

Megyn Kelly: Last question for tonight, it is late. Forgive me; this may be a long one. What do you see as your greatest accomplishment as president and what do you see as your biggest mistake? And what did you learn from it?

Vladimir Putin: You know, these would be very close.

Our biggest achievement is that our economy has changed radically. It has almost doubled in scale. The number of people living below the poverty line has decreased by half.

At the same time, the number of people living below the poverty line remains large, and we must work on that. We must remove the gap between people with very high and very low incomes. In this context, we have many achievements and many unresolved issues.

Back in the early 2000s, our population shrank by nearly a million people a year. Can you imagine the scale of the disaster? Almost 900,000 people. We have reversed this trend. We have even achieved a natural population increase. We have very low infant mortality, and we have reduced maternal mortality to almost zero. We have prepared and are implementing a large-scale programme of supporting mothers and children. Our life expectancy is growing at a high rate.

NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

Much has changed in our economy. But we have not achieved our main economic goal: we have not yet changed the economic structure as we need to. We have not yet reached the required growth of labour efficiency. But we know how to do it, and I am confident that we will do it. The thing is that we had no opportunity to do this before, because until recently we did not have the macroeconomic conditions for taking specific measures in these areas.

At the beginning of our path, inflation was about 30 percent, but now it is 2.2 percent. Our gold and currency reserves are growing, and we have achieved macroeconomic stability. This offers us an opportunity to take the next step towards enhancing labour efficiency, attracting investment, including private funds, and changing the structure of our economy.

I am talking in large blocks. There are also more specific areas, such as modern technology and artificial intelligence, digitalisation, biology, medicine, genome research, and so on.

Megyn Kelly: Much more on the economy and how Russia is doing – tomorrow, and on your re-election. Thank you so much for your time. You have had a long day. I look forward to meeting up with you in Kaliningrad.

Vladimir Putin: Thank you.

* * *

Part 2, Kaliningrad, March 2, 2018

Megyn Kelly: Mr President, good to see you again.

Vladimir Putin: Good afternoon.

Megyn Kelly: So, we are here in Kaliningrad. Why is that? This is a port that, I am told, could not be more threatening to NATO, to Europe. It is a Russian military base. It is a Russian military port. It is home to some of your nukes. Are you trying to send a message?

President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Why Kaliningrad? Because I regularly visit Russian regions. This is one of these regions. This time, I came here to attend a conference of the regional media, which they decided to hold here. It was not my decision but theirs, your colleagues from the Russian regional media. I have an agreement with them that I attend such meetings once a year and meet with them, and that is why I am here today. It does not have anything to do with any external signals; it is our domestic affair.

Megyn Kelly: Understood. So, the last time we met in June, I asked you about the conclusion of our American intelligence agencies that Russia interfered in our presidential election. You told me that there was nothing specific in these reports, that if there is anything specific, you said, then there will be something to discuss. You told me, as they used to say in the KGB: addresses, houses, names. Since then, 13 Russians and three Russian-owned companies have been indicted by a special prosecutor named Robert Mueller in the United States for interfering in our election. The IRA agency, Yevgeny Prigozhin and others running a cyber warfare operation out of an office at 55 Savushkina Street, St Petersburg, Russia. Addresses, houses, names. So, can we have that discussion now?

Vladimir Putin: Of course. We not only can but I think we must discuss this issue if it keeps bothering you. But if you think that the question has been asked, I am ready to answer it.

Megyn Kelly: Why would you allow an attack like this on the United States?

Vladimir Putin: What makes you think that the Russian authorities and I gave our permission to anyone to do anything? You just named some people; I have heard about some of them, some of them I do not know, but they are just individuals, they do not represent the Russian government. Even if we suppose, though I am not 100 percent certain, that they did something during the US presidential election campaign (I simply do not know anything about it), it has nothing to do with the position of the Russian government. Nothing has changed since we spoke last time in St Petersburg. There are some names, so what? It could just as well be some Americans who while living here, interfered in your own political processes. It has not changed anything.

Megyn Kelly: But it was not Americans. It was Russians. And it was hundreds of people, a monthly budget of 2.5 billion dollars, all designed to attack the United States in a cyber warfare campaign. You are up for re-election right now. Should the Russians be concerned that you had no idea this was going on in your own home country, in your own hometown?

Vladimir Putin: You know, the world is very large and diverse. We have rather complicated relations between the United States and the Russian Federation. And some of our people have their own opinion on these relations and react accordingly. At the level of the Russian Government and at the level of the Russian President,

there has never been any interference in the internal political processes in the United States.

You have named some individuals and said that they are Russian. So what? Maybe, although they are Russian, they work for some American company. Maybe one of them worked for one of the candidates. I have no idea about this, these are not my problems. Do you know that, for example, after the presidential election in the US, some Ukrainian officials sent messages congratulating Hillary Clinton, even though Trump had won? Listen, what do we have to do with this?

Now, in my opinion, Mr Manafort, that is his name, he was initially accused of having something to do with Russia's interference in the presidential election in the United States. It turned out that just the opposite was true: in fact, he had connections to Ukraine. And he had some issues with Ukraine. What do we have to do with this?

You know, we have no desire to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. But if you are interested in talking about this, I would like to widen the scope of our discussion.

Megyn Kelly: I want to go through it. I do want to go through it. If we can do it step by step that would be more clear for the viewers who are following us. Let me ask you this: you say the Russian Federation did not order it. Do you condone these activities?

Vladimir Putin: We do not condone or order. But I say that there are internal political processes in the United States itself and there are people who wanted to achieve some result. They could have used some tools in other countries: such technologies exist. They could have sent relevant information from France, from Germany, from Asia, from Russia. What do we have to do with this?

Megyn Kelly: But it was not the Russians.

Vladimir Putin: Well, all right, Russians, but they were not state officials. Well, Russians, and so what? There are 146 million Russian people, so what?

Megyn Kelly: What have you done to satisfy yourself with that fact?

Vladimir Putin: What fact?

Megyn Kelly: What have you done to satisfy yourself that it was not Russians? You suggest maybe it was Americans, maybe it was the French. What have you done to satisfy yourself that the 13 Russian nationals who have just been indicted, those three Russian companies, including, as you pointed out, some of your close friends, were not behind this? This has caused an international incident.

Vladimir Putin: I know that they do not represent the Russian state or the Russian government. And I have no idea what they did and what they were guided by. Even if they did something, then our American colleagues should not just say something in interviews with the media but give us specific data, with proof. We are ready to consider it and talk about it. But you know what I would like to say...

Megyn Kelly: That would be great. Will you extradite them to the United States?

Vladimir Putin: Never. Just like the United States, Russia does not extradite its citizens anywhere. Have you ever extradited any of your citizens? This is my first point.

Second, I do not believe anything illegal was committed.

And, third, we have repeatedly suggested that the United States and Russia establish relations in this area and sign a corresponding interstate treaty on extraditing criminals. The United States has evaded this proposal and does not want to sign it with Russia. What are you hoping for? That we will extradite people to you whereas you will not? This is not a proper way to go about international affairs.

There is more to it. Please listen to me and take to your viewers and listeners what I am about to say. We are holding discussions with our American friends and partners, people who represent the government by the way, and when they claim that some Russians interfered in the US elections, we tell them (we did so fairly recently at a very high level): "But you are constantly interfering in our political life." Would you believe it, they are not even denying it.

Do you know what they told us last time? They said, "Yes, we do interfere, but we are entitled to do so, because we are spreading democracy, and you are not, and so you cannot do it." Do you think this is a civilised and modern approach to international affairs?

Yesterday, you and I talked about nuclear weapons, and that once the United States and the Soviet Union realised that they were moving towards possible mutual destruction, they agreed on rules of conduct in the security sphere given the availability of weapons of mass destruction. Let us now agree on how to behave in cyberspace, which never used to have such a big role and scope.

Megyn Kelly: Okay, so let me ask you: you have stated explicitly you believe that America interfered in Russian elections, right?

Vladimir Putin: We made a proposal to the United States, our partners back during President Obama's watch: let us agree on how we build our relations, develop common rules acceptable for all, and adhere to them in cyberspace.

The first reaction of the Obama Administration was negative, but then, at the very end of his presidential term, they told us: "Yes, it is interesting, let us talk about it." But again, everything disappeared and vanished in some swamp. Well, let us agree on this, we are all for it.

With NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

With NBC anchor Megyn Kelly.

Megyn Kelly: Okay, so let me ask you: you have stated explicitly you believe that America interfered in Russian elections, right?

Vladimir Putin: The US does this all the time.

Megyn Kelly: But Russia did not interfere in America's election?

Vladimir Putin: No, and there are no plans in Russia to do so. It is impossible. It is impossible for us.

Megyn Kelly: Why not? Why wouldn't you?

Vladimir Putin: First, we have principles whereby we do not allow others to interfere in our domestic affairs and do not poke our noses into other people's business. This is a principle we have. This is the first point I wanted to make.

My second point is that we do not have a comparable number of tools.

Megyn Kelly: Come on. Come on.

Vladimir Putin: No, we simply cannot do that.

Megyn Kelly: You told me just yesterday, because we were amping our missile defence systems, we have to respond in kind with increased nuclear technology. Now you want me to believe that we attacked your Russian elections and you say, we are going to take that road.

Vladimir Putin: This is not a matter of missiles. This is a completely different area.

In addition, we lack the necessary instruments.

Megyn Kelly: Cyber warfare.

Vladimir Putin: This is a completely different area of activity. It has nothing to do with cyber warfare. Russia does not have the kind of tools the US has. We do not have global media outlets comparable to CNN. You think we do? We have Russia Today, and nothing else. This is the only Russian media outlet, and even then, it was designated...

Megyn Kelly: Is that cyber tools?

Vladimir Putin: You keep interrupting me, this is impolite.

Megyn Kelly: Forgive me, sir.

Vladimir Putin: We have one media outlet, Russia Today, and even it was designated as a foreign agent so that it is unable to do its work properly. It is the only media outlet of this kind, while the US has a whole range of outlets, and immense possibilities online. The internet is yours. The United States control all the internet governance tools, all located on US territory. Do you think that a comparison can be made in any way? This is simply impossible. Let us come together and agree on the rules of conduct in cyber space. But it is the US who refuses to do so.

Megyn Kelly: David and Goliath. The Mueller indictment is very specific about what the Russians were doing. There is a specific email, a damning email that is cited therein by a female Russian who appears to have been caught red-handed. She says as follows, "We had a slight crisis here at work. The FBI busted our activity. Not a joke. So I got preoccupied with covering tracks together with the colleagues. I created all these pictures and posts and the Americans believe that it was written by their people." And now you want to sit here and say you do not have the tools to do it? That we have the market cyber interference? This is just not true.

Vladimir Putin: I do not even understand what you are talking about. You see, this is just nonsense. The US Congress analysed the information from Russian sources that appeared online. The information coming from media outlets like Russia Today was also analysed and turned out to be one hundredth of a percent of the overall information flow in the United States, just one hundredth of a percent. Do you think that this fraction had any impact on the election? This is just nonsense, don't you see? This is the same old business when the people who lost refuse to admit it. You see, I have commented on this on a number of occasions. It has yet to be seen what the US policy toward Russia will be like under the current administration. Many things remain unclear, since we have not yet been able to start working or to establish normal contacts.

However, it is absolutely clear that the current US President adopted a specific stance in terms of domestic policy, and decided to reach out to the people who were ready to support his campaign promises. This is what led to his victory, not any kind of outside interference. To claim otherwise makes no sense. Will anyone believe that Russia, a country located thousands of kilometres away, could use two or three Russians, as you have said, and whom I do not know, to meddle in the elections and influence their outcome? Don't you think that it sounds ridiculous?

Megyn Kelly: Now you are talking about causation. But I am still on whether you did it. And it is not true that you do not know the individuals who were accused of

conducting this. One of your good friends is actually accused of helping conduct this. His name is Yevgeny Prigozhin. Do you know him?

Vladimir Putin: I know this man, but he is not a friend of mine. This is just twisting the facts. There is such a businessman; he works in the restaurant business or something. But he is not a state official; we have nothing to do with him.

Megyn Kelly: After you heard about him being indicted, did you pick up the phone and call him?

Vladimir Putin: Certainly not. I have plenty of other things to worry about.

Megyn Kelly: He is your friend. He has been indicted.

Vladimir Putin: Did you hear what I just said? He is not my friend. I know him, but he is not a friend of mine. Was I not clear? There are many people like that. There are 146 million people in Russia. That is less than in the US, but it is still a lot.

Megyn Kelly: He is a prominent businessman.

Vladimir Putin: A prominent businessman? So what? There are many prominent people in Russia. He is not a state official, he does not work for the government; he is an individual, a businessman.

Megyn Kelly: Some people say his real job is to do your dirty work.

Vladimir Putin: Who are those people? And what dirty work? I do not do any dirty work. Everything I do is in plain view. This is your prerogative; some people in your country enjoy doing dirty work. You think we do the same. That is not true.

Megyn Kelly: It is a) the fact that you know him, you admit that. He is a prominent Russian businessman. And he is specifically accused of running this operation; b) this is the same man who has been accused of sending Russian mercenaries into Syria and they attacked a compound held by American back militia. This guy gets around.

Vladimir Putin: You know, this man could have a wide range of interests, including, for example, an interest in the Syrian fuel and energy complex. But we do not support him in any way. We do not get in his way but we do not support him either. It is his own personal initiative.

Megyn Kelly: You did not know about it?

Vladimir Putin: Well, I know that there are several companies, several Russian companies there, maybe his among others, but this has nothing to do with our policy in Syria. If he does anything there, he does not coordinate it with us; he probably coordinates it with the Syrian authorities or the Syrian businesses he works with. We

do not interfere in this. Does your government interfere in every step your businesses take, especially small businesses? It is essentially a medium-sized business. So, does your president interfere in the affairs of every medium-sized US business? That is just nonsense, isn't it?

Megyn Kelly: If the 13 Russian nationals plus three Russian companies did in fact interfere in our elections, is that okay with you?

Vladimir Putin: I do not care. I do not care at all because they do not represent the government.

Megyn Kelly: You do not care?

Vladimir Putin: Not at all. They do not represent state interests. If you are worried about anything, state it officially, send us documents proving it and explain what exactly those people are accused of. We will see if they have violated Russian laws...

Megyn Kelly: I did that.

Vladimir Putin: No, this is not true. If they violated Russian law, we will prosecute them. If they did not, there is nothing to prosecute them for in Russia. But after all, you must understand that people in Russia do not live under US law but under Russian law. This is how it is. If you want to reach an agreement with us, let us negotiate, choose the subject, make an agreement and sign it. But you refuse to do this. I am telling you for the third time: we have proposed working together on cyberspace issues. But the US refuses to work like this and instead throws 13 Russians to the media. Maybe they are not even Russians, but Ukrainians, Tatars or Jews, but with Russian citizenship, which should also be checked: maybe they have dual citizenship or a Green Card; maybe, the US paid them for this. How can you know that? I do not know either.

Megyn Kelly: I will give you one piece of evidence. Andrei Krutskikh is an advisor to the Kremlin when it comes to cyber issues. In his speech to an information security forum in February 2016, he reportedly said, quote, "I am warning you. We are on the verge of having something in the information arena which will allow us to talk to the Americans as equals." What do you think he meant? Because it certainly sounds like a threat right before an election hack.

Vladimir Putin: Sometimes I think you are joking.

Megyn Kelly: No, I am deadly serious.

Vladimir Putin: A man says something about how he sees our contacts and our work with our foreign partners, the US in this case, in a certain area. I have no idea what he said. Ask him what he meant. Do you think I control everything?

Megyn Kelly: He is an advisor to the Kremlin on cyber.

During an interview to American TV channel NBC.

During an interview to American TV channel NBC.

Vladimir Putin: So what? There are 2,000 people working in the administration; do you think I control everyone? Peskov is sitting in front of me, he is my press secretary and he sometimes says things that I see on television and think, what is he talking about? Who told him to say this?

I have no idea what he said. Ask him. Do you really think I can comment on everything administration or government personnel say? I have my own work to do.

Megyn Kelly: I think when it comes to our two countries you know exactly what is going on. And this is Russia's problem now. It is. The heads of the US intelligence agencies just testified to Congress that Russia, Russia poses the greatest threat in the world to the American security, greater than ISIS. You cannot get the sanctions lifted. The relationship between our two countries is nearly non-existent right now. Did not this interference, whether you knew or you did not know about it, backfire against Russia?

Vladimir Putin: Listen, you are exaggerating. I do not know about someone saying something and I am not going to comment on it, and neither do I follow what is going on at your Congress.

I am more interested in what is going on at the State Duma, if they have approved a bill on a healthcare or utilities issue; if they delay certain discussions or not. Is a special interest lobbying against a nature conservation, or forestry, or environmental law? This is what I am interested in. You should follow what they are discussing in Congress; I have enough on my plate without that.

Megyn Kelly: You know that the sanctions have not been lifted. You know that the relationship between our two countries is at not an all-time low but is getting there. And this is in part the reason. And so, Russian interference in the American elections is important.

Vladimir Putin: Listen, sanctions have nothing to do with the myth of some Russian interference in the US election. Sanctions are about something else entirely: the desire to halt Russia's progress, to contain Russia. This policy of containing Russia has been pursued for decades, on and off. Now it is back. It is a misguided policy, which not only affects Russian-US relations but also US businesses because it frees up space for their competitors on our market.

You and I were at the St Petersburg Economic Forum. The largest business delegation was from the US. People want to work with us, but they are not allowed to; they are contained in order to contain Russia. They have been contained and contained so that our defence industry cannot develop, among other things. We discussed this

yesterday. Did they manage to achieve anything? No, they did not: they have never managed to contain Russia and never will. It is simply, you know, an attempt with tools that...

Megyn Kelly: Can we contain Russia in cyber warfare?

Vladimir Putin: I think it is impossible to contain Russia anywhere. You need to understand this. Listen, you cannot even contain North Korea. What are you talking about? Why would you do that? Why do we have to contain, attack or cast suspicion on each other? We are offering cooperation.

Megyn Kelly: That is my question to you. That is my question to you. Why, why would you interfere in our election time and time again? And why would not you, for that matter? Let me put it to you that way. You have spent a day, every time I have seen you, in St Petersburg, in Moscow and now here in Kaliningrad, telling me that America has interfered in Russia's electoral process and that Russia has a robust cyber warfare arsenal. And yet you want us to believe that you did not deploy it. Do you understand how implausible that seems, sir?

Vladimir Putin: That does not seem implausible to me at all, because we do not have such a goal, to interfere. We do not see what we have to gain by interfering. There is no such goal. Let us suppose this was our goal. Why, just for the sake of it? What is the goal?

Megyn Kelly: Creating chaos. That is the goal.

Vladimir Putin: Listen to me. Not long ago President Trump said something absolutely correct. He said that if Russia's goal was to sow chaos, it has succeeded. But it is not the result of Russian interference, but your political system, the internal struggle, the disorder and division. Russia has nothing to do with it whatsoever. Get your own affairs in order first. And the way the question is framed, as I mentioned – that you can interfere anywhere because you bring democracy, but we cannot – is what causes conflicts. You have to show your partners respect, and they will respect you.

Megyn Kelly: You once said, Mr President, that you believed the interference in our election was done by some patriotic Russians. An answer like that, you understand, will lead people to ask, are you the patriotic Russian?

Vladimir Putin: I am the President of the Russian Federation. It is my constitutional duty to address a host of issues concerning the protection of Russia's interests. When I spoke of patriotic people, I meant that you can imagine that, in the face of a deteriorating Russian-US relationship, people – and people use cyberspace – will express their points of view, their opinions, including on this global network. Of course, they are free to do so. How can we really prohibit it? But we cannot control it

and, most importantly, we are not directing it. Please note that this is not the position of the Russian state.

Megyn Kelly: You cannot? The Russian intelligence services cannot find out who is doing this, bring it to your attention? You are unable to stop it?

Vladimir Putin: Perhaps if we looked into it carefully we would find those people, if they exist. But we have no such goal. We propose holding official talks and you refuse. So what do you want? For us to open investigations just because Congress said so? Let us sit down, sign an agreement on working in cyberspace and comply with it. How do you want to do it? There is no other way of conducting international affairs.

Megyn Kelly: So you have no goal to stop it. So what does that mean for our elections in 2018 and 2020? We can expect more of the same?

Vladimir Putin: I did not say that stopping it is not a goal. I said we had...

Megyn Kelly: You just said that.

Vladimir Putin: No, I did not. I said we do not interfere in our people's private lives and cannot stop them from expressing their opinion, including on the internet. But I also said that Russia's official position is that we do not interfere in the political processes of other countries as a state. That is the most important part. I want it to be recorded in our conversation today, for people in the US to understand this.

Megyn Kelly: And forgive me, but I am trying to get to one level below that, whether you have the goal of stopping your own citizens from behaving in this manner, which has undermined relationships between our two countries?

Vladimir Putin: I want to say that we will stand in the way of everything that violates Russian law or our international agreements. For the third or fourth time, I will say that we are ready to sign a corresponding agreement with the United States. You still refuse. Let us sit down at the negotiating table, identify what we consider important, sign the document and comply with it with proper verification.

Megyn Kelly: You are the President, sir. Respectfully, I still did not hear an answer about whether you want to crack down on the Russians who committed those crimes. It sounds like the answer is no. If I am wrong, please correct me. I understand you want a negotiation with the United States directly. But internally, you could put a stop to this if you had the desire.

Vladimir Putin: I want you to listen to me. We will counter anything that violates current Russian law. If the actions of our citizens – no matter what they are and whom they target – violate current Russian laws, we will respond. If they do not violate Russian law, we cannot respond.

Megyn Kelly With this?

Vladimir Putin: With anything. If no Russian law has been broken, no one can be held accountable.

Megyn Kelly: Will this violate Russian law?

Vladimir Putin: I must look at what they have done. Give us the materials. Nobody has given us anything.

Megyn Kelly: You know this. Hacking into the Democratic National Committee, hacking into John Podesta's email, creating interference in our election by creating bots that spread false information on Twitter, on Facebook. Spreading this information when it comes to Black Lives Matter, when it comes to the shooting we just had in Parkland, Florida, when it comes to our presidential election. Spreading fake news in order to alter the course of the presidential race. That is what I am talking about.

Vladimir Putin: With all due respect for you personally and for the body of the people's representatives, the US Congress – and we treat all these people with respect – I want you to really understand this. Do you have people with training in law? Of course, you do. One hundred percent. Highly educated people. We cannot even launch an investigation without cause. Our conversation today or an inquiry in the US Congress is not sufficient cause. Give us at least an official inquiry with a statement of facts, send us an official paper. After all, a conversation on air cannot be grounds for an investigation.

Megyn Kelly: The intelligence agencies in the United States, now a special prosecutor with a criminal indictment – that is not enough for you to look into it?

Vladimir Putin: Absolutely not. If you do not have legal training, I can assure you that an inquiry is required for this.

Megyn Kelly I do.

Vladimir Putin: Then you should understand that a corresponding official inquiry should be sent to the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Russian Federation. That said, we do not even have a treaty on how to proceed. But send us something in writing at least.

Megyn Kelly Vladimir Putin could not order an investigation into whether this was done in a way that undermines its relations with a major partner, the United States of America?

Vladimir Putin: Give us something in writing, an official inquiry. We will look at it.

Megyn Kelly: You said that the last time and now I am back with an indictment.

Vladimir Putin: There is nothing in writing. Send an inquiry to the Prosecutor-General's Office. It is necessary to go through official channels rather than with the help of the media and harsh words in the US Congress, levelling accusations against us that are totally unsubstantiated. Give us something in writing.

Megyn Kelly: Let me ask you this: you were President back in 2001 when the FBI arrested one of its own, Robert Hanssen, for spying for the Russian Federation. In retaliation, President George W. Bush kicked 50 illegit Russian spies out of the United States, and the Kremlin did the same, throwing 50 Americans out of the US Embassy in Moscow immediately. This is a tradition that goes back for decades. December 2016: after our intelligence agencies agreed that Russians interfered in our election President Obama expelled dozens of Russians and seized two Russian-owned properties. And yet, you did nothing, you did nothing in response. Why not?

Vladimir Putin: We believed and I still believe that there were no grounds for this whatsoever. This is the first point.

Secondly, this was done in clear violation of international law and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The totally groundless seizure of our property constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. We were strongly hoping for a response from the new Administration. But since none is forthcoming – and I have already said this and the Foreign Minister repeated this – we will turn to the appropriate courts of the United States to protect our interests.

Megyn Kelly: Let me ask you about President Trump. Any time he says anything about you it is supremely deferential. Never a harsh word for you. Although if you look at the ways he speaks about members of his own party, even members of his own staff, never mind of the other political leaders, he frequently personally insults them. Why do you think he is so nice to you?

Vladimir Putin: This is not about being nice to me personally, in my view. I think he is an experienced person, a businessman with very extensive experience and he understands that if you need to partner with someone, you must treat your future or current partner with respect, otherwise nothing will come of it. I think this is a purely pragmatic approach. This is my first point.

Second, even though this is his first term as President, he is a quick study, and he understands perfectly well that trading accusations or insults at our level is a road to nowhere. It would just mean depriving our countries of their last chance for dialogue, simply the last chance. This would be extremely unfortunate.

You may have noticed that I, for my part, show respect to him and all my other colleagues, not only in the United States, but also Europe and Asia.

Megyn Kelly: You may, but the truth is our President has referred to the leader of North Korea as “little rocket man.” So he is not quite as diplomatic depending on who he is talking about. I am sure you saw that, yes?

Vladimir Putin: Yes, I did. You are aware of our position on that account. We urge everyone to show restraint.

Megyn Kelly: So what do you think of President Trump?

Vladimir Putin: The question is not entirely appropriate, because President Trump’s work should be assessed by his constituents, the American people. There is one thing I would like to say: like it or not – we may dislike certain things as well – he does his best to keep the election promises that he made to the American people. So, he is consistent in this sense. I think that, in fact, this is the only proper way to show respect for the people who voted for him.

Megyn Kelly: He has praised your leadership. Is he an effective leader?

Vladimir Putin: Well, again, this is up to the American people to decide. He has strong leadership qualities, of course, because he takes responsibility when he makes decisions. To reiterate, whether some people like his decisions or not, he still goes ahead and does it. This, of course, is a sign of leadership qualities.

Megyn Kelly: Do you ever read his tweets?

Vladimir Putin: No, I do not.

Megyn Kelly: Do you ever tweet?

Vladimir Putin: No.

Megyn Kelly: Why not?

Vladimir Putin: I have other means of expressing my point of view or making decisions. Well, Donald is a more modern person.

Megyn Kelly: Would you say he is more colourful than you are?

Vladimir Putin: Maybe.

Megyn Kelly: Let me ask you one question going back to the election interference issue. There are two theories on you at least. One is that when Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State you felt that she interfered with the elections here in 2011 and 2012, inciting protests here, including against you and it made you angry. Two is when the Panama Papers were leaked showing a massive money trail that led to you

and some of your associates that that was the last drop for you. Do either of those things make you angry?

Vladimir Putin: This is complete nonsense. Speaking about Hillary, I know her personally, and we generally always maintained a good dialogue every time we met. I cannot understand why at some stage... Her advisers probably suggested that she focus part of her election campaign on criticising developments in Russia. Well, it was their choice. I never took it personally. It was just their policy.

As for all those files, this is complete nonsense. They mention some of my friends. So what? As you know, this has had no effect whatsoever. This is nothing but nonsense and media chatter. I have forgotten all about it. I do not remember what it was all about. Actually, nothing of this kind can make me angry. I am guided by pragmatic considerations, not emotions.

Megyn Kelly: Since you mention it, a friend of yours was mentioned in those Panama Papers. Let me ask you about him. Sergei Roldugin. Legend has it that this guy introduced you to your ex-wife, that he is the godfather to one of your daughters. He is a cellist by trade, right?

Vladimir Putin: Yes, I know him very well. He is a friend and a wonderful musician. He has devoted his life to art and music. By the way, many artists here are also involved in business one way or another. Apart from me, Sergey also has other ties in the country, including business people who have involved him in this work. He has made his money legally. He has not made hundreds of billions [of dollars]. Everything he earned he has spent on the purchase of musical instruments abroad, which he has brought to Russia. He uses some of these instruments personally, for example the cello. He plays the cello.

Megyn Kelly: A \$12 million Stradivarius.

Vladimir Putin: Yes, something like that. But it is a unique instrument.

Megyn Kelly: That is a lot of money.

Vladimir Putin: Yes, it is. He must be eccentric, but then, all artists are eccentric. To spend all this money on musical instruments. I think he bought two cellos and two violins. He plays one himself and has given the others to other musicians, who are playing them. He has brought all these instruments to Russia.

Megyn Kelly: According to the Panama Papers, this mass of series of leaked documents about offshore bank accounts, he has got assets, this cellist, of at least a \$100 million, including a one-eighth stake in Russia's biggest TV ad agency, a \$6 million yacht, a stake in a truck manufacturer, a 3-percent interest in a Russian bank. He must be one heck of a musician.

Vladimir Putin: Well, I know nothing about his business, but I do know that he has only enough money to buy these musical instruments. All the rest is on paper. He does not have anything else apart from what he has bought. Maybe he does have something else, but you should ask him about it. I do not control his life.

Megyn Kelly: But the question is how a cellist makes that much money? People ask it because many people believe that is really your money.

Vladimir Putin: Listen, just look at many Russian art figures, and probably there are people like this in your country as well. After all, there are art personalities in the US, including Hollywood celebrities who either run restaurants or own some stock. Aren't there many people like this in the US entertainment industry and art world? I am sure that there are many people of this kind, and more than in Russia. In Russia, there are also quite a few art figures who do business apart from their creative work. In fact, there are many such people, and he is just one of them. So what? The question is not whether he runs a business or not or whether he made a profit or not. The question is whether there were any violations. As far as I know, he did not commit any violations.

Megyn Kelly: That is right. There is no issue with making money. I am an American, we are capitalists. The question is whether that is really your money.

Vladimir Putin: This is not my money, that is for sure. I do not even know how much Mr Roldugin has, as I have already said. As far as I know, he has not committed any violations in his business and creative undertakings, he did not violate any Russian law or norm.

Megyn Kelly: Speaking of money, back in the 1980s and 1990s, in the wake of multiple bankruptcies, the Trump Organisation found it hard to secure loans in the United States and looked elsewhere. Mr Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr., said that ten years ago and I quote, "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets. We see a lot of money pouring in from Russia." Were you aware of the degree of Russian money flowing into properties?

Vladimir Putin: This is all nonsense. There were no investments in Trump properties in Russia, as far as I know. I do not even know if there were any serious plans for making these investments.

Megyn Kelly: Come on.

Vladimir Putin: Look, you keep thinking that the whole world revolves around you. That is not the way it is.

Megyn Kelly: It is not about me. It is about what Donald Trump Jr. says.

During an interview to American TV channel NBC.
During an interview to American TV channel NBC.

Vladimir Putin: Do you think we know everything what Donald Trump's son has said? You see, this is not the way things are. Donald came here to Russia when he was not even nominated. I did not even know that he had been to Russia. I learned about it only afterwards, when I was told that as it turned out he had been to Russia. By the same token, I ignore what his son said on this occasion. Did Donald Trump's son infringe on any rules or laws? If so, charge him. If he did not, why do you keep picking on every word?

Megyn Kelly: Years ago, before Donald Trump ran for president, he said he knew you and he spoke with you a lot. Is that true?

Vladimir Putin: No, I had never met him. You mean before he became President and before he decided to run for President, right?

Megyn Kelly: Before he ran.

Vladimir Putin: No, we had not met. We never talked to each other, neither by phone or otherwise.

Megyn Kelly: You are poised to be re-elected for your fourth term as president here in Russia, right?

Vladimir Putin: We will see what the Russian voters decide.

Megyn Kelly: How does somebody like Vladimir Putin, who is as popular as you are here in Russia, feel any threat from Navalny? I realise he has got in legal trouble, but could you pardon this guy and let him mount a meaningful challenge to you?

Vladimir Putin: As for the question about whom I could work together with and whom I would not want to work together with, I can tell you in all honesty that I would like to and am ready to work with people who want Russia to become a stronger, more effective, competitive and self-reliant country. But to achieve that, the people we are talking about should have a clear plan of action designed to promote national development in today's environment. There are people like that, including ...

Megyn Kelly: But Navalny is such a man and has a fair amount of popularity here in Russia.

Vladimir Putin: Any person can be pardoned if he deserves it.

Megyn Kelly: Why don't you?

Vladimir Putin: If he deserves it. There are no exceptions for anyone. No exceptions. But we are not talking about pardon now; we are talking about certain political forces. They do not have a development programme for the country. What do they have that is positive and what I like? That they expose problems, and this is actually good, this

is the right thing to do, and it needs to be done. But this is not enough for the country's progressive development, simply not enough. Because focusing on problems is not enough; moreover, it is even dangerous, because it can lead to destruction, while we need creation.

Megyn Kelly: Our political analysts tell me you are exactly right about your chances in the upcoming election, that you have no meaningful opponents so you will likely win. What is next after that? The Chinese President just abolished term limits. Is that something you would ever do?

Vladimir Putin: I do not think that I should talk about my political plans with you now at this meeting, in this conversation, in this interview for American television. But I think I told you yesterday, I never changed the Constitution or adjusted it to my needs, and I do not have any such plans today.

As for China, before criticising decisions in a country like China, you need to think and recall that there are 1.5 billion people living there and, after thinking about it, you need to come to the conclusion that we all are interested in China being a stable and prosperous state. How it should be done best, it is probably up to the Chinese people and the Chinese leadership.

Megyn Kelly: Can you leave power? Because some of the experts that we have spoken to have said it would be near impossible for you because someone in your position would likely either be thrown in jail by your adversaries or worse. They say it is actually sad that you will have to stay in power in order to stay well.

Vladimir Putin: What your so-called experts say is their wishful thinking. I have heard a lot of nonsense like this. Why do you think that I will necessarily be succeeded by people ready to destroy everything I have done in recent years? Maybe, on the contrary, a government will come to power determined to strengthen Russia, to create a future for it, to build a platform for development for the new generations. Why have you suddenly decided that some destroyers would arrive and wipe out whatever they can? Maybe there are people who would like this, including in the United States. But I do not think they are right, because the United States, I think, should be more interested in the other option – in Russia being a stable, prosperous and developing country, I mean if you really can look at least 25–50 years ahead.

Megyn Kelly: Have you groomed a successor? Is there anyone in mind?

Vladimir Putin: I have been thinking about this since 2000. Thinking is not a crime, but in the end, the choice will still be up to the Russian people. Whether I like or hate someone, other candidates will run for president and eventually the citizens of the Russian Federation will make the final decision.

Megyn Kelly: Let me ask you a bit about Syria. Do you believe the chemical weapon attacks in Syria are fake news?

Vladimir Putin: Of course.

Firstly, the Syrian Government destroyed its chemical weapons long ago.

Secondly, we know about the militants' plans to simulate chemical attacks by the Syrian army.

And thirdly, all the attempts that have been made repeatedly in the recent past, and all the accusations were used to consolidate the efforts against Assad. We are aware of these goings-on, and they are not interesting. One wants to say, "Boring."

Megyn Kelly: The bodies of dead children thanks to sarin gas attacks? That is boring?

Vladimir Putin: Are you sure that these deaths are the result of chemical attacks by the Syrian Government? I, on the contrary, blame this on the criminals and radicals, on the terrorists who are staging these crimes in order to lay the blame on President Assad.

Megyn Kelly: That is not what the United Nations has concluded. They autopsied the bodies of the dead children. Your Foreign Minister suggested it was all made up. Do you believe that?

Vladimir Putin: Of course. I am absolutely sure that it was. Because there was no serious investigation.

Megyn Kelly: There were no dead bodies?

Vladimir Putin: Maybe there were dead bodies, which is to be expected in a war. Look how they liberated Mosul: it was razed to the ground. Look how they liberated Raqqa: the dead have not yet been removed from the ruins or buried. Do you want to talk about this?

Megyn Kelly: That is what we call whataboutism. That is you pointing to somebody else's bad behaviour to justify your wrong or that of your ally. We are talking about Assad and dead children thanks to sarin gas. Sarin gas. And you are telling an international audience it never happened?

Vladimir Putin: Look here, to be sure that this was indeed how it happened, a thorough investigation must be conducted and evidence must be gathered at the site. Nothing of this has been done. Let us do this.

Megyn Kelly: Let us do it. They wanted to investigate the helicopters and the UN wanted to go and check the helicopters that were on site. And Russia said no. Russia said no. Why?

Vladimir Putin: There was nothing of the kind. Russia did not say “No.” Russia is for a full-scale investigation. If you do not know this, I am telling you this now. It is not true that we are against an objective investigation. That is a lie. It is a lie just as the vial with the white substance that allegedly proved that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, which the CIA gave to the US Secretary of State. He later apologised, but the damage had been done, the country had been ruined. This is yet another piece of fake news, which has no substance behind it. An investigation should be conducted to gather the substance. We are in favour of such an investigation.

Megyn Kelly: Since the beginning of the year, there have been at least four chlorine-based chemical weapons attacks in Syria. Our Secretary of State Tillerson just said that Russia bears the responsibility for this given your earlier promises to reign in chemical weapons attacks in Syria. Your response?

Vladimir Putin: I will tell you that a) we have nothing to do with this, and that we demand a full-scale investigation.

As for crimes, go back to Raqqa and at least bury the dead bodies, which are still lying amid the ruins after the air strikes at residential neighbourhoods there. And investigate these attacks. This will give you something to do.

Megyn Kelly: One of the questions that our audiences have is how do we walk this back? How do we get to the place where these two great nations are less adversaries and something closer to allies, which we clearly are not right now. Do you agree we are not?

Vladimir Putin: Unfortunately, we are not. But we were not the ones who made the US our adversary. It was the US, the US Congress, who called Russia its adversary. Why did you do that? Did Russia impose sanctions on the United States? No, it was the US that imposed sanctions on us.

Megyn Kelly: You know why.

Vladimir Putin: No, I do not. Can I ask you a different question? Why did you encourage the government coup in Ukraine? Why did you do that? The US directly acknowledged spending billions of dollars to this end. This was openly acknowledged by US officials. Why do they support government coups and armed fighting in other countries? Why has the US deployed missile systems along our borders?

Listen, Russia and the US should sit down and talk it over in order to get things straight. I have the impression that this is what the current President wants, but he is prevented from doing it by some forces. But we are ready to discuss any matter, be it missile-related issues, cyberspace or counterterrorism efforts. We are ready to do it any moment. But the US should also be ready. The time will come when the political elite in the US will be pushed by public opinion to move in this direction. We will be ready the instant our partners are ready.

Megyn Kelly: Before I leave you, what do you hope your legacy will be?

Vladimir Putin: I strongly believe that my legacy would be to create a powerful development momentum for Russia, and make the country a resilient and balanced democracy that is able to benefit from the latest advances of the technology revolution. We will keep up our efforts to improve our political system and the judiciary. And I am certain that all this, taken together, would strengthen the unity of the Russian Federation and the unity of our people, and enable us to move forward with confidence for years to come.

Megyn Kelly: Mr President, thank you very much for having us here.

Vladimir Putin: Thank you.

1

JEREMY HUNT
ANDREW MARR SHOW
29TH OCTOBER 2017
JEREMY HUNT

AM: Can I ask you, on your watch has provision for mental health got better or worse?

JH: It's got better, but it needs to get a lot better still. We are treating now 1400 more people every day. We are seeing a real increase in resources hitting the frontline. But when we made that historic change in the law in 2012, when we said that we wanted to end the terrible injustice of the fact that if you break a leg you get treated immediately in an A&E, but if you have a mental health crisis you might have to wait weeks or months to be seen. To change that is going to take a bit of time and we are making progress in the right direction but there's a lot more to do.

AM: You say it's getting better. For a young person who may have an anxiety disorder or depression or an eating disorder or whatever, how long should they have to wait before they're seen by the NHS?

JH: Well, we've said for an eating disorder we have introduced a waiting time standard. I think we're the first country in the world to do that for eating disorders. We've said if it's an emergency you should be seen the same week. But you should certainly be seen within four weeks. We are setting up a whole series of eating disorders units across the country.

AM: Psychosis, depression?

JH: On psychosis again, another example, we are the first country in the world to set up a waiting time standard for your first incidence of psychosis. But in order to deliver that we have to

2

JEREMY HUNT

train up staff, we have to train up psychiatrists, mental health nurses, and that's why I announced in July an additional 21,000 posts that will be recruiting for in the NHS in order to deliver those ambitions.

AM: The Quality Care Commission did a study on this and found some young people were waiting 18 months for any kind of treatment.

JH: Well, that is totally unacceptable. And that is why a couple of years ago we put together a big report, it was actually authored by Paul Farmer, who's the Chief Executive of MIND, as to how we make progress towards this parity of esteem. And what we said was that by 2020-21 we would aim to treat a million more people every year. We've put a billion pounds extra of resources into mental health. But that it was going to take some time to get

there because of all the training of new staff, the expansion of capacity that you need. But we are, as I say, making good progress in delivering that.

AM: You make it sound like it's all very sunny, but the Children's Society said, for instance, 30,000 children were turned away in a single year, getting no help at all from the NHS. There is a real problem. And if we look at why there is a real problem it comes down to resources. When you came to power, can you remember how many mental health nurses there were, very roughly speaking?

JH: Well, I do know – I think you're going to tell me that the number of mental health nurses has gone down.

AM: By 5,000, a lot.

JH: Yes, and let me explain why that is. Because over the last five years we've been dealing with the terrible problems that we had

3

JEREMY HUNT

in mid-Staffs, and what that meant was that we needed to get more nurses into hospital wards. Actually over that period we have 11,000 more nurses in the NHS as a whole. But they've tended to go into hospitals where we had that urgent problem to deal with. Overall, in terms of mental health staff, the staff working in mental health trusts, we've got 4,000 more than we had seven years ago. So we are expanding the numbers. Buy you know –

AM: Was it a mistake to take out 5,000 mental health nurses?

JH: Well, it wasn't ever a conscious decision. The reality is that we had a crisis in that we realised that a number of our hospitals across the country were unsafe. And so we had a big effort to make them safer. I think that has borne fruit. But the unintended consequence is pressure on mental health nursing. And what's the overall lesson of this? It is that we don't have enough nurses, and that's why at the Conservative Party conference just a few weeks ago I announced a 25 per cent increase in the number of nurse training places. Because the fact is we need more nurses as we need more doctors.

AM: It does sound slightly – given that you've cut the nurses in the first place, it does sound slightly as if Jeremy Hunt has decided to clear up the mess made by Jeremy Hunt.

JH: Well, with respect, we have 11,000 more nurses in the NHS now than when I became Health Secretary. So I think the one thing you can't say is that I haven't prioritised the importance of nurses in delivering safe care. We also have more people working in mental health. There has been a specific issue on mental health nursing but we're sorting that out.

4

JEREMY HUNT

AM: What about beds? Because it's more or less the same story isn't it? A seven and a half thousand cut in mental health beds, for instance.

JH: Well, there are two things going on here. The first is that we know that it is much better if you possibly can to treat someone with severe mental health problems in the community, where they're properly looked after, often by NHS staff, than it is in what we used to have, the old asylums. So there is a trend away from hospital care.

AM: But there are people who need hospital care. June 1st last year there was a moment in London when if you were a young person with a mental health problem there was not a single hospital bed available for you in London, in the capital, one of the world's great cities. That's scandalous isn't it?

JH: Well, we do have a problem with what we call the tier four beds. And in fact we have increased the number of mental health beds in the last year as a response to those issues. But what I would say is in all of this the thing that is most unacceptable is if you're a young person and you need to be an NHS in-patient in a mental health organisation, to have to go to the other side of the country. Because what really matters in terms of your recovery is that you can be visited by your parents or friends..

AM: That is happening again and again because of the lack of nurses and the lack of beds. On your watch.

JH: Andrew, I think you are mischaracterising what is happening, because there is more money, there are more people working in mental health, we are increasing the number of beds, particularly for young people. But Rome wasn't built in a day, and if we are going to achieve Theresa May's ambition of full parity between mental and physical health, then we are going to need to train up

5

JEREMY HUNT

many, many more people to deliver that. That's what we're doing, and we're absolutely determined to end this injustice that we have at the moment with that. But don't forget, as we do this -

AM: You've had seven years to end this injustice. You've been in – you're entering your sixth year as Health Secretary, which makes you the third longest in the post since Nye Bevan, and I can't remember who else. But nonetheless –

JH: Normal Fowler.

AM: Normal Fowler. One of the longest-serving Health Secretaries. Do you not recognise that given the cuts in nurses, given the cuts in beds over time, part of the mental health crisis has happened on your watch, and is the result of the cuts that were made at the beginning of your time?

JH: Andrew, you are only painting a limited picture. What has actually happened on my watch is the biggest expansion of mental health provision in Europe. Other countries are looking at what we're doing. As I mentioned at the beginning of –

AM: So if it's not the beds and the nurses where is the expansion taking place?

JH: Well, for example, on treatment for anxiety and depression, where what we're doing now is considered world leading, it's even being copied by the Swedes, who are looking to import what we're doing on psychological therapies into Stockholm. Overall, we are treating – and I say this for the second time because I don't think it registered – 1400 more people every single day. There is a big expansion. We have 3,000 more people working as talking therapists. But it's not going to –

6

JEREMY HUNT

AM: Both sides are saying so many different things. James Munby, who is President of the Family Court, I'm sure you'll remember this case. There was a 17 year old girl who was suicidal and was about to be released and he condemned, the 'disgraceful,' he said, 'and utterly shaming lack of proper provision in this country.' And he said, 'we, the system, the society, the state, will have blood on our hands.' And he took that judgement and he made sure it went to you. Then things changed for that girl, nonetheless. But it took a high court judge to say that, say it publicly and come to the Secretary of State to get some changes, didn't it?

JH: And he was right to say that. But that is why we are changing. I mean, let me just give you an example. In the last year we are spending over half a billion pounds more on mental health in the NHS. This is at a time when you know, as you know, when NHS resources are very constrained. But the reality is that because we are proud to offer a service that is free at the point of use in the NHS, and rightly so, there is huge untapped demand for mental health provision. We know now that you can in many cases make a mental illness completely better, and because people understand that there's a lot of people who want NHS care. But it's not going to be solved overnight, and we have to be honest with the British people. Our plan is 2020-21 we will deliver the Paul Farmer plan and be treating a million more people every year. We're on track to do that. But it's not going to happen overnight. There's no silver bullet. I'm afraid it does take time.

AM: I want to talk about the NHS a little bit more generally in a moment. Before I do can I just ask you about this morning's front pages here? You've been at Westminster a very long time, you've heard all these stories about sex pests, and one of your colleague,

Mr Garnier, has been named on the front page of the Mail on Sunday. Do you think that's the kind of behaviour that allows him to stay as an MP, as a Minister?

7

JEREMY HUNT

JH: Well, I mean, these stories, if they're true, are obviously totally unacceptable and the Cabinet office will be conducting an investigation as to whether there's been a breach of the Ministerial Code in this particular case. Because, as you know, the facts are disputed. But what I would say is that there are mums and dads who have daughters who are politics students hoping to get a job in Westminster, and they must be able to be confident that if they get that job their daughter will not be subject to some of these behaviours that we've been seeing. And so it's absolutely essential that we sort this out.

AM: Nobody wants trial by television. I'm not going to go there.

But nonetheless, the Ministerial Code covers this area, does it?

JH: It covers this area and many other areas. But I think it's important - I know you were having the same discussion with Diane Abbott just now, and the other point to make is that this is something that covers behaviour by MPs of all parties. And that's why the other thing that's going to happen is that today Theresa May is going to write to John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons to ask for his advice as to how we change that culture. Because I would actually agree with Dianne Abbott. I think things have got better in recent years but there's still a long way to go.

AM: Do you agree with John Mann that there should be some kind of parliamentary Tsar or character who receives allegations of this nature, looks into them and does so in private? That there should be another place that people can go if they feel worried?

JH: Well I think there is merit in the idea of having someone anonymous that you can talk to if you're unhappy about the way that you've been treated, but I think these things need to be looked at I think probably by the Speaker because it's about the conduct of parliament as a whole.

8

JEREMY HUNT

AM: Let's turn back to the NHS in that case. What normally happens in these interviews is I have statistics and you have statistics and we kind of throw them at each other and the public

—

JH: We've sort of done that haven't that we a little bit this morning.

AM: We've done it and the public probably get quite bored, so I'm going to do something slightly different and ask you to listen to the testimony of a nurse who spoke to Newsnight last week. She

was in Birmingham and this is what she said:

Nurse: The way that things have become in A&E over the last two years you know, we are at breaking point. It can't carry on. The queues on the corridor and the situation that the patients are in and the department's in it's unsafe.

We're probably seeing about a hundred patients more per day than we were a year ago. It just seems to be acceptable to treat people on the corridor and it's not dignified really, is it? To see the NHS as it is now I don't see it getting any better. In my eyes it's just gonna get worse.

AM: Now that's how it feels from the perspective of one nurse in Birmingham. What would you say to her?

JH: Well I listened to that with a great deal of sympathy because I think she speaks for a lot of people who feel an enormous amount of stress on the frontline. Our hospitals have never been busier. Our NHS staff have never worked harder. We have this enormous pressure of an aging population and you know, there is no doubt that we are going to need to find more money for the NHS in the years that come ahead of us because we have a million more over 75s coming down the railway track in the next decade. And what do we want? We want the NHS to be the safest and best health

9

JEREMY HUNT

service anywhere in the world. As a Conservative I believe that good public services are the moral purpose of a strong capitalist economy. That's why we do it. And so what we need to do as a government is to make sure the NHS gets the resources it needs and that has been very difficult because of the financial situation the country's in, but over the last few years we've started to see some significant increases and we need to address that nurse's concerns, because what she wants is what I want which is to make sure we give NHS patients the very best care.

AM: The last time we talked you were very clear and you've just been very clear again that the NHS does need more resources. Now you're just about to lift the one percent cap on NHS pay which will delight an awful lot of people working in the NHS I have to say. Are they actually going to get a pay increase?

JH: Well we have a process now. There's an independent pay review body and they look at this and I think it's you know – it will be wrong for me on air to make a – to give you a view as to where I thought that process would end up because I want to hear what the independent experts say would be a fair pay rise. But I think that one of the things that is behind the frustration of that nurse and other nurses is that they have had pay restraint for many, many years and they want to see some recognition of the very hard work they're doing.

AM: So even a 3% rise would not actually be a pay rise for most people give where inflation is, but just to give people a sense of the scale of what we're talking about, how much would a 3% rise cost the NHS?

JH: Well something of that probably would cost a billion pounds, so it's a serious amount of extra money and you know the Chancellor has said that if we can have a negotiation and look at some of the ways that we could improve productivity at the same

10
JEREMY HUNT

time that he's willing to have a discussion with me about whether extra resources can be found.

AM: Because this is the really crucial question. You've got lots and lots of pressures, mental health, many other things and now the pay pressure too. Are you going to be able to emerge from this – he said delicately – with the kind of new money from the Chancellor that allows you to pay NHS people more without actually cutting back elsewhere in hospitals?

JH: Well this government is absolutely committed to making our NHS the safest, best health care system. We recognise there's a lot of work to do, you've just been talking about mental health, but there are lots of other areas as well. So I will be making a very robust case for the NHS to get the resources it needs as I'm sure other Cabinet ministers will for their departments. But when it comes to money and the NHS every week we have avoidable death, avoidable harm in the NHS that is nothing to do with resources or not principally to do with resources, and if we're gonna be the safest and best we also need to have a culture of safety and quality that comes from inside as well as the cheque from the Chancellor. The two need to go together and so what I would say is that look at what the CQC say, there are signs that they say that the care is getting safer. The Commonwealth Fund, an independent American think tank say that the NHS is the best health care system in the world, so the final thing I would say to that nurse is yes, we face enormous pressures, we're not the only country to do so. Other countries are facing them as well but I think our NHS and our values put us in a better place to deal with those pressures than many other countries.

AM: Perhaps some of those pressures are because we ask the NHS to do so much and do so relatively little ourselves and a very interesting experiment in Hertfordshire where they're not only saying to people that if they want non urgent operations they

11

JEREMY HUNT

can't it while they're still smoking, they're actually going to breathalise them to check that they have not been smoking for 6

to 8 weeks before the operation. Is that the kind of thing that you think is a good idea, it should be expanded, we should see more of this?

JH: Well I do think that we have to allow some local discretion for - to allow for new ways and there are a number of operations where your recovery is much quicker if you're not a smoker and so the thinking behind these kinds of schemes is that they - you know you will have better surgical outcomes if you do this. But it's not something I would mandate for the whole NHS. I think we need to see if works in Hertfordshire.

AM: See if it works there. But it's more the general philosophical question as to whether if you drink too much, if you're too fat, if you're smoking that should be taken into account as a kind of deal between you and the NHS. That it's not all on the NHS to deal with these things.

JH: Well I think I believe in a tax payer funded system where care is not rationed and everyone pays their taxes. But I also believe in personal responsibility and I think we all have a responsibility in terms of the lifestyles that we lead to ourselves and also to our fellow citizens and also in terms of the pressures that we put on the NHS. But I think British citizens understand that because the NHS belongs to all of us and we all need to do our bit to make sure that we don't exacerbate the pressures that are very real.

AM: There's been a real drop, quite a dramatic drop in the number of nurses coming into the NHS from the rest of the EU after the Brexit vote. Are you concerned about that? Are you worried about the effects of that and indeed as you've said in the past, no deal?

12

JEREMY HUNT

JH: Well I think of course Brexit brings a number of concerns to the NHS and what I always try and do is to reassure the brilliant doctors and nurses from the EU who are working in the NHS that we think you do a fantastic job. We want you to stay, we're very confident you will be able to stay. But in a period of difficult negotiations it's probably not surprising that you're going to have some tailing off of applicants from other EU countries. Not least because they have their own aging populations and countries like Spain and Portugal are recruiting nurses in significant numbers for the first time for a while.

Ends

Larry King Special: Johnny Depp

Aired October 16, 2011 - 20:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LARRY KING, CNN HOST: He's one of the biggest stars in the world. One of the most acclaimed actors of our time.

Tonight Johnny Depp. The man who rarely grants interviews sits down with me and opens up about his fame.

JOHNNY DEPP, ACTOR: This is the card I drew, so I'll deal with it, that's fine. Doesn't mean every single moment you have to be sort of OK with it.

KING: His family.

DEPP: I don't want my kids to experience me as a novelty. I want my kids to know me as dad.

KING: And his famous friends. Brando had that big an effect on you?

DEPP: He was a wonderful man. You know? He'd give you anything.

KING: Plus we'll go on a tour of his private office full of personal memorabilia and his paintings.

It's all ahead on this LARRY KING SPECIAL, "Johnny Depp."

We're sitting here in Johnny Depp's office. An office like none I have ever seen. That later we'll get a chance to explore a little. He, of course, one of the most celebrated and versatile actors of his generation. He's also a director, producer, accomplished musician.

His new movie "Rum Diary" will open October 28th. The only novel ever written by Hunter S. Thompson. We'll talk about that a little later.

You don't do many things like this. Do you not like to be interviewed or --

DEPP: No. I'm just not very good at it, you know. Never have been very good at it.

KING: Why not?

DEPP: I don't know. There's a -- you know, there's a strange thing, you know. I'm OK when I'm a character. If I'm playing a character, I can do, you know, virtually anything in front of a camera. But if I'm just me, I feel, you know, exposed and sort of, you know, it feels awkward.

KING: We won't expose you.

DEPP: OK. Good.

KING: Do you like being other people?

DEPP: Yes, I do. I do because I'm fascinated with people. I mean, I'm fascinated -- I like to watch people. And that's the one sort of thing, you know, as an actor in terms of job necessity is the ability to be able to watch people, to observe, to be the observer. As a journalist, you know, to observe. And it's one of my favorite things, to sort of pick apart, you know, various traits.

KING: Marlon Brando told me that one of the problems is when you get very well known is they're observing you.

DEPP: That becomes the problem.

KING: You can't -- you're not observing them really.

DEPP: Yes. Exactly. No, that becomes the problem. You become the focus of others. So, therefore, your ability to observe is tainted. You know it's a little bit -- yes. It changes quite radically.

KING: How did you go from guitar to acting?

DEPP: Accident.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: How did it happen?

DEPP: I'd moved to Los Angeles in 1983 and was living here playing -- you know, playing music. And we did a couple of good gigs. You know, the band and stuff. And we went on the road for a little bit. And that was all fine. But, I mean, in terms of making a living, it was pretty straight -- you know pretty close to the bone there.

So I was filling out job applications for just various -- like video stores or anywhere, you know. And I happened to be with an old buddy of mine, Nicolas Cage. And who was -- who was then coming up the ranks. And he said that, you know, why don't you just -- I think you should meet my agent. You should investigate acting.

KING: You hadn't thought of it?

DEPP: No, not really, no. No. And so I met his agent. She sent me to read for a part. And got a call back and then they hired me for the gig. You know that was the first "Nightmare on Elm Street." That was 1984? Three or four.

KING: Did you like it right away?

DEPP: No.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: It was a job?

DEPP: It was just a gig. You know I just thought, well, this will get me through, you know, until, you know, the music picks up or whatever. You know. So I just -- you know, the first two or three, four films to me were just, you know, a lark. You know, just --

(CROSSTALK)

KING: Would you rather have been a musician?

DEPP: In retrospect, no, you know. In retrospect, no. Because it's -- I suppose had that become my bread and butter, as they say, you know, the main gig, I would have probably fallen out of love with it on some level. And I still to this day, you know, have the -- the same love, you know, first love feeling for music as I did when I was 12.

KING: Do you play?

DEPP: All the time, yes. Constantly. Still, yes.

KING: How did you react to getting famous?

DEPP: I'm still reacting, you know. I'm still sort of dealing with it. I don't think it's anything you ever get used to, you know. I could never -- for many years I could never sort of put my name in the same sort of category as the word "famous" or anything like that. And I just found it very uncomfortable. So it's weird.

It's something like if you -- I find if you get used to it, then something must be wrong, you know. If you get used to that constant kind of thing, it's -- something's got to be wrong. There's got to be still a part of you that -- somewhere in there that pines for anonymity.

KING: Allen Alda told me one that he doesn't like giving autographs because he feels it demeans the person asking for the autograph. It put them on a lower level. And Brando didn't like much being photographed. Is it true you don't like being photographed?

DEPP: I suppose, like, for example when you're doing something organized like a photo shoot, essentially amid the faux pas of, you know -- there was a piece in "Vanity Fair" where I should have used the word "violated." However, you know, in my -- in my lack of vocabulary in the moment I used another word, which I've, you know, apologized for radically.

But the thing -- the thing with doing a photo shoot, that's sort of an organized thing. You feel dumb. OK. But you just get through it. But what I find still to this day, kind of, like an attack on the senses, is really just being bombarded by paparazzis.

You know I'll take photographs with kids. People, you know, who want to take photographs with me. People who like the movies. People who supported me. I'll do that all day, all night, that's fine. But the bombardment, you know, of the paparazzi is just -- it's like a -- it's just --

KING: What do they get out of it? I mean, they take your picture.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: And then they take it a minute later. It's not any different than a minute before.

DEPP: And it's not any different than the year before, or the year before that.

KING: So what is the -- what do you think it is?

DEPP: I truly don't understand. I think it must be just this kind of -- I don't know. It just feels like this kind of gluttonous, horrific sport. It's like sport. It's like hunting or something.

KING: Do you therefore go out of your way to try to avoid them?

DEPP: Yes. I try to avoid, you know, any and all, you know, press or -- especially that nature. You know, just to -- yes. I just --

KING: So do you --

(CROSSTALK)

DEPP: I don't want my kids to experience me as a novelty. I want my kids to know me as dad, you know. And already, you know, if they have access to the Internet or

whatever, I mean they understand what the deal is. But I don't want them to have to live through and experience that kind of attack, you know.

KING: So what do you do when you go out to eat?

DEPP: I don't go out very much, you know. I stay at home a lot. Or when you go out to eat, you know, you've got to -- it becomes a strategic sort of plan.

KING: Getting in through the side door.

DEPP: OK, we're going in the back. We're going to walk through the slippery kitchen and we're going to go into the private room or, you know, that kind of thing.

KING: It's a tough way to live.

DEPP: It's -- you know, I suppose it's what I -- it's the card I drew. So I'll deal with it. That's fine. But you know it doesn't mean that every single moment you have to be sort of OK with it. I certainly am not one of those guys and would -- you know, can't stand the idea of, you know, one of those guys who whines about, you know, how horrible success is.

I do realize and understand very well on a profound level how lucky I am and what a privileged position it is and what it's done ultimately for me, my family and my kids. But at the same time, you know, there are moments in a man's life when you just kind of want to feel somewhat normal, you know.

KING: He's one of the biggest stars in the world. But it wasn't always that way.

DEPP: I had been essentially known within the confines of Hollywood as the -- you know, as box office poison. You know basically I'd built a career on 20 years of failures.

KING: Plus, later, Johnny shows me the inside of his private office. It's an up close and personal look at a Johnny Depp you will not want to miss. When this LARRY KING SPECIAL, "Johnny Depp" returns.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Paul Newman told me that any successful person in any field who in discussing their career doesn't use the word luck is a liar.

DEPP: Yes. He's absolutely right, yes.

KING: So you consider yourself lucky?

DEPP: Very lucky, yes.

KING: But you have to have talent to meet the luck, right?

DEPP: Somebody hands you the ball and you run, you know. And then if you get hit, you get hit, or maybe you make it through, you never know. But, I mean, I just know that somebody handed me the ball at a certain point. And I was hungry enough to keep running. And I'm still running. So --

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Now what do you think makes you good at what you do? You have to think you're good.

DEPP: I'm OK.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: You don't watch yourself, right?

DEPP: I don't. No. I don't. I don't like to watch myself. I think, you know, I maintain a hunger, but not an ambition. You know, I -- I'm very happy to explore all possibilities of a character and really, you know, dive into the role. You know to the point where Disney wanted to -- wanted to fire me.

KING: They wanted to fire you from "Pirates"?

DEPP: Yes.

KING: Because?

DEPP: They couldn't understand what I was doing. You know? They didn't understand the character. They were actually contemplating subtitling the film, you know.

(LAUGHTER)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DEPP: You will always remember this as the day that you almost caught Captain Jack. What are you doing? You burned all the food, the shade, the rum.

KYRA KNIGHTLY, ACTRESS: Yes, the rum is gone.

DEPP: Why is the rum gone?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Ever turned down something you regretted?

DEPP: No.

KING: No?

DEPP: Don't regret any of it, no. No. Everything that I turned down was -- it was -- weirdly, it was more important what I turned down than what I accepted in terms of films.

KING: For your own happiness?

DEPP: Mm-hmm.

KING: So even if it became a hit?

DEPP: Yes. "Pirates" was a complete accident, you know? I mean prior --

KING: What do you mean?

DEPP: Well, prior to "Pirates of the Caribbean," you know, the first one in 2003, that was -- I mean I had been essentially known within the confines of Hollywood as the -- you know, as box office poison, you know what I'm saying? You know basically had built a career on 20 years of failures.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Did it surprise you, its success?

DEPP: Hugely. I had no idea.

KING: Are you going to do more?

DEPP: You know, it depends.

KING: Does it ever become maybe too much?

DEPP: Not yet, you know. Not yet for me. I mean, maybe -- maybe to the masses. I don't know. Maybe. I don't know. I still feel like in terms of character, Captain Jack is one that I'd like to explore.

KING: He's still evolving?

DEPP: Yes. Because he's -- because he's fun, you know. It's his fun. It's a license to be totally and utterly irreverent and get away with it.

KING: He's going to age, then?

DEPP: I suppose he'll have to.

KING: Discuss some others. Some incredible roles you've played. Edward Scissorhands.

DEPP: Probably the most important film that I've ever done, just in terms of the -- the transition for me, you know, from basically at the time, you know, being known as having come up the ranks as a TV actor, essentially, in the minds of Hollywood. "Scissorhands" was the one that sort of put me on the road that I wanted to be on. So for me that one's -- yes, that's probably the most important of all.

KING: "Mad Hatter."

DEPP: A gas. You know, I mean, just a gas. Again, one of those things where you get a call from Tim and he says what do you think about this? And you just -- you just start to travel, you know.

KING: You just did "Dark Shadows," right?

DEPP: Just finished.

KING: Finished. That was a soap opera about a vampire.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: What attracted you to that?

DEPP: Well, I had watched it as a kid, you know. Religiously. I remember sprinting home from school to see it. Didn't want to miss, like, a minute of it. Ironically, you know, Tim had gone through the same experience. You know running home from school. And then back when we were doing Sweeney, we were doing "Sweeney Todd" a couple of years ago, it -- one day we're just sitting there talking, and I said, you know, we should do a vampire movie sometime.

Let's do a vampire movie. It was before all the "Twilights" and all that, you know, stuff. And yes, that's a good idea. I went, oh, "Dark Shadows," man. And so we got on the "Dark Shadows" tangent. And then one thing led to another.

KING: So was "Willy Wonka" fun?

DEPP: Absolutely fun. Yes. Really fun.

KING: Do you have to enjoy it to do it? DEPP: I think you have to. I mean I think it's got to be fun. The process itself must be fun. You have to enjoy what you're doing. And as we all know, as you know as well as I do, it's a collaborative process, you know. It's not just let's put the actor in front of the camera. There are many people behind the scenes that make it all go.

So I would -- I would find it really a drag if they stick me out in front of the camera and the guys behind the camera weren't having a good time, too. All I do is try to make them laugh.

KING: Still ahead, Johnny talks about his famous co-stars and friends. Al Pacino.

DEPP: He says, I'm nuts, but he's really -- like, he's certifiably nuts.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Marlon Brando.

DEPP: We got along like a house on fire. You know. Instantly. There's a dangerous element. You never know what to expect from him.

KING: And Hunter Thompson.

DEPP: I realized that this was the voice of truth. He was without question I mean, I think the most important nonfiction writer of the 20th century.

KING: Plus, get a tour of his private office. Wait until you see what's in there.

But first, after supporting them for years, Johnny opens up on the release of the West Memphis Three.

Did you have anybody say to you, you know, Johnny, you go out on a limb on a thing like this?

DEPP: Oh, yes.

KING: Find out why when this LARRY KING SPECIAL: JOHNNY DEPP" continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: What do you make of finally the release of the Memphis Three? You got involved in that battle. We did a whole show on it.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: We had them on. And they still not -- they're guilty. They're out. But it's crazy.

DEPP: It's a very strange thing the state of Arkansas presented to them. Essentially, you know, to say, OK. All you have to do is say that we have the evidence to convict you again, and -- but we'll do time served and you're out. Admitting guilt, maintaining your innocence. So it's a very -- you know, it's a really floppy piece of ground to stand on.

KING: Why did you get involved?

DEPP: Because I -- I knew immediately, you know, when I -- when I first started to get, you know, kind of familiarize myself with the case, I knew instantly that they were innocent. I knew instantly that they were wrongfully accused. And the more research I did and the more people I spoke to, it was absolutely apparent.

KING: Did you have anybody say to you, you know, Johnny, you go out on a limb on a thing like this.

DEPP: Oh, yes, yes. A lot of people.

KING: Like what if they did it? You're going to look bad.

DEPP: There was that kind of thing. Yes. But I just knew. I just knew, you know. I -- it was just -- it was ugly and -- and a raw deal from the get-go. Back in '93. And you're thinking of these three kids, you know, one, Damien Echols on death row for 18 years. Ten years in isolation. You know, for a crime that he did not commit.

KING: You think Obama should pardon them?

DEPP: I mean, it would be wonderful. I don't -- I think he's probably got a few other things on his mind at the moment. But, yes, yes. What I'm hoping is that the investigation will continue outside the courthouse right now and we will be able to prove the real killers.

KING: Back to some roles. One I want to play a little clip for you here. Because you did one of my favorites, one of my all-time favorite movies with one of my dear friends, Al Pacino. And that was, of course, "Donny Braskow." So let's hear -- let's watch Al talking about you.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Working with Johnny Depp.

AL PACINO, ACTOR: I love him. I love Johnny Depp.

KING: What makes him special? You did "Donny Braskow."

PACINO: Yes. Yes. And he's done so many things. I mean He's gone from A to Z, you know. It's just gifts. It's really his gifts. And has a personality. And as a person, I just loved him. I loved being with him because he made me laugh every day I was there. He's really nuts, too.

KING: He's nuts?

PACINO: Oh, yes. He'll say I'm nuts but he's really nuts. He's nuts in that way that just -- you know, it's just fun to be with. (END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: You the same way toward him?

DEPP: Yes. Although when you're working with Pacino, you know he's great. I mean in that moment, you know, of course you lock in, as he said. You lock in and you're in the scene and stuff like that. But you know, as soon as cut comes, you go, Jesus Christ, man. Wow. He's monumental.

KING: He said you're nuts.

DEPP: He might be right. But he's -- I mean, he's really -- I mean he says I'm nuts but he's really -- he's like certifiably nuts.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: And one of the funniest human beings I've ever known in my life.

KING: From Pacino to Brando. Now there's a puzzling aspect of your life that puzzles me. You directed and appeared with Brando in a movie.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: That we have never seen.

DEPP: Yes. "The Brave," yes.

KING: Why have we never seen it?

DEPP: I was sort of rushed to take it to the Cannes Film Festival. Took it there. And then --

KING: And it was praised there, was it not?

DEPP: It was kind of praised. The first night was really wonderful, you know. I mean you had Bertolucci there and Antonioni and Kustavitz (ph) and all these filmmakers that I really admired and have admired for years, you know, saying bravo, bravo. And

then, you know, and then the next day the American press just absolutely lambasted, you know, me and the film saying it's the -- you know we haven't seen a weirder group of people since Bunel and, you know, and all these kind of strange things. And I just --

KING: Shelved it?

DEPP: Yes, I didn't shelve it. You know I owned the North American rights. And I just thought, you know what? I mean, what's the point? You know?

KING: Might you release it?

DEPP: Yes. Maybe. I tell you why. For one reason only. It's certainly not a perfect film. What I will say about that film and what I will say about Marlon in particular, it's one of the best performances he's given since "Last Tango." It's one of the performances where he dug down deep and gave of himself so monumentally.

KING: Was he a little ticked that you didn't release it?

DEPP: No. He didn't care. No, he was fine.

KING: That's Marlon.

DEPP: Yes. He was fine with it.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Now you did do a movie with him. Did you enjoy doing that?

DEPP: "Don Juan"?

KING: "Don Juan."

DEPP: Yes. Very much. That was the first. That's when we met and we got along like a house on fire, you know, instantly. And that's where we got very -- we got close doing "Don Juan."

KING: What did he do that others in the -- what did he do that the rest of you didn't do?

DEPP: Well, Marlon early on, I mean, Marlon reinvented -- Marlon reinvented acting. He revolutionized acting. He made it -- it was not about behavior in a sense as it was just about being in a moment. And he was a dangerous element. I mean, he was a dangerous element. He remained a dangerous element.

KING: Risk taker.

DEPP: Oh, yes. All the way through, man. Until, you know, his last -- his last breath. You know, he was -- he was a dangerous element. You never knew what to expect from him.

KING: Coming up, Johnny explains how he made Hunter S. Thompson's final wish come true. Shooting his ashes out of a cannon.

DEPP: He came down over all of us. You know we were covered in Hunter's ashes. It was something that I knew that had to be done and we got it done, yes.

KING: And get an inside look at his office. It's all next on this "LARRY KING SPECIAL: JOHNNY DEPP."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DON LEMON, CNN ANCHOR: I'm Don Lemon. Live in the CNN world headquarters in Atlanta. Here are your headlines this hour.

Tragedy in the world of sports to report to you. Two-time Indy 500 winner Dan Wheldon was killed today in a fiery crash. It happened early in the Las Vegas Indy 300 race. The season ending championship race for the Indy car series.

The race was halted and the drivers were informed that Wheldon had died from his injuries. The remaining cars that were not damaged in the multi-car crash later saluted Wheldon with five slow trips around the track. Dan Wheldon was married and had two small children.

Philadelphia police have made a horrifying discovery. Four mentally challenged adults locked and chained in the basement of an apartment building. The three men and one woman are believed to have been there about a week. Three people are now in custody. They are suspected of holding the captives to get their Social Security checks.

Martin Luther King Jr. Now stands with presidents as a nation dedicates a memorial in honor of the civil rights leader.

The first family was among the dignitaries at today's ceremony. King's 30-foot-tall likeness is placed between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials on the National Mall. And to reach King's statue called "The Stone of Hope" visitors walk through the "Mountain of Despair" where a wall contained inscriptions of Dr. King's most famous quotes.

Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah has arrived at a hospital in Riyadh. He is expected to undergo back surgery. His third back operation within the last year. The 87-year-old

king has suffered in the past from a debilitating herniated disk that put pressure on his spine.

Those are your headlines this hour. Now back to the "LARRY KING SPECIAL" featuring award-winning actor Johnny Depp.

KING: Johnny Depp's personal office. As interesting and unique as the man himself. Inside the walls are lined with personal mementos and photos from his life and work. Here, a cabinet of curiosities from his movie "Sweeney Todd." Willy Wonka's throne from "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." And his walking stick and that golden ticket. One of his guitars. Awards and accolades.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things to see, Johnny's self-made portrait of his friend and mine, the legendary Marlon Brando.

DEPP: I said, hey, I made this painting of you. You know? And he's, you paint?

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Another amazing man in Johnny's life, Hunter S. Thompson. Here he shows us a letter and a check. Something he received after Thompson lost a bet over the 1998 World Cup. Johnny became friends with Thompson before he filmed "Fear and Loathing" in Las Vegas. It was a friendship that endured for years and one that led to his latest movie "The Rum Diary."

All right, let's talk about Hunter Thompson. And your friendship with him. You led to this movie, "Rum Diary" based on him. You found this novel, right? He never written -- we never knew he wrote a novel. DEPP: No, no. I happened upon it. Hunter and I -- it was when I was researching "Fear and Loathing" in Las Vegas, and I was living in his basement, you know, and I happened upon this box. As we were looking through the manuscript of "Fear and Loathing," and I see this, you know, folder.

"Rum Diary" across it in his hand. I thought, wow, what's that? You know -- so we started to read it, sitting, you know, cross-legged on the floor. You know, reading this amazing thing. And he's like, my, god, that's pretty good, isn't it? Yes, it's very good, Hunter.

You know, what are you doing? But then he brought up the idea of, you know, he used to call me Colonel. Colonel Depp, you know. As a colonel, we must produce this. We'll produce this together. It'll be our -- you know, so that was the plan.

KING: Did he know you were going to do it?

DEPP: It took a little while. And you know, years, years happened. And then Hunter made his exit, you know. So he never got to --

KING: Did you kind of make a promise that you'd make it?

DEPP: Yes. Absolutely. Yes.

KING: So this is a commitment?

DEPP: For sure. No, this was -- this was fulfilling a commitment to Hunter. This was absolutely a major promise, we are going to produce this thing together. And I even so far as to have -- you know I mean Hunter had his chair on set every day with his name on it. He had his script there with his name on it. He had -- there was a bottle of Chivas there every day. A highball glass filled with rocks. And we'd bang in the Chivas. We had his Dunhills, we had his cigarette filters.

KING: It's a very unusual film, you'll agree with that.

DEPP: It is, yes.

KING: People will react different ways to it.

DEPP: I think so, yes.

KING: So explain to the uninitiated who Hunter Thompson was?

DEPP: He was without question, I mean, I think the most important nonfiction writer of the -- of the 20th century.

KING: When he died, you -- you blew his ashes?

DEPP: Yes.

KING: How did you come to do that?

DEPP: It was -- KING: From a cannon?

DEPP: Yes. Built a cannon. He -- it was his last request.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: You know? And it was something that we'd talked about here and there. But I knew that that's what he wanted. And I knew that that had to be done at whatever, you know -- at whatever cost. So I met with some -- you know, some kind of architectural wizards and stuff. And we built -- we devised a cannon of 153 feet in the shape of the gonzo fist that would shoot Hunter into the stratosphere.

KING: Did it make a big sound?

DEPP: Oh, boy. It was huge.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: He came down all over all of us. You know we were covered in Hunter's ashes. But the idea also is to take Hunter -- you know, his ashes and then mix that in with gun powder, there was something so poetic about that. You know it's something so kind of symmetrical about Hunter becoming basically large bullets.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: That he would have loved. So I mean it was -- again, it was something that I knew that had to be done and we got it done, yes.

KING: He's gone from pumping gas to being one of the highest-paid actors in the world.

DEPP: I haven't changed. I'm still exactly the guy that used to pump gas, you know. I'm still the guy that was a mechanic for a minute, you know. I'm still exactly. I just happen to have a weird -- weirder job at the moment.

KING: And Johnny tells us the latest on the "Lone Ranger." Finally back on? It's going to happen?

DEPP: Yes. We got the budget down.

KING: That's good to hear.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: That's coming up on this "LARRY KING SPECIAL: JOHNNY DEPP."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Ever want to do theater?

DEPP: Yes. There is a part of me. There is a part of me that wants to do it, you know.

KING: I mean to have the audience and get the reaction.

DEPP: Yes, yes. There is a part of me that wants to do it. But at the same time, you know, I -- I suppose the reason to do it is because it just scares the absolute, you know --

KING: It does scare you?

DEPP: Oh, yes.

KING: You don't have the protection of "cut."

DEPP: Yes. You don't have the protection of cut. But also you just walk out there and suddenly just go -- line. You know, I mean -- I'm up. What's the line, you know? That would be a real drag.

KING: Is there a play you've liked that you've said to yourself, if I do do it, I would do that play?

DEPP: It was one -- one conversation with Marlon where he said -- he asked me how many movies I did a year. And at the time I said, I don't know, maybe three or something. He says, too much, kid. That's too much. We only have so many faces in our pockets, you know. I said, OK, I get it. He said, why don't you play Hamlet? You should play Hamlet.

I said, I don't know, you know, Hamlet's the kind of cliché thing. He said, no, man. Do it before you're too old to do it. He said, I never got the chance. I never did it. You should do it. Go do it. And -- so that still sticks in my head is the possibility of, you know, before I'm too long in the tooth to play Hamlet. It's just --

KING: Have you --

(CROSSTALK)

DEPP: Have I?

KING: Yes.

DEPP: Yes. Every time. Me? Yes. Sure.

KING: But what got you down?

DEPP: Well, I don't know -- throughout life, and many things, but I mean certainly, you know, losing Marlon, you know, took me down. Losing Hunter took me down. Because, you know that these -- these friends, these mentors, these teachers, these father figures, you know, these -- someone who you really -- it was amazing to be accepted by them and to -- and to be loved by them. And suddenly they're gone, you know. Yes. Those are pretty down times.

KING: Do you have faith?

DEPP: I have faith in my kids.

KING: Me, too. DEPP: Yes. I have faith in my kids. And I have -- I have faith, you know, that as long as you keep moving forward, just keep walking forward, things will be all right, I suppose, you know. Faith in terms of religion, I don't -- religion is not my specialty, you know.

KING: Do you enjoy success? Now you know you're successful. Are you -- do you enjoy it? Do you enjoy the fruits of it?

DEPP: Sure. I mean, I've been very -- like I said, very, very lucky, you know, in a sense that, you know, I mean, how ironic is it that, you know, as I said you get --

KING: You were pumping gas.

DEPP: I was pumping gas, most definitely. Printing T-shirts and selling ink pens, and you know anything and everything. Yes. And then the fact that you have a 20-year career of failures and then you do a pirate movie and that buys you an island is pretty -- the irony of that is pretty good.

KING: Do you think about the times when things weren't so good a lot?

DEPP: Yes, yes. Oh, yes. You know, there was a guy who I worked with many years ago. And we were talking about success and money and all that stuff. And he told me this one thing. He said, you know, money doesn't change anybody. Money reveals them, you know. Same thing with success.

And I believe that, you know, wholeheartedly. I think I've been revealed. I don't think -- I haven't changed -- I'm still exactly the guy that used to pump gas, you know. I'm still the guy that was a mechanic for a minute, you know. I'm still exactly. I just happen to have a weird -- weirder job at the moment, you know?

KING: It is a weird profession.

DEPP: As Marlon said, he had -- Marlon had the best definition of acting that exists, you know. It's a strange job for a grown man. And that's it.

KING: You do that good.

DEPP: It's a strange job for a grown man. Right?

KING: But he called something else that people in the business got mad at. He said it on our show. He called it lying for a living.

DEPP: Right.

KING: And most actors say they're not lying.

DEPP: Mmm.

KING: Did you think that was an unfair expression?

DEPP: I think it's totally -- I think it's totally right, yes. It's lying. It is lying. Why wouldn't it be? You can make it lying. You can make it not lying. You know it's -- you can find your own truth. But it's still a lie. You know what I mean? You're going to go to the craft service table. You're not Henry VIII, man. You're not going to have some Fritos or whatever, man. You know?

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Have a donut and then go, yes.

DEPP: Right. You know? He's not going to eat a giant chicken leg and chuck it somewhere and start screaming "wench". Right? You know? And that's not --

KING: Do you like the camera? Burt Reynolds used to say every day he'd go up and say to the camera, love me today.

DEPP: Oh, really?

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Please love me. You don't look at your films, right?

DEPP: I don't. I don't look at my films. But what I do is -- the strange thing is what happens at a certain point, it's kind of like that thing Marlon said about being observed and having been the observer. You get to a place at a certain point where you're more comfortable in front of a camera doing, behaving, living in front of a camera than you are in normal life. That is to say, like, out at a restaurant or something like that. You know, the camera becomes sort of just part of the --

KING: Same thing in my profession. I don't want to discuss myself.

DEPP: But you know what I mean?

KING: Yes.

DEPP: It's just there and that's part of it and that's it.

KING: It's your comfort zone.

DEPP: Yes, yes.

KING: Up next, Johnny talks about being a family man.

DEPP: Kids are great. So fun. As you know, they just grow up so fast. It's just shocking.

KING: Explains those tattoos.

Do the kids like it?

DEPP: Yes, they're OK with it, you know. Yes. I mean they're sort of used to it by now, you know. When I come home with a new one they're like oh, yes, that's good. Nice one, dad.

KING: And announces details on his next projects. Are you doing a film about Dr. Seuss?

Find out all about his future coming up on this "LARRY KING SPECIAL: JOHNNY DEPP."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: You're not into "National Enquirer."

DEPP: No. I mean, thank god. You know, early days, you know, they tried to sort of slop me into those things but now not so much. You know I think they kind of -- after almost 14 years of Vanessa and two kids I think they kind of --

KING: How did you meet Vanessa?

DEPP: I had met her before. But very briefly. And then it was '98 when I went to do this film with Roman Polanski in Paris. I was in the hotel lobby sort of getting my messages. And I turned around and was walking back towards my room and then I saw -- I saw across the room, I saw this back, this sort of skin of this back and this neck attached to it.

I just thought, my god, what's that? And then instantly it turned towards me and walked over and said hello. And it was Vanessa. And it was that moment when I knew I was absolutely in deep trouble. It's over. I just knew it. It was over. And she -- you know, we were going to have a kid. You know within three months she was pregnant, so it was over.

KING: What are the kids like?

DEPP: The kids are great. So fun.

KING: Now you live here, right? You live in Los Angeles?

DEPP: Yes, yes. We basically try and spend -- spend sort of half and half. But with the kiddies in school we do a lot here. The kids are great, you know, they just -- as you know they just grow up so fast. It's just shocking.

KING: I mean you and your sister are very close, right?

DEPP: My sister, yes. Christy is my best friend in the world. She's always kept me alive since I was a little kid.

KING: So you were family oriented early.

DEPP: Very much so.

KING: Maybe you changed. It's hard to change.

DEPP: Well, unfortunately I have a tendency, you know, especially these days now when -- you know the way the work is coming, I work a lot. And I probably work too much. If I could change that, I'd love to be able --

KING: You can change that.

DEPP: -- to spend more time. Yes, you can. But once you've committed to certain things.

KING: You need that camera.

DEPP: Well, I need to have the brain occupied for sure. You know, the brain canopy occupied at all times. Otherwise I will go sideways.

KING: Why tattoos?

DEPP: Like a journal. You know.

KING: You keep a journal of your life on your body?

DEPP: Basically, yes. It started when I was 17 I got my first tattoo. And every single one means something and they all --

KING: And the kids like it?

DEPP: Yes. They're OK with it, you know. Yes, I mean they're sort of used to it by now. You know? When I come home with a new one they're like, oh, yes, that's good. Nice one, dad.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: What happened to "The Lone Ranger"?

DEPP: It's still up and running. They --

KING: I heard that the budget was too high and they're not going to do it. You're going to play Tonto, right?

DEPP: Yes.

KING: You have Indian blood, right?

DEPP: Yes, yes.

KING: What tribe?

DEPP: I was told -- you know I was always told it was Cherokee growing up and stuff. It may be Cherokee. It may be Creek. I don't know exactly, you know?

KING: Is there a script?

DEPP: There is a script. There's a very funny, good script.

KING: Is it a takeoff of "The Lone Ranger"?

DEPP: Yes.

KING: It's funny.

DEPP: There's humor. Yes. There's a boat load of humor. KING: Does Tonto get to say kimosabe?

DEPP: Yes.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: Yes, yes.

KING: Who's Lone Ranger is made?

DEPP: It going to be Army Harmer. Looks like it's going to all come together in January.

KING: So it's going to happen.

DEPP: Yes. We got the budget down, yes.

KING: That's good to hear.

DEPP: Yes.

KING: So you play him tongue in cheek? How are you going to approach Tonto?

DEPP: I think -- what I like about Tonto is the idea that this character who's thought of as the sidekick, you know, it was the thing that bugged me always about "The Lone Ranger" is why is the Indian the sidekick? Why does he have to go get you that thing? Why does he --

KING: Because he's the slave.

DEPP: Right. And I couldn't stand that always. And my approach to Tonto is that he's this sort of -- there's sort of a crazy like a fox stoicism to Tonto, you know, that -- that Tonto probably believes that the Lone Ranger is his slave, his sidekick. So he's like, go get me the thing. No, no, no.

KING: He's going to say no?

DEPP: You go get it. You go.

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: You're the one dressed in the funny outfit. You do it.

(LAUGHTER)\

KING: Are they going to do the beginning where all these bunch of rangers are killed and Tonto saves the Lone Ranger's life and --

DEPP: Yes. There's certainly elements of that, yes, for sure. You remember it well.

KING: Oh, is there a love interest?

DEPP: Not for Tonto. KING: I see, he doesn't get --

DEPP: Not for Tonto, no.

KING: Will you do your own Tonto makeup?

DEPP: Will I do my own Tonto makeup?

KING: Have you figured out will Tonto -- one little feather?

DEPP: I think it's a little more than that. I think --

(LAUGHTER)

DEPP: I'll tell you what, I'll send you a picture of it.

KING: Please.

DEPP: I've done some tests. I'll send you a picture of it. Because it's -- it's a little -- it's a little different than that. What I like about Tonto, what I feel good about in terms of Tonto is that I feel like he's, you know, when I -- when I came up with Captain Jack, I thought, OK. I've really arrived at something, you know, different here, you know. And Tonto feels right on par with Captain Jack. It feels like another Captain Jack to me.

KING: Are you doing a film about Dr. Seuss?

DEPP: It's something, yes, something we're developing. With Seuss's widow, you know. Guisele's widow. And it's a very exciting possibility. Because it's a sort of combination of live action and --

KING: "Cat in the Hat"?

DEPP: Not "Cat in the Hat" so much but the characters. The characters will certainly have a role.

KING: Thank you, Johnny.

DEPP: Thank you. What a pleasure. What an honor.

KING: Let's go around then.

DEPP: That was fine really, yes.

KING: Johnny Depp.

Encore: Interview With Comedian Jerry Seinfeld

Aired December 26, 2010 - 21:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LARRY KING, CNN ANCHOR (voice-over): Tonight --

JERRY SEINFELD, COMEDIAN: My final appearance on the Larry King Live Show.

KING: Jerry Seinfeld. He has kept one of Hollywood's most buzzed about secrets until tonight. The comic reveals the true identity --

SEINFELD: It's like not even know just total shock.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Oh, come on, Jerry, please, please, please, please, please.

KING: Someone we've only read about.

SEINFELD: It was a nom de plume.

KING: One of the funniest men on the planet is here.

SEINFELD: I mean, I think missing in the show is a menu.

KING: Jerry Seinfeld is next on LARRY KING LIVE.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING (on-camera): Good evening. I have to say this? Jerry Seinfeld is an actor, author, director and comedian.

SEINFELD: Keep going.

KING: I'm telling you, you may not know who he is. He is making his Broadway directing debut with comedian, Colin Quinn's one-man show, "Long Story Short, History of the World in 75 Minutes." And he wrote the forward to an all-new "Letters From A Nut," one of the funniest books you will ever read. And tonight, he will reveal the secret author a little later.

Jerry has been a frequent guest, long-time friend to this show. Watch. We'll show you some examples.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SEINFELD: Look at this piece of junk. Look at it Give me a camera. Look at this. This is like, you know, this like a 4.95 opening act. You're a headliner now.

This is a nice weather map you have here. This looks like a game of risk.

KING: What about financial success? I mean, you don't have financial worries?

SEINFELD: No.

KING: How's that changed you? You can buy anything you see.

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: OK.

SEINFELD: I want that clock. Here's the question.

KING: Go ahead.

SEINFELD: Who's the victim? Where's the victim here? You're all a victim.

KING: This looks like QVC, doesn't it? What else, Jerry? What else?

SEINFELD: That's not all you get. You get the knives.

KING: What do you make of our earlier conversation which bumped you 20 minutes?

SEINFELD: Well, I can't tell you how flattered I am that it takes the president's genitals to push me back 20 minutes. I mean, that's how big a star I am.

Let's tell them about this movie.

That shot of you and Cattenburg (ph), nose to nose --

KING: Historically.

SEINFELD: I have not seen that since I left Hebrew school.

You know, I have a Larry King in the human world too.

KING: It's a common name. Next week on the LARRY KING.

SEINFELD: No, no, I mean, he looks like you. He has a show with suspenders and different color of dots behind him --

KING: Next week on the LARRY KING.

SEINFELD: Old-guy glasses and these quotes along the bottom from the guest you're watching even though you just heard him. It's not even a new one. Do you tape this in your luggage? Oh, boy. What a budget. Goodbye, clock. Get another one.

(END VIDEOTAPE) KING: We used to have a little clock in there. We used it frequently until Seinfeld's last appearance then we couldn't afford another. Why did you take our clock?

SEINFELD: Larry, this is my final appearance on the LARRY KING LIVE show.

KING: Because LARRY KING LIVE leaves in December.

SEINFELD: No. You will be here. I'm going.

KING: Oh, I see.

SEINFELD: And because this is my final appearance.

KING: No.

SEINFELD: I have in my hand.

KING: What?

SEINFELD: A clock that I'm going to give you. It's the cheapest clock I could find. It's \$3. But I wanted a clock that looked most like the clock that you usually have on this show, which I could never even conceive that you don't know what time it is or you need to -- so, I'm replacing the clocks that I have been stealing all these years. I'm putting one down. And it got a snooze. Can you get a shot of that? It got a snooze, because when you get older, that's what counts.

KING: This clock shall be a permanent part of LARRY KING LIVE. It shall be embellished in our hearts.

SEINFELD: At the Smithsonian.

KING: And will go to Smithsonian when we send the set over. By the way, what prompted you to take it the first time?

SEINFELD: It's just annoying that a big-time, big-shot guy like you has a piece of Chazarai (ph) like that. It offended me. Chazarai, by the way, is an inexpensive item.

KING: That's correct. You're going to put the rumors to rest tonight about who wrote "Letters From A Nut."

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: Who was identified as Ted L. Nancy, which of course was a nom de plume.

SEINFELD: It was a nom of plume. Now, this idea of this character started 15 years ago. And when the idea arose, we decided to keep it a secret, who was writing these letters.

KING: And tonight, we'll meet -- SEINFELD: Tonight, you're going to meet the person who has conceived of this entire character. And it was really thought of -- we did it as kind of a gag, just for ourselves to have fun and the books took off. And there's been, I think, four or five of them now. They've best sellers, and it was never intended to be that.

KING: The trouble with the book and just called trouble is you can't read it without breaking up. I mean, we'll read some letters later. This guy fiction (ph) writes crazy letters to people.

SEINFELD: And they answer him.

KING: He writes to hotels, businesses, corporations.

SEINFELD: Because people are so afraid of offending a customer now. No matter what he asks them for, they say, well, we don't know if we can have 10,000 --

KING: We'll reveal that in a little while. Why did you choose LARRY KING LIVE to reveal it?

SEINFELD: I have to be honest with you.

KING: Please.

SEINFELD: This is the funniest show on TV.

KING: What?

SEINFELD: This show makes no sense. That you sit here and ask these questions night after night and nobody answers them and nobody cares. And it goes on and on and on and you sit here and you look like you're ready to order. This is what this show looks like to me on TV is a guy in a deli waiting to order.

To me, the only thing missing on the show is a menu. I always think you're going to look up and go, "is the corned beef lean? Is it lean?"

KING: So, you have chosen us?

SEINFELD: Because this show is funny. Do I want to do the "60 Minutes" funny?

KING: No.

SEINFELD: No.

KING: So, you see me with President Carter, you laugh?

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: You laugh?

SEINFELD: Yes. Because it's -- you know -- you're like an uncle that cornered somebody at a Thanksgiving dinner and you just start peppering them with questions and they're looking -- they're holding a piece of cake and they can't get away. And you keep asking them questions, and they're avoiding the answers and that's who you are. You're like an annoying relative that people love, but you're annoying.

KING: OK. You -- by the way, I was honored to appear in "Bee Movie."

SEINFELD: I loved you in "Bee Movie." Let me tell you why you were in "Bee Movie." First of all, you have been in more movies --

KING: 26 I think.

SEINFELD: Than any talk show host.

KING: Correct. I have that record.

SEINFELD: And that is because the show makes no sense.

KING: That's why they want me.

SEINFELD: That's why they want you. But there's something about we thought, if there was a fantasy universe where bees lives, when talked like people, no matter what universe you could conceive of, there would be some version of Larry King there. That's how Omni present you are.

KING: Omni present?

SEINFELD: You're so much a part of culture. The idea of a world with no Larry King is inconceivable, which is why CNN will change their mind before this season is over, before, what is it December 18th?

KING: 16th.

SEINFELD: 16th. It will go to the 18th. That's how strong you're --

KING: You're on a role, man. By the way, you directed me in "Bee Movie."

SEINFELD: I did.

KING: And of all the movies I do, you were the most, maybe next to Warren Beatty in "Bulworth" who drove me crazy.

SEINFELD: Right.

KING: You were the most involved director, changing scripts, little lines.

SEINFELD: I'm a nuts.

KING: We were whole day with it.

SEINFELD: Yes. I noticed. I -- I wanted -- I wanted -- you weren't quite giving me Larry King.

KING: That's right. You needed more.

SEINFELD: Yes. It's too much Larry, not enough King. Too much King. Less Larry.

KING: Will you do a sequel?

SEINFELD: To "Bee Movie"?

KING: Yes.

SEINFELD: No.

KING: Why not?

SEINFELD: I loved it. In case, you haven't noticed, if you look at my career and you see what I do, being a standup comedian aside, I do things and then I just walk away. Have you noticed that? And I never go back. Do you think I'll do another sitcom?

KING: No.

SEINFELD: No. Can we roll the clip, by the way, of you asking me, it was my favorite one, one of your producers asked me, what was my favorite moment of being on LARRY KING. My favorite moment was when you asked me if my show was canceled. Do you remember that?

KING: And you got ticked.

SEINFELD: No. I was joking.

KING: You were acting, yes.

SEINFELD: But it was a big internet sensation, you know.

KING: I know.

SEINFELD: Because people thought that I really was upset.

KING: But, yes, you did it pretty good and then we were on Conan the next night. Both of us were on Conan.

SEINFELD: That's right.

KING: The cast of "Seinfeld" reunites, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SEINFELD: George Costanza?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

SEINFELD: Is getting married. How am I going to wear this? I can't wear this.

Hey, this looks better than anything you own. I'm out.

You faked with me?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

SEINFELD: You faked with me?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

SEINFELD: No.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

SEINFELD: What about the breathing, the panting, the moaning, the screaming?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Fake, fake, fake, fake.

SEINFELD: You want bread?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes, please.

SEINFELD: \$3!

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What?

SEINFELD: No soup for you!

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: That's too funny. The cast of "Seinfeld" recently reunited on "Curb Your Enthusiasm." Let's take a look at some behind the scenes footage as they all walk onto the set.

SEINFELD: It was a year ago.

KING: Yes. Once again, let's watch. Let's go back in time.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SEINFELD: Oh, all right. Oh, my God. Wow.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: You got granite countertops.

SEINFELD: Upgrade.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Oh, this is the same.

SEINFELD: This is the same.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: The experience of walking out and seeing the sets was interesting. The coffee shop set is exactly the same.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Frank, take one, easy Mark.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: What's wrong? UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What's wrong?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What's wrong?

SEINFELD: I kept thinking about the moment when I would stand in the kitchen and lean against that counter again.

What is with the blackberry people?

I couldn't believe I was going to do that again.

Hello, Newman.

I'm just really enjoying performing with Larry, because he was always there with us, but we never got to do a scene together. So, now, we're doing scenes together. It's just fantastic.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: What was that like to go back?

SEINFELD: It was mind boggling. It was mind boggling, because, you know, they rebuilt the set and we were all there. And so, you know this is 12 years ago. You walk away. It's like if you go back to your old neighborhood, you can see the neighborhood, but if you go back to your old house, it's not the same. So, it was the same. So, we got to really go back in time.

KING: How do you explain the success of "Curb Your Enthusiasm"?

SEINFELD: Just really a show.

KING: It's brilliant.

SEINFELD: It's a brilliant show. And Larry has all the gifts, you know? He knows how to write. He knows how to cast. He is funny himself, you know. It's one of my favorite shows.

KING: How did "Seinfeld" come about?

SEINFELD: It came about because NBC had talked to me about doing a show, and I was standing in catch a rising star on first avenue in 1988 with Larry David, and I said, so NBC is talking to me about you know that they might want to do something, and I can't think of anything to do.

So, then, we go across the street to a Korean deli, and we're buying some food to eat, some, you know, junk, you know, chips and things, and we start making fun of everything. And he goes this is what the show should be, two comedians just talking. And that's what we started with.

KING: And did NBC -- was it a hit get-go?

SEINFELD: No. No. Four years. Four years.

KING: Really?

SEINFELD: Yes. It had good demographics. In other words, we had a good audience that was sort of whatever the advertisers want, but we did have very low ratings, very low ratings. Very low ratings.

KING: Now, you continue now to do your standup? You play Vegas? How many times a year do you go?

SEINFELD: Oh, I do about 100 shows a year.

KING: That many?

SEINFELD: Yes. All over the country.

KING: New material?

SEINFELD: Not all the time. As much as I can.

KING: But a lot? You write all your own --

SEINFELD: I write all my own stuff. Yes. Do you want to hear a joke?

KING: Yes. Do a joke. Do a joke. Go ahead. Say something funny. A-ha.

SEINFELD: That's the worst setup for a comedian and you know it.

KING: I know that. You can't do that.

SEINFELD: Any guy in a deli knows that you don't tell a comedian be funny.

KING: You got me back in the deli.

SEINFELD: I love you in the deli. I don't know why this is not a deli set. There should be sandwiches here and waiters walking with around. Because that's where you belong in a deli.

KING: This is the world.

SEINFELD: Speaking of food.

KING: I'm going to get to that in a minute.

SEINFELD: Sorry to go out of order. You want to hear a joke? Two peanuts are walking long, one was a salted.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh, man.

SEINFELD: The kids (INAUDIBLE)

KING: I know. "Letters From A Nut," the secret revealed, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: "Letters From A Nut" by Ted L. Nancy with an introduction by you.

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: Explain this. Is there a guy named Ted Nancy?

SEINFELD: There is a guy, but I've never met him.

KING: But he gets big cut of this book.

SEINFELD: Yes. Well, I know a guy who knows him and that's where I --

KING: You have never met him.

SEINFELD: I have never met.

KING: The hero of this book?

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: He wrote all the letters?

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: And that was a little falsehood there, because in a minute, you're going to meet who the real Ted Nancy is with a new edition of "Letters From A Nut." But first, another first.

SEINFELD: One of the things that's great about being me --

KING: Among many, yes.

SEINFELD: Among many is I get to present people that I love, that have great talents and great things, and I get -- I use you to do this.

KING: I'm your prop?

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: OK.

SEINFELD: I wouldn't say prop. I would say you're my --

KING: I'm your idol.

SEINFELD: You're my idol.

KING: OK.

SEINFELD: If that helps you. So, tonight is three people that I'm really here to talk about because I don't talk about myself. Not about me.

KING: I know.

SEINFELD: And this, for the first time, my wife had a huge hit book.

KING: Unbelievable.

SEINFELD: Two years ago called "Deceptively Delicious." I thought of the title, but she did everything else, and it was a giant hit, and she's finally come out with a sequel. Now, I know that your wife loves this book.

KING: Loved it.

SEINFELD: And I know that you drove all around San Francisco trying to find a copy.

KING: The last copy they had.

SEINFELD: I got the first copy of the sequel, which has never been seen anywhere before this appearance on LARRY KING LIVE. Here it is "Double Delicious," and it's signed from my wife to your wife, Shawn, warmest regards, Jessica. And that's for you, Larry.

KING: Wow. Oh, and this book is in stores when?

SEINFELD: I think you can buy it now.

KING: OK. Jessica Seinfeld, "Double Delicious," you saw it here first.

SEINFELD: She's not here.

KING: I know.

SEINFELD: She's going to be on Oprah next month.

KING: Oh, good.

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: I've heard of that show, too.

SEINFELD: Yes.

KING: She goes to Oprah, you come to me. I like that.

SEINFELD: Yes. Another one, gone. Nobody can hold a job around here.

KING: We're going to do a show together, a network in a deli.

SEINFELD: But the most exciting thing tonight, go ahead.

KING: Jerry read one of my favorite letters back in 1997 when he was here. It's about of all things, Mickey mantle's toenails. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SEINFELD: This is a letter to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum in Cooperstown. OK?

KING: My kind of place.

SEINFELD: I have a valuable which I would like to donate to the great hall of fame in Cooperstown. In 1960, I was an employee of a hotel in Miami where Mr. Mickey Mantle was staying. As I was setting up the room service tray, I noticed Mr. Mantle clipping his toenails.

I watched out of the corner of my eye, he clipped every toe. He was then called out of room at that moment. I dropped to the carpet and secured all the toenails that had been clipped off. There are almost ten nails, nine and some shavings, but a full set.

KING: They answered?

SEINFELD: They answered. "Dear Mr. Nancy, we are very interested in your story of the Mickey Mantle toenails." This is the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown!

KING: Correct.

SEINFELD: They want the nails. They want them!

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: All right. That's -- all these are nutty letters. Jerry, who's with you here?

SEINFELD: Now, the man sitting next to me, the reason I am bringing him out tonight, is because in the 15 years since we have been doing this, the internet has started up and a lot of people have been out there taking credit for these letters.

KING: Oh, really?

SEINFELD: And saying I wrote the books, and they're for sale on my site and, because of the internet and you know what that's all about, it was time to reveal the mystery. It's his fifth book coming out. Ladies and gentlemen, the real author of "Letters From A Nut" is Barry P. Marder, sitting next to me, who has been a colleague of mine for over 25 years.

KING: Colleague in what way? He writes?

SEINFELD: He's a comedian, a comedy writer.

KING: How have you lived, Barry, in unanimity through all of this with famous books you know you did them?

BARRY MARDER, "LETTERS FROM A NUT" AUTHOR: Well, I don't know how to answer that.

SEINFELD: Let's move on to our next guest.

KING: Thanks to Barry. We'll have you back soon., probably December 17th, you'll be back. MARDER: No, I just -- you know, I was just writing them and it just got out of hand and, you know.

KING: You did it originally as a lark?

MARDER: I did them about -- started about actually 16 years ago in 1994.

SEINFELD: With Fritos bag, wasn't it?

MARDER: Yes. I was sitting with --

SEINFELD: He was eating a bag of Fritos.

MARDER: You know, the actual way it happened when I was sitting in the bedroom. I was with my girlfriend, Phyllis Murphy. And she was kind of -- it was like 4 in the morning. She was watching television. This is actually how the whole thing came about, and she was watching television. I was kind of mindlessly sitting on a chair eating a bag of Fritos.

SEINFELD: You weren't thinking about the Fritos?

MARDER: No, I was just kind of, you know, just kind of looking at them.

KING: Don't interrupt him. He's on a roll.

MARDER: The Fritos bag said you, hey, you want to talk with us. You got any issues? Write Fritos, we want to hear from you. And I was like who in the world is going to write Fritos? So, I was kind of like, a nut, that's who, and she was kind of, you know, looking at me (INAUDIBLE)

KING: Did you write to them?

MARDER: Not at that point. At that point, you know, I just kind of, you know, drafted a letter and the next day, I noticed that these, you know, president's messages were all over. I had some Bon-Ami cleanser. And they actually had a thing on the side. It was a smudgy stamp from the president, and hey, you got some issues, we want to hear from you from Bon-Ami. Tell us what's on your mind, and then, you know, signed like, you know, Gordon Bukar, III or Gordon --.

KING: Get a break, come back and if you can remember the first letter. And we're going to read some of the new ones.

MARDER: OK.

KING: More with Jerry and Barry after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Do you remember your first letter?

MARDER: Gosh, it's been about 15 years. KING: Did you write to Fritos?

MARDER: I did write to Fritos.

KING: What did you ask them?

MARDER: I said, you know, I bought a bag of Fritos, and you know, I've actually described the Fritos. I said they were all curled and crunchy and salty and hard, and I threw the bag away even though I was describing a Frito. And then I bought another

bag. I got the same thing, it was curled and crunchy and hard and I said help me, Fritos, help me.

And then, you know, I just -- I even wrote to the Bon-Ami guy, you know.

KING: What did you say to him?

MARDER: I said, you know, your name was smashed and smudged, and Gordon Bukar, are you the third, are you the fifth, and I thought the fifth guy named Gordon Bukar in the Bon-Ami thing is what a weird life he got, you know, which is kind of communicated. That was actually (INAUDIBLE)

KING: Is he little nuts, right, your friend?

SEINFELD: A little? Let me read you a letter he wrote to the Oakland Chamber of Commerce.

KING: Oakland Chamber of Commerce.

SEINFELD: I want to come to your city for the tiny man convention. Let me be clear, we are not midgets, small persons, diminutives, , petiteos or fun size. We are tiny men. I would like to buy tickets to the performance of Tiny Bennett. This is a tiny man that sings like Tony Bennett. They write him back.

Dear Mr. Nancy, we could not find any information on a show appearing with Mr. Tiny Bennett, but I attached a schedule for Tony. He writes back to them. I told you, it's not tiny, it's small McCartney. He is a fun-sized man that looks like Paul McCartney, and these correspondences go back and forth.

KING: They answer?

SEINFELD: They answer.

MARDER: They answer.

SEINFELD: Because they're so afraid of losing a customer.

KING: They answered because they fear?

SEINFELD: Yes. Yes. Fear.

KING: All right. Let's do another one. This is about -- this is about opening a sandwich stand in a casino bathroom. Do you have that?

MARDER: Yes.

KING: OK. Read this letter.

SEINFELD: You want too read it?

MARDER: Go ahead you read it.

SEINFELD: All right. I'll read it.

KING: Who is it to?

SEINFELD: This is to the Chinook Winds Indian Casino. "I want to sell ham sandwiches in your restrooms. You once had a sign on the restroom mirror that says we have the potty melt. Can you direct me to what office I would contact to request casino credit?"

They reply, dear Mr. Nancy, we thank you for your interest, but at this time, we are not interested in putting any businesses in the restrooms. We have five food outlets for our customers. Thank you for considering us, but at this time, we are fine.

KING: What do you make -- your mind is wild.

MARDER: I think so.

KING: Yeah. I mean, you are -- you know you're a little nuts?

SEINFELD: What do you think the craziest one you ever wrote?

KING: Mickey Mantle wasn't bad.

SEINFELD: Mickey Mantle wasn't crazy.

MARDER: The Hamsterdam one was --

KING: What was that?

MARDER: I had written a letter to a hotel in Amsterdam. I said I am staging my play in Amsterdam and need to know what health permits I need. My play is called "Hamsterdam," and it's telling of the history of your beautiful city using hamsters. I need to bring 300 loose hamsters into your hotel and have them live in the room with me. This is for 12 nights.

The hotel replied our hotel cannot accommodate 300 hamsters in a room, please.

I wrote them back. I understand your concern about keeping 300 hamsters in my room. It is wrong. I now realize this is a disease issue. That is why I have decided to restage my "Hamsterdam" play. It is now called "Amsterclam." It involves a telling of

your beautiful city using clams. I will check in with 500 clams and have them live in the room with me. Clams are not like filthy hamsters, they are wet. Please alert housekeeping, so when they open the door, they can spray.

KING: Now, let's hear about your request to bring an ice machine to a hotel?

MARDER: We had other better ones.

(CROSS TALK)

KING: All right.

SEINFELD: I like the one where you wanted to --

KING: This book is now out, "The New Letters From A Nut."

SEINFELD: Hold it up, Larry. That's how we get sales.

KING: OK. OK, one more.

MARDER: I like this one that I, you know -- I wrote to a -- I was trying to get a sign made, I am opening a business next to a coo-coo restaurant. My business is called I am the walrus. I need one big sign that I'll put next to them so the one big sign says, "I am the Walrus, koo koo ka-roo."

SEINFELD: You know Koo-Ka-Roo chicken and --

KING: Of course. hey, you are a genius much.

MARDER: That is awfully nice.

KING: Thanks for introducing him to the world. All you people on the Internet, here he is.

SEINFELD: Finally, the mystery is over.

KING: The name is Barry Marder. The book is "All new Letters From a Nut" by Ted L. Nancy. This is Ted Nancy. Jerry stays with us. We will be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: When we get married, we have to get rid of any evidence that we've ever had a prior relationship.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: She wants this guy to get rid of a sofa. And she's got her husband's old prosthetic leg. Are you kidding?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: The couch they had sex on, the plastic leg, it is a recipe for disaster.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It is getting weirder. It is getting weirder.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: They're so moronic, I don't even want to help them. (END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: That is from Jerry's show, "The Marriage Ref." Madonna, Larry David, Ricky Gervais, what qualified them to give advice? How did you come up with this?

SEINFELD: I just love talking about marriage fights. I find them funny and I love to hear how people respond to other people's -- other people's marital issues are comedy for the world.

KING: Not yours?

SEINFELD: Not mine, no. And not yours.

KING: No, not mine. But theirs.

SEINFELD: Theirs. Anybody else, it makes you laugh. So I just thought it would be fun to have a show with funny people coming on and talking about marriage. It seems to provoke natural comedy. I love that show.

KING: When is it on?

SEINFELD: It's coming back on NBC I think the beginning of next year, January of next year.

KING: It's not on the early winter, right?

SEINFELD: I don't know what they do, but they are starting to shoot them now, the next season.

KING: Explain television to me.

SEINFELD: It is like --

KING: Like "Seinfeld," you lasted four years without being a hit? Couldn't happen today?

SEINFELD: I don't know about that. Don't you believe quality always survives somehow?

KING: You really believe that?

SEINFELD: You busted out laughing at that? Quality survives somehow always. Not always, but most of the time. Don't you believe in that?

KING: A television network would stick with a show having --

SEINFELD: Anything that's good eventually somehow --

KING: Finds its way.

SEINFELD: You have to believe in that or you don't go into this business, right?

KING: I guess so, yeah. It can be disappointing when you have to deal with --

SEINFELD: I have never been disappointed, fortunately.

KING: You have always had success?

SEINFELD: Always, yes.

KING: How do you deal with the suits in the business?

SEINFELD: The suits? The lawsuits or the guys wearing suits?

KING: The guys up at the --

SEINFELD: I agree with them. It's like a wife. You agree. You say that makes perfect sense. From now on, we are going to do it that way. And then you do whatever you want.

KING: Of course the suits don't watch.

SEINFELD: They don't know. They don't even watch their own network.

KING: So you agree with them. They call you in; you've got a "Seinfeld" episode they didn't like. You tell them, OK, we will change it.

SEINFELD: When we were doing "Seinfeld," a lot of times they would come in and they would go, we don't understand what you are doing. But go ahead. That was the way "Seinfeld" worked.

KING: Why did it work?

SEINFELD: It worked because there was a very loyal, powerful audience out there that loved what we did, no matter -- and no matter how crazy it was, they stuck with us. And the networks, they do watch that and they understand that. So even though they didn't get it, they knew the audience got it and the audience liked it.

So we were free. And that's the ultimate thing in this business, when you're free to do whatever you want. That's the ultimate.

KING: You have attained that now?

SEINFELD: I have. Well, obviously. I don't need to be here. I'm here because I'm free to do whatever I want.

KING: So you actually chose to come here?

SEINFELD: I choose to come. I am no place that I don't want to be.

KING: What time do you wake up? What do you do in the morning? What do you do?

SEINFELD: Do you really want to know? I have three kids.

KING: That's enough. SEINFELD: They are nine, seven and five. If you have three kids, it is like having a blender but you don't have the top. You wake up ready. You hit the ground ready. So I wake up and I have breakfast with the kids and we watch Elmo. And people say, are you ever going to do another TV series? And I say to them, I watch Elmo every morning and he jumps around and he tells jokes or she. I don't even know what the hell this thing is. And I watch Elmo every morning and I think, you know what, let him bust his little red ass.

KING: Jerry is headed for Broadway. Broadway is next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(NEWS BREAK)

KING: We're back with Jerry Seinfeld. We're joined by Colin Quinn. Colin is a comedian, writer. And his new Broadway show "Long Story Short, History of the World in 75 Minutes" debuts you said November 9th?

COLIN QUINN, DIRECTOR: I said -- that's 13 days after Jerry's wife's book really comes out.

KING: October's 26th Jerry's wife's book comes out.

SEINFELD: 28th.

QUINN: Twenty sixth, Jerry.

SEINFELD: Twenty six. My wife's book.

KING: Why are you producing a Broadway show?

SEINFELD: I'm directing, Larry. Directing. I wear a cape. I have a beret. I have a cane.

QUINN: He sits like this in the third row.

SEINFELD: I don't know.

KING: How did this come about?

SEINFELD: This is a great story. We started this in the spring, right? We were sitting around. We have breakfast together, Colin and I, multiple times a week. Like you, you go to Nate and Al's, right? We have a place here, not going to mention the name.

QUINN: Not the diner from "Seinfeld".

KING: OK.

SEINFELD: And I said to him, you know what you should do? You should do a one-man show, because one of the things that a comedian has that no other person -- an actor doesn't have is if you don't feel like dealing with networks or producers, you can go right to the audience and present what you do. And he was looking to do something, and he was thinking of television and movies. He was talking to people and having meetings. And it gets annoying.

Let's just do a one-man show where you can just go out and do your thing.

KING: What is "The History of the World in 75 Minutes"?

QUINN: Jerry wasn't done. Now look, Larry, "The History of the World in 75 Minutes" --

SEINFELD: He goes and writes this thing.

KING: Oh, Colin, I don't know why you're laughing.

QUINN: I don't know.

KING: What is the history --

SEINFELD: Nobody is paying attention. Ask Barry to read this letter, he goes, I don't want to read that one, I want to read another one with. You let him get away with it. You're Larry King. You should have said, Barry.

KING: I don't care.

QUINN: All right, I'm sorry: Jerry is on fire tonight.

KING: He is. He is cooking.

QUINN: He is rolling tonight.

KING: What is the "History of the World in 75 Minutes."

QUINN: Just that. That's exactly what it s.

SEINFELD: What is it that you don't get about that?

KING: Begin with Genesis?

SEINFELD: No.

QUINN: No.

SEINFELD: Way before that.

QUINN: No offense, I start with the New Testament. No, I'm kidding. But we start -- we start with the cavemen. We get to Genesis in a way.

KING: Caveman?

SEINFELD: Then the birth of Larry King right after that, right?

KING: Oh.

SEINFELD: Oh, I'm sorry. Excuse me. Excuse me for making fun of anything.

QUINN: The Greeks first.

KING: When you're directing a one-man show, what do you do tell him, move to the left, stand there? What do you do?

SEINFELD: That's what I do, exactly that, move to the left.

QUINN: What does a director who directs a ten-person show say? Move to the left.

SEINFELD: I go, who do you have to know to get a latte around here? That's what I do.

KING: It's all a monologue, right? Background scenes?

QUINN: Background scenes, bunch of background stuff, music and lighting.

SEINFELD: But Colin really has a very -- he is very smart. He doesn't seem smart. He is very intelligent. He is well read. And he knows about culture and, you know, different --

KING: He is smart.

SEINFELD: He's really smart. Yeah.

QUINN: Erudite. The fact that I know the word erudite should tell you I'm kind of smart.

SEINFELD: He knows about Serbian empires and Ottomans and --

KING: Will the public get it, though?

SEINFELD: It is a comedy. I know comedy. He is smart.

KING: Does you know Serbian empires?

SEINFELD: No, I don't know half of what he is talking about.

KING: Why are we going to laugh?

SEINFELD: Because we present it as a comedy. It is a comedy telling of the history of the world in 75 minutes. Is that clear, Larry.

KING: Yes. Did you write it all?

SEINFELD: He wrote the whole thing.

KING: And you're the director?

SEINFELD: I'm the director. Have you ever seen --

KING: Are you nervous.

SEINFELD: This doesn't look like Broadway to you.

KING: No. No.

SEINFELD: You're thinking Broadway? Maybe off-Broadway.

QUINN: Tommy Tune Christmas.

KING: Are you nervous about opening night?

SEINFELD: We are terrified.

KING: Are you in rehearsal?

QUINN: Sure, we're in rehearsal. We rehearsed yesterday.

KING: You're new to 75 minutes. You know what you're doing. There's no intermission, I guess?

QUINN: No intermission.

SEINFELD: Here is the great appeal, and this is why you would love a show like this. You'll think, I could be at dinner by 9:00.

QUINN: Asleep by 12, and Nate and Al's next morning.

KING: You could pitch this easy to people. Get out early.

SEINFELD: We will get you the hell out of there. Yes. That is why people love this show.

KING: You really like it if they look at their watch?

SEINFELD: Yeah.

KING: That means you're succeeding.

SEINFELD: We apologize if it is 76 minutes.

QUINN: He has been on a roll. I'm not going to make it to the next segment, am I? Be honest.

KING: No, you're not. But November 9th --

SEINFELD: Wait a minute.

KING: Helen Hayes Theater.

SEINFELD: Do you know how rare it is? You know, because you know a little bit about this business. We started in how many seats down there in 45 Bleaker? A hundred seat -- we did 100-seat theater. Investors came in. They loved the show, said -- we didn't want to take it to Broadway.

QUINN: No.

SEINFELD: We were just screwing around. And they go this is a Broadway show. We went, really? They go, yeah, we will put up all the money. QUINN: It is true.

KING: You didn't put up any of your money.

SEINFELD: No! Well --

KING: Good luck, Colin.

QUINN: Thank you, Larry.

KING: We will be back with more of this. By the way, if you understand this, please send us a card, I understand this at CNN. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SEINFELD: Jerry Seinfeld remains with us. Time now for our Heroes section. Anderson Cooper reveals our top ten for 2010.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ANDERSON COOPER, CNN ANCHOR: I'm Anderson Cooper. All year, we've been introducing you to our CNN Heroes, everyday people changing the world. Today, we're announcing the top ten CNN Heroes for 2010.

The honorees are, in alphabetical order, Guadeloupe Arizpe De La Vega. She's providing health care in the increasingly violent Juarez, Mexico. Susan Burton, her re-entry program helps female ex-convicts get back on their feet.

Linda Fondren, she's brought her community together to shed pounds. Anuradha Koirala rescues and rehabilitates Nepali girls from sex trafficking.

Narayanan Krishnan serves three meals a day to homeless by hand.

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow feeds more than 400,000 kids every day.

Harmon Parker build bridges connecting Kenyans with life-changing resources.

Aki Ra restores safety by finding and diffusing land mines planted by the Khmer Rouge.

Evans Wadongo is lighting the way to prosperity for rural Kenyans with his solar powered lanterns.

And Dan Wallwrath, who builds custom homes for wounded veterans returning from service.

Congratulations to the top ten CNN Heroes of 2010. Which one inspires you the most? Go to CNNHeroes.com right now to vote for CNN Hero of the year.

KING: OK, Jerry, follow that.

SEINFELD: Yes, thanks, Larry. Let's throw up the Zapruder film also.

KING: But you like our heroes concept.

SEINFELD: I do. I love the Heroes. That's beautiful.

KING: It's nice to salute everyday people.

SEINFELD: That is the classiest thing on CNN. I love it. Don't you think? That's really classic. That's great. That's great. No jokes.

KING: Have you done heroic things ever?

SEINFELD: What was this?

KING: This is a heroic thing?

SEINFELD: This is like a medevac. I come on -- you're on a show here as a comedian with no audience. That's, you know --

KING: But there's people here.

SEINFELD: Yeah, I guess. But I would say to you, what's funny about this show is there's no audience but you can still bomb. You can still go right down in jokes.

KING: When's your next in-person appearance?

SEINFELD: I'm in Memphis tomorrow night, Friday.

KING: Memphis.

SEINFELD: Memphis, Tennessee. Yes, the good people of Memphis.

KING: Theater. Big theater?

SEINFELD: It's a little tiny theater. Of course it's a big theater. It's a huge theater. I don't know what it is.

KING: Do you -- truly, do you ever bomb any more? Are you too big to bomb?

SEINFELD: No one's too big to bomb. No one's too big to bomb.

KING: So you don't automatically have -- you have them for the first -- Bob Hope said you have them for the first minute.

SEINFELD: You get a free minute, because if you have -- if you're well known. But after -- nobody -- as I like to say, nobody laughs at a reputation. If you're funny that night, they laugh. If you're not, they don't. They want to say, I went to see this guy. He bombed. They're dying to tell that story.

KING: How self confident you are.

SEINFELD: Yes. KING: We'll be back with our remaining moments with Seinfeld. He's in Memphis. Don't bother, they're sold out, I'm sure.

SEINFELD: Sold out. Double Delicious, October 26th.

KING: Don't go away. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Wish we had more time, Jer. When we did the scene in the bee movie, you pulled up in one of the wildest looking cars.

SEINFELD: Oh, really?

KING: You're a car freak.

SEINFELD: I'm a total car nut, yes.

KING: How many cars do you own?

SEINFELD: More than I need.

KING: Why? You only need one to get somewhere. Why?

SEINFELD: Because when you're in a car, you're inside, and you're outside. And you're moving and you're still, all at the same time.

KING: You're moving and you're still.

SEINFELD: You're moving and you're still, and you're inside and you're outside.

KING: So why do you need four of them or five of them?

SEINFELD: Because I -- I love that experience of --

KING: What's your favorite car?

SEINFELD: My favorite car is a Porsche 73 RS, that only a Porsche fanatic would know.

KING: What does it do that other cars --

SEINFELD: It makes certain sounds. It has a certain feel to it. It's just a hobby. It's an interest.

KING: Are you a fast driver?

SEINFELD: No, I drive reasonably --

KING: You live in the city of New York?

SEINFELD: I live in New York City, yes.

KING: You drive around New York City?

SEINFELD: Not around. No, I leave. I go outside the city and I drive.

KING: I don't know why that's -- you have space to park all these cars?

SEINFELD: I have a little garage I keep my cars. I keep most of the cars someplace else. I'm not telling the thieves where they are.

KING: You lived in L.A. for a while, didn't you?

SEINFELD: I lived in L.A. for 18 years, from 1980 until the end of the show in 1998. Then I came right back to New York, because I believe New York makes you funny. And L.A. makes you less funny.

KING: Why? Why would a city --

SEINFELD: Some cities are funny. Do you ever watch the local news in New York and they interview a garbage man? He's always funny, right?

KING: That's right. Not funny in L.A.?

SEINFELD: Not funny. Garbage men aren't funny in L.A.

KING: What's another funny city?

SEINFELD: Minneapolis is funny. Miami is funny. Wouldn't you agree? Miami is funny. Tijuana is funny.

KING: Is New Haven funny?

SEINFELD: New Haven is not funny.

KING: Toronto.

SEINFELD: Funny.

KING: Montreal?

SEINFELD: Less funny.

KING: You've got to be so hip to get this, the band don't get it. Do you have any goals left? You've got a Broadway show, books.

SEINFELD: I wasn't kidding you. I love these people I brought on the show tonight, Barry Marder, Colin Quinn. I love these people. I think they're great talents. And that is my goal, that the public should connect with this talent that hasn't quite been discovered yet. So that's my goal for Barry and for Colin.

KING: And you will succeed, because you're a good guy and you're a funny guy.

SEINFELD: Thank you, Larry. And you're a great man. And we thank you for all your years of service.

KING: And thanks for the clock. It shall be here nightly.

SEINFELD: That really makes me feel good.

KING: The cast of "Saturday Night Live" is here tomorrow night.

SEINFELD: Where?

KING: In New York.

SEINFELD: That was my gag in the bee. He's always telling you about some other show. Tomorrow night.

KING: It's time now for "AC 360."

CNN LARRY KING LIVE

Interview With Al Pacino

Aired December 6, 2010 - 21:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LARRY KING, CNN ANCHOR: Tonight my good buddy, my best man. Al Pacino.

AL PACINO, ACTOR: I love the people I play.

KING: One of the world's greatest actors. And a very private guy. He's going to sit down for a rare and revealing interview.

We thought that "The Godfather" would bomb at the box office.

You ever turned down a role you regretted?

PACINO: Let me see -- yes.

KING: The Academy Award winner Al Pacino. We'll talk about George Clooney, Brad Pitt and others all next on LARRY KING LIVE.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: We're in Al Pacino's backyard in Beverly Hills. Yes. The last time he was with us after much begging and cajoling was back in 1996. We thought it would be the start of hundreds of interviews, and this is the second time.

We've become very close friends. We spent a lot of time together. This is only the second time on the show.

Let's show you a little clip of the first time from 15 years ago.

PACINO: No. No, don't. Don't. No.

KING: Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Why have you finally come?

PACINO: Come here?

KING: Yes, finally, after years of asking?

PACINO: Senility, I guess.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Why do you dislike interviews?

PACINO: Well, I don't -- I think it's because it starts with the whole idea of being an actor, which is something that is kind of -- the anonymity of an actor. The more anonymous you are, the easier it is for an audience to accept you in the role. I think it starts -- it starts there. And it's also basically because I think I'm somewhat shy.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: You still feel that way?

PACINO: Sure.

KING: Do you still feel --

PACINO: Yes, I do. But I'm so shy now I wear sunglasses everywhere I go.

KING: I mean you play so --

PACINO: I sleep with these.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: You do -- you do so many things, you're so outgoing, why would you be shy and --

PACINO: I've often said there's two kinds of actors. There's a more gregarious type and the shy type. And both going to acting for the reason that they're able to access stuff because they have these big personalities and they're able to get involved in -- and they're open and they do things.

And the others go into acting because they can't do that. And in acting it allows them that freedom. So I think there's -- I'm sure there's people who are a little bit of both. But --

KING: Do you enjoy fame?

PACINO: This play I did, remember the local stigmatic, which you saw, the movie of -- I filmed it -- that the quotation in there from the author at the start was, "Fame is the perversion of the natural human instinct for validation and attention."

Can you follow that?

KING: Yes.

PACINO: I didn't make it up, but I just said it. It's a strange thing. When it first happened to me, it was quite daunting, and I got the best advice I ever got --

KING: Was it after "Godfather"? PACINO: Yes, after the big movie started coming out. It started early in the theater, too. It was escalating. And I got the best advice I could ever get from anyone, Lee Strasbourg. The great Lee Strasbourg said to me, "Darling, you simply have to adjust." About fame.

KING: All right. Al is currently starring on Broadway --

PACINO: I haven't adjusted, but I'm trying, you know?

KING: He's currently starring in Broadway in "Merchant of Venice." He played it in the summer outdoors in Central Park. That was free, right?

PACINO: That was free theater. Yes.

KING: You worked for nothing?

PACINO: Yes. Yes. Joseph Papp, the great emissary --

KING: Started it.

PACINO: He started it, yes. It's a great place. And they do it every summer. They do Shakespeare. They're even doing other things.

KING: Is it different when you're working without pay?

(LAUGHTER)

PACINO: No, of course not.

KING: No? I mean no?

PACINO: No.

KING: You don't even think of that?

PACINO: No, you don't think about that. I mean you don't think you're -- because again, it's a job. It's -- and again doing it in the park, it's so -- because you're dealing with all the elements in the park. It's not quite what you think it's going to be. It's outdoor theater. But it doesn't work out kind of the way you think it would be.

KING: And so like these planes go overhead while you're acting?

PACINO: Everything happens. Everything happens.

KING: It rains.

PACINO: And it rains. As a matter of fact, we were in the middle of a scene and it started raining.

KING: What do you do?

PACINO: You stop the show. But you don't stop until the announcement comes up by the stage manager. He announces, all right, ladies and gentlemen, we're going to stop the show for a while, and the audiences love it. They love it when that happens. You know? You go back --

KING: Why?

PACINO: I don't know why. They just do. They're like -- they're a part of something that's different. You know? And so -- but we did and we stopped for a full half hour and went back out again.

KING: By the way, the advance for "Merchant of Venice" was the largest on Broadway this year. It was \$4 million as of weeks ago.

PACINO: Wow.

KING: Before you open so you should be very proud. The reviews were amazing. I want to touch a lot of bases.

PACINO: Yes.

KING: You play Shylock.

PACINO: Yes.

KING: In a times Shakespeare -- was Shakespeare anti-Semitic, in your opinion, when he wrote that?

PACINO: In my opinion no, he wasn't. But it's hard to tell what was going on back then. That's 400 years ago. What -- what was being interpreted. There's a lot of interpretations of the play.

To me, I think there is anti-Semitism in the play, of course, but I also think Shylock is also a blatant cry against prejudice in some ways, when you think of what they do to this person because he's a Jew. And how he reacts to it and what he's become. What he is made into.

KING: So before you play him --

PACINO: Because of prejudice.

KING: Do you think about it a lot? Do you think about, how I'm going to -- how I view him? Do you have to like him?

PACINO: Well, yes, I mean -- you know, you don't -- you first of all, you think of anybody you're playing as a human being, and what his needs are, what drives him. Why he is where he is and what he's doing.

These are the things you focus on. And in that point of view, you are -- as far as I'm concerned, I'm looking at the play through Shylock's point of view, and he's defiant. He's defiant in the face of prejudice. He defies it. That's what I love about the character.

KING: You like playing Shakespeare? PACINO: I love playing Shakespeare, yes. Yes, I do.

KING: And I just saw "Salome." Another one. When is that going to come out? You directed it, you star --

PACINO: Well, one maybe knows. You know you -- you know this has been an ongoing thing for me for four years. It's sort of -- it isn't rare for documentaries to go on for a long time. You work on them, you develop them because there's no script to start with, so I had an idea.

As I did with "Looking for Richard." There was an idea I had. And that took me three or four years to do. And you do it while you're doing other things and it goes back and forth.

KING: Do you then -- by the way, it's a brilliant movie, whenever it comes, see it.

PACINO: Awesome.

KING: When you do Hollywood, sometimes are you doing it for money? Because you love theater so much.

PACINO: Well, I wouldn't do some of the pictures I did for nothing, I'll tell you that.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: That's a good way to put it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Sailors but men. There be land rats and water rats. Water thieves and land thieves. I mean, pie rats.

(LAUGHTER)

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Say hello to my little friend.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: When I look at your credits, just some of them, "Godfather", "Serpico", "Dog Day Afternoon," "Scarface." That great line. Do that line. The great lines --

PACINO: Every day -- every day above ground is a good day?

KING: No --

PACINO: That's an Oliver Stone line. KING: No, my little friend.

PACINO: Oh, say hello to my little friend, yes.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Say hello to my little friend.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: My little son told me that. He said someone said that to him. What's that line your dad says? Say hello to my little friend. It's a catchy -- it's a catchy phrase.

KING: When you take an accent like that, a Cuban accent, do you keep it the night you go home for dinner, too?

PACINO: You sort of get involved. And you -- yes, it becomes a part of your fabric, it becomes a part of your life. But even after the movie is over, you're still a little bit in it. Your frame is -- you know. It was interesting because it was a relief for me to come home.

And I was lucky enough to be -- I had fallen in love during "Scarface." I'd fallen in love. Doing that 10, 12 hours a day, and then coming home and listening to my girlfriend's problems and her day would take me out of what I was doing. And it's -- because I -- you know, it's like you don't talk much when you're doing something like that afterward.

You're not in -- you know, it's almost tantamount to being a fighter, like a boxer, right? Who's in the ring. He doesn't fight much afterward. You know? He doesn't go out and get into a brawl in a bar. Usually, it's because it's -- you know it's what we do. And doing "Scarface" every day for 12, 14 hours a day, kind of -- I want to hear other people's issues and their problems.

"Scarface" was written -- people don't realize this -- by Oliver Stone, and directed by Brian De Palma, produced by Martin Bregman. But Oliver Stone wrote that text. So when you say, say hello to my little friend, I think of Oliver.

KING: When you see your films, are you very self-critical?

PACINO: No, I stopped being that long ago. It doesn't serve -- you know, let the others be because I'm going to have enough critics without it being myself, so what I look for is where the actor is working, where it's working, what I can do about it. I don't like seeing movies when I can do nothing about them.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Who put this thing together? Me. That's who. Who do I trust? Me.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP) KING: But it's that universally wrapped?

PACINO: Yes. Yes, it did. Yes.

KING: Yes, it's a cult, right? It's -- everyone talks about it?

PACINO: Well, there's probably -- yes. I would say it's the most successful movie I made. And -- for me, yes.

KING: In dollars taken in?

PACINO: Yes. Yes. It's really -- and it's been that way for -- it's gotten all this -- and it's across the board. When I go to Europe, when I go around, that's the picture they --

KING: Have you ever turned down a role you regretted?

PACINO: Let me see. Yes, I did.

KING: Without embarrassing the actor, what did you turn --

PACINO: I don't want to embarrass anybody, that's the problem. Because, you know, you mention a role you turned down and -- but I realized about this role that I could have -- when I first read it, I said, no, this is -- I'm not right for it. But later when I saw it, and I -- when I saw a comic, I gave it away now. Anyway, it doesn't matter.

KING: It was a comedy?

PACINO: I saw somebody doing something in a club, and I suddenly saw what I would want to do with this part.

KING: Plenty?

PACINO: And what happened -- it's going to -- that was a great performance by Dustin Hoffman, it was amazing. It was amazing.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I know it was you, Fredo. You broke my heart.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: "Godfather I & II" may be the best movies ever made. Many consider that now, right? Ranked with "Citizen Kane."

PACINO: Wow. I know. I know. I know.

KING: Did you like Michael Corleone?

PACINO: I loved him. I loved the people I play.

KING: He killed people -- PACINO: I loved -- you know, that's like saying to a painter, when he paints a painting that, how could you -- you know, how could you paint this painting of who ever? Do you -- you know, you don't feel as though, you don't do that? You see always looking at the metaphor, you're always looking at what the character is, what is the deeper -- what is being said about our life and our world through this character.

You know? And one can make the argument that Michael Corleone -- why did the audience like him? Because it was couched in a drama so it had a different -- it comes at you differently, it comes out of the drama.

KING: Do you agree "Godfather" is about a family, basically?

PACINO: Well, that's what I mean about this -- that was the thing that turned people on so much at the first one. I remember I was there, and, you know, the reaction was so universal across the board. Had a lot to do with family, the family structure. And people related to it. You didn't have to be an Italian American or -- you just related to the whole family dynamic.

KING: When he goes into the bathroom, gets the gun and comes out and shoots the cop, was it your idea to throw the gun in the air?

PACINO: I guess it just happened.

KING: It was very effective.

PACINO: Yes, I think -- I think --

KING: You tossed it and out.

PACINO: Yes, it had that -- the way it was going, sure, it was in the script. I can't remember that far back. But it's sort of -- yes, I think it was in the script.

KING: Well, we're all over the board tonight because I'm just so happy to have you.

PACINO: I don't mind.

KING: No, I'm going --

PACINO: I'm glad to be here.

KING: I'm going everywhere with you.

PACINO: Yes.

KING: Do you ever watch --

PACINO: You want to stay here tonight?

KING: Do you ever --

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Do you ever watch other movies and say, I would have liked to have played that?

PACINO: No.

KING: No?

PACINO: No. As far as I can see, any part that anyone's doing, I couldn't do. So I just look at it and say -- you know, because I look at all parts, movies, as an audience looks at it.

KING: You do?

PACINO: Yes, it's like going to a baseball game or something. You watch them, the pitcher pitch the ball. The hitter hit it. You just -- you know, you don't want to go out there and do it yourself. But you know --

KING: But you were at a film?

PACINO: I am.

KING: Your own craft?

PACINO: Yes. I don't see it that way.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KING: You don't cry?

TOM HANKS, ACTOR: There's no crying in baseball.

KING: No crying.

HANKS: Yes.

SEAN CONNERY, ACTOR: And I'm inclined to agree with that but --

SIDNEY POITIER, ACTOR: They know when he or she is missing the mark.

BRAD PITT, ACTOR: I can't tell you anything more than it just felt right.

GEORGE CLOONEY, ACTOR: Apparently now I'm in big trouble.

TOM CRUISE, ACTOR: We start training now.

MICHAEL DOUGLAS, ACTOR: Well, we're humble guys, Larry.

MARLON BRANDO, ACTOR: I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse.

KING: Good-bye.

BRANDO: Good-bye.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: "Godfather" is a term that was used by his friends, one of affection, one of respect.

BRANDO: Michael, why is it not done?

PACINO: We'll get there, pop. We'll get there.

In my home, in my bedroom where my wife sleeps? I know it was you, Fredo, you broke my heart.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Working with Brando, what was that like for a young guy?

PACINO: Well, when you think of growing up with the image of Brando as your sort of source of inspiration, because I remember seeing him in a movie when I was 16. And I went into this movie house and I saw the "Waterfront", I was alone.

And I had seen "A Member of the Wedding" came first with Julie Harris and Ethel Waters. It was a great movie. She was great. You know? And then I saw this movie, and those days these two movies -- so I'm sitting there, and this movie comes on, "On the Waterfront," and I'm just -- you know, I'm just locked because of the degree. Kazan directing it.

It's over and I just sat there. Did not move. Sat through the whole "Member of the Wedding" movie again. Just to see "Waterfront" again. So that's how it impacted me. And it truly -- it -- it's -- it was a -- you know, today when you tell young people today about it, the response isn't quite the same.

You have to understand, this wasn't that period, it was a revelation. It was a breakthrough. His acting on screen was different than anything we had all seen. So it was a -- so playing with him in the movie. I'll get to that answer.

KING: What was that like?

PACINO: It was a little --

KING: Nervous?

PACINO: A little -- a little unnerving, and you don't know. And Marlon would play that a little bit. You know he was -- he was always -- he was --

KING: Very sharp (ph). PACINO: Yes. But he was so good to me. He was so sensitive to the condition that I -- because I was in a precarious condition to say the least. Because they were going to let me go, I think.

KING: They were going to let you go?

PACINO: Yes. Yes. They had made a mistake.

KING: They thought you were wrong for Michael?

PACINO: Well, they did. Yes. Because I started out slow. And that was my plan. My plan was to do Michael Corleone slow. And discover it. He discovers who he is in this thing, in a way. He really doesn't know who he is by the end of the picture, he could be anything.

And I wanted to see if I could get to that, so that when the moment of whatever comes, we know that this guy, where did he come from? That's what I was trying to get. Because he's kind of a schlep during the thing a little bit. He's a kind of he's here, he's there. We get a sense that he's an independent kind of guy. But he's the kid. You know? He's the kid. And eventually he becomes the don.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Then I'll kill them both.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: And I thought, you know, if you start like this, you got nowhere to go, really. And that impact of that moment of change won't be strong.

KING: Was it difficult for --

PACINO: But you know what kept me was that restaurant scene, you see? When they saw that scene, they kept me in the movie because I would have been gone.

KING: Wow.

PACINO: Even Francis said to me, you know I had a lot of belief in you when I hired you, I wanted you, I just felt you could do this thing. And now there you are. You're not cutting it for me, kid. So I want you to see some of the rushes. I said, all right. By that time I didn't want to be in the movie any more. I just -- you know, you get the feeling you're not wanted so you don't want to be there.

KING: So you're thinking like, you might not be in a movie when you did that gun shot scene?

PACINO: Yes. But I saw the rushes. I went it and saw what he was talking about. And I looked at the movie and I thought, wow, I don't know. I seemed to be doing what I wanted to do. But I'll just pretend like -- I said, oh, yes, you know you're right? I can see it. But I know I was into something right. But I didn't say anything. But they kept me after the -- after the shooting.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PACINO: "Scent of a Woman" playing -- you are wearing glasses now, sun glasses. You wore glasses as a blind man, right? No, you didn't. You had them off a lot too.

PACINO: I had them a lot too. I didn't wear sunglasses that much.

KING: When you're playing a blind person and you had to do that scene of the dance -
-

PACINO: Yeah.

KING: -- what do you see?

PACINO: It's the oddest thing, you don't see anything.

KING: What do you mean?

PACINO: You don't focus your eyes. And what happens is, you just go into a state. As a matter of fact, I had an eye injury during the shooting of the film, because I fell into a bush. And the worst kind of eye injury is when plant life gets into your cornea. It stuck into my cornea. As I was falling, my eyes weren't focusing and the thing went into my eye. So it's also dangerous to do that.

PACINO: So you're saying you were blind during that movie?

PACINO: Yeah. You know what's so interesting is because I asked my little daughter at that time -- she was at that time about three -- I said to her, Julie, could you show me -- if you were doing something, how do you do a blind person?

She was spot on. She was just perfect. I said, bam, no work, no preparation, no nothing. She just did it. So it's -- I didn't -- I did a variation on that theme. But --

KING: Was it difficult?

PACINO: No, it wasn't. Having an affliction of something, it's sort of like having an accent. It gives an actor something to feed into. It feeds you. It serves you as an actor.

KING: How did you come up with Hoo-ah?

PACINO: Well, I had this guy who was teaching me how to assemble and disassemble a .45 blind. And I would spend countless --

KING: You did that yourself?

PACINO: Yes. And I spend hours just learning how to take it out on. He was there and he was a real lieutenant or one of the guys, I don't know what his rank was. One time I did it right and he went Hoo-ah. Hoo-ah (BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Hoo-ah.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I said, what's that? He would do it every time I did something right. It's an expression that's used in the Army. So I thought -- and it worked its way into the movie.

KING: That was a hell of a movie. "Sea of Love."

PACINO: "Sea of Love."

KING: That sex scene.

PACINO: Yes. I thought you would never ask, Larry.

KING: You and Ellen Barkin, one of the sexiest scenes ever filmed. I don't want to bring up names.

PACINO: That's because I had all my clothes on.

KING: Marcello Mastroianni (ph) told me that sex scenes are the hardest thing to do, because it's hard to be sexy when there's 43 cameramen around.

PACINO: Yes. Well, you know, I think that had to do with Harold Becker's direction, because he had orchestrated that in such a way all you had to do was show up. He had

just moved it in different ways. Yeah, it's not the hardest thing in the world to kiss Ellen Barkin. That you do.

But at the same time, if it's orchestrated, if it has a purpose, if it's made to do something, and it's orchestrated, literally planned and worked out, moment by moment, step by step. And that's what Harold Becker did. He knew what he wanted. He knew how to get out of it this quality, this sexual --

KING: Did you get excited?

PACINO: Well, you know --

KING: Well, do you or don't you?

PACINO: I'm excited now. I'm always excited.

KING: You're kind of passionate.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: "Godfather," "Serpico," "Dog Day Afternoon," "Scarface."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I'm done with this cockroach. (END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: It's like you don't talk much when you're doing something like that afterward. You're not in -- you know, you've -- it's almost tantamount to being a fighter.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I'm going to get him.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Like a boxer who is in the ring.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Inch by inch, play by play, until we're finished.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: He doesn't fight much after. You know, he doesn't go out and get into a brawl on the bar.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: See, this is how we keep score.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Are you easily directed?

PACINO: Well, yeah, kind of in a way. If the director knows what they want, yeah. Sure. I kind of like -- as Sidney Lumet once said, a director directs. He says, go here, you go there, you go there.

KING: You follow it well? But have you --

PACINO: Well, I don't know if I follow it well -- well, look, with a guy like Lumet, he tells you this is where you go when you come in the bank. You go here. You go there. You go around there. You do that. You do this.

And you know what, you're in a bank robbery. You don't have to act. You're just doing what he tells you and you're there. There's the bank robbery. That's genius. So when you work with a genius, that's what you -- that's good. That doesn't happen often, but sometimes you get lucky.

KING: One of the great movies ever made -- you made so many of the great movies ever made. "The Dog Day Afternoon."

PACINO: "Dog Day," yeah.

KING: And that actor you worked with --

PACINO: John Cazale.

KING: He was a great actor.

PACINO: He was a great artist.

KING: When he was Fredo, was that different? He had to play such a weak character, yet the oldest brother. That was quite a job he did, because -- yet you were sympathetic to him.

PACINO: Yeah, I tell you. Nobody liked John. How about the guy in "Dog Days".

KING: Yeah. That guy -- you were two gay guys robbing a bank?

PACINO: Well, that's what he -- he wasn't. Remember when that moment comes?

KING: He wasn't? You were gay.

PACINO: I was gay. Well, I was AC/DC. So it was this moment where they say two gay robbers in the bank and John's character says, I'm not gay.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN CAZALE, ACTOR: I'm not a homosexual.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: John Cazale says to Sidney Lumet, why do I say I'm gay? Why do I say I'm not gay? And Sidney looked at him and said well -- they started talking. Knowing John, I know this is going to go on for a while, right. Because I know John. I worked with him. And Sidney starts to satisfy his question, but it won't get satisfied.

And he goes on and on. But I knew enough to go off to the side and sort of practice whatever I wanted to --

KING: He didn't want to say I'm not gay.

PACINO: He didn't understand why he said it. Then Sidney finally -- you hear Sidney say, you're saying it because it's in the script and I'm telling you to say it. He said, oh, you should have told me that in the first place.

KING: That was a hell of a movie.

PACINO: But the thing about movies that's so interesting is that you can -- and I've heard Dustin Hoffman talk like this -- is you can suddenly do something in a movie that's absolutely spontaneous and right there. Like in "Dog Days" when I was going to say Attica, Attica.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Attica! Attica! Attica! (END VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I have to go out there and talk to a mob and this guy, Bert Harris, a great AD, assistant director to Sidney Lumet, comes up to me and says, why don't you say Attica? Just say Attica? Because it just had happened where they went into the prison and killed all those prisoners. And it was really in the air, hot and heavy in the air.

And I just got it. And I thought, OK. And I went out there and said, you know, Attica! And the crowd just went Attica! I said Attica! And there was like this -- you know, it was a cyclical thing. It came back and forth, and before we knew it, we were in the zone together.

KING: Working with De Niro.

PACINO: Oh, my, Bobby -- Well, Bob is --

KING: The two of you are like -- he doesn't do theater?

PACINO: No, he doesn't. You know, Bob is a kind of artist who has always been connected to movies. That's his art form. That's where he expresses himself. And it's a different kind of thing. He's -- there are actors who find their art through film. A lot of them today, most of them today.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: Now that we've been face to face, if I'm there and I've got to put you away, I won't like it, but I'll tell you, if it's between you and some poor bastard whose wife you're going to turn into a widow, brother, you are going down.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(NEWS BREAK)

KING: How did you defeat alcoholism?

PACINO: Well, I didn't defeat it. One doesn't look at it that way.

KING: How long are you sober?

PACINO: All I can say is I'm never sober. I don't want to be sober. But I have to say, I don't -- just don't drink, but a part of being involved in alcohol and the way of that life and all, which is today -- it's extremely interesting to see the way it's dealt with today. Mainly because of the DUI's, because of drunk driving, because that's -- that's just -- that's not permissible.

But aside from that, people drink and -- it's a different world today because of the scrutiny and the attention being paid to us. In my day, it was an old part of being -- as they used to say to Lawrence Olivier -- Sir Lawrence Olivier, what's your favorite part of acting? He'd say the drink after the show. That's his favorite part.

So it was all part of a world. And then when it started to replace -- when the cart was in front of the horse and it sort of replaced the work and all other parts -- I was reluctant to stop, but my great friend Charlie Lawton, who I have talked about so many times --

KING: Not the actor but the same name.

PACINO: The same name. He was a real influence on me, because he was my mentor, my closest friend. Really begged me to stop for a while. Just to take a look at it, and ask me if I would -- he had stopped for about a year, and I was continuing. And he was quite worried about -- it was during one of those episodes of drinking in London that I turned down "Dog Day." I actually turned it down. I said I don't want to go into a bank, rob a bank and do all of that stuff.

I was talking like this. And I actually turned it down after I said yes. And I was very lucky I had someone like Marty Bregman and Sidney Lumet around.

KING: Made you do it.

PACINO: They didn't just make me do it. They understood I wasn't going to do it. I quit and they got somebody else. During the course of this time, Bregman was on me, on me, on me. I said, Marty, I don't want to do this. I don't want to do this. He said, if you stop drinking for a while -- could you just stop for a while. I said, OK, for a while, and read the script.

I said, OK. He said, no, I mean it, just don't drink. I didn't drink for a couple days and I read the script. It was clear. I said, why am I not doing this? I should be doing this. And I called him, I said, you know, Marty, you're right, this is a great script. He said, OK. Talk to you later. Boom.

And he got on it. And he somehow wangled and wiggled as only he can -- and he knows how to do it -- and I was very lucky I had him there.

KING: How did you stop drink something.

PACINO: I didn't just stop dead-on. It's a gradation, you know. You gradate (ph) from one stage to the another. It takes a while to even -- like as they often say, unscramble your brains. You have a certain period of time. And then slowly I got to understand what it was and --

KING: Are you ever tempted?

PACINO: You know, as Norman Mailer once said, why he keeps drinking and he know us how difficult it is for him to do it -- he said I can't give it up because it would be one less way to relax. And the truth is, you know, we need our anodynes. You know that word, anodynes? We need that in life some times. A good warm bath can be one for you, or a whatever.

And a nice glass of wine is an anodyne. You know, at the end of the day, you have something, sit back, drink it and enjoy it?

KING: Are you tempted?

PACINO: As we speak I am. No, I'm not. I'm not. It's been a long time. I don't see the need for it. I don't think about it.

KING: Could you ever act while drunk?

PACINO: No, I didn't like that. And I've done it. And I did it with John Cazale on stage. And he said to me what are you doing afterwards? I said -- he says, what are you doing? And I realized I had a few beers, that's all, before I went on. And it changed things for me. But the great actors of the past and all, they would be -- they would drink in the wings on stage. They'd done the part. And it was part of the trade.

But in our way, our approach to it, drinking wasn't a part of that day.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGNI VIDEO CLIP)

PACINO: I don't know how to do anything else.

ROBERT DENIRO, ACTOR: Neither do I.

PACINO: I'm in love with you. I love you. I am totally, completely mad for you.

Love you! If you was a broad, I'd marry you.

Somebody trying to shake me up? Huh? Huh?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Working with Johnny Depp.

PACINO: I love him.

I love Johnny Depp.

KING: What makes him special? You did "Donny Brasco" with him.

PACINO: Yes. He's done so many things. He's gone from A to Z. It's his gifts. It's really his gifts. As a personality and as a person, I just loved him. I loved him. I loved being with him because he made me laugh every day I was there. He's nuts, too.

KING: He's nuts?

PACINO: He'll say I'm nuts, but he's really nuts. But he's nuts in that way that he's just fun to be with.

KING: When you're doing a scene with him, are you aware while acting that he's great?

PACINO: No. No. I mean, you lock in with your partner. It's as though you were playing tennis and you just hit the ball back, and you are going this way and that way, and you're in sync as much as you can be. And you're playing with each other. You're not observing the other person. That's really for the director to do and watch. You're in it with him.

"Frankie and Johnny," that movie --

KING: Oh, "Frankie and Johnny", and you were obsessed with her, crazy in love.

PACINO: With Michelle Pfeiffer, yes.

In "Scar Face II," I was in love with her too.

KING: That's right. But in "Frankie and Johnny" that was like --

PACINO: That was a Terrence McNally play, which was a great play. Kathy Bates had done it. She was great at it. So was Michelle, by the way. Sometimes people were a little hard on her because she was so beautiful and she was supposed to be playing a plain person.

KING: A waitress.

PACINO: But the truth is, she was a plain person. She was in this movie. She's quite good in this movie. You can see she was a very sad person. And it shows. You don't see her glamour in the movie?

KING: why did you do one of the Ocean's movies for our friend Larry Weintraub?

PACINO: It seems like a good idea at the time.

KING: "Ocean's 12?"

PACINO: "Ocean's 13"

KING: You were the hotel owner?

PACINO: Yeah.

KING: Was that for fun?

PACINO: No. No. I don't -- I don't think that was for fun. That was because it was there. They're a great cast. They do these great films. They're a franchise that does fantastic with all these great people in it. And there offering me a part. And I thought, one of the main reasons I did it is because I was here in Los Angeles to see my kids and it was like given to me on a platter.

And it was a good script and I thought, well, OK, I'll try it. But, you know --

KING: Clooney, Pitt --

PACINO: I love George Clooney. I love him.

KING: what makes him special? He's our Carry Grant.

PACINO: Well I think what makes him special is he's different. Believe it or not, he's not Carry Grant. He's different than Carry Grant. As individual as Carry Grant was and as great as he was, George has his own place. You could say in a way, in a manner of speaking, he's sort of falls into that pantheon, but he's very special.

KING: What are you going to do after Venice?

PACINO: What's he talking about?

KING: After "The Merchant of Venice."

PACINO: Oh, "Merchant of Venice?" Venice, I thought where am I going, Venice? I'd love to go there.

KING: Did I lose your train of thought there.

PACINO: After Merchant, I'm going to probably do a movie, I think, with Adam Sandler.

KING: Adam Sandler?

PACINO: Yeah, I think so.

KING: I heard about this.

PACINO: You don't want to go into it.

KING: You play yourself?

PACINO: You don't want to go into that though. It's not a done deal yet.

KING: But it's a very funny concept.

PACINO: It's very funny. And Adam is great and he's very funny. And not only is he a great actor but he's a great comic writer. I want to go on stage again, too.

KING: Why do you keep working?

PACINO: Because I'm here. Because I still, you know, have my health. And you know, I had a few setbacks, as you know, that people have heard about in my life, financially and --

KING: Guy took all of your money?

PACINO: Not exactly.

KING: He took a lot. He's in jail.

PACINO: He's in jail, yes.

KING: You have to work?

PACINO: In a way, I do, yeah. And maybe that's good. You know?

KING: Al, an honor to have you here.

PACINO: It's an honor to be here. Congratulations for everything. Congratulations.

KING: Al Pacino.

CNN LARRY KING LIVE

Interview With Ricky Martin

Aired November 9, 2010 - 21:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight Ricky Martin sizzles on the world stage and now on the pages of a revealing new book celebrating an incredible career.

The international pop star gets personal about a private life. A secret he kept for so long. How his love for his twin sons forced him to go public.

Ricky Martin answers my questions and yours still next on LARRY KING LIVE.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: We love him. Good evening and a very special welcome to our CNN Espanol viewers.

Ricky Martin, as you know, is the Grammy-winning recording star. He sold more than 80 million albums worldwide and is the author of a new memoir simply titled "Me."

We hold the book in our hand and in a while we'll have Ricky even reading from the book.

Why did you title it that?

RICKY MARTIN, GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING SINGER: Very simple. It was my life. It was my moments, my ups and downs. It's about me.

KING: Why now?

MARTIN: I'm going to talk about my children for a minute. When I held them in my arms.

KING: They're twins, right?

MARTIN: They're twins. Twin boys. I said this is about -- it's about dignity, it's about love, it's about transparency. I need to do something about this. And then one day I sat

in front of the computer and I started writing about my foundation and my trips to India.

And I said I think I found the right way to do it. So it was something that was -- it was there. It was very organic how it happened. KING: You didn't think much about having kids did you?

MARTIN: I always wanted to be a dad.

KING: Yes?

MARTIN: Yes. Yes. I have amazing memories with my father. And I always said, maybe, you know what, I -- this is something that needs to happen. I didn't know how I was going to tell I was going to do it. And then the work that I do with my foundation which is about human trafficking, child trafficking, you know, I read so many -- I read and I heard so many testimonies of children. And the way they heal easily.

I guess something happened there that triggered the paternity.

KING: Was it hard to write?

MARTIN: It was intense. Very intense at moments. Very painful at moments. Very extremely vulnerable moments. And then moments of joy.

KING: You didn't have to write it.

MARTIN: I didn't have to write it, but you know it was -- it felt amazing at the end when I said my book is done. It just felt liberating. It felt -- it just felt right.

KING: In describing this journey that brought you where you are today, your memoir includes a section you call baby steps.

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: Would you -- want to read part of that first?

MARTIN: Sure. Baby steps.

KING: And then we'll get into this. This is from the book "Me."

MARTIN: Yes.

"It was approximately five years ago when I understood and felt deep down in the bottom of my heart and my soul that I was finally ready to accept my truth. I had

plenty of time to think, to fall in and out of love, and to live through everything that I had to live through.

"Until then, even though I knew deep down in my heart what I was about, I didn't own it. And I didn't feel the need to tell the rest of the world. On one hand I felt that it was nobody's business but my own. On the other hand I simply didn't see how I was going to change everything."

And I have to go back to my children. Transparency.

KING: How did you come to have the twins? MARTIN: I stopped my last tour, the "Black and White" tour, an amazing tour, world tour, and I said this is the right moment. I can take it anymore. I also talk about this in the book.

KING: How did you get them?

MARTIN: Surrogacy. I searched many options. Adoption is a very beautiful option and maybe in the future that would be the way. But science and medicine has given us so much.

KING: You had a surrogate mother?

MARTIN: I had a surrogate mother. And --

KING: Your sperm?

MARTIN: My sperm and an egg donor. And then a volunteer. That's how it came. Very simple. Since the moment I typed surrogacy in my computer until the moment until I was -- I held my children, it was exactly a year.

KING: All right. During all the years of your fame -- you were in that baby group, right?

MARTIN: Menudo.

KING: Menudo. Well, how old were you then?

MARTIN: I was 12 years old.

KING: That group hit it early, right?

MARTIN: In 1977 they were -- they were -- they started. And then they became a phenomenon by the beginning of the '80s.

KING: All from Puerto Rico?

MARTIN: All from Puerto Rico. I started in the band in 1984. July 1984.

KING: And then you broke away, of course, on your own.

MARTIN: Five years later I was done with the band. I was so tired. And I just went to New York City to live and to relax. It was the first time in my life that I was literally not following a schedule and it was very important for me to do so.

KING: Well, I have seen you work. I've seen your concert. You entertained at a gala for our Heart Foundation.

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: When my son was six months old. He danced with you on stage.

MARTIN: Right. KING: There were always rumors about you. And you'd heard them, right?

MARTIN: Yes, yes. Yes, of course.

KING: What was -- what was that like? What was that life like to live?

MARTIN: I was just not ready to even focus on the idea of --

KING: Coming out?

MARTIN: Coming out. And telling the world that I was -- that I am gay. And the way I was treated for some members of the media, it was -- it didn't feel right. It didn't feel good. It was --

KING: How do you mean?

MARTIN: Well, they -- it was treated in a very remarkable way. Everything within told me don't do it. It's just not right. Are you? Are you gay? Are you bisexual? What are you? Who are you?

To be honest, Larry, I didn't know why I didn't know back then. But I just -- I wasn't ready. And no one should be forced. No one should be forced to come out.

KING: How did you come out?

MARTIN: Well, first to my mother. And she actually asked me, my son, are you in love? And I was in love. And she said, is it with a man? And I said yes, mom, it's with a man.

It's fantastic. Stand up and give me a hug, she said. And with my father, pretty much the same way. He said, I just want you to be happy.

KING: All along -- of course the people saw your act, you know. It was very sexual and sensual act.

MARTIN: Mm-hmm.

KING: Right? Were you --

MARTIN: And it still is. And it will always be.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Were you, though, at -- during the earliest stage or before this, pretending? I mean women would flock, right? They'd throw underwear at you. I mean people --

MARTIN: Yes. Yes. But you know what, Larry? I'm gay and I enjoy dancing with women.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: And I will always enjoy -- I just allow myself to feel the music and just go for it. I don't --

KING: But you had to pretend a life, didn't you?

MARTIN: I didn't -- I don't know if I was pretending because I didn't know who I really was. I didn't know. It was -- denial is very powerful. And whenever I had an encounter with a man I would do -- not think about it and keep walking.

You see, sexuality is very complex and it's very different for everybody. There are moments that I said yes, yes, I am. How am I going to tell the world? And then there are moments when I started dating a woman and it felt right and it felt very comfortable.

KING: So you had relations with women?

MARTIN: I had very steady and formal relationships with women. And I can say, I fell in love with women and it felt right. It felt --

KING: Physically in love?

MARTIN: I fell physically in love. Now a lot of people would say yes, Rick, maybe you were trying to prove to yourself something. OK. Maybe I was. But in the meantime I was feeling. I was feeling comfort, passion. I felt passion. And it felt beautiful.

KING: So can that still come again? With a woman?

MARTIN: You know, like I say in my book, you know, love is about souls and encounters. Today I am a gay man. And everything about saying this feels right.

For many years I thought I was bisexual. And then I would ask myself, what is bisexual? Does that even exist?

(CROSSTALK)

MARTIN: Well, maybe yes. But when I was with a woman I was loyal and faithful to that woman. And I would not look any other way. And --

KING: But there was a but?

MARTIN: There was a but. But that but didn't -- the thought of that wouldn't last two seconds. I would try not to think about it.

KING: So you never thought you'd be sitting on a worldwide television program saying I am a gay man?

MARTIN: I never thought. And I -- trust me Larry, if I knew, and I've said this in many occasions. If I knew how good it was going to feel I would have done it 10 years ago.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Much more on -- on Ricky's life. We're going to preview his new single, too.

The book is "Me." We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: You're listening to Ricky's new single, "The Best Thing about Me is You." It's a duet with Joss Stone. And from the sound of it you'll be hearing a lot more of this one.

This could be a big hit, right? Is this out?

MARTIN: Thank you. Very simple. Reggae-ish, kind of tropical vibe. A lot of people were saying, Ricky, I was not expecting this kind of music from you on your come back. I thought you were going to do either a power ballad or a "Living La Vida Loca" kind of vibe. And I'm like, well, you know what? I guess life is more simple than that.

KING: Speaking of coming back, from where? Where did you go?

MARTIN: I don't know, Larry.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Where did you go?

MARTIN: A lot of people say come on back.

KING: You owned the world and then suddenly you were gone.

MARTIN: It was so healthy for me to do so, Larry. I needed to step back.

KING: Did you hibernate? Did you --

MARTIN: Yes. I mean I started working in 1984 and I did not stop until like two days ago.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: It was very important for me to find silence. That's why for me my trips to India, like I said in my book, my trips to India, just spending time in my home in the U.S. going across country. And really finding silence was something that I was not used to. That I was really afraid of. And I haven't been -- I've never been more creative than since I took the time.

KING: You came out on your Web site, right?

MARTIN: Yes. And to twitter.

KING: March 29th of this year you published a letter that concluded, "I'm proud to say I am a fortunate homosexual man. I am very blessed to be who I am."

Was that hard to put those letters?

MARTIN: Larry, I was -- I was so ready.

KING: You were?

MARTIN: I was so ready.

KING: Not scared?

MARTIN: I couldn't take it anymore. I was ready to -- I wrote that letter on a Friday. And I think I made it public on a Monday. So that weekend for me was eternal. But

you know, I wanted to wait for everyone in the office to come back, you know, to work and I sent it to everybody first.

My mother was coming to Miami where I lived, from Puerto Rico. I'd wanted her to be near me before I sent -- made it public. And all I know is that when I pressed send, I just felt alive, really.

KING: Where there very rough days when you're -- the hiding -- hiding is the wrong word. When you're trying to find who you are?

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: I mean that must be terrible.

MARTIN: Yes. You know what happens, Larry? Everything around me was telling me that what I was feeling was not right. That was probably evil. You know from my faith?

KING: Evil?

MARTIN: Yes. My faith.

KING: Your faith.

MARTIN: You know, a lot of people say maybe your culture. I don't think about the culture. I think this is something that people from all over the world deal with. It doesn't matter if you're European, Latin American or, you know, Hispanic in the U.S., Asian. You deal with acceptance. And it was -- it was -- it happened at my age. Right now there are men and women that are dealing with this and they're 17.

KING: How are you?

MARTIN: I'm 38.

KING: To the Latin, though, this is the image. To the Latin, the thought of being gay is very difficult. It's very not macho.

MARTIN: Right.

KING: And that's hard?

MARTIN: Maybe that was one of the reasons why it took me so long.

KING: You're afraid?

MARTIN: Yes, because my emotions were not compatible at all with everything that I represented. But then again, I would think about for a minute and then I would keep working. Working, working, working, working. That's what I did. Not to think about this.

And there was a moment in my life where the only thing that was keeping me away from actually accepting or actually confronting my reality was work, but then work was also taking me there because everybody was asking me about it.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: So it's very confusing.

KING: When you saw the gays put down or anti-gay material or people speak about against gays, weren't you pained? How did -- how did you handle that?

(CROSSTALK)

MARTIN: In the past?

KING: Yes.

MARTIN: It was -- it was very painful. I think it was probably one of my lowest moments where I was seeing injustice. And me with the power that I had --

KING: You did.

MARTIN: To be able to be in front of a camera and talk about something that is not right. And not do it, that was devastating for me.

KING: We'll talk about Ricky's sons, his charity work, his friendship with a Supreme Court justice. Yes. Lots more with Ricky Martin coming up.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: The book is "Me." The author is Ricky Martin.

Barbara Walters interviewed Ricky for her "2000 Oscar Special" and pushed him pretty hard about his sexuality. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MARTIN: I think that sexuality is something that each individual should deal with in their own way. And that's all I have to say about that.

BARBARA WALTERS, ABC NEWS: Well, you know, you could stop these rumors. You could say, as many artists have, yes, I am gay. Or you could say no, I'm not. Or you could leave it as you are. Ambiguous. I don't want to put you on the spot. You know that this is being said.

MARTIN: I know. I understand. And thank you so much --

WALTERS: And you're even being named.

MARTIN: -- for giving me the opportunity to express the rumors. But, Barbara, for some reason, I just don't feel like it.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Only our dear Barbara could say, I don't want to put you on the spot, but are you gay?

(LAUGHTER)

KING: I love Barbara.

MARTIN: It really is funny now that I look at it. I haven't seen that video in a while.

KING: Did that bother you? Because she has said that she kind of regrets questioning you as she did.

MARTIN: You know, at the moment, I felt invaded. I -- once again, Larry, I was just not ready. I was not ready. Why? I don't know. Could be a thousand reasons why I was not ready. But you know, two days later I was already working again.

KING: Was there a time you knew you were gay? I mean what --

MARTIN: Yes, yes. Yes, maybe like --

KING: How old?

MARTIN: I was in my early 20s. Probably I was 20, 21 years old. I fell in love and I fell in love with a man. And I was about to give up everything, you know. My career -

-

KING: Was he in show business?

MARTIN: No. Not in the show business. But I was like, you know what? We're young, let's go, explore the world. Let's go and live in Europe or in Asia. Let's just live a beautiful life. How romantic and naive. But --

KING: What happened to it?

MARTIN: You know, like any other relationship it didn't work. It didn't happen. But it felt horrible when we broke up. It felt really painful. I was in my early 20s. It just -- it was felt so bad that I said, OK, maybe this is just not right. Look how -- ignorant on my part, I guess.

It's not right. Maybe it's because I'm not gay. So I started dating women again. And it felt good.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: But --

KING: Boy, you must have been mixed up.

MARTIN: It was very confusing. It's very confusing. And you know what? Right now as we're talking there are thousands of men and women that are struggling with acceptance.

It's very difficult because, you know, unfortunately when -- what you're feeling is not compatible with what society dictates or with what your faith dictates, or what your family are telling you to feel. And it's just not right unfortunately. Because this is the reality we're dealing with.

KING: Did you -- did faith play a part in this?

MARTIN: Totally.

KING: You're Catholic?

MARTIN: Totally. I grew up Catholic. But -- I don't want to say it is Catholicism. It can be any religion. There are many religions that accept homosexuality and I have no problem with it. But unfortunately the one I grew up in, yes.

KING: Ricky Martin. The book is "Me." Still lots more to go and lots more to talk about. We'll talk about that Supreme Court justice as well.

Judge Judy is here tomorrow night. Thursday night, "Dancing with the Stars," the finalists will be with us. And Michael Moore on Friday.

Back with Ricky Martin after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Are you having as much fun as it appeared?

MARTIN: When I was on stage, Larry -- when I am on stage I am always having fun.

KING: You never let anything bother you when you're on?

MARTIN: I never let anything bother because it's my -- it's like -- you're dealing with 20,000, 25,000 --

KING: Do you miss it?

MARTIN: I do miss it a lot. I do miss it. But I'm going to be real honest. I stopped -- one of the things that made me stop and go home for a minute years ago was the fact that not even being on stage was giving me that rush and that happiness and that joy.

So I said wait a minute. One thing is not to like interviews too much because they are invasive. But to be on the stage and not -- you know, not be having a good time, what's going on? It's time to stop. And now I'm ready to go back.

KING: You're going back, right?

MARTIN: I'm going back. March, hopefully, yes. World tour.

KING: All right. You've been -- do you call yourself gay or bisexual? Are you still bisexual? I mean you -- what are you?

MARTIN: Very confusing. For everybody, but for me. I am gay.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: No interest in women at all?

MARTIN: But I am gay. G-A-Y. Gay.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: We been tweeted -- we get a lot of tweets for you asking if you are involved with someone now?

MARTIN: I am in a relationship and I am very happy.

KING: Are you open? Do you bring him around? Are you --

MARTIN: It's usually very overwhelming to start a relationship, like we were talking in the break. And to be in a relationship with Ricky Martin it gets a little bit more overwhelming for some reason now at this moment in my life when I am presenting my book and everything.

But you know, we're not afraid of anything, we're not hiding anything. It's just when ever we decide to make it public well, we'll walk into the red carpet together I guess. I don't know. We'll see.

KING: Were you ever bullied?

MARTIN: You know, Larry, I am bullied today. You know?

KING: How so?

MARTIN: It's very weird because you know I'm a twitter fan. And I check my messages all the time, and you can get 100 messages of love. And you're very happy. And then you get that one message of a hater and -- you know, if you're in a bad day it ruins your afternoon. It's so sad that there is still hate out there.

KING: Then why look at it?

MARTIN: Yes, of course. You don't look at it, you ignore it. But you had your bad moment and you look at it and you --

KING: Tell me why bother to see what they're saying?

MARTIN: I know for me, networking is amazing. For me --

KING: Well, you're nuts then.

MARTIN: For me what --

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: I'm nuts. But I think that, you know what twitter has done for me and Facebook and all this social networking is just have an immediate reaction of what's going on out there.

And in fact when I was recording my music I would let them know what I was -- you know, what my -- what I was learning, what I was listening, and they would say, I love this, I don't. It's very interesting. Networking is a new way. It's a new era.

KING: As a kid, how did you handle success early?

MARTIN: When I was 9 years old I really wanted to be in the show business. I really wanted to be an artist. I would grab a wooden spoon and I would start singing even if it was for my uncles and my aunts. And I would just sing any lah-lah song.

KING: But you got well known early, right?

MARTIN: At the age of 12 I became part of the music band Menudo. And one day I was riding my bike to go to school, the next day I was flying a private 737, you know, living in a -- suite of a hotel suite and singing for 200,000 people.

It was pretty drastic.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: But I enjoyed it. It was -- it was an amazing beginning. A great school of discipline. And up until today, I am benefiting from that.

KING: You told me during the break that the group doesn't keep -- you don't keep in touch with the group?

MARTIN: Not really. I mean I'm sure that if we see each other we'd say, hey, bro, what's up? How you doing? Give me a hug, you know? But not really. We're not touch.

KING: Ricky performed at the Grammys for the first time in 1999. Indeed that was the year you did our gala.

MARTIN: That's true.

KING: You sang the "Cup of Life." You got a standing ovation. This was the Grammy Awards. This was like coming out. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Now even though you had been in the business all this time that made you what they call an overnight sensation, right?

MARTIN: Yes. Well, maybe here in the United States. For the Anglo market. Because that in 1999, I released the album "Vuelve" and that album in the United States was already -- I think it was already three times platinum in the U.S. But the Anglo market didn't know who I was. And that was an amazing platform for me.

KING: So you were -- you were always big in the Latino market?

MARTIN: Well, since 1984 because of the band and then when I released my first soloist album. As a soloist. It was successful.

KING: But was that Grammys that made you, right?

MARTIN: In the United States. In the United States. Because with that album, the one that I got the Grammy for that evening, I was already nine -- almost a year on a world

tour. It was amazing because I was performing in Delhi, India and Tokyo and Singapore and Sydney with a Spanish album.

And I was doing stadiums in New Delhi. I did a 55,000 people stadium with a Spanish album. It was a very beautiful year for me. But definitely I'm very grateful to -- you know, obviously the Grammys because it was -- it was like the next level.

KING: As we go to break we're going to have Ricky ask our viewers at CNN Espanol to stay with us. So you do the break.

MARTIN: In Spanish?

KING: Yes.

MARTIN: (Speaking in Spanish.)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Ricky Martin is the guest. The book is "Me".

Tell me about this relationship with Justice Sotomayor.

MARTIN: Well -- what an honor. I don't even know how to start. I received a phone call from her office inviting me to that very special moment when she -- you know, she was being --

KING: Sworn in?

MARTIN: Sworn in. And --

KING: Why you?

MARTIN: I don't know, but I'm not going ask. I was honored.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: I was honored by the detailing of it. It was a great moment. And I just sent her my book. We had a very beautiful conversation. She talked to me about her struggles when she went to college as a Hispanic woman years ago.

And I told her about my grandmother who also went to college in the United States back in the '40s and how intense it was for a Hispanic woman. And it was a very beautiful, full of respect relationship that we have.

KING: How did you grandmother come to go to college in America?

MARTIN: She wanted to do her masters and she went to Boston in the '40s. She hopped on a plane and she said it's time to keep on working -- to keep on studying. And now that I was -- you know I was talking to Justice Sotomayor about it.

I was like, wow, then my grandmother was a very special woman. She became a senior professor at the University of Puerto Rico in the pharmacy school. She wrote many books. A very, very passionate woman. Very intense. And I write about her in my book because I'm definitely very, very proud of her.

KING: You ought to be.

We get a lot of questions posted via Facebook.

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: One of your favorite things. Would you get married?

MARTIN: I would get married. That's -- that's why I want to have that option, Larry. There are many countries around the world where same-sex marriage is a right.

KING: Not Puerto Rico.

MARTIN: Not in Puerto Rico, unfortunately. And not in many states -- in America.

KING: But why don't you go somewhere if you're really in love with this man now here with you. You could go somewhere where it's legal.

MARTIN: Yes, we could go to Spain and get married. We can go to Argentina and get married. But why do we have to go somewhere else? Why can't I do it in my country where the laws are -- you know, protecting me?

I can go to Spain. I have many friends in Spain. And get married. And make it very beautiful and symbolic. But that I can do it in the backyard of my house. I want to have that option. I don't want to be a second class citizen anymore. I pay my taxes. Why can't I have that right?

We're not talking about getting married now. That's not part of our conversations. But --

KING: Would your partner like to have children?

MARTIN: Maybe. Maybe. All I know is that he loves my children. And my children love him. And it feels very beautiful.

KING: What's the part about fatherhood you like the most?

MARTIN: The love. When my -- when my child Valentino would tell me, "Papi, te amo," you know, I melt. And they tell me "te amo" every other hour. And it feels amazing.

KING: They own you.

MARTIN: Yes. Before I used to ask permission to my parents to leave the house. Now it's -- I ask permission to my children to leave the house. They own the house.

KING: What are going to do when you tour, though?

MARTIN: They already have their passports. They're coming with me everywhere, Larry. Everywhere. A lot of people say yes, but you know what? Children, they need stability. Their stability is to be with daddy, and that is going to be what's normal for them. To grow up --

KING: How are you going to tell them about what's normal on the outside world, though? And that they have a father and don't have a mother?

MARTIN: Well, when they ask me I will say, you know, every family is different. Every family is very particular. I would say that there are families with a mom and a dad and there are families with two moms, and families with three moms.

And right now it's about the love that we have among each other and you have to walk through life with pride and happy and honored to be part of a modern family. And I would talk about it with honesty. And that's how it'll be.

KING: There are rumors that Ricky is headed for Broadway in a revival of "Evita." Boy, would he fit that part. We'll ask him about that next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MARTIN: And we got embraced (ph). I brought you home from the hospital the day you sprained your ankle.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes, you did. And you were so kind and patient.

MARTIN: Well, it's my job.

(END OF VIDEO CLIP)

KING: That was Ricky Martin looking like Moses on "General Hospital."

You were on "General Hospital"?

MARTIN: I was on "General Hospital." And it was a very intense moment of my life. Very beautiful moment of my life.

KING: It was a one-time appearance or --

MARTIN: I -- no, I spent --

KING: You were a regular?

MARTIN: I was a regular. Two and a half years. Maybe three.

KING: Who did you play?

MARTIN: Miguel Morez.

KING: Miguel Morez.

(CROSSTALK)

MARTIN: I was a bartender/orderly in a hospital.

KING: And you had romances with nurses?

MARTIN: Yes. I had romances, yes.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: With Lilly. There was a romance with -- who else?

KING: All right. Any truth to the rumors about "Evita"? Because a lot of Broadway hits are coming back now. If "Evita" comes back, would you be interested?

MARTIN: No, it's not -- it's a fact. I am going be part of --

KING: This is a done deal?

MARTIN: This is a done deal. 2012. I'm really happy. I had the opportunity to do "Les Mis" many years ago. And I always said, you know, I need to go back to Broadway. And then my agent, you know, he said let's work on something and "Evita" was a part --

KING: Che.

MARTIN: And I'm going to do Che. I'm really looking forward to it. I can't wait.

KING: Who will be Evita?

MARTIN: Elena Rogers. She is an amazing, amazing singer, amazing actress. And it's going to be -- it's going to be beautiful. Next week I'm going to work on my tour. I'm going to be hopefully going around the world with my tour and then I will focus entirely on Broadway. Because it is one of my passions. To have -- every night to be in front of an audience and you have to sweat to get a standing ovation, that is something that turns me on, Larry.

KING: Who did you play in "Mis"?

MARTIN: I was Marius Pontmercy.

KING: The hero?

MARTIN: Yes. Yes. Very beautiful experiences.

KING: And every night repeating the same -- it's like concertizing, yes.

MARTIN: Yes, but you know what? Every night you find something different. That being the silence of the audience or something in the character. Something in the stage that will trigger something different every night.

Yes, it's beautiful.

KING: How do you look at where you are now, Ricky? Assess yourself. The book is out. You're starting the tour again. You're out-out.

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: You're going to be in "Evita." I mean --

MARTIN: Yes. I'm a father.

KING: Twins.

MARTIN: Beautiful healthy boys. Nothing but gratitude. Live as it is at the moment is balance and I don't want to sound cliché, but I am only being honest. This part of my life after writing this, I don't -- you know, no masks, nothing. I am in a really good place spiritually, mentally, physically, and I am ready to do more. It's very, very beautiful internal strength that I have got.

KING: How is your mother?

MARTIN: My mother is amazing. You know for 10 years I've been telling her, mom, you know, Miami, come and visit her. You know what? Why don't you stay? And all of a sudden now she lives in Miami because the babies are there.

I have an amazing relationship with my parents.

KING: Is your dad still living?

MARTIN: Yes. My father is a psychologist. Retired. He lives in Puerto Rico. Yes, really nice.

KING: You have an amazing life. I mean you've --

MARTIN: I can't complain.

KING: No?

MARTIN: Larry, you know, you have your ups and downs. And everybody goes through dark moments in their lives. But they've always --

KING: What was your darkest?

MARTIN: My darkest probably that, but you know --

KING: Living a --

MARTIN: Trying to find myself. Trying to really accept who I was and not be afraid and/or ashamed of what my emotions were about. And -- it really was a struggle.

KING: Ricky has lent his name and energy to a number of causes. We'll talk about that next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We'll be right back with Ricky Martin. The book is "Me." But let's check in with Anderson Cooper. He'll host "AC 360" at the top of the hour.

What's our lead, Anderson?

ANDERSON COOPER, CNN ANCHOR: Keeping them honest tonight, Larry.

Facts matter, the truth matters, and that's why we're digging deeper into Sarah Palin's exchange with a "Wall Street Journal" reporter who corrected her on a minor economic factual error.

Everyone makes mistakes, right? Well, we're going to show the twitter/Facebook battle that ensued and talk with our panel about why Sarah Palin and other politicians cling to mistakes even when confronted with the truth.

And a senseless thrill killing a quiet New Hampshire town. So brutal. The judge said today in sentencing the murder that, quote, "I could go on for days about the depth of your depravity. It's sufficient to say you belong in a cage."

Find out what punishment he did receive.

Those stories and a lot more, Larry, at the top of the hour.

KING: That's 10:00 Eastern, 7:00 Pacific with Anderson Cooper.

Ricky Martin is the guest. The book is "Me."

You do a lot of philanthropic work, the Ricky Martin Foundation. You're an activist against human trafficking. What got you into that?

MARTIN: Many years ago I was invited by my colleagues, someone that was building an orphanage in Calcutta, India. And he told me, come and check it out. And I hopped in a plane, I went to Calcutta to see what was going on and when I was there he told me come on, let's go out to the street and let's rescue girls.

And I'm like, OK, let's rescue girls. And then we brought girls that were from the ages of 4 to 7, and he told me, you see girls like them could become preys for human trafficking. And I'm like, what does that mean? Literally. He goes, you know, children are being forced into prostitution.

And I'm like, what are you talking about? She's 4 years old, 7 and 9? Yes, men pay for their virginity.

I went crazy, Larry. I went back home and I started doing research about human trafficking and I had no idea about the magnitude. I said now I know about this. I can't be silent about this because it would be like allowing it to happen.

And I went to Washington, D.C., and I started meeting with amazing activists, people who are my mentors today, and I'm doing my part. A little bit. There's so much that needs to be done.

KING: I understand also that you went to Thailand after the tsunami and Haiti after the earthquake.

MARTIN: Yes.

KING: And these experiences affected you a great deal.

MARTIN: Well, that's what happens. Traffickers take advantage of situations like --

KING: Like that?

MARTIN: Like that, well, because children become orphans or semi orphans and they are vulnerable and they go and they kidnap the children. So I went there. And I said, this could be happening right now.

Media, listen to me. This could be happening right now. So let's be aware. And I had the opportunity to meet the younger survivor, Baby Wave. Baby Wave was a month old, and he was in a hospital being protected by the nurses, because in five days, five different men went to the hospital saying that's my nephew, that is my son. That is my --

KING: What are they going to do with the baby, then?

MARTIN: You know, human trafficking -- to be raped or for organs, or for false adoption. Human trafficking is terrible. It's a slavery of the new era.

KING: We'll have Ricky read another passage from the book "Me" right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: You want to read from the end of the book? The book is "Me." MARTIN: Yes. OK. It says, "Throughout these pages I've shown myself exactly as I am. Without censorship. The truth is never easy to pin down, especially when it's a matter of personal truth. Which is why I will always continue -- why I will always continue on with my search. My spiritual path for the rest of my days.

"It is this constant search that will always bring me about intense emotions. It teaches me how to challenge myself, question myself, and always push forward. But the most important thing and what inspires me the most is that this book can help to inspire other people to face their fears and push forward and their lives as well. And that for me is the greatest gift of all."

KING: Looking -- as you look retrospectively now, should you have come out sooner?

MARTIN: Like I've said, Larry, I wish I knew how good it was going to feel, I would have done it 10 years ago. But I guess I had to go through my spiritual search, my spiritual path to get to conclusions and be able to be comfortable enough to look at myself in the mirror and say, everything is going to be fine. You're a good person. And God doesn't make mistakes.

KING: Were you surprised at how well your parents handled it?

MARTIN: My parents are amazing. I was very lucky because I know it's not everyone's case.

KING: Had you to be nervous about that, though.

MARTIN: I was nervous, but you know in my case my mom asked me and it was like, OK, half of the work is done. Yes, mom, and then she gave me a hug and she told me that I love you. Then my father, he told me, I just want you to be happy, son. Go ahead and live life to the fullest.

But that was not enough for me. It still took me a long time to make it public. But it feels amazing and I never felt better.

KING: All right. The tour starts when?

MARTIN: March. March in Puerto Rico.

KING: In Puerto Rico.

MARTIN: And then we'll come to the United States. We'll do Latin America, hopefully Europe and definitely Asia and Australia and New Zealand. It's a long tour.

KING: And then "Evita" will come to Broadway when? Fall of 2012?

MARTIN: No, it would be spring 2012.

KING: Not far away.

MARTIN: Not far away. We're almost there. We're already dealing with the schedule of two years from now.

KING: You're going to have two very busy little twins.

MARTIN: I'm really looking forward to this. And they inspire me. They inspire me to become a better person.

KING: Great seeing you again, Ricky.

MARTIN: Likewise, Larry.

KING: Ricky Martin. The book is "Me."

Hey, if you want to interview me, right here, enter our "Be the King" contest. Just go to CNN.com/Larryking for details.

Our buddy Judge Judy is here tomorrow night and the "Dancing with the Stars" finalists on Thursday, and Michael Moore on Friday.

Right now it's time for "AC 360" and Anderson Cooper. Anderson?

COOPER: Larry, thanks a lot.

CNN LARRY KING LIVE

LARRY KING SPECIAL: Dinner with the Kings

Aired December 10, 2011 - 20:00 ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LARRY KING, CNN HOST: Tonight --

SHAWN SOUTHWICK, LARRY KING'S WIFE: We're having a party, and you're invited.

KING: Come on in. My wife Shawn and I are hosting a dinner party.

CONAN O'BRIEN, COMEDIAN, HOST, "CONAN": Nice to see you.

KING: And invited some of the biggest names in Hollywood.

SOUTHWICK: Hi.

KING: And we're saving a seat at the table just for you.

O'BRIEN: I'm just wondering why we're being served by the CIA.

KING: Conan O'Brien. Russell Brand. Tyra Banks. Seth MacFarlane. Shaquille O'Neal. Quincy Jones and Twitter inventor Jack Dorsey. All opening up about life, love, success and failure.

O'BRIEN: The most shocking thing that anyone would hear from a table like this is there's a tendency for people to look and say they've made it. What they don't understand is the amount of insecurity that drives you when you're 15, but it's still there when you're 48.

KING: Nothing's off limits.

SETH MCFARLANE, "FAMILY GUY" CREATOR: Any discussion of this type always makes me kind of secretly kind of squirm a little.

O'BRIEN: This is big news. I just want to make sure that we stick with the headline here which is that you wish to be frozen. Your head.

(LAUGHTER)

MACFARLANE: Would you want to live forever?

KING: Yes.

MACFARLANE: You would?

KING: You bet your ass.

You have never seen a dinner party quite like this. RUSSELL BRAND, COMEDIAN: I'm looking through Larry's drawers.

KING: Russell, does anything embarrass you?

All coming up next.

O'BRIEN: You know what? None of this is airing. This is clearly not airing. And if it's not airing, we all have to chip in for the meal.

KING: I think -- I think this goes on HBO.

O'BRIEN: No. HBO would not air this.

KING: On this LARRY KING SPECIAL, "Dinner with the Kings."

Sean and I decided to bring together a group of diverse and successful people to share some food, great conversation and a few laughs. Of course, it helps to have friends like Wolfgang Puck, celebrity chef of Spago fame, and his fabulous team of cooks who spent the whole day preparing an amazing meal for us to enjoy.

WOLFGANG PUCK, CELEBRITY CHEF: For the first course we have a fantastic tomato salad, with virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, a little basil and the two little greens. So our next course is going to be a wonderful salmon. We just got it two days after the (INAUDIBLE) in Oregon.

KING: And in between courses we all have a chance to learn about ourselves and each other.

How about success? Everyone here is successful.

TYRA BANKS, SUPERMODEL, HOST: Conan?

O'BRIEN: I'm still trying. I'm happy to be here and get a free meal. What is success? What is successful? These are interesting questions.

QUINCY JONES, RECORD PRODUCER, MUSICIAN: The first years were the hardest.

KING: You find it difficult to deal with? Some people do.

O'BRIEN: What's that?

KING: Success.

O'BRIEN: Oh, no. I would love to have a lot of success. I would have no problem dealing with that.

KING: How do you deal with it, Russell?

BRAND: Well, I suppose, Larry, one has to look at those definitions. If you want material success and artistic success, there are a good many people at the table that could make that claim. But perhaps the pursuit of individual success is one of the problems that's causing our planet to ecologically implode currently and perhaps this imbalance, this constant service of the top 1 percent is causing all this configuration.

SO it's difficult. How I deal with my personal material success is guiltily.

MACFARLANE: I feel like the second you feel like I'm doing great work and I feel terrific about it, then whatever you're doing has to be terrible. I hate everything I do.

O'BRIEN: That makes two of us. I met with --

(LAUGHTER)

MACFARLANE: You hate everything I do, too.

O'BRIEN: Yes, I do.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: I mean on -- Seth, his work is reprehensible. But we'll get to that. Enjoy your meal. I met with -- we had a group come visit the show recently of inner city kids. And they were gifted, you know, all in different ways. And they were talking about they wanted to speak with me for a little bit. And so I spoke with them at the show, and one of the girls who must have been 16, 17 years old, said to me, "How do you get over your insecurity? When does that go away?"

And I said, you never get over it. And she was shocked. And I said -- and she's looking at me. And I've been doing this for a long time. And to her I might as well be 1,000 years old even though I'm only in my early 30s. And -- but she said, how do you get over your insecurity. And I said, it's never going to go away.

If you're any good at what you do you'll always be afraid. You'll always --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That's right.

O'BRIEN: Yes, you always think you're fooling everyone. You always think you're the one at the table --

MACFARLANE: Not for a second do I think that ever.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Right.

MACFARLANE: I'm still working on hiding my insecurity 100 percent.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Right.

KING: Athletically, though, it's hard to be insecure when you're --

SHAQUILLE O'NEAL, NBA LEGEND: Not really.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That question (INAUDIBLE), give me a break. O'NEAL: Not really. I mean I was always just taught to -- excuse me -- stay humble. You know, I always -- my mother and father always told me that pressure, the real definition of pressure is when you don't know where your next meal is coming from. So, you know, we're all blessed here at the table.

And you know, I've always had the attitude that I'm a lucky kid. I won the lotto a couple of times. You know, don't turn my luck into bad luck and just stay humble and I've been blessed.

BANKS: Were you ever insecure?

O'NEAL: Always, always. But to be here next to Conan, I'm so blessed.

O'BRIEN: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Shaq. Your hand weighs 60 pounds.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: You just crushed my vertebrae. But the kiss was amazing, by the way. And --

KING: You can't be insecure, though, if you're scoring 30 points for LSU and you're number one pick. You can't be insecure.

O'NEAL: I mean, you know, I felt that, you know, that was my job. You know, when it comes to being insecure, I'm sort of like Seth. You know, I'm not really ever happy with what I do. Especially being at the free throw line, missing, you know, four or

five free throws in a row and, you know, we lose the game. So, you know, there are times that would go on that I would just have a fit.

O'BRIEN: I think -- I think that would be the common -- the most shocking thing that anyone would hear from a table like this is there's a tendency for people to look at a table like some of the people that are here and say they are -- they've made it. They have it.

KING: I want to be there.

O'BRIEN: And I want to be there because their lives are great and what they don't understand is the amount of insecurity that drives you when you're 15, but it's still there when you're 48.

KING: Quincy, you ever feel insecure?

JONES: Not a drop. No. Let me just say something. I learned from a very early age, I started at 13. Ray Charles and I started from 14, 16, all the way. The prime rule back in the '40s was you have to be humble with your creativity and gracious with your success. We didn't think about money or fame ever.

KING: You never were insecure about your talent?

JONES: Oh, sure I was. But, I mean, I mean, I tried to support my insecurity with learning my craft, you know.

KING: When you're this pretty -- and you're pretty, Tyra. Do you ever feel insecure? You look in the mirror, feel insecure?

SOUTHWICK: Sure. I see -- I see the things that I want to change when I look in the mirror. I'll see -- I'm fine. I'm good. I'm not complaining. But, no, when I look in the mirror as I'm getting older especially I look at my skin. And that -- whose body is this? You know? What is happening to me?

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Tyra, you ever feel -- you ever look at yourself, you ever feel insecure?

BANKS: Do I feel insecure physically? Probably every day. I had this --

KING: We're all (EXPLETIVE DELETED) then.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: This is the most depressing dinner I've ever been to. Tyra Banks is physically insecure. It's time to push this into my sternum.

MACFARLANE: You're not the one who has to sit across from you.

(LAUGHTER)

BANKS: No. Every day. I have this new apartment I built in New York. And in the bathroom I put all these, like, mirrors everywhere, you know. Just, oh, put one over there. Put one over there. Make it look bigger. But I see my ass and the dimples in my ass every time I'm brushing my teeth. It's -- there's a mirror there reflecting there. And I'm looking at my ass with the dimples in my ass. So yes, of course I feel it.

KING: Russell, you know you're funny, right? You know you're funny?

BRAND: Yes, yes. Under the right circumstances when the pressure is on, perhaps a fabricated dinner with a variety of celebrities.

(LAUGHTER)

BRAND: Good times for (INAUDIBLE).

KING: Coming up next, dinner heats up as my guests reveal what makes their blood boil.

O'BRIEN: I can't stand it when people think they're entitled to something. I think our culture is very entitled.

KING: Plus --

MACFARLANE: Any discussion of this type always makes me kind of secretly kind of squirm a little bit. KING: Find out what is making Seth and Conan so uncomfortable.

O'BRIEN: Thank you. You've destroyed all of our careers.

KING: When this LARRY KING SPECIAL "Dinner with the Kings" continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PUCK: The next course is going to be a Sweet Corn Agnolotti. One of our famous dishes from Spago so this is really, really very special. It's a small pasta like a small ravioli with filled with a puree of corn, a little ricotta cheese. It's really delicious. And we're going to finish it with some summer truffles. Enjoy.

KING: What gets you angry, Jack?

JACK DORSEY, TWITTER INVENTOR: Facebook.

(LAUGHTER)

DORSEY: Not at all. I think -- I think it's mainly around inaction. You know, people seeing something just inhumane going wrong and just not doing anything about it. Not speaking out. Being silent. We have such amazing tools to share. And we -- we've just been given so much opportunity to help. And we don't take it. We do think it's going to be given to us. We think we're entitled to not do anything.

KING: I hate hypocrisy. I hate the politician that preaches anti-gay and is gay. That drives me up a wall.

O'BRIEN: I think entitlement is my least favorite. I can't stand it when people think they're entitled to something. I think our culture is very entitled. And I honestly don't think I'm entitled to anything. I think, you know, I come from a culture where you get what you can and you're grateful for it. But I don't think I'm -- I don't think I deserve anything.

I grew up not really knowing what class my parents were. My father is in academic medicine, and my mom didn't work when we were kids. And then she went back to law school much -- went back to being a lawyer much later on. So we were comfortable but we were driving crappy station wagons and class was never an issue. And my father always said it's good that you grew up -- he was very proud of the fact that we grew up not knowing where we were.

We didn't feel any entitlement. And I've never felt that. I'm happy to be here. If I get kicked out in 20 minutes, I'll be upset and you'll hear from my publicist but I will accept it and then move on. And I think there is a lot of entitlement in our -- in our culture specifically. I don't know about globally. But I think in America, there's a lot of I am owed this and this and this and this.

KING: Yes. Where does that come from?

O'BRIEN: And I don't know where it comes from. BRAND: It comes from consumer culture. Because you're told that you're nothing unless you can consume, unless you can purchase. And now people are (INAUDIBLE) and they want it. People are being accidentally marketed that can't afford the products that they're being sold and they're being told they should have that they deserve because you're worth it, just do it. These constant, endless, jinglistic slogans filling people's head. And there's been a void created, spiritual void because there is no religious or spiritual culture promoted.

MACFARLANE: And you also have every politician on the planet saying you know what, you're getting screwed. You deserve more. How are you -- why are you tolerating this? And it's almost akin --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: For your own benefit.

MACFARLANE: It's almost akin to the way in Hollywood if your agent tells you, you don't have to take that, you know? You're worth 100 times more than that. You know? You hold your ground and oftentimes they're wrong. And -- but you start to believe it unless you're -- unless you're -- you know you have a strong psychological constitution.

KING: What makes you laugh?

BRAND: I think misunderstandings are funny, Larry. People's misapprehensions. Watching a misunderstanding unfold and seeing it from someone else's perspective.

KING: It's all a surprise, right? There has to be surprise.

BRAND: Sudden revelation.

(CROSSTALK)

MACFARLANE: The "Dick Fran Dyke" show that was -- that was -- it features -- he'd spent an afternoon talking to a class of grade schoolers telling them this -- to somebody, what is -- what is funny? And they summed it all up into that one little nugget. It's what's unexpected.

BANKS: When I was a kid I loved that show "Three's Company." And every episode was a misunderstanding. Jack thought Chrissy was doing this and Chrissy thought Jack was doing this. Every episode was a misunderstanding.

BRAND: Right. So -- yes, it can slightly (INAUDIBLE) to the characters or that we can be surprised by it. What about -- what do you think, Conan?

KING: Or jokes, right, Conan? Every show.

O'BRIEN: You know, I don't love jokes. I never liked jokes. People on the street are always saying, hey, Conan, how about a joke? I hate jokes. I don't --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: They come from prison.

O'BRIEN: Well, I don't --

KING: Stars supposedly --

O'BRIEN: I don't like anything that you can memorize that's supposed to be funny. I like -- and I agree with Russell that I like to be funny with people in the moment. You find it. It's -- you know, it's a little like music. I'm a horrible musician but I love it. And I think there is something akin to music where --

JONES: Absolutely.

O'BRIEN: -- you're just trying to find a little moment and play it out.

JONES: Improvisation.

O'BRIEN: Yes.

KING: I want to hear what Sean -- makes Sean laugh other than me.

SOUTHWICK: Hearing old stories. Hearing old stories over and over and over again.

KING: Old stories they still make you laugh.

SOUTHWICK: And I don't know why they still make me laugh, but they do.

DORSEY: We do such stressful things every single day. And it's the greatest stress reliever. It's also the greatest team builder.

JONES: And health is, too.

DORSEY: Yes. And --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The health is now.

DORSEY: I mean nothing is more bonding than having a laugh together and making a fool of yourself to do it. It's all situational.

JONES: Leaving yourself.

DORSEY: Yes. Yes.

(CROSSTALK)

MACFARLANE: It always makes me squirm about analyzing it, though. About -- any discussion of this type always makes me kind of secretly kind of squirm a little bit.

O'BRIEN: Well, it should. Because I always think it's grabbing it missed.

MACFARLANE: Yes, exactly. O'BRIEN: Whenever you -- whenever you hear people start to, you know, my standard line with journalists is if you like it, great. If you don't, I can't help you. This is what I do. But it's grabbing at fog. You grab it --

(CROSSTALK)

MACFARLANE: Almost in a weird way -- in a weird way in its attempt to elevate it almost diminishes it.

KING: All right. This is -- I'll close it out.

O'BRIEN: So you've ruined comedy, Larry. Thank you. You've destroyed all of our careers.

KING: Coming up, we talk about friends.

I have an unusual situation because I have three people I grew up with that I knew them since 10 years old.

O'BRIEN: Well, these are people you fought in the Civil War with.

KING: Right.

And family --

O'NEAL: My mother has always been there for me. She's my best friend.

MACFARLANE: My parents were unbelievably supportive. They were ex- hippies. And so, thank god, never wanted me to become a lawyer or anything like that.

KING: Plus, later.

BRAND: I'm ruffling through Larry's drawers.

KING: Russell Brand's on the loose in my house.

BRAND: If I can discover anything more, we'll just (INAUDIBLE).

KING: Find out what he uncovered.

Russell, does anything embarrass you?

When this Larry King Special "Dinner with the Kings" continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We had dinner recently that went very well. And we talked about friends and what friends mean in your life and friendships because I have an unusual situation because I have three people I grew up with that I knew them since 10 years old. And, you know, I was defining what friendship is, and I've made some new friends since. Great friends. But there's nothing like a friend. Do you have any friends -- O'BRIEN: Well, these are people you fought in the Civil War with, Larry.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: See, now, normally I would be hurt by that.

O'BRIEN: That's a bond. When you're fighting the Confederacy, that's an incredible bond, Larry, that you're not --

KING: You can make a joke about ages. You can make --

O'BRIEN: No, please. Please, I make my -- please, I'm in my late -- early 30s, late 20s myself. And I know better than anyone at this table what it's like to lose your incredible physical prowess that you had just years ago. Two years ago.

KING: True.

O'BRIEN: Although --

KING: Do you have -- do any of you have close friends like that?

O'BRIEN: Oh, yes.

BANKS: I have -- my close, close friends are from, like, elementary school, junior high and high school.

KING: Jack?

DORSEY: I don't have -- I don't have close friends that I've been friends with for years and years and years. But recently just going deeper and deeper with. But, you know, they're grounding. They have perspective. They're inspiring.

KING: And they like you for you, not for Twitter.

DORSEY: Absolutely. They knew me before Twitter. Yes.

KING: Russell?

BRAND: Yes. I think it's really important because otherwise you lose yourself in this mad context. Although now I can't remember my life before I came into this room. This is completely how I define myself now.

KING: A friend is someone I think that if you call at 3:00 in the morning and say, I got a problem. They don't say what it is. They come over.

O'BRIEN: That's my agent.

KING: And you don't --

(LAUGHTER) JONES: You don't make friends, you discover them. They'd say, forget about the people in your past until they make it to your future. It's true. You know the ones who don't know how to stick with you. Because a real friend knows who you are and accepts you for your bad you're your good sides.

KING: Shaq?

O'NEAL: Believe it or not, my best friend is my mother. You know we struggled together in New Jersey. Throughout all the tough times, she was there. You know she was really my real role model. You know that -- you know people always talk about role models. But my mother has always been there for me. She's my best friend. You know before I do something or say something crazy, I always think about how it could affect her.

KING: Do you have great friends?

O'BRIEN: I would like to be friends with Shaq's mom. She sounds --

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: She could straighten me out, probably. I'm -- I come from a big Irish Catholic family. And I'm one of six kids. And we're all very close so --

KING: The family.

O'BRIEN: The family is very close. And I've just been lucky and my good friends have been friends of mine for 20, 30 years. And it's -- they're great. They don't -- you know, they don't see me as any different.

KING: Do you have any individual impact on your life?

O'BRIEN: My parents were the formative people in my life who, you know, taught me to work hard and be nice to people which is, you know. And then there's a million comedy influences and people that I look up to. And so it's hard to boil it all down to just one person.

KING: Do you have an impacting person?

SOUTHWICK: My dad. Because he -- he's my best friend.

KING: Your mother is the answer to that question, right, Shaq?

O'NEAL: Yes.

KING: Your mother is your impact. Do you have an impact person?

BANKS: It's actually my momma as well.

KING: Seth, do you have anybody?

MACFARLANE: You know, as long as we're all on the -- on the mother train.
(LAUGHTER)

KING: Confessional. Your mother, too?

MACFARLANE: Yes. And actually, it's worth noting when my mother passed away last year, you did a very, very heartfelt --

KING: I called you.

MACFARLANE: Very much appreciated tribute to her on air which is -- which remains a very precious thing. But yes. You know, my -- I mean, both my parents were unbelievably supportive. They were ex- hippies. And so thank God never wanted me to become a lawyer or anything like that.

And, you know, my mom used to call every Monday morning after the show would air, after "Family Guy" would air, and would, you know, either rave about the show or say, I didn't think this was as funny as some of the other ones. And I would always look forward to that call. I would always -- I would always -- you know you do a show for millions of viewers. And yet I would still always look forward to that call. Mainly because she'd always genuinely got it. This wasn't just somebody from an older generation saying, "I love it because you did it."

No. She got the jokes. She was just a wickedly dark person. Got all the -- the jokes. It was impossible to offend her. And in a way it was like weirdly, you're kind of like putting that really, really expensive macaroni drawing on the -- on the refrigerator, you know, every week. So that was -- that was -- I miss that very much.

KING: Jack, do you have an impact person?

DORSEY: Yes. My -- it was definitely my parents as well.

KING: Really.

DORSEY: My -- they were both -- they were both entrepreneurs. My dad started a pizza restaurant when he was 19 with his best friend. And it was called Two Nice Guys. And it --

KING: Where?

DORSEY: In St. Louis, Missouri, where I'm from, and started doing really well. And they started to need to hire some help. And they made one rule which was they would not date the wait staff. They hired my mom a month later. And my dad fell in love with her, said, you know, I broke the rule. I have to give up the business. It's all yours. And I was born nine months after that.

BANKS: Wow.

DORSEY: But they've been entrepreneurs ever since. My mom started a coffee store and my dad has his own business. Both my brothers work there. It's -- they've been a constant inspiration. KING: Coming up, what keeps these people laying awake at night.

O'BRIEN: I just watch episodes of my own show over and over again. And I just -- god, that guy's good.

BANKS: I feel like my problems are ridiculous and dumb and what the hell, why did I not sleep? It happens all the time.

MACFARLANE: Are you maybe a little obsessed with your own mortality like I am?

KING: Plus, a personal revelation that had my guests doing a double take.

O'BRIEN: This is big news. I just want to make sure that we stick with the headline here which is that you wish to be frozen. Your head --

(LAUGHTER)

MACFARLANE: Would you want to live forever?

KING: Yes.

MACFARLANE: You would?

KING: You bet your ass.

When this LARRY KING SPECIAL "Dinner with the Kings" continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DON LEMON, CNN ANCHOR: Hello, everyone. I'm Don Lemon live at the CNN world headquarters in Atlanta.

I want to give you some headlines now.

"Occupy" protesters have gone to new heights to make their point about widening wealth. The widening wealth gap in America. We mean to heights literally. Look at these live pictures now. Because in Washington, demonstrators erected a wood structure to protect them from the cold overnight. But police have been using cherry pickers to arrest people who have refused to take down the structure and leave the park.

This is the last person up there. They're getting him down now. As many as 200 people gathered to watch the standoff. We'll follow.

Iran claims it shot down a U.S. spy drone over its airspace. State TV quotes an Iranian military official calling it a clear example of aggression. NATO says it may have been an unmanned plane that was flying over western Afghanistan when operators lost control last week.

For years the American government has maintained that it does not fly drones over Iran. Activists say 22 people were killed today in Syria's brutal crackdown on pro-democracy activists. The Arab League had given Syria until today to end the violence plaguing the country. If Syria's government refuses to sign on to a peace deal, it could face new sanctions. The opposition says sanctions will weaken the ruling regime, but are unlikely to topple it.

Forty-five thousand Germans returned to their homes today after two World War II bombs and a third device were successfully dismantled. One was a 4,000 pound air mine likely dropped by the British Air Force. A second bomb was diffused while a fog producing-device was destroyed.

For 65 years the bombs were hidden in the Reine River until dropping water levels exposed them. The evacuation was the largest in Germany since the end of the war.

Those are your headlines this hour. I'm Don Lemon. Now back to the CNN special, "Dinner with Kings."

KING: At one point during our dinner party, Russell excused himself and left the table. And decided to go explore our house. In just a few minutes, you'll find out exactly what he was up to.

PUCK: We're going to have a wonderful filet mignon (INAUDIBLE) which is like a crust. It's a beef filet. A cross between Japanese beef and American beef. So it's very tender and great, so it's really delicious with some mushrooms and a few potatoes and a light sauce with it. So it's really simple. And for you, we have something special.

BRAND: Thank you.

PUCK: OK. All right. And we'll continue for the next one.

KING: What keeps you up at night? You, I know.

SOUTHWICK: What you think keeps me up at night is not what keeps me up at night.

JONES: You keep her up at night.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: No, no. She's up all night with the -- with the iPad, with the Twitter, with the -
--

SOUTHWICK: No. I'm thinking. I'm thinking and I'm worrying. And I'm thinking about the kids.

O'BRIEN: What are you worried about?

SOUTHWICK: You know what? I'm worried about what's happening with -- with our kids and who their friends are and what's going on with -- how the world is changing so quickly and trying to contain it and make sure they get on the right path. There's so many things available to everybody through the Internet, through television, through friends. That I wouldn't normally maybe introduce to them. But how do you -- how do you fix it? How do you guide them without being overbearing?

O'NEAL: Believe it or not, every night before I go to sleep I like to go through a checklist. Was I a good father today? Did I make people laugh today? Did I help someone in need today? Did I laugh a lot today? You know, I just say, OK, I lived today like it was my last day. Now I lay me down to sleep. You know I say the prayer. And hopefully I wake up the next day and every day when I wake up, thank God. Thank my parents. You know, just -- you know go through the next day and just try to do the same thing. Try to do the same thing.

KING: Conan, what keeps you up?

O'BRIEN: I just watch episodes of my own show over and over again.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: And I just -- god, that guy's good. I laugh and laugh. You know, I don't think anything -- I'm a reader. I like to read. I like to read history. So -- and I'll get these ridiculously -- I just finished a book on Chairman Mao. I don't even know where I find these things. And I like to -- I like anything that's exact -- I don't know if you're the same way, Seth, but I like anything that's the exact opposite of what I do for a living.

So I don't like to read comedy at night. I don't like to watch comedy at night. My wife always says let's watch the funny sitcom, let's go and see the funny movie. And I always want to go and see the documentary where they invade Poland again. You know that --

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: So I always like to go to a different place. That's what puts my mind at rest at night.

BANKS: My work keeps me up at night. I think about my business. Like, you know, I tend to have insomnia sometimes. Actually, I didn't sleep much last night. But, like, work. Business. Or minor things like HR. Like, you know, maybe a staffer is -- you know, just -- and it's just dumb. And then I wake up in the morning and I'm like, wait, I lost sleep over that?

When the sun comes and the world is awake, I don't feel alone and I feel like my problems are ridiculous and dumb and what the hell, why did I not sleep? It happens often.

O'BRIEN: Can we just, so we have it for editing, could you say you think about me at night?

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: Just for editing. We don't -- we're not going to use this.

BANKS: OK. We'll do it for editing.

O'BRIEN: Just for editing in case.

BANKS: Yes.

MACFARLANE: What keeps you up at night?

KING: I read a lot at night. I generally --

MACFARLANE: Are you -- are you maybe a little obsessed with your own mortality like I am?

KING: Oh, I fear that.

MACFARLANE: Yes.

KING: My biggest fear is death.

MACFARLANE: Yes.

KING: Because I don't think I'm going anywhere. And --

MACFARLANE: No. I --

KING: Since I don't think that and I don't have a belief, I don't share a belief -- I'm married to someone who has the belief. So she knows she's going somewhere. And I want to be frozen. On the hope that they'll find whatever I died of and bring me back. And if she said to me, if you come back in 200 years, you won't know anybody. OK. I'll meet new people.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: This is big news.

KING: I like to believe --

O'BRIEN: Let's make sure we're --

(CROSSTALK)

KING: Cryonic.

O'BRIEN: Russell is chewing loudly. Please, Russell.

KING: Cryonic.

O'BRIEN: You would like to be frozen. This is -- this is news to me.

KING: The only hedging of a bet.

MACFARLANE: There's a great quote from Mark Twain that I use to comfort myself whenever I have the same thoughts because I have many of the same thoughts. He said there were -- there were billions upon billions upon billions of years before I was born in which I did not exist. And during that time I was not in the least inconvenienced by that fact.

KING: That wouldn't help me.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: I just want to make sure that we stick with the headline here which is that you wish to be frozen. Your head --

(LAUGHTER)

MACFARLANE: Would you want to live forever?

KING: Yes.

MACFARLANE: You would?

KING: You bet your ass.

SOUTHWICK: Larry is narcissistic during dinner table.

KING: No, I'm curious. Who's going to win the World Series? Who's going to win the next election? What's going to happen after that?

BRAND: Won't really matter when you're dead, mate.

KING: What happens to the world? Where does Twitter go?

(CROSSTALK)

O'BRIEN: I'm with Russell on this. I want out. I want out. The sooner, the better. That was crazy.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: Give me six more years. But you know, what's this obsession with sticking around forever? I don't want to stick around forever.

MACFARLANE: But do you believe in an afterlife? Do you have -- I mean how deep is the Catholicism --

O'BRIEN: If my mother is watching, yes. If she's not watching, I think, you know, as Theodore Roosevelt said, we just go down in the darkness. So I'm not sure. And who knows.

JONES: That's right. Who knows.

O'BRIEN: But I find -- I find my voice annoying. And I think it's reedy and it's high pitched. And I think it should just go away at some point. And my own self-loathing, I'm rooting for my death.

KING: That's Catholic.

O'BRIEN: Yes.

KING: And what do you think about at night?

BRAND: Well, what keeps me up mostly at night, Larry, is your wife's underwear.
(LAUGHTER)

BRAND: Most nights I lie awake thinking about, what does Shawn King wear? What's keeping Larry so lively that he wants to be frozen for eternity? This man refuses to die. Because that's what he goes to bed with. Yes. You have me in your house. I've been rooting, Larry.

(LAUGHTER)

SOUTHWICK: Why didn't you pick a matching set?

BRAND: Because it's dark in there, OK? I spent a lot of time rummaging around in Larry's (INAUDIBLE).

KING: Russell, does anything embarrass you?

O'BRIEN: Clearly not.

KING: Clearly not.

BRAND: It's the artful (INAUDIBLE), yes, he is. Hello, hello. I'm a touring scamp. I've got no morality.

KING: What keeps you up, Jack?

BRAND: Yes. Just move on.

KING: Yes, thinking about new things.

BRAND: Whoever's holding Shawn King's undies can talk.

O'BRIEN: Here's the question. Here's the thing. You just revealed that you want to be frozen.

KING: Why are you hung on that?

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: Listen, two things just happened. You revealed you want your head chopped off and frozen and Russell Brand went into your wife's room and stole her underwear and now you're moving on with prepared questions.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Coming up, my guests are about to reveal a very personal side you have not heard before.

BANKS: In real life, I'm like passive aggressive. I'm anti- confrontational. I'm even in coaching to, like, learn how to be confrontational.

DORSEY: I've made hundreds and hundreds of mistakes and learn from them.

MACFARLANE: I think people because of "Family Guy" think that I'm -- BANKS: Heartless?

MACFARLANE: Yes. A heartless frat guy, playboy type. Could not be further from the truth.

KING: Find out what they are all really like when no one's around. Up next on this Larry King special "Dinner with the Kings."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: What's the biggest misunderstanding about you? What don't people know about you or think wrongly about you?

O'NEAL: They probably don't know that I'm a nice guy.

SOUTHWICK: Yes. He's so sweet.

KING: Because you look evil on the court.

O'NEAL: Yes.

KING: You do. You do.

O'NEAL: I look evil. And you know, sometimes when I don't want to be bothered, I give people the short answer. You know, I just -- you know, but, you know, most of the time I'm friendly. I make people laugh. I like to laugh. I think if I can laugh at myself, then I can laugh at anything.

KING: What don't we know about? What's misunderstood about you?

BANKS: Misunderstood? Well, when I did my show, created my show, whatever, I also created a persona on "Top Model." And it's a character. So when I'm sitting there and I have all this make-up on and I'm, like, your picture is not fierce and you know talking all that and reprimanding the girls, and like that is a character. Like I don't do that.

Like, in real life, I'm, like, passive aggressive. I'm anti- confrontational. I'm even in coaching to, like, learn how to be confrontational. So it's a character. But people think it's real.

KING: You're very sexy. You realize that you're like a sex symbol to me.

BANKS: Am I? No, I'm not. I'm so not sexy. I know how to turn it on for a picture but I'm not sexy in real life. Like I'm not sexy right now.

KING: No, no.

BANKS: I'm not a sexy person but I know how to turn it on for a camera. I know how to turn it on for a camera, but I'm not like sexy normal.

BRAND: Would you mean you do not like having sex? BANKS: I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about --

BRAND: That's what sexy is. It's about sex.

(CROSSTALK)

BANKS: I'm talking about like sitting -- I don't know how to go like hello.

(CROSSTALK)

O'BRIEN: You know what? None of this is airing. This is clearly not airing. And if it's not airing we all have to chip in for the meal.

KING: I think -- I think it does go on HBO. What --

O'BRIEN: No. HBO would not air this.

KING: What don't -- what's misunderstood about you?

DORSEY: I think the biggest thing for me is that people assume when they see a Twitter or a square that it just happens and there were no mistakes, there were no wrong decisions. But I've made hundreds and hundreds of mistakes. And -- and learned from them.

And that's what makes a successful company. That's what makes a successful, creating endeavor is learning from your mistakes. And it's so easy to assume when you see something at a moment in time that it's been perfect up to that point.

BRAND: Jack Dorsey there, debunking the myth.

KING: Russell. What's the biggest myth about you?

BRAND: I don't know, mate. Because other people's perspectives in it. Like, if you spend too much time thinking about what other people think of you I think you've gone a bit mental. I'm bloody lucky I've got a conception at all, let alone a misconception. I'd be very grateful if anyone is thinking anything.

KING: Seth, what do we -- what do we misconceive about you?

MACFARLANE: I don't know. There's a million things that anyone at this table could read about themselves that is a misconception. I think people because of "Family Guy" think that I'm --

BANKS: Heartless?

MACFARLANE: Yes. A heartless frat guy. A playboy type. Could not be further from the truth. I'm actually very -- not withdrawn. I'm very shy. I fall asleep each night with a book in my hands, my favorite movie is "The Sound of Music." I mean I'm --

KING: You're not a player?

MACFARLANE: In no way whatsoever. That's always fascinated me. If I had had that reputation in high school, my god, it would have been wonderful. But no. I'm actually very -- I'm actually very --

KING: Well, you're a single, good looking, creative, inventive, successful guy.

MACFARLANE: Gosh, I don't know what to say, Larry. You're not frozen to me.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Coming up, our dinner's almost over. And my guests tell me what they're thankful for.

BRAND: I'm lucky not to be dead. I was a drug addict for years. I'm very, very lucky to be here with all these beautiful and intelligent people.

O'BRIEN: Grateful that I'm at a party with these wonderful people and there are rubies on the table. The country is in a tight spot right now. And you're having a --

JONES: And Larry King is having away --

O'BRIEN: A televised function that Caligula would be embarrassed. Look at these.

KING: Stick around for dessert. Next on this LARRY KING SPECIAL, "Dinner with the Kings."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Most grateful for. Anything.

BRAND: In 104 characters or less.

(LAUGHTER)

DORSEY: I'm most grateful for being able to wake up every day and do what I love. And -- and define every day completed. You know, I don't -- I can't think of anything else more magical than that. I can -- I can find my day and do exactly what I want to do.

KING: Russell?

BRAND: I think I'm most grateful for Shawn King's bra. This close to my heart.

KING: It's a serious moment, Russell.

BRAND: Oh, serious moment.

KING: What are you most --

BRAND: I'm so sorry for undercutting the paradigm.

I'm grateful for everything. I'm grateful to be included in this. I'm lucky not to be dead. I was a drug addict for years. I'm very, very lucky to be here with all these beautiful and intelligent people. And very grateful to still be alive. Pioneers, brilliant comedians, beautiful, intelligent people. I'm grateful for these. I shouldn't even be here. I don't think I should be here now. I've (INAUDIBLE) loads of stuff from your house.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: Tyra?

BANKS: What am I most grateful for? I'm most grateful that I had a woman that raised me and kept me sane --

BRAND: Just finish the sentence there.

BANKS: -- in a world that's insane, full of insane people.

JONES: What are you looking at him for?

BANKS: I don't know. I don't know, right?

MACFARLANE: I'm grateful that I'm still a drug addict. I don't know how I would have gotten through this evening.

(LAUGHTER)

MACFARLANE: I think it would have been a disaster. I wouldn't have had a thing to say. No. I think -- I think I got -- I got to be unoriginal and duplicate Jack's sentiment that there's a million things I could be doing and I'm -- I couldn't be more delighted to be doing what I'm doing. I think a lot of it has to do with luck and timing. But, you know, pitching the right thing at the right time to the right people.

And so I'm grateful for being in the right place at the right time and getting the opportunity to do everything that I've been able to do.

KING: Shaq?

O'NEAL: I'm most grateful for being a medium level juvenile delinquent that made it. Because as you know many young African- Americans don't make it. And you know my key was being a leader, not a follower. Listening to my parents. And I consider myself one of the luckiest people in the world.

I can remember a day, you know, I want to be a rapper and I'm doing my thing. And I get a call from Quincy Jones. He wants me to rap on his album. Remember that? That's why -- so that's why -- so -- that's why for me it's key that I remain humble. Because all this right now is luck. I mean, I remember timing where, you know, if I would have went this way, I wouldn't be here. If I would have went that way, you know, I wouldn't be here.

So you know I'm -- you know I'm grateful to have friends. I'm grateful that, you know, Conan has me on the show. I'm grateful to be sitting next to Tyra. So you know, I'm grateful that you invited me to this dinner. I thank you very much. I'm just a -- you know, a kid that's from northern New Jersey who followed his dreams, stayed out of trouble and I'm here.

KING: Quincy?

JONES: I'm grateful that I'm a motherless that lived -- was going to go from infancy to Alzheimer's. Never passed grown up. I don't ever want to be grown up. Seven of the most beautiful kids. Six daughters, one son. Grand kids and the best friends in the world. I work with every major artist in the world in the last 60 years. Every major artist. Louis Armstrong and Billy Holiday, too. All those rappers. It's a blessing. You have to take the light. The light part of your life, you know. Wipe out the darkness.

KING: Shawn?

SOUTHWICK: Most grateful for -- redundant. My family. My sons. I cry when I talk about them. So, yes, I'm thankful for them. And I'm really thankful for you.

KING: I'm grateful for this whole thing in life. Her, the kids. I can't believe -- I pinch myself every day. My kid who was -- my father died when I was 9 1/2. I was on relief for three years. New York City, bought my first pair of glasses. I dreamed of being on the radio. And that is all I ever dreamed of.

And I never thought all this would happen to me. And I'm grateful for it happening and for where I am right now. And still got things to do.

Conan? Are you praying, Conan?

O'BRIEN: I have an amazing -- yes. I was -- first of all, I'm grateful that I'm at a party with these wonderful people and there are rubies on the table. Rubies.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: We spare nothing.

MACFARLANE: They are fabulous.

O'BRIEN: This is insanity.

MACFARLANE: This is like the banquet in the temple of doom.

O'BRIEN: Well, it's ridiculous. This is making me feel horrible because the country's in a tight spot right now. And you're having a --

MACFARLANE: Larry King is giving away precious gems.

O'BRIEN: -- a televised function that Caligula would be embarrassed. Look at these rubies and There's rubies. I think I'm probably most grateful for -- I see the absurdity in things. I think that's -- I'm very grateful for that. This is absurd in a very nice way. But it's absurd that I get to sit at this table and -- and I think it's absurd that I get to do a show. And I think it's -- there are just so many things in my life that I think are absolutely --

KING: What am I doing here?

O'BRIEN: Yes. What am I doing here? And my grandfather directed traffic in Worcester, Massachusetts. And why am I here? And I -- my root has been so improbable. And I find myself to be an absurd person. I think it's ridiculous that I get to exist. So I think that sense of absurdity is -- keeps me going.

I just think is whole thing is insane and I've got your wife's underwear in my pocket.

(LAUGHTER)

KING: You got -- anybody got a credit card? I'll pay you back.

PUCK: You have a credit card? I have my --

KING: I left it upstairs.

PUCK: Who has a credit card?

KING: This is something that Jack has invented. All right. Tell what this is, Jack. Show is and tell what it is.

PUCK: They call it a Square.

DORSEY: It's called Square. And it allows anyone to accept credit cards.

BANKS: Anyone.

MACFARLANE: For any reason at all?

DORSEY: Personal trainer. For whatever reason.

MACFARLANE: That seems incredibly dangerous.

BRAND: They've been misuse.

KING: Where do you get it now, Jack?

DORSEY: What's that?

KING: Where do you get this?

DORSEY: You get it from the app store. You download it from Android or the iPhone app store. And it's really important for this particular economy because people are starting businesses and they want to start their own -- their own functions. And accepting payments has been the barrier.

KING: And you invented this?

DORSEY: Yes. Myself and my co-founder. We both (INAUDIBLE).

KING: What do you call it?

O'BRIEN: This will revolutionize prostitution.

(LAUGHTER)

O'BRIEN: No. Congratulations. Here, here.

PUCK: I'm leaving.

(CROSSTALK)

KING: For Wolfgang.

PUCK: Bye. Thanks, everybody.

KING: Thank you, all. Thank you, all, for a wonderful evening.

And with that, dinner was done. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. Thank you all for watching. And Happy Holidays.