Briefing Materials

Kris Engskov
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2006
1974  Engskov meets Bill Clinton while Clinton is campaigning for Congress. They meet at Engskov's grandparents' hardware store in Berryville, Arkansas. Engskov is four years old at the time. (Bill Clinton, *My Life*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, p. 213; The Christian Science Monitor, 05/15/2000)


1993  After graduating from the University of Arkansas with Bachelor’s degrees in Public Administration and Finance, Engskov moves to Washington, D.C. and becomes Trip Coordinator in the White House Travel Office. (The Boston Globe, 08/13/2000)

1997  Engskov is Press Assistant in the White House Office of the Press Secretary, where he serves under Michael McCurry. (The Washington Post, 04/02/1997)

**December**  Engskov is appointed Personal Aide to the President, replacing Stephen Goodin. (The Washington Post, 12/29/1997)

1998

**February**  Engskov testifies before the federal grand jury investigating the Monica Lewinsky case. (The Washington Post, 02/05/1998)

**March**  Engskov accompanies President Clinton on his diplomatic tour of Africa. (Chicago Sun-Times, 03/22/1998)

**May**  Engskov accompanies President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton on a trip to California to visit their daughter Chelsea at Stanford University. (The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 05/04/1998)

Engskov again testifies before the federal grand jury investigating the Monica Lewinsky case. (The Washington Post, 05/22/1998)

**June**  Engskov accompanies President Clinton on a diplomatic trip to Beijing, China. (The New York Times, 06/21/1998)

**August**  Engskov is part of the official delegation accompanying the President to Russia, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. (US. Newswire, 08/29/1998)
1999

March Engskov is part of the official delegation accompanying the President to Central America. (M2 Press wire, 03/09/1999)

June Engskov accompanies the President on his trip to Europe. (US. Newswire, 06/15/1999)

July Engskov is part of the official delegation accompanying the President to Morocco, and Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. (U.S. Newswire, 07/25/1999)

September Engskov accompanies President Clinton to New Zealand. (The Washington Post, 09/15/1999)

November Engskov is part of the official delegation accompanying the President to Europe. (M2 Presswire, 11/16/1999)

2000

March Engskov is part of the President's official delegation to India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. (U.S. Newswire, 03/17/2000)

May Engskov resigns as Personal Aide to the President. He goes on to work for Madrona Venture Group LLC, a venture capital firm in Seattle. (The Christian Science Monitor, 05/15/2000; The Washington Post, 05/26/2000)

June Engskov is part of the official delegation accompanying the President to Europe. In Moscow, the delegation throws a goodbye party for Engskov. (U.S. Newswire, 05/30/2000; The Washington Post, 06/07/2000)

2001

June In Palo Alto, California, Engskov helps the Clintons handle logistics for Chelsea Clinton's graduation from Stanford University. (The New York Times, 06/17/2001)

2002 Engskov accepts a job as Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs for Starbucks Corp. (The Wall Street Journal, 04/12/2005)
Joining the Clinton Administration

• When did you first meet Bill Clinton? Describe your early impressions of him. Did you have much interaction with him in your years growing up in Arkansas?
• Describe your involvement in the 1992 presidential campaign. What were your main responsibilities during the campaign? Did these responsibilities change over time?
• With whom on the campaign staff did you work most closely? Did you have any interaction with Governor Clinton during the campaign?
• Did you have any role in the transition?

White House Travel Office

• How did you come to serve as Trip Coordinator in the White House Travel Office? What were your main responsibilities in this position?
• With whom in the Travel Office did you work most closely? Did you have a close working relationship with any other members of the West Wing staff? Did you have any interaction with the President in this position?
• Do you have any observations about the controversy over reorganizing the Travel Office?

White House Press Office

• How did you come to serve as Press Assistant in the White House Press Office? What were your major roles and responsibilities?
• With whom in the Press Office did you work most closely? Characterize your working relationship with Press Secretary Michael McCurry.
• As Press Assistant, did you have a working relationship with the President or any other members of the West Wing staff?
• Assess the Clintons' relationship with the White House press corps as you saw it.

Personal Aide to the President

• Discuss the circumstances surrounding your selection as Personal Aide to the President. Did you have any conversations with the President or anyone else about your role and responsibilities in this position?
• Describe a typical day as Personal Aide. What were the most challenging aspects of your job? How did your responsibilities change during periods of presidential travel?
• Discuss the organization of Oval Office operations in the Clinton White House. How was staff access to the President managed? Who had direct access to the Oval Office?
• Comment on your relationships with other members of the White House staff. With whom did you work most closely? Describe the management of the White House under Chiefs of Staff Erskine Bowles and John Podesta.
• Discuss the most important considerations in scheduling the President's time. How closely did Clinton stick to his daily schedule? Comment on Clinton's working style.
• How would you characterize the President's personal and management style?
• What were the keys to being a good Personal Aide to President Clinton?
• How did Clinton balance spending time with his family and fulfilling his duties as President?
• What did the President like to do to unwind? Did the constraints of life in the White House bother him?
• Comment on your observations of Clinton’s relationships with his senior advisors, congressional leaders, and foreign leaders.
• To what extent did the Lewinsky scandal affect the President and his relationship with his inner staff? Which people did the President most rely on to get through this period? Discuss the personal reserves he drew on to sustain himself in 1998 and 1999. Did the conduct of the outside investigations complicate your ability to do your job? Discuss your appearance before the grand jury.
• Discuss any special recollections about the President during your tenure as Personal Aide.
• Comment on your decision to step down as Personal Aide to the President.
• As a close observer of the President and other senior members of the Administration, discuss the key historical moments of the Clinton presidency. What were the high points and low points?
• What about the presidency most appealed to President Clinton? What were the least appealing aspects?

The Clinton Presidency in Retrospect

• What about Clinton should historians most pay attention for understanding the kind of President he was? Which of his personal traits are most difficult for an outsider to fully appreciate?
• Comment on the physical and psychological demands the office of the presidency imposes upon its occupant.
PERSONAL AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT


TIMELINES

- Kris Engskov News Timeline, prepared by Jill Abraham, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 03/07/2006.

- Timeline of the Clinton Presidency, prepared by Robbie Robinson, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/30/2002