

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):
2009-0800-F

FOIA Number:
2009-0800-F

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Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: Media Affairs, White House Office of
Series: Smith, Dorrance, Files
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 08292
Folder ID Number: 08292-037

Folder Title:

20/20 Interview 6/22/92 [Memos for interview, text of previous Barbara Walters interviews with Reagan & Bush, ratings, text of actual interview]

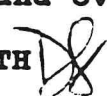
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

20/20 INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA WALTERS

DATE: June 22, 1992
TIME: 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
LOCATION: Oval Office and Oval Office Veranda
FROM: DORRANCE SMITH 

I. PURPOSE:

To conduct an interview with Barbara Walters for air on the ABC News program "20/20" on June 26, 1992.

II. BACKGROUND:

You are scheduled for an interview with Barbara Walters, Anchor of ABC's "20/20" program. This program is a news magazine format show, which you have appeared on in October 8, 1987 and January 20, 1989.

This interview will provide you the opportunity to communicate who George Bush really is, and what you care most about. You may also discuss important initiatives and your most recent visit with President Yeltsin.

The audience for "20/20" is made up primarily of women between the ages of 18 to 40 and is viewed by an estimated 25 million viewers on an average Friday night. Your interview is expected to draw a much larger audience -- 30 to 35 million viewers across the nation.

III. PARTICIPANTS:

The President
Mrs. Bush
Dorrance Smith
Barbara Walters
Maria Eitel Sheehan
Scott Sforza
WHCA Personnel (2)
ABC News Production Personnel (5)

IV. PRESS PLAN:

Exclusive to the participants

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

- You will have a radio frequency microphone placed on your lapel by WHCA audio personnel.
- You will be introduced to Barbara Walters in the Oval Office.
- You will walk out of the Oval Office with Barbara Walters and onto the Oval Office Veranda, where you will be seated for your interview.
- Barbara Walters will interview you for 30 minutes one-on-one.
- You will then be joined by Mrs. Bush, and you will be interviewed together for 10 minutes.
- At the conclusion of the 10 minute interview session, you will depart, and Mrs. Bush will be interviewed one-on-one for 30 minutes.

VI. REMARKS

None


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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

June 4, 1992

TO: Katherine L. Super
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Appointments and Scheduling

FROM: Dorrance Smith 
Assistant to the President for
Media Affairs

REQUEST: To have the President and Mrs. Bush interviewed by Barbara Walters for the prime time news magazine *20/20*.

PURPOSE: To provide prime time network exposure for the President's domestic agenda.

BACKGROUND: Barbara Walters has a longstanding request to interview the President and Mrs. Bush. The President would be interviewed for a half hour by Barbara Walters. Then the President would be joined by Mrs. Bush for a few minutes. Then Mrs. Bush would be interviewed for a half hour. *20/20* is a news magazine program that regularly finishes in the top 15 in the Nielsen Ratings. Last week's *20/20* finished 4th among all network programs with an average of approximately 35 million viewers.

DATE: Monday, June 22 (for air Friday, June 26)

LOCATION: The White House

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Mrs. Bush
Millie
Ranger


MEDIA COVERAGE: Exclusive to participants.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

PRE-BRIEF FOR 20/20 INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA WALTERS

DATE: June 22, 1992
TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
LOCATION: Oval Office Dining Room
FROM: DORRANCE SMITH 

I. PURPOSE:

To review background information for your interview session with ABC News anchor, Barbara Walters for the program "20/20."

II. BACKGROUND:

You are scheduled to be interviewed by ABC News "20/20" Anchor Barbara Walters. The interview will be aired on Friday, June 26, 1992 at 10:00 p.m. E.D.T.

This interview will provide you the opportunity to show the American people the kind of person you are, and give them insight as to the kinds of issues that concern you and Mrs. Bush.

Your interview is expected to reach an estimated 30 to 35 million viewers.

III. PARTICIPANTS:

The President
Sam Skinner
Richard Darman
Bob Teeter
Marlin Fitzwater
Dorrance Smith
Lois Cassano - Make-up

IV. PRESS PLAN:

White House Photographer only

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

- You will enter the Oval Office Dining Room at 8:30 a.m.
- You will engage in a pre-brief session.
- You will proceed to the Cabinet Room for light make-up.
- You will depart the Cabinet Room and proceed to the Oval Office, where your interview session with Barbara Walters will begin.

VI. REMARKS:

None

THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY - June 7, 1992

7

PASSION

agenda for the future of this country. I'd like to hear that from Ross Perot.

MS. WALTERS: You know, there is something else. It's much more than the issues which you've been talking about, the president's been talking about, Governor Clinton's talking about. And that's passion and ideology. And one of the biggest criticisms about President Bush is that he doesn't seem to have an ideology. People talk about Ronald Reagan and they say you may or may not have liked him, but we knew where we stood. Can you tell me what the president is passionate about? And a balanced budget doesn't sound too inspirational.

MR. MALEK: I'm glad you asked that. I wish the American people had the opportunity that I've had of getting to know this man, of getting to know this man close up for the past 20 years, and know how decent he is, how passionate he feels about this country and about what he wants to continue to do.

MS. WALTERS: But more than that--

MR. MALEK: Let me get at that.

MS. WALTERS: Okay. What does he want to do in his second term? What's the most important--

MR. MALEK: Here's what he feels passionate about. He feels passionate about an economic opportunity for all Americans. He feels passionate that all Americans deserve the chance to get a sound education. He feels deeply and convincingly that we need strong law and order in order to secure our neighborhoods and streets. He believes in fundamental family values. He believes in a national defense capable of securing world peace. These are some of the things he believes in.

MS. WALTERS: Maybe it would have been better if he'd pick one or two rather than a whole list.

MR. MALEK: You asked me what he believed in.

MS. WALTERS: Okay, let me put it another way. A year ago, he was a hero, not just in this country, but throughout the world. It's one year later--and we felt the passion, we felt the strength--it's one year later and a man who was almost totally unknown a year ago is now in the polls running ahead, not on issues, but on fire, on fearlessness, these kind of ephemeral qualities. What went wrong in the past year?

MR. MALEK: Well, let's look at what happened. We've had an 18-month recession. It was a vexing recession, it was a troubling recession. We had people out of work and we had people troubled by it. We are now coming out of that recession, but we're not moving it rapidly enough. As we were coming out of the recession, we had a primary season. There were five Democrats, there was a Republican and an independent, all taking shots at the president. Now we're coming out of that, and I think we're getting down to the point where people are going to get past those kind of battles and start deciding on who has the qualifications to be president, who has the experience, the seasoning, the

20/20 FACT SHEET

- 20/20 has an average Friday night share of 26, which translates to **25 million** viewers.
- The President's interview on 20/20 is expected to receive a much larger share than the usual Friday night average. At the moment, 20/20 expects the share to be between **30 to 35**, which translates to approximately **30 million** viewers.
- The gender breakdown for the program is as follows:

Female

18 to 34 years of age	24% Share of the available audience at the 10:00 p.m. time period
34 to 49 years of age	26% Share " "
50 years of age and up	30% Share " "

Male

18 to 34 years of age	20% Share of available male audience at the 10:00 p.m. time period
35 to 49 years of age	22% Share " "
50 Years of age and up	25% Share " "

- The majority of 20/20's audience is 50 years of age and older. The older the audience is, the more they watch, according to the 20/20 statistics.

Possible Questions From Barbara Walters '

1. "One of the biggest criticisms about President Bush is that he doesn't seem to have an ideology. People talk about Ronald Reagan and they say you may or may not have liked him, but we knew where he stood. Can you tell me what the President is passionate about? And a balanced budget doesn't sound too inspirational."
2. "A year ago, he (the President) was a hero, not just in this country, but throughout the world. It's one year later -- and we felt the passion, we felt the strength -- it's one year later and a man who was almost totally unknown a year ago is now in the polls running ahead, not on issues, but on fire, on fearlessness, these kinds of ephemeral qualities. What went wrong in the past year?"
3. Describe to me the George Bush vision for the 2nd Term? Where will we go and how will you take us there?
4. Your children, George, Jr., Jeb, and Neil, in particular, have been the subject of intense scrutiny. What do you tell them? How does this affect you?
5. If there were one decision, one thing you could change about your 1st term, what would it be?
6. Your health -- last year you were hospitalized for heart fibrillation, in Japan you took ill, you're 68 years old. Are there times when you say to yourself, "Is it worth it? I could have a nice life. What do I need this for?"
7. How would you grade your 1st 3 & 1/2 years in office? What are your memorable moments? The best time? The worst time?
8. How do you respond to the criticism that you are out of touch with the American people?
9. Leadership -- How would you describe George Bush's leadership qualities?
10. Murphy Brown - Do you agree with Vice President Quayle's criticism of her character? What exactly do you mean when you say you're for family values?
11. You have called yourself the "Environmental President," yet your environmental record was criticised in Rio. You have called yourself the "Education President," but you can't get an education bill through Congress. How would you characterize this type of presidency?

12. You've been Vice President, Head of the CIA, Head of the Republican Party, a Congressman, Ambassador to the U.N. and to China, and now President. Why do people have trouble understanding what you stand for?
13. I know you are not going to talk about Ross Perot the candidate, but how do you explain the phenomenon of Perot? What does it say about your presidency -- that if the election were held today you'd lose to someone who was a political unknown 3 months ago? What does it say about the mood of the electorate?
14. On breaking your "read my lips, no new taxes" pledge, do you deserve to retain the trust of the people?

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR ANNA PEREZ

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *PS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

Attached are the transcripts from Barbara Walters interviews with:

Ronald Reagan - Nov., 1981

Vice President & Mrs. Bush - Oct., 1987

The President & Mrs. Bush - Jan., 1989

Ross Perot - May, 1992

I am sending these transcripts, along with videotapes, to Camp David for the President and Mrs. Bush to screen on Sunday.

We have Pre Brief time from 8:30 - 10:30 Monday morning in the dining area next to the Oval Office. I will have the tapes from the Walters' programs available.

The agreed upon format is:

1. BW & the President walk from Oval to Veranda
2. BW interviews the President (30 minutes)
3. BW & the President are joined by Mrs. Bush
4. BW interviews the President and Mrs. Bush (10 minutes)
5. The President departs
6. BW interviews Mrs. Bush (30 minutes)

20/20 will devote 3/4 of their program time to these interviews. They estimate 22 million homes. 20/20 will set up on Sunday, and Ms. Walters will be in for a lighting check at 4:30 p.m.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR SAM SKINNER

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *DS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR DICK DARMAN

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH 

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR BOB TEETER

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *DS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

Bob
Any chance you and
Martin have to discuss this
with him would be
helpful. J

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR MARLIN FITZWATER

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *DS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

MF
Any chance you have to discuss with him would help.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR ROGER AILES

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *DS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 INTERVIEW

Roger
Please call me
through Signal if
you need anything -
J

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20/20 - Barbara Walters Interview

The President

&

Mrs. Bush

January 20, 1989

This transcript has not yet been checked against videotape. Accuracy as to speakers and spellings not guaranteed.) lw

ABC NEWS

20/20 Show #903

January 20, 1989

HUGH DOWNS: Good evening. I'm Hugh Downs. Well, America has a new president tonight. That's why Barbara Walters is in Washington.

BARBARA WALTERS: Hi, Hugh. Coming up, we will meet the new president and Mrs. Bush in an intimate, revealing and even quite amusing interview. And this is 20/20.

ANNOUNCER: On the ABC newsmagazine, 20/20, with Hugh Downs and Barbara Walters. Tonight, the 41st president of the United States.

GEORGE BUSH: I thought it would be scarier.

ANNOUNCER: And the new First Lady of the land.

WALTERS: Do you give your views on issues and do you take her—

BARBARA BUSH: Do you mean to my husband?

WALTERS: Yes. So many people say your view has changed. It's as if Clark Kent became Superman. I mean, you're very articulate—

Mr. BUSH: That'll change, too. Wait 'til the budget goes up.

WALTERS: What will be your first priority in the White House? What will we read about you one month from now?

Mr. BUSH: Well, I feel ashamed when I drive down and see people sleeping on the grates.

ANNOUNCER: Tonight, a new beginning and how a First Family moves into the White House. A Barbara Walters exclusive. "The President and Mrs. Bush."

And, to get an education, these kids have to get lucky.

ROBERT MURPHY, Student: If I could stay at one school all the way through high school, that'd be mainly a miracle.

ANNOUNCER: They're children of the homeless. Because their numbers are growing, schools now exist just for them. Bob Brown on trying to teach "The Almost Forgotten."

Plus, your guide to getting through sweepstakes madness. Who wins? What are the odds? John Stossel on one of life's great mysteries, "You Have Already Won...Maybe."

The President and Mrs. Bush

DOWNS: All of that and, in addition to her interview with the new President and First Lady, Barbara Walters will keep us up to date on several events in Washington this evening. First, this was the moment, George Bush being sworn in as 41st President of the United States, Chief Justice William Rehnquist administering the oath. And so did George Bush open a new chapter in our history. And he and Barbara Bush become now the most-watched couple in the world. And we are, on this Inauguration Night, pleased that they chose 20/20 as the program to do their very first interview together. This interview has a unique quality, in that I don't think anybody has ever seen the Bushes like this on television before and may never see them like this again. Barbara?

WALTERS: I think you're right, Hugh. For many people, this will be the first intimate look at the new President, but even more than the new President, it's the first look at his First Lady. I met with them the other day in the Vice Presidential mansion before they were about to move. Amazingly, while this entire city has been caught up in the frenzy, George and Barbara Bush were

relaxed and even playful. People want to know what it's going to be like to have new tenants in the White House. See for yourself.

WALTERS: [voice-over] For eight years, this has been home, the Vice President's official residence on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Observatory in northwest Washington. The moving company's trailer was parked for days as Barbara Bush supervised packing and loading for the 29th time in her 44 years of marriage.

BARBARA BUSH: These are our clothes.

WALTERS: [voice-over] All of this in preparation for this morning's unloading at the White House.

[interviewing] And everything comes in in those two hours from 9:00 to 11:00 on Inauguration Day?

Mrs. BUSH: A lot of things like your clothes and, actually, our whole living room upstairs is going to go right into the little living room, the private living room—

WALTERS: Your whole living room from up here?

Mrs. BUSH: My curtains have been taken down and are in New York being cut down to the right size and will come back and fit in on Monday morning.

WALTERS: And you walk in and it's done.

Mrs. BUSH: Isn't that wonderful?

WALTERS: Well, where do you begin? How do you know what goes to the White House, what goes to Camp David, what goes—

Mrs. BUSH: Well, it's terrible, but we have tagged everything. Here's a perfect example. See the little red dot? Everything that has a red dot goes to the White House.

WALTERS: This has a red dot.

Mrs. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: This has a red dot.

Mrs. BUSH: Yeah, because we are sending things to Maine, we're sending things to the White House, we're sending things to Camp David and we're sending things, sort of packing things that maybe we think later will be good in a library or a museum at some college. So we really have had four different colored dots on things.

WALTERS: You have the sympathy of every woman who's ever tried to pack.

Mrs. BUSH: Well, that's great.

WALTERS: [interviewing] We talked to Mr. and Mrs. Bush in the only room in the house that was still intact on Monday the living room.

[interviewing] Mr. Bush, by the time this interview is aired you will be president of the United States. As I say it, what do you feel? Has it sunk in yet?

GEORGE BUSH: It has. It doesn't have the dramatic feeling I thought it might have, but I am—I want to go and try to do my best.

WALTERS: Mrs. Bush, what are you feeling in between the packing?

Mrs. BUSH: Well, I'm very proud of George. I'm not nervous or scared. Every now and then I think, though, "I won't see that again until we get to the White House." The White House! Or "he really is going to have to face those problems" and he can do it, I know he can. But mostly I'm thinking about packing.

WALTERS: Mr. Bush, we read and hear that Ronald Reagan came into office with a vision, with a grand plan. And it is said, I'm sure you read it yourself, that you don't have a vision, that you don't have any broad strategic goals. Do you have a vision and if so, what is it?

Mr. BUSH: A world at peace. An America that's— whos

people are better off. A lot of people in this country that are hurting and my vision is to see that their hurting less or doing better. But look, when we came into office, the president leading in 1980, we were running against an administration, we were running against the way things had been, to change them to make them better. This is different now. What I want to do is build on a record, so there's slight difference there.

WALTERS: President Reagan said in an interview with David Brinkley recently that some of the homeless who slept in grates did so voluntarily. He has said, "The homeless who are homeless, you might say, are by choice." Do you agree?

Mr. BUSH: No, I agree that some make that selection. I think some are not competent what is best for society. Some, maybe 30-some percent. It's a national shame. It's a national shame. I feel ashamed when I drive down and see people sleeping on the grates.

WALTERS: We didn't have this many homeless eight years ago. Is this the fault of the Reagan Administration?

Mr. BUSH: No, because the economy is far stronger than it was eight years ago. There are more jobs out there, so I don't think you can blame the Reagan Administration. I think the problem is too acute and too demeaning to try to assign blame for it.

WALTERS: Mrs. Bush, the homeless, especially the situation of mothers with children, is of particular concern to you. Mothers with children who don't have fathers to help support the family, is of particular concern to you.

Mrs. BUSH: That's right.

WALTERS: Is this going to be one of your priorities?

Mrs. BUSH: Yes, I think it is. I'm very interested, as you know, in literacy and mostly literacy—moving towards literacy in the family because you'll find a lot of these mothers are also functionally illiterate because they left school at an early age and had babies and never had a chance to finish school. So the homeless will—women will fit right in to my very loose interest, I mean, it's very broad. It's a big concern to me and to George.

WALTERS: I had read somewhere that you—not that your husband was not interested, but that you felt that some of his answers perhaps during the campaign were not as strong about the homeless as they should have been and you—it was something—the truth?

Mr. BUSH: Yeah, I saw that, too. I thought it was outrageous.

Mrs. BUSH: That's not true or untrue.

Mr. BUSH: What's that mean?

Mrs. BUSH: Well, that's probably half true. I mean I—
WALTERS: It is of a great concern and you wanted him to know it, is that it?

Mrs. BUSH: Well, I think he knew it.

Mr. BUSH: No, she criticized some answer I gave, as showing—I made an answer where she felt I'd put too much emphasis on the mentally incompetent, on those after the change in the law that forced release from mental care, turned a bunch of people out on the streets. So when I gave an answer at one of these forums of that nature, she felt I didn't mention the other 66 percent enough and I think it's fair criticism. And—because I think there are about two-thirds that don't fit that description. She thinks I put all my emphasis on that and properly—I wouldn't say chastised me for it, it wasn't exactly—but—

Mrs. BUSH: You must have told. I didn't tell.

Mr. BUSH: Well, it showed in the newspapers here.

WALTERS: I read that you had your breakfast in bed in the

morning, watched the television shows together, the news programs, and discuss everything, policy—

Mr. BUSH: A, I don't eat breakfast.

WALTERS: Oh?

Mrs. BUSH: Well, you have coffee.

Mr. BUSH: Coffee, yes. Coffee in bed. We flip it on at six watch 15 minutes on one network, 15 on another and then I on the next to get a blanket and the out of there, history, at seven o'clock.

WALTERS: Do you discuss things? Do you—

Mrs. BUSH: We read the papers.

WALTERS:—read the papers?

Mr. BUSH: Oh, yeah.

WALTERS: Do you discuss policy, foreign policy domestic—

Mrs. BUSH: No.

WALTERS: Ah, you—come on, I don't—

Mrs. BUSH: No.

Mr. BUSH: I'm a little grumpy at six in the morning—

Mrs. BUSH: No, we don't even discuss it then.

Mr. BUSH:—so she discusses it and I just say, "Thank you."

Mrs. BUSH: That's not true, but we—very often, he'll read one paper, I'll read another. Then we'll change—and other papers. And I might say, "Look at this article," or he might say, "Wait 'til you see this one," or something. But we discuss like any other two normal people. We do not discuss foreign policy other than just what's of interest to everybody.

WALTERS: I know that you do not like to speak on issues because you said you were not elected, he's elected—

Mrs. BUSH: That's right.

WALTERS:—but do you give your views on issues and do you take her—

Mrs. BUSH: You mean to my husband?

WALTERS: Yes. Ah ha. Look at—read his lips.

Mr. BUSH: I'm not saying that anymore. Yes, she does. U—
vanished. No bark on it.

Mrs. BUSH: He's very polite and that he does his own thing.

WALTERS: Can you tell us anything, either of you, anything that you said, felt in any area that was of influence to your husband?

Mrs. BUSH: No. That's a hard question because we grew together. George and I. We were married at 19 and 20, we've been married 44 years. I think we think alike in many cases but George is more matter of—

Mr. BUSH: No, but she—you mentioned this homeless thing. She was right about that. She thought I came off as insensitive and I think—I thought about that, after bawling her out criticizing me and my answers, and—

WALTERS: Do you really?

Mrs. BUSH: No.

Mr. BUSH: I never bawled her out for that stuff.

Mrs. BUSH: No, he teases me.

Mr. BUSH: I tease her. But she was right.

Mrs. BUSH: I'd like to think that his enormous feeling about education has come a little bit from me, but I know that's true. Education is a time that's come and I don't think I influenced him on that at all.

WALTERS: A sensitive subject and one that's always a subject in this country, but do you, Mrs. Bush, or any members of your family disagree with your husband's view about abortion?

Mrs. BUSH: I just made a vow I'm not going to get into things I disagree or agree with George on because I was not elected to office and I'm just not going to talk about that. And I'm not going to talk about other members of my family—

WALTERS: Klud of damned if you do and damned if you don't because one of the papers said that the fact that you don't say you agree with your husband's view on abortion means that you disagree, otherwise you would have said you agree.

Mrs. BUSH: But another paper said it, that I agreed with him, so it isn't just abortion, it's a number of issues I don't talk about.

WALTERS: But you do privately?

Mrs. BUSH: Sure. And when I get elected to public office, I certainly expect George Bush will treat me the same way. Will you?

Mr. BUSH: If I don't run against you, I will, yeah.

WALTERS: You heard it first. What will be your first priority in the White House? What will we read about you one month from now?

Mr. BUSH: One month from now, you will read that I have sent a proposal on the budget up to the Congress and that they don't like every aspect of it. I'm not naive about how the process works. One month from now, you'll see no solution to the budget, but I will have shown my hand. You will also see a president that has sent The Hill strong proposals in ethics. I used to get teased a lot, Barbara, as kind of having a naive view, a kind of a super optimistic view about public service. I still have that, but one way to enhance that is to hold high the highest possible ethical standards in terms of conflict of interest. So you're going to different, you're going to more initiatives on education, but some of them'll fall short of some expectations because we're dealing in a time of tight money.

WALTERS: You have worked as the education president, you've also been very strong on the prevention of drugs and yet, tight money. Give us a hint. What are you going to cut?

Mr. BUSH: You can't measure one's commitment to literacy on how much federal money you put into it. You can't measure one's commitment to fighting drugs by being able to match the highest bidder on federal money. One of the problems with Washington, D.C. is you're judged by how much money you can put after a problem. Now, a lot of what a president has to do in times of tight financial resources is to exhort, is to bring out the best in people, private sector, public sector — meaning state and local in this case — to help solve the problems. And I'm going to try to do that because I won't be able to match the highest bidder on federal funds for education or federal funds for drug rehabilitation or federal funds for the homeless, whatever it is. But does that mean I don't care? No, it doesn't.

WALTERS: One thing that a great many people don't understand — we talk about the deficit and everybody's eyes glaze over — but people have been saying for something like the past six years that this country was going to be in terrible trouble financially. We were going to have a recession, high inflation, higher interest rates and we're the largest debtor nation and doom and gloom. And it hasn't happened. The economy is still strong. And you think it'll be sound for the next four years?

Mr. BUSH: If my program is enacted, it will be. And I say that without, you know, trying to be some big shot about this thing, but the worst thing you could do is kill off the economy by loading it down with more taxes and certainly sitting still for increasing debt. That would hurt and I don't want to be a

part of that.

WALTERS: I want to get back a little bit to foreign policy, but some of the issues that are so important, the Middle East right now in the front pages today, all the time and — are you totally against an independent Palestinian state?

Mr. BUSH: I think an independent Palestinian state, knowing the realities of that region as I do, is a non-starter. What you have to do is have Israel and then I think the first step should still be Jordan and direct negotiation. And I know that, with a factions in Israel, a Palestinian state is a non-starter, so why be advocating something that would keep the process from going forward? I think the best concept is still a confederation—

WALTERS: With Jordan.

Mr. BUSH: —with Jordan in some way and if the U.S. can be a catalyst to achieve those ends, so much the better. And we can.

WALTERS: Do you trust Yassir Arafat?

Mr. BUSH: No, but I don't totally trust him. I obviously don't know the man, but I'm encouraged by the recent steps that Mr. Arafat took to do those things that have been the fundamental in U.S. foreign policy, recognition of Israel's right to exist and renunciation of terror.

WALTERS: The Soviet Union. Certainly, conditions have changed and I guess one could look forward to arms reduction on both sides, but are there — in the still of the night, are there things that still worry you about the United States and the Soviet Union? Are there warning signs that you see even now?

Mr. BUSH: Sure. And that's why I have adopted a position of some caution. That's why I'm asking for a total review of our arms control proposals. I will be prepared to have proposals that I think the West can put forward, as opposed to always responding to some bold new initiative of Mr. Gorbachev, but I don't think that is detrimental to the Soviet interests. I would think they'd welcome it if it was realistic in its breadth.

Mrs. BUSH: We've been reading this week that you've received so many letters from people all over the country who say "Now, I can let my hair go gray, I can gain a pound or two. They're so happy about you."

Mrs. BUSH: Well, I've certainly gotten a lot of letters. I've been reading some aloud to George, at this time where I'm giving him all the information on world affairs in the morning that are really cute, warm, slightly insulting but very funny—

WALTERS: Why are they insulting?

Mrs. BUSH: —and they're all meant with — well, I mean "Stay fat, stay gray, stay wrinkled, we love you." And they are all meant with great warmth and love.

Mr. BUSH: But they're saying something else. They're not talking about whether you're a blimp or not, but I mean—

Mrs. BUSH: Ah-ah.

Mr. BUSH: No, but they're talking about—

WALTERS: He's a big help.

Mr. BUSH: —genuine— no, they're talking about being genuine. They're not talking about whether anybody is — I mean weight or how — whether you look young or old. I mean they're talking about something different. It doesn't matter whether they use that language. What they are saying when they talk about Barbara is that they sense in her a certain genuineness. Kids matter to her. Her family is important to her. And that's what I think they're saying and some of them are funny.

Mrs. BUSH: They are. They're sweet. They are sweet.

Mr. BUSH: Ten years ago, that'd have hurt her feelings and they don't.

Mrs. BUSH: George said to me, "You don't want that dessert, do you? Do you?" And I said, "Well, I have to eat it, George, for my fans."

WALTERS: Was there a point when everybody was giving advice to both of you — you should do this, you should do that — was there a point where you thought, "Well, maybe I should dye my hair and maybe I should—"

Mrs. BUSH: No, No. I have never had that thought, mostly because George never said it. Truthfully, he's always been very supportive.

Mr. BUSH: 'Cause if Barbara's on to something, now, there's a time when you say, "I need the advice, I welcome the advice. God knows I can do things better, but I've got to be myself." And maybe that happened to Barbara. I know it happened to me somewhere along the line. Remember the old story—

WALTERS: Certainly, everybody was giving you advice, you—

Mr. BUSH: We'll give you the extra time, but you remember the story about the guy that came and he said, "I got some advice from a friend and that advice, after analyzing my performance, was 'Be yourself' That proved to be the worst advice I could have given." But in my case, I know, and Barbara hasn't needed it as much, I've needed advice and I've needed help on whatever it is, but in the final analysis, it all gets right back to be what you are, say what you think, do it the best way you can and feel comfortable with what you do, not try to do it the way someone else thinks you have to do it.

WALTERS: But during the campaign, it was said that you did what somebody else thought you had to do. You read all those things.

Mr. BUSH: Oh, I read it all the time, read a lot of other stuff I didn't like, either.

WALTERS: That's not true.

Mr. BUSH: Well, maybe at some points it was, I don't know. The campaign lasted for about ten years, so— you know, I'm sure there are times that I did things that— or read something that sounded out of— didn't do it well and therefore, there was plenty of room for the ridicule factor to go off the charts, but that's history. It doesn't mean anything anymore. I'm going to approach my job as Barbara's approaching hers. Call 'em the way you see 'em, as that umpire said. Do it the best you can.

WALTERS: But you know, so many people's view of you has changed. It's as if Clark Kent became Superman. I mean you're very articulate. They used to say you were—

Mr. BUSH: That'll change, too. Wait 'til the budget goes up.

WALTERS: But do you think you've changed or do you think that maybe the campaign or the election or something gave you a different feeling about yourself? You don't think he has?

Mrs. BUSH: No.

WALTERS: No?

Mrs. BUSH: I really don't.

Mr. BUSH: Well, I do think, in fairness to the critics, that when you are not the number two on a team, but are really heading a team as a president must do, it's different. I hope that I demonstrated, during eight years as vice president, a certain sensitivity to the White House staff, the president's staff and certainly to the president for whom I have lasting respect as he heads out to the West. I mean, I've learned so much from this man. And it would never— it never occurred to me to go out then and say something even though I might

have a nuance of difference on what he had decided. So you're— as a team player, you are— some of your own passions are properly sublimated. So there is that difference, Barbara, that's realistic, I think.

WALTERS: Are you going to have a specific role for Dan Quayle other than the traditional role that the vice president plays, looking at—

Mr. BUSH: It's going to be— if you want to know how that's going to work, look at the Reagan-Bush relationship. There will be some specifics and there will be a great deal—

WALTERS: Well, he gave you specific things. Will you be giving him something specific that you're not—

Mr. BUSH: Oh, sure.

WALTERS: Can you say what it might be?

Mr. BUSH: Well, we've already got one, the Space Council which I didn't do. And what he will— what the vice president will do, that's one to start with. But you shouldn't measure the effectiveness of a vice president by how many specific assignments he gets. That makes it— that was what went wrong in the past. Nelson Rockefeller was given the energy portfolio and he last about three weeks on that portfolio until the White House staff cut his legs off. How do I know? Because Nelson Rockefeller told me so. So you got a— it's—

WALTERS: That could happen again.

Mr. BUSH: Yeah, we don't want it to happen again.

WALTERS: Mrs. Bush, it— I guess it can't be helped, but one keeps reading comparisons between you and Mrs. Reagan. How do you feel about that?

Mrs. BUSH: I hate it because first of all, I lose on that particular comparison, but I am her greatest fan. I think she's done a wonderful job. The White House has never been more beautiful, the flowers prettier, the food better, the— she's done a wonderful job. But she and I are not alike and you can't compare apples and oranges or whatever. And she doesn't take from my enormous respect for her and the job she's done, so I hate that— the comparisons I read.

WALTERS: Mr. Bush, you don't like to dance. Well, you've got all these Inaugural Balls coming up. If you—

Mrs. BUSH: Oh, he's a very good dancer.

WALTERS: Oh, he's a very good dancer.

WALTERS: Is he? Now, everything I've read says that you're not a good dancer, you're—

Mr. BUSH: Yes, well—

Mrs. BUSH: He says he's not a good dancer 'cause I doesn't really love it.

Mr. BUSH: I'm awful.

WALTERS: You're going to have to dance at all these White House—

Mr. BUSH: No, but that's show business. You get up "Sweetie," you know. You get up there for about 15 minutes on the thing and that's it. That's all I'm good for. I've read that somebody else — who was it, some famous guy said he felt the same way about it. Who was it, one of the stars recently that you—

Mrs. BUSH: George came from a family where many of them were very good dancers, also singers. Somehow or other they made him feel he wasn't either a good dancer or a good singer.

WALTERS: And?

Mrs. BUSH: And he isn't. That's not true.

Mr. BUSH: Nobody likes to do anything you do badly. I do like in life to do something that I know I'm really bad at.

WALTERS: We'll never ask you to sing.

Mrs. BUSH: Please.

WALTERS: Okay. Would you describe Barbara Bush for me.

Mrs. BUSH: Careful.

Mr. BUSH: Inside or out?

WALTERS: Any way you want.

Mrs. BUSH: Inside.

Mr. BUSH: A kind and strong and a loving person whose priorities are family, her garden, her faith and—

Mrs. BUSH: In that order?

Mr. BUSH: —who will be totally unspoiled by being First Lady of the land and will emerge, no matter what we do after this, happy.

Mrs. BUSH: I like the picture.

WALTERS: Would you describe George Bush for us?

Mr. BUSH: Well, I'd like to say little.

WALTERS: Everything he just said?

Mrs. BUSH: No, I think, very funny, George is. Very warm, very wise, very caring, very—I would put faith as a very important part of George's life and family and friends. I think those are the—loyal and he's good. But that's what I'd say about George.

WALTERS: Right now, you're both feeling pretty good, aren't you?

Mr. BUSH: Pretty relaxed. I thought it would be scarier. It's not.

WALTERS: Well, I'm a little premature. However, thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Mrs. Bush.

Mrs. BUSH: Thank you.

DOWNES: Well, it's not premature now, Barbara. He is the president. You know, it struck me that the White House probably isn't any too big for the size family they have there. I understand all of them are going to be there at home tonight when they get home.

WALTERS: Well, all of them is the President's 87-year-old mother who hasn't been too well, so she is coming with her nurse and her doctor. There will be all five children and the respective spouses. There will be ten grandchildren and three nannies. They're putting cots up in the White House. That's the first time they've probably had that in years and years. So it's a jumping White House tonight.

DOWNES: I'll be so and the first time they've had real little children since '61 and '62.

WALTERS: Since the Kennedys' children, yes. Well, it's a happy place and it's a happy day.

DOWNES: Great. Thank you, Barbara. And Barbara will be back later in the hour, keeping us up to date on festivities in Washington on this night. Also, two other reports. John Stossel takes a close look at what you probably have already gotten in the mail, publishers' sweepstakes, "You Have Already Won...Maybe."

But next, faces, not statistics. A special school for children of the homeless. Bob Brown reports, "The Almost Forgotten."
[Commercial break]

The Almost Forgotten

DOWNES: One estimate has it that in America today, 250,000 children aren't receiving any education. Now, they're not dropouts, they're children of the homeless. Indeed, a recent survey of the homeless in 27 major cities showed that one in every four was a child, little boys and girls living in shelters and in the back seats of cars, a horrible existence they could be locked into for life if they never get an education. Bob Brown looks at one of this nation's biggest challenges, how to teach kids who have no

homes.

BOB BROWN: [voice-over] Letters on the walls, the smell of chalk and paste. Most people have vivid childhood memories of classrooms that became familiar places to learn as time went on. It's something we take for granted. Now, try to imagine this as a transient stopover, a place where you may spend only a few months before you're taken away again. That's all it can be to many of the children you will meet. They are homeless. The school bus has picked them up at shelters in Tacoma, Washington and they will soon fill that empty classroom as students in a public school program designed and run for homeless kids. The teacher who waits for them, Connie Iverson, knows that any day of the year could be the first day of school for some child whose family has been on the move.

CONNIE IVERSON, Teacher: It's like going into any new school, but the situation is so much different because they are without a home to begin with—they don't even have that security—and then they're coming yet into another insecurity of a brand new school. And it doesn't matter whether they're five or they're twelve or they're thirteen, they're scared when they get off the bus.

BROWN: [voice-over] They may also get off the bus hungry. [interviewing] What's the best thing about school?

JAMIE KENTNER, Student: (?) Breakfast.

BROWN: [voice-over] Jamie Kentner, who is seven, has been coming here for eight weeks with her two younger brothers from a nearby shelter. Inside this YWCA building which provides the space for their classroom, there is the smell of breakfast every morning when they arrive, sometimes cooked by volunteer workers in a kitchen near the classroom, sometimes donated by a local McDonald's. When they know the kids have eaten, then the lessons begin.

The children are divided by age and learning level kindergarten through ninth grade, and Mrs. Iverson helps them through reading and writing and math projects that would be pretty typical even for full-time students.

Mrs. IVERSON: My feeling is I'm going to have them for a very short time and I'm going to give them all I can give them because I don't know when they're going to be in school again. I mean, even at the beginning of this year, we had seven- and nine-year-old who'd never been in school. So you have to give—I want to give them the school year. The staff wants to give them as much as we can give them because we're only going to have them for their short time. And that's the way to make a difference in their lives is to let them know that this is it, this is it and make them hungry for education make them hungry to want to be in school.

BROWN: [voice-over] In a lesson for younger children this includes a read through the popular book, *Where The Wild Things Are*, the differences in this school become apparent more in how the children respond to the discussions with the own concerns.

DEBBIE, Student: The other—last night I had a dream about my mommy and daddy separated. And they were separated. And they was made at me and they went back together and my mommy packed her stuff and she left us at the Salvation Army.

Mrs. IVERSON: The unknown that these children go through as to where their next home is going to be, what the next apartment's going to look like, what the next shelter's going to look like. I think it does have an effect on the kids.

Mrs. IVERSON: [teaching class] Today, we're going to go with "The sky is the limit." Tell me what that means.

**Barbara Walters Interview
with President Reagan
"20/20"**

November 26, 1981

November 26, 1981

BARBARA WALTERS [*in a Jeep with President Reagan on his ranch*]: I don't want to hurt your feelings, but this is the scrougiest Jeep I have ever— the upholstery is coming out. I mean, I know we have an austerity program, but this is ridiculous.

WALTERS [*voice-over*]: Tonight, a personal visit with the president of the United States. A look at his career and a visit with some of his closest friends — Pat O'Brien, Ginger Rogers, George Murphy, Patricia Neal, the President's brother and children.

ANNOUNCER: "Ronald Reagan: At Home on the Ranch." A personal portrait with Barbara Walters.

[*commercial break*]

WALTERS [*voice-over*]: This is Rancho del Cielo, "ranch in the sky." Home, privacy, peace, for Ronald Reagan. What you will see tonight is a personal portrait, the President at his most relaxed, and the California hills he loves the best. Early each morning he rides his favorite horse, Little Man, a 17-year-old thoroughbred he raised from a colt. Mrs. Reagan rides a bay, No Strings. Strong winds and fog often roll in suddenly from the sea, but on good days the mountaintop is crystal-clear. Its acres of rugged land are nestled 2,000 feet above the Pacific Ocean. Coyotes, bear, and deer roam the trails. For the President it has a very special meaning.

Pres. RONALD REAGAN: It casts a spell. There is such a sense of seclusion and— I suppose it's the scriptural line that, "I look to the hills from whence cometh my strength." I understand it a little better when I'm up here.

WALTERS [*voice-over*]: He's at home in nature, knows the names of all the wild flowers and can identify all the trees. Some are over 200 years old, and only when they're dead or fallen will he chop them for firewood. He's 70 years old and last spring had chest surgery, but he whacks away.

Pres. REAGAN: There are things that give you a sense of accomplishment, things you've looked forward to doing: clearing a trail, pruning in a section of woods that has to be done, clearing brush and then you go at it.

WALTERS [*voice-over*]: He has seven horses on the ranch and four dogs, and, oh yes, some snakes. But his friend and helper, Willard Barnett, "Barney," insists they're safe too.

WILLARD BARNETT: He doesn't kill them. He will not— he doesn't kill them. We catch 'em, put 'em in a sack, and take them down to the bottom of the hill.

WALTERS: And he doesn't kill them?

Mr BARNETT: He doesn't kill them. No, he won't kill anything, hardly.

WALTERS [*voice-over*]: He used to break his own horses; now contents himself with saddling, cleaning hooves, and occasionally changing their shoes. Nancy Reagan isn't that comfortable on a horse. The ranch is clearly a concession to her husband. But time alone with him, she feels, is worth it. A practiced jumper, Reagan now restricts himself to trail riding, where sometimes he meets his 2000-pound steer named Duke, who roams about freely.

This pond used to be just a mudhole. Reagan and his friend Barney dug it out and put a plastic lining on the bottom. The canoe is called *True Love*, Reagan's gift to Nancy on their 25th wedding anniversary. He promises to paint it again on the 30th. Another romantic note: the Reagans' initials carved into a sandstone rock.

The house itself is tiny, only five rooms. Reagan bought the ranch six years ago, and when he was governor he would corral friends and come up here with sandwiches in a paper bag and they'd help him rebuild it. Nancy Reagan uses a big old dinner bell to

summon her husband in to meals. This room looks huge, but isn't. Called the family room, it was actually a porch which they enclosed. Like two kids with their first home, they did almost all the inside work themselves. This painting is a particular favorite of the President's. It's by Russell White. The potbellied stove is fake; the house is heated only by two fireplaces.

Pres. REAGAN: The boards for the roofing, the baseboards are old fence boards. And we figured the rustic look was all right. The original house goes back to 1872, and I understand that an Indian worker here made the adobe bricks here from the soil right on the place, and that was how it was built.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Although there are reminders of the Reagans' other life, most everything in the house was either a personal gift or came with the Reagans from an earlier ranch. The toy soldiers were a gift from Mrs. Reagan's parents to Ron Jr. For many years while he was growing up they were in his bedroom. Now that he's married and living in New York, they march happily here in the family room. Here's the President's collection of guns. There are several others displayed on walls around the room. A variety of hats, given by friends or collected during campaigns. These belt buckles also have been presented to Mr. Reagan. The tooled leather saddle was a gift from Mexico's President Lopez Portillo. There's only one bedroom besides the Reagans', cheerful but very small. Two bathrooms but no bathtubs. There is a bar, but the President rarely takes more than a single drink — a glass of wine or a vodka and tonic. Campaign posters of another time tell of the virtues Ronald Reagan still applauds.

But mostly it's an outdoor life. Daughter Patti's dog, Freebo, leading the way. Two more, Victory and Millie, always come along for the ride. And the President takes the wheel.

WALTERS [in Jeep]: I hope you're a good driver; you know what you're doing, I hope.

Pres. REAGAN: Yes, I've been driving this for quite a while. You probably deduced that it wasn't new.

WALTERS: Yes. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but this is the scroungiest Jeep I have ever— the upholstery is coming out. I mean, I know we have an austerity program, but this is ridiculous.

Pres. REAGAN: Well, it's a 1963, and the upholstery— You'd be surprised that we've finally given up. We've had it reupholstered a few times at quite some cost, but, you know, you stop it someplace where you're doing work, and the horses are out there — it's the horses that do this; they can't resist it. They come and chew on it, tear up the upholstery, so we tried to *[unintelligible]*. But it's really— this is for work.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Indeed, the whole ranch is for work. It's truly a labor of love. For Ronald Reagan loves this ranch. He loves the land and, in a larger sense, all that it represents.

Pres. REAGAN: I've always believed that there was some plan that put this continent here to be found by people from every corner of the world who had the courage and the love of freedom enough to uproot themselves, leave family and friends and homeland, to come here and develop a whole new breed of people called American. You look at the beauty of it, and God really did shed his grace on America — as the song says.

[commercial break]

WALTERS [voice-over]: Ronald Reagan traveled a long road to arrive at this ranch in California. He was literally born over a store on this street in Tampico, Illinois, in 1911. He grew up in this house in nearby Dixon. His brother, Neil, or "Moon" as he was called, recalls their childhood.

NEIL REAGAN: It was a very pleasant childhood. We were sort of a Tom Sawyer existence — painting fences and raising rabbits and collecting birds' eggs — never aware of the fact that the folks, I guess, had problems. My dad was a drinker. This was not as serious a thing as, to my mind, as some people would make it.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Actor and friend Pat O'Brien remembers the night he met Jack Reagan.

PAT O'BRIEN: Ron's dad and myself have been known to toast a friend, and we made many friends that evening. So take it from there.

WALTERS [voice-over]: The President's daughter Patti and son Ron have shared the memories of those years with their father.

PATTI REAGAN: I think it's a painful thing for him to remember. I've heard him talk about Christmases where the little money that they had would go to alcohol.

RON REAGAN: Yeah, he tells some very poignant stories about, you know, going out finding his father in the snow in the early morning and pulling him back into the house unconscious.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Mother Nell was beloved by her sons. Deeply religious, she had a strong social conscience. She also involved young Ron, or "Dutch" as he was called, in the frequent dramatic readings she held at home. Neil, as older brothers often do, remembers young Ron's most irritating qualities.

NEIL REAGAN: He'll kill me when I tell you. I will demonstrate. If he got within arms' length of you and there was a conversation going on, the next thing you know he had the lobe of your ear, and he's rubbing your ear. I would like to have a nickel for every time I batted his hand away from my ear. And I'm sure there were many, many others.

WALTERS [voice-over]: From the time he was a little boy until he went to Eureka College, football was Ronald Reagan's greatest love. He used this knowledge to announce a whole game from memory when he auditioned as a sportscaster for an Iowa radio station. Four years later, in 1937, Warner Brothers cast him as an announcer in his first film, *Love is on the Air*.

RONALD REAGAN [film clip]: Eight-thirty. Stop talking, children, and finish your Curly Krispies. Time you were leaving for school. And I hope you break your sweet collective necks.

WALTERS [voice-over]: *Brother Rat and a Baby* with Jane Wyman was his 18th film in three years. He worked constantly but with only moderate success.

JANE WYMAN [film clip]: Well, you might just as well break down and surrender because I'm gonna get you.

RONALD REAGAN: You are?

Ms. WYMAN: Um hum. You're cooked. I made up my mind.

WALTERS [voice-over]: And cooked he was. He and Jane Wyman were married in early 1940. *Knute Rockne, All American*, came out that same year. His friend, Pat O'Brien, helped him win the role that changed his career — the Gipper, George Gipp.

RONALD REAGAN [film clip]: Rock, someday when the team's up against it, breaks are beating the boys, ask 'em to go in there with all they've got, win just one for the Gipper. I don't know where I'll be then, but I'll know about it. I'll be happy.

WALTERS [voice-over]: This year, President Reagan and Pat O'Brien commemorated the 50th anniversary of the death of Knute Rockne at Notre Dame.

Mr. O'BRIEN: We were embracing each other, and he whispered in my ear — and he got his arms around me, and they're still applauding the both of us, and he whispers in my ear, "I guess they liked the picture."

WALTERS [voice-over]: *King's Row*, with Ann Sheridan, is considered the finest film of Reagan's career. He played a man whose legs were amputated.

RONALD REAGAN [film clip]: Randi. Where's the rest of me? Randi.

WALTERS [voice-over]: By the end of the war, Reagan, a captain, was showing a growing interest in politics, particularly with the Communist infiltration of Hollywood. His friend at

that time, actor, later senator, George Murphy.

GEORGE MURPHY: I— with regard to his learning about communism, I like to think that maybe I was an influence in that area, because I had learned a good deal about it.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Murphy says that he had inside information from his friend, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, which he passed on to Ronald Reagan. In 1947, as president of the Screen Actors Guild, he testified as a friendly witness in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee investigating communism in Hollywood. Jane Wyman did not share her husband's political interests. Actress Patricia Neal knew Reagan at this time.

PATRICIA NEAL: The first time I met Ronald Reagan was New Year's Eve. His wife had just announced that she was going to divorce him. And then it was just about five minutes to midnight, and he went outside and he cried and cried and cried because he did not want to divorce Jane Wyman. She just won the Academy Award, and I think she thought that she was going to go very high and Ronnie wouldn't.

WALTERS [voice-over]: His friend and co-star Ginger Rogers feels that maybe Jane Wyman couldn't take the steady diet of political talk.

GINGER ROGERS: We'd sit there at lunch and Ronnie would talk — guess what? — he'd talk politics. He talked politics during the whole hour of every lunchtime.

WALTERS [voice-over]: If his political career was high, his acting career was faltering. He hit a low point when his co-star was a chimp named Bonzo. But his personal life was going better. He found a co-star in Nancy Davis who was to change his entire life.

RONALD REAGAN [film clip]: How do you know so much about the moon?

NANCY DAVIS: I know a lot about it. Spend all my time looking at it when you're away. That's how it still is with me, Case. *[they kiss]*

WALTERS [voice-over]: They were married in 1952. They had a daughter and a son; he also had two children with Jane Wyman. What kind of a father was he? Was he tough?

PATTI REAGAN: He's kind of a soft touch. He tried. He tried, but he was not a real good disciplinarian.

RON REAGAN: Well, I think he really makes a better friend than a father. I don't think he was really too comfortable in an authoritarian sort of position.

WALTERS: Was he the kind of parent who helped you with your homework, or whom you came to with problems?

PATTI REAGAN: Oh, yes. If you stayed there long enough he'd do your homework for you.

RON REAGAN: He would always help me put my toys together, you know, after I'd pulled them out of the box and stuff. And he'd spend hours at Christmas, you know, reading the directions of awful complicated things, you know, where the A goes into Z. And then of course I'd go off and I'd sit in the box and play in the box for a long time and he'd be left with a train set or something, and he'd be playing with it.

WALTERS: I think I know what you mean. I think I know what you mean. She has said of her father and Nancy Reagan, "They don't need anybody but themselves."

MAUREEN REAGAN: They don't. I think it's wonderful. And they are totally self-contained. That doesn't mean that they don't think of us as a part of their family, but they don't need anybody else but them.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Patricia Neal feels that Nancy Reagan was much more than just a wife and mother.

Ms. NEAL: When I knew him he was very liberal. And I think he was liberal until he met his present wife, Nancy Reagan.

WALTERS [voice-over]: Whatever the reasons, Reagan was at first reluctant when friends talked him into running for governor of California. But he served two terms, and in 1976, he

and to win the Republican nomination for president and lord.

MAUREEN REAGAN: I think it was one of the most difficult times of his life. And I think because he doesn't show those things, and because he keeps his pain to himself, that people think that he doesn't have any. I think they're damn lucky that he does keep it to himself, because what we don't need is somebody bleeding all over the rest of us.

WALTERS (voice-over): In 1980, he tried again. That was ten months ago. Ten months that included an assassination attempt that came close to the President fool has changed him profoundly.

PATTI REAGAN: There is something that I see in his eyes now that I never saw before that is beautiful and frightening at the same time. The reason I say it's beautiful: I think that that gives somebody a wisdom that those of us who haven't confronted that can't grasp. And it's frightening for me because when I see it then I have to confront his mortality. And I don't want to do that.

BONNIE BEARABLE: It's a strangely American nightmare. I guess, to sit in front of the TV, you know, and the vigil — you know, run to the TV and watch over and over again. But when it's your father, I think it's a very personal nightmare.

WALTERS (voice-over): Mike Deaver, the President's closest political aide and confidante for the past 15 years:

MICHAEL DEEVER: About 10 days after he came home from the hospital, we were up on the second floor of the residence, and four or five of the staff were in, and a couple of Cabinet members, and we were debating an issue. And several of the people were telling him that he shouldn't follow his own instincts, that that was wrong, that he should follow the advice of the bureaucracy here. He was really kind of weighing that, and I said, "You know, Mr. President, you ought to do what you want to do. You ought to do what you feel. You're the president." And later that day we went back into the study and he — there was just the two of us there, and he said, "You know, thank you." He said, "Ever since the shooting I've had the feeling I ought to follow my instincts." And I see it now in decisions, there is a firmness that — a more of a firmness than there was before.

WALTERS: But some think the President isn't firm enough. Others think he is just plain stubborn. In the past two weeks, Ronald Reagan has faced the strongest criticism since assuming the presidency. We'll be back with him to talk about his political and personal choices.

[commercial break]

WALTERS: We thought for a moment that we'd never get to this interview on the ranch. Even as I call you "Mr. President" I wonder, was there a moment or two of this past week when you thought you were unemployed?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes. I still don't whether yesterday I was or not.

WALTERS: You're not sure they think you're "essential"?

Pres. REAGAN: No one had told me whether I was or not. But I sat there in the office anyway, just in case somebody tried to take it over.

WALTERS: Mr. President, what's going to happen? Do you think that this budget crisis will be resolved by December 15th, or if not are we all going to just hang in there for the countdown again?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, it should be. I think it is disgraceful that we have gone through the entire 1981 year without a budget.

WALTERS: But you do think that it will be resolved before December 15th.

Pres. REAGAN: I'm going to try very hard. There will be two choices. Either the budget, or send down a continuing resolution that is within the figures of the budget that we have proposed.

WALTERS: This is your first veto and your first great clash with Congress, and I wonder if it

left a bad taste in your mouth. Tip O'Neill, for example, said that he never knew a President who knew less about the budget than you did, and he'd never met one in his lifetime that knew less about the budget. And he was born in 1912.

Pres. REAGAN: Uh-huh. He's a young man. I have to say this back to Tip. I had eight years as governor in which every year we had a balanced budget, and the governor was in charge of the budget in California. Can Tip tell me that he has ever participated in government in Washington in which they had a balanced budget? How did we get the trillion-dollar deficit?

WALTERS: Maybe we'll have some answers from him next week. You have been in office now for 10 months and it's getting around the time when the various columnists start to grade you. Some of them already have. "A" to "F" for failure. I wonder if you would grade yourself.

Pres. REAGAN: Well, I wouldn't want to put a letter grade on it, 'cause most of my high school and college career, a "C" average was eligibility for sports and I figured that that was the standard to shoot at to remain eligible. But I want a little better than that in this job. But I have to say we have gotten the Congress to pass the biggest reduction in spending that has even been attempted, we have asked for the biggest single reduction of tax rates that has ever been attempted and have secured that. I feel that we have been making good progress.

WALTERS: So you think you're doing much better than a "C"?

Pres. REAGAN: Uh, yes.

WALTERS: "B-plus"?

Pres. REAGAN: No, I wouldn't know how to— see, I never knew anything above "C"s.

WALTERS: You never got above a "C". It's going to be a new— if you can make it this time, it's going to be a new treat for you, huh?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Do you remember one time in your life that, when you look back, was the most difficult?

Pres. REAGAN: We were poor. We had problems when my brother and I were boys growing up that seemed insurmountable to young boys at the time.

WALTERS: You mean your father?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Your children talked with us about that, Mr. President. They talked about your father being an alcoholic and they said that they thought it was very painful for you.

Pres. REAGAN: Oh yes, it was. It was in an era of prohibition and, as I say, a small town. Really he was a fine man, and it was a typical tragedy of that disease. The one thing I must say about my mother was that she never let my brother and I for one minute ever— she constantly would say to us, "You must remember this is a sickness. This is not something that you should blame your father for. This is something that he can't help." But it was the type of thing in which there would be months and months of everything just fine. It seemed as if it was good times that he couldn't take. He could buckle down when things were tough and the job had been lost and he had to do something. But it was when everything was right that there it'd go, and it would eight or 10 days of real misery.

WALTERS: You're more like your mother, people say. Your brother says that. He says, "Ron's like my mother." Do you think that's so?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, I don't know. She left me with an enduring faith, I know that. She was probably one of the kindest people I have ever known, and even with all our poverty and her problems there — and maybe this was also something that was good for us — we were always conscious of people who were worse off than we were because my mother was always finding people that needed help.

WALTERS: Mr. President, I don't know whether you'll remember this, but your brother Moon, talking about you as little boy, said that one of your habits that used to drive him crazy was that you would come up to him and other people and start playing with their earlobes. Do you remember this?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Well, what were you doing?

Pres. REAGAN: I'd sit in school, I don't know why, and if there wasn't anyone close enough, I'd sit and pull my own. That was—

WALTERS: You do it now. You pull your own now?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: He said he used to swat you all the time—

Pres. REAGAN: Yes. I would sit there beside him and listen to the radio or something, hanging onto his ear!

WALTERS: You've stopped, I hope.

Pres. REAGAN: Oh yes, oh yes.

WALTERS: You don't do that with heads of state?

Pres. REAGAN: No. No.

WALTERS: Mr. President, one of your earliest jobs was as a sports announcer in Davenport, Iowa, and you used to broadcast baseball games from the teletype. How did you do that?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, we had an operator, telegraph operator with a typewriter, sitting on the other side of this window in this little studio, and a slit under the window, and he had the headphones on getting that dot and dash Morse code from the Wrigley Field in Chicago, and as— because in those days you didn't have a team announcer, there were at least seven stations broadcasting the same game, and you had to really keep up with the play. Most of them were doing it live. We were too far away to afford to go there live. So, as I saw him start to type, why I would start the pitcher like — dating myself — Dizzy Dean is out on the mound with the Cardinals and Billy Jurgens is up at the plate, here comes the pitch. And by that time he'd hand me the slip, and it would say S-1-C. Well, you can't sell many boxes of breakfast food yelling S-1-C, so I'd say "And it's a call strike breaking over the outside corner just about above the knees, and the man that likes one a little more shoulder high," — 'cause I'd study that too, and what did the ballplayers like, so that I wouldn't be totally inventing, I would think if he let a call strike go by, it'd be a ball that he didn't particularly care for. And if next play is coming along so you'd have him— and if he was pausing and didn't type, why you'd say, "Well, Dean steps back off the mound, rubs his hand on the rosin bag, back up, shakes off the sign, gets another sign from the catcher. All right, and here comes the pitch," and he'd hand it to you and it'd say, "Out, 4 to 3." Well, three is first base and four is second base, so you'd say, "And it's a hard-hit ground ball, down over second base. So-and-so going over after the ball, picks it up, whips it over to first base, just in time for the out, and—" *[laughs]*

WALTERS: I heard one time the tickertape, the teletype got stuck.

Pres. REAGAN: Yes, in the 9th inning of a game — and I've already used the name names, Dean on the mound and Jurgens at the plate for the Cubs, tied up nothing and nothing. And I saw Curly start to type so I started the ball on the way to plate and he was shaking his head, no, and I didn't know what he meant. When I got it, it said the wire's gone dead, and I had a ball on the way to the plate. Well, there's one thing that doesn't get in the scorebook, so I had him, Jurgens, foul it off. And then I look, and Curly just shrugged his shoulders and I thought, well, if I say, "We'll now play some music until we get the wire back," I won't have any audience when it comes back. So I decided to have Jurgens foul another one. And I think I set a world's record, if there is such a thing, for consecutive foul balls. I had him miss a home run by a foot: hit one back of third base and describe the two kids that got in a fight

over the ball. I kept on until finally I just— I was in a desperate situation. I knew now that if I'd admitted the wire had gone dead they'd know I hadn't been telling the truth on all of this. And finally Curly started typing and when the slip came through, I could hardly talk for laughing. It said Jurgens popped out on the first ball pitched. But for days people would stop me on the street and say, "Has there ever been anyone ever stayed at the plate and hit that many consecutive fouls?"

WALTERS: And you said, "No-o-o-o"?

Pres. REAGAN: *[laughs]*

WALTERS: Mr. President, Thanksgiving is a time for families, and in some cases parents and older children are reunited on Thanksgiving. Looking back, what kind of a father do you think you were?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, I can say a loving father. I don't really know, I don't— I wouldn't know how to evaluate myself that way. I tried very hard, and worked at spending time with the family. I'd seen too many people who just— too many men who made the excuse of saying, "Well, they've got to understand: this is my job and therefore I can't— and even then, when Ron was still at home and the youngest and I became governor, I— that's where all of that talk started about 9 to 5. So, sure, I'd try to go home at 5 o'clock, but I went home with a briefcase full of work. I figured at least I'd be there in his presence, even though I was still working.

WALTERS: When people talk about you and your relationship with Mrs. Reagan— it obviously is such a good one. But your daughter Maureen told us, she said, "They don't need anyone but themselves."

Pres. REAGAN: Well, I hope the children don't feel that way, but I guess maybe what she was trying to say is that, well, I'm double lucky. I'm very lucky to have her, and I'm lucky in that I know how lucky I am, and appreciate it. And we do have what— Thomas Jefferson once said that "a contentment" — I can't remember his exact words — "by the fireside was the first boon of heaven," and I think I have that boon.

WALTERS: Mr. President, if you had to describe yourself, what adjectives would you use?

Pres. REAGAN: Oh, a terrible fight goes on inside of you between vanity and modesty.

WALTERS: Well, what comes out fast? Wonderful, kind, generous, sweet, loving—

Pres. REAGAN: No. Soft touch, and I really am. Sometimes I'm stubborn, I hope not unnecessarily so, but— I couldn't answer that question: I wouldn't know how to do it.

WALTERS: If you had been president at the time, would you have pardoned Richard Nixon?

Pres. REAGAN: I believe so, knowing what Gerald Ford knew at that time. I approved of his doing it. Yes, because I think that it was the main step that had to be taken to bringing this country together again, and ending the bitterness that was dividing us.

WALTERS: Again and again, Mr. President, we hear how trusting you are, how you see the best in people. But I wonder, would the events that have happened in the last few weeks, with the kinds of things that have happened to different members of your staff— do you feel a little betrayed? Do you think, "How dare they rain on my parade"?

Pres. REAGAN: No, I think I learned this as governor. You know that when you put an administration together of human beings, things aren't going to be perfect. I also, in the particular instance of the last few weeks, think that one of the things we're suffering from today is an aftermath of Watergate in which — and forgive me, but too much of the media tends to take accusation for conviction.

WALTERS: But so do your own people. I mean, it was Alexander Haig who said, "There's guerrilla warfare." It wasn't the press.

Pres. REAGAN: That's right. And— but I think that it all, it piles up. One of the things I wish that more of them would learn is that when someone comes and says, "So-and-so said this about you, and it's in the press or on the air or something, and what is your reply to

that?" the only real reply you should give is, "When I find out exactly what so-and-so said, I will respond." Because sometimes so-and-so has been misquoted. And then if you say something then the misquoted person says something back, and you have the feud going on.

WALTERS: You've told some of your staff to "cool it" in this manner?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: People have wondered, and I must ask you: why didn't you fire David Stockman after what happened?

Pres. REAGAN: Because I think David Stockman was not the sinner. He was sinned against.

WALTERS: Really?

Pres. REAGAN: I think it was perfectly natural that they'd have these meetings and get together with an old friend. And there'd be days when he'd come down and be discouraged, and knowing the safety of "not for attribution" or anything, say, talking about special interest groups on the Hill, say, "The greed of them." Trying to do this—the old thing of everyone wants savings but they—one that Senator Long said, "Don't cut him or— don't cut you and don't cut me, cut that fellow behind the tree." So he'd storm about that or something and then a quote taken without the surrounding conversation and leading to a misinterpretation then by the author. It is not the quote, it is the interpretation that the author then puts on the quote. Dave Stockman believes in our program, and I still trust him—

WALTERS: You're sure?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes, yes. And in these last few days up on the Hill the men on the Hill in the Senate and the House were accepting his figures as to what was going on.

WALTERS: Mr. President, what about Richard Allen? What are you going to do about him?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, wait for the investigation. So far, all that we hear is that the Japanese who sent the envelope in the first place have corroborated everything that's been said. But I can't comment further because an investigation is going on, and we'll wait for the end of it.

WALTERS: Mr. President, a week or so ago you rode in the "doomsday plane" which would be the plane that you, any other president would ride in should there be a nuclear attack. And I've heard that if there is an attack you as president would have something like 17 minutes to make up your mind about what you do, whether you press that button and fire back or what. I wondered whether this is something you have nightmares about, whether you worry terribly about this. I mean, I think, my Lord, what does it mean when you know that it's in your hands?

Pres. REAGAN: It is awesome. I don't have nightmares about it. You just have a determination that you're going to try with everything you can to see that we do not arrive at that situation. Seventeen minutes is generous. If they start with those nuclear missiles from the submarines off our coast — and right now there are more submarines, Russian nuclear submarines, off our coast than there have been in years — then you only have a very few minutes.

WALTERS: But it's your responsibility.

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Everything that's happened to you in your life that gives you whatever judgment you would have to make that decision. Doesn't that sometimes frighten the daylights out of you?

Pres. REAGAN: I can't say fear. There's a dread that we'd ever reach that point. But remember, what you're talking about is the other side would have already pushed the button. Those missiles would be on their way. Now—

WALTERS: That would be only way you'd do it?

Pres. REAGAN: You have to assume that those missiles are aimed at our own ability to fight back. And you acquire all the knowledge you can, all the options that are available, but particularly all of the things that you can do now, such as the proposal that I have made, and I made very sincerely, about Europe.

WALTERS: Mr. President, Chairman Brezhnev has said "no" to your proposal for nuclear disarmament in Europe. What do you think is going to happen now?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, if he means what he said, he also said, however, a reduction in the number. You start bargaining from there. We'll negotiate in good faith, but we'll do everything we can to get it to zero.

WALTERS: Does this make you feel that there's — what? — a sign of hope that things are going to be better, that we're going to get away from this "we build up, so they get scared; they build up so we get scared"?

Pres. REAGAN: I think one of the things going for us in these negotiations is that this is the first time that we have sat at the table opposite them in which they've got some interest in coming together in a negotiation because we're not busily disarming ourselves. There's a cartoon that tells it all. It was in a paper recently, and that was Brezhnev saying to a Russian general, "I liked the arms race better when we were the only ones in it."

WALTERS: What's been your toughest decision since becoming the president?

Pres. REAGAN: Oh my. Well, it could have been— could be the veto the other night with the knowledge that if they wanted to hang tough also in that game of chicken that was going on that much of government would have to grind to a halt.

WALTERS: What's been your biggest disappointment?

Pres. REAGAN: I think it has been the inability to control the leaks that just seem to constantly be coming no matter what efforts you make. Everyone who's been here longer says, "Well, that's Washington." I thought I'd gotten used to something of that kind in Sacramento, but I've never known any place like Washington that— that's what made me in frustration the other day say that I think the District of Columbia's one giant ear. No matter where you are or how few people, you almost read it before you get home.

WALTERS: Just too much gossip — talk, talk, talk?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Is there a problem with balancing the kind of life that the president or a head of state feels he should have at the White House in these times of austerity and tight money?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, you know, Herbert Hoover was so impressed with the White House that even when he dined alone he dressed for dinner. He felt that the White House required it. Well, we don't do that. As a matter of fact, I'm in evening clothes most of the times when there's just the two of us for dinner: pajamas and a robe.

WALTERS: I wish we could come photograph that. You love this ranch.

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Any thought of retiring here, perhaps in three years? Notice how subtle that was put?

Pres. REAGAN: Yes, I saw that. Oh, three, four, five, eight.

WALTERS: You're as subtle as I am.

Pres. REAGAN: No, I don't know that we could be totally happy here all the time. We got a circle of friends and all. I think that— I've always thought of it as, to come to it is wonderful. I think we would rather live where we've lived in Los Angeles.

WALTERS: Or the White House?

Pres. REAGAN: What?

WALTERS: Or the White House?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, for a while there I think we'll be in that public housing.

WALTERS: What do you think is the greatest threat to America?

Pres. REAGAN: The greatest threat to America? I still don't believe it is external, assault from without. I believe that the very thing that we've — with our so-called economic program — have been trying to correct is the greatest threat. That this independent people, this people who from the ranks of the citizenry could organize and help in a great national earthquake in another country and could bring help to another country when there was famine, these people who have organized voluntarily to support not only the humanities but the arts, have, out of the trauma of the great depression, let government encroach more and more, and I think the instinct and the desire is still there among the people to have more control of their own lives and destinies, to do these things that we once did voluntarily. And this is what I would like to see happen. But I think as Lincoln once said, that if this country were ever destroyed it wouldn't be murder, it would be suicide, and I just— I think the people are ready to respond to a call, and it doesn't have to be war.

WALTERS: Mr. President, when we were talking about you, your close aide Mike Deaver said that he sits down with you in the morning, he and Jim Baker and Ed Meese, and they lay out all the different problems and so on, and then you listen to this and you say, "Yes, but on the other hand, there are some very good things in the world." So, Mr. President, on this Thanksgiving evening, will you tell us what are some of the very good things in the world?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, there are great trouble spots, there's no question. And there is a great conflict going on in the world for the souls and minds of men. But I have to be optimistic because all of us came from those same people. Every blood strain in the world is part of America. And I believe in people. And I just believe that we can resolve these problems. So I guess this is what we talk about, and it is true. It's just a difference of— and they are not pessimists, I don't mean that. Their job is to come in and tell me that the cup is half empty, and I just figure that it helps if I tell them it's half full.

ANNOUNCER: "Ronald Reagan: At Home on the Ranch" will continue in a moment.

[commercial break]

WALTERS *[voice-over]:* Mrs. Reagan and the President spent Thanksgiving with family. His brother Moon and sister-in-law Bess and daughters Maureen and Patti. For both the President and Mrs. Reagan, it's been an extraordinary year. And Thanksgiving is the time to look back.

[with President and Mrs. Reagan] Mr. President, at this Thanksgiving time we all look back at what we have to be thankful for, and I can't help but be reminded as I talk to you of the assassination attempt against your life eight months ago. Is there any residue of that event in your mind?

Pres. REAGAN: Well, there isn't any physically. I'm completely cured and well, but—

WALTERS: No nightmares?

Pres. REAGAN: No. I think if there's any concern, the real concern that I have is the knowledge now that I could be— I could be a threat to others, because of what happened to others when this started. And it does give me some concern now and then of— the situation of saying yes, but this would endanger other people if I went there or did this.

WALTERS: James Brady, of course, came home for this Thanksgiving. That must make you feel very good.

Pres. REAGAN: It sure did, yes.

WALTERS: At this Thanksgiving time, Mrs. Reagan, what are your thoughts? What are you giving thanks for?

NANCY REAGAN: I think mainly my family, my husband, my children, and obviously that my husband's still around.

WALTERS: Do you think you've changed in this last year?

Mrs. REAGAN: Yes. Yes.

WALTERS: How?

Mrs. REAGAN: Well, I think after March 30th, that made a change, and your— that leaves a more of a lasting effect than I thought it would. And your priorities change. Your values change. What's important to you before isn't as important now.

WALTERS: As we sit here now, on Thanksgiving eve, and I wonder Mr. President, what is your Thanksgiving message to the nation? These are trying times.

Pres. REAGAN: Well, they are trying times, and worldwide. But I suppose if I could just say if only all of us would remember how much we have to be thankful for in this blessed land, and resolve that there isn't anything confronting us that we can't handle, we haven't handled things that bad before, then we'll continue to have a great deal to be thankful for.

WALTERS: I want to thank you for letting us invade your privacy and bring our cameras here and share this Thanksgiving week with you.

Pres. REAGAN: Well, Barbara—

Mrs. REAGAN: Happy Thanksgiving.

Pres. REAGAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Happy Thanksgiving.

**20/20
INTERVIEW**

"THE REAL GEORGE BUSH"

**BARBARA WALTERS
OCTOBER 9, 1987**

STOSSEL [voice-over]: Some say the government should do something.

Mr. McGEADY: Congress should be ashamed of themselves on this one, and so should the FCC, because this whole thing is ridiculous. All we have to do is ban it, and that would be constitutional.

STOSSEL [voice-over]: That's debatable. Existing law already requires promoters to screen out calls from kids. But in four years, only one federal prosecution in Utah has been effective.

[on-camera] Now, some congressmen want tougher laws. Several are proposing laws like the Telephone Decency Act that would outlaw phone sex altogether. But there's a free speech question here, because what some people consider obscene, other people might call just intimate conversation. Who will decide?

Ms. LEONARD: I'm not crazy about magazines like *Soldier of Fortune*, for example, within whose pages you can order a veritable arsenal. You can get a handgun or a howitzer.

STOSSEL: Maybe for the good of the country, we should ban that and ban your phone—

Ms. LEONARD: Who's "we"? Are you going to take the responsibility? Sexuality is a form of expression, whether it be acceptable or abhorrent in certain circles is not the point. The point is that it is an expression of speech.

Mr. SOBIN: We have a multimillion-dollar budget just for lobbying efforts. I mean, we can—we meet these congresspeople. We can talk to them, and we have access. We contribute to campaigns. We're not a small business.

STOSSEL [voice-over]: But what if Dial-A-Porn is outlawed, what then?

Mr. SOBIN: Then, if there are no more sex lines, we will do a horoscope line or a sports line that will feature people moaning and groaning. We will not be stopped.

STOSSEL [voice-over]: That remains to be seen. But for now, in most places, phone sex is still available. So maybe it's something you parents should talk to the kids about. With luck, their common sense will win out.

Ms. WILLIAMS: I don't see what people get out of it. I thought it was pretty stupid. You just call up, you hear this lady, so what?

DOWNES: What a wonderful attitude that is, you know, although my feeling is that children should be kept from that. But if adults want to pay for that, I can't imagine—

STOSSEL: There sure seem to be a lot of adults who want to call. People, I guess, want this.

DOWNES: A lot of lonely people out there.

STOSSEL: But you can do things to protect the kids. These devices, for example — you can buy them. This one replaces the dialer on your telephone and screens out 976 calls. This one just attaches to the phone line, does the same thing. But they cost \$100.

DOWNES: And a child old enough to be doing that and know what he's doing can just pull that out and connect the other one.

STOSSEL: Might disconnect— it would be easier if you could just police your kids, or if the phone company made it possible.

DOWNES: Yeah. Thank you, John. Well, later, meet some of the happiest people in America, retirees who've fallen in love with life on the road. Bob Brown reports, "The Best Is Yet To Come." But next, no image-makers, no prepared speeches. It's Barbara, looking for "The Real George Bush." Stay with us.

[commercial break]

The Real George Bush

DOWNES: It seems that almost every day, we're learning some-

thing new about one of the candidates for President, and we find ourselves saying, "Who is the real man or woman?" Well, on Monday, Vice president George Bush will formally announce that he is running for president, and although he's been vice president for nearly seven years and in the public eye all of that time, many people feel they don't know him, and his critics say he has an image problem. Barbara, you went to Washington recently to find out who is the real George Bush.

WALTERS: We went down there just the other day and talk with him at the vice president's mansion.

DOWNES: And you saw him on Monday. He had just gotten back from an overseas trip.

WALTERS: Yeah, he had just come back from 10 days in western Europe and Poland, where all had gone quite well, and then made a gaffe, which we all probably heard about, when he joked that some expert Soviet mechanics might be sent to Detroit. The labor leaders there hit the roof. Well, Bush apologized and hoped as they say, that the memory won't linger on. But in spite of that, Hugh, when we saw him, he was in fine spirits, confident and hopeful about that next step up from vice president.

[voice-over] The job is more form than substance, more emotion than action. He's the "what if" man, the man in waiting. The only constitutional mandate is to preside over the Senate and cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.

Vice Pres. GEORGE BUSH: The Senate being equally divided, the vice president votes aye.

WALTERS [voice-over]: George Bush has stayed loyally in the background, in the public eye mostly on ceremonial occasions representing the president, for example, at the funerals of foreign dignitaries. His motto, he once joked was, "You die, we fly." George Herbert Walker Bush, raised a prep school Connecticut Yankee, made his fortune as a Texas wildcatter. In World War I he was the Navy's youngest pilot. Rescued by a submarine when his plane was shot down in the Pacific, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Twenty years ago, he was elected to the House of Representatives, beginning a career in public service that has seen him serve as an ambassador in two administrations and director of the Central Intelligence Agency. We talked at his official residence in northwest Washington, where he and Barbara, his wife of 42 years, are preparing for the official start of his campaign next week.

BARBARA BUSH, Wife: I'm going to be on the road a lot. I hope with him, but I think a lot by myself.

WALTERS [voice-over]: George Bush is 63. He has 10 grand children, and he says maturity is one of his strengths for this campaign.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I'm more composed than I used to be. I vowed not to be—the word they always used about me was "testy." Now, you maybe make me testy, but I don't think so. I think I can handle it better.

WALTERS: I'm going to try.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, I expect you will, I expect you will.

WALTERS: I am now going to ask you all the questions that the critics keep asking, okay?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Why do you have to do that, Barbara?

WALTERS: Well, because, you know, it's what you have to do. I will start off, though, on a high note. You have had more experience than any other person running — a congressman, you were an ambassador, ambassador to China, head of the CIA, vice president, an outstanding combat record. And yet, you've got this so-called image problem.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I don't think I do, but go ahead.

WALTERS: Let me quote from President Richard Nixon, former President Richard Nixon, and he's usually considered a very accurate forecaster of the political scene. He said recently he wouldn't "bet the ranch" on your nomination. He said you are hampered by an image problem and appear as a weak individual. And this is a man from your own party who wants you to win. Now, you've heard people say this, "He's such a nice guy, he's so experienced, but gee, he's not going to be able to make it." What do you say?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I say that some of that stems from the way in which I have conducted myself as vice president. I made a determination early on, I'm going to stand with this President. The best way for me to assert my independence is to jump away from the President, criticize him — "Hey, Bush has a lot of ideas of his own." I don't believe that. I feel comfortable doing my job the way I've done it, but I think maybe that is why some critics are out there suggesting this.

WALTERS: Does it bother you? I mean do you think when you read it that it's very unfair?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Not from Mr. Nixon, but I've read some, you know—

WALTERS: I mean, there have been worse things, you know.

Vice Pres. BUSH: That's right.

WALTERS: Shall we say that terrible word?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, you can say any word you want.

WALTERS: Well, you know, this wimp factor.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: How do you feel when you hear that?

Vice Pres. BUSH: It doesn't bother me, because I know it's not true. The people in my squadron when I was fighting in combat as a kid didn't think it was true. The people that worked side by side me in a business that I started from scratch with a couple of other guys didn't think it was true. I've been tested in life. People that know me know that my record is full of success, leadership, making tough decisions, doing things, accomplishing things, so why worry if some one or two critics try to come up with something else?

WALTERS: It's bigger than one or two critics.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I don't think so.

WALTERS: How do you show—

Vice Pres. BUSH: You've been around that elite New York set too much there.

WALTERS: Is that what you think it is?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, that's where I hear it a little more. It's kind of a— get out West, go down south.

WALTERS: Had you been president during the last seven years, which decisions that Ronald Reagan made would you do differently?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, now, Barbara—

WALTERS: I'm not going to get an answer. I know as I ask the question I'm not going to get an answer.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, you asked a question that I've avoided for six and a half years, so, you know, why go back and— you've got plenty of people out there in the press and plenty into politics criticizing the President, some in our own party. Not me. And for me to go back and fine-tune places I might have had differences, I'm simply not going to do that.

WALTERS: So, but let me ask about you.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: You have now been in this administration for seven years. What views on public policy are different from those of the

George Bush who ran in 1980 against Ronald Reagan? In short, what have you learned, as vice president?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I've learned a lot, and a lot of it from the President. Stay with a few principles. I believe passionately holding taxes down. I believe that the foremost responsibility the President is the national security. And it's a heightening these views, rather than some radical difference in these views.

WALTERS: So it's pretty much following Ronald Reagan's basic program.

Vice Pres. BUSH: It is. Why change something that's working? We're in the longest recovery since the middle of the 19th century, the longest. But some people are still hurting, and you've got to do something about them, help lift them up. And yes, I'm not going to depart for something that seems to be working in this country.

WALTERS: Let's talk about the Iran-contra hearings a bit, although I'm sure you've had it up to here.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I've had it up to where? Here.

WALTERS: Well, let's do it once more, then we'll finish. You were not implicated as the testimony came out, but what some people say is worse is that you sat in on important meetings and seemed to say nothing.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Most of the time the way I operate and have since I've been in this job, and every Cabinet member will tell you, I don't weigh in. I give my advice and my opinions to the President, and I don't discuss what I talk to the President about.

WALTERS: That's interesting. Okay, that's your style. Did you then walk in to the President and say, "I'm concerned about arms sales to Iran?"

Vice Pres. BUSH: I have publicly stated that I told the President I had some reservations.

WALTERS: Did you weigh in heavily?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, I weighed in in the Bush style, which is, he knows where I'm coming from.

WALTERS: I'd like to ask you some questions just about you. Tell me what was the best time in your life, and tell me what was the worst.

Vice Pres. BUSH: The best time in my life? The best time when all our family is together, whether it was this summer for a day. We had our Christmas card picture taken, all of them running like a bunch of goldfish in a water pond, jumping around and coming into the bedroom early in the morning. That's the happiest thing for me.

WALTERS: What was the worst time?

Vice Pres. BUSH: We lost a child, and I don't want to dwell on that, but had a four-year-old wrenched away from us by leukemia and that was the worst.

WALTERS: What are you least proud of?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Least proud of? Well, we're shifting gears now from the kind of philosophical plane to—

WALTERS: Yeah, well you can give any kind of answer you want.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, I hurt a guy's feelings once. I said something ugly. I'll spare you the details. A little guy that was in my class at school, and I made some epithet that hurt him very much.

WALTERS: And you still remember that? How many years ago?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, I was 18. I'm 63.

WALTERS: And it still bothers you?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: What's your greatest weakness?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Wait, listen—

WALTERS: Come on, I mean, we want to get to know you a little bit.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I mean, are you hard of hearing? Weakness.

WALTERS: Weakness. Oh, you must be able to think of one weakness.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Well, I can probably think of a lot of alleged weaknesses, but having— give me a couple of minutes to think that one out. I'm an emotional person. I frankly think Pat Schroeder got a bum rap.

WALTERS: For crying, you mean?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: Would you ever cry in public?

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah.

WALTERS: You would?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I did the other day.

WALTERS: Where?

Vice Pres. BUSH: It was in a hospital in Krakow, Poland, for children. My eyes filled up, and I just felt identified with this problem there, but you know—

WALTERS: You think it's okay for a man to cry in public, huh?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I do. I think you ought to convey strength, I mean, but I— this idea that if you get tears in your eyes, that shows you're not strong, I don't believe it.

WALTERS: Okay. Greatest strength.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Family, love of my family, that they're together, they lift me up. Some have considered that a little bit of a weakness, that I depend, you know, too much on all of that. But I think it's a tremendous strength.

WALTERS: One of your critics, somebody from the opposing camp, when I said, "What would you ask George Bush?" said, "Ask him why he has left no tracks. Ask him why he has left no traces."

Vice Pres. BUSH: But he's wrong. Has he ever gone out to the CIA and talked to those people out there about who came in at a tough time, lifted it up, held the agency together? Did he ever talk to the people I flew with in combat? Did that guy, that critic, that political, nameless critic, did he ever know what it is to go out and start a business and add to the productive base of this country? I was a good ambassador to the United Nations. I was a good person over there in China representing our country. I left tracks every place I went.

WALTERS: Let's talk some politics. Would you like to have Robert Dole as your vice presidential running mate?

Vice Pres. BUSH: It's premature to even think about vice presidential running mates, but I have great respect for Bob Dole.

WALTERS: Does that mean yes?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I haven't said any -- sure, but I haven't said— I haven't said anything negative about him because I'm the guy that's living by the 11th commandment, and it's tough, when you—

WALTERS: Thou shalt not pick on anybody else in your own party?

Vice Pres. BUSH: That's right. I'm the javelin catcher.

WALTERS: Is that what the 11th commandment is, thou shalt not— yeah.

Vice Pres. BUSH: Yeah, speak ill of some other Republican or try to put him down.

WALTERS: Would you like to have Jack Kemp as a vice presidential running mate?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I think the world of all of them, but I am not in the process of picking a vice president, period.

WALTERS: What about Pat Robertson?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I am not in the process of picking a vice president.

WALTERS: What about a woman? What about Jeane Kirkpatrick?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I am in the process of stating that of course you'd consider a woman.

WALTERS: Would you like to have Jeane Kirkpatrick? Would that be somebody that—

Vice Pres. BUSH: I am not in the process of picking the individual— Barbara, give up on me.

WALTERS: I'm sure trying.

Vice Pres. BUSH: I know, give up on me.

WALTERS: Well, you know, maybe I'll get there. Okay. Pat Robertson has shown much more strength than people expect to. What do you think of him as presidential material, and is he a threat to you?

Vice Pres. BUSH: As I told you, I am not going to criticize anybody else, and yes, I take him as a threat, because he went up to straw poll, where you buy a ticket for \$25. He had more people that bought tickets for \$25 at a poll in Ames, Iowa, than I did, and it shook me up, it gave me a kick right down here. I said myself, "Never again. I'm going to get out and out-hustle anybody else." So he showed a lot of organizational ability there.

WALTERS: Is the pulpit good training ground for the presidency?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I happen to be more of a— you know, or who doesn't necessarily feel that that is the best training for being president of the United States. We're not running for priest, we're running for president.

WALTERS: Do you think this is going to be a dirty campaign?

Vice Pres. BUSH: I hope not.

WALTERS: Well, I really am asking that as a segue into something that happened a few months ago that surprised a lot of people. There were rumors that suddenly circulated in-the-media that accused you of infidelity, and even though the rumors didn't rise to the surface and most of the media never reported it, it got to the point where your own son asked you a question about it. Can you tell us what he said and what you said?

Vice Pres. BUSH: No, I can't tell you anything about it, because I don't deal in rumors, and I really think they demean your profession and demean mine, and the more you talk about rumors the uglier it is, and the most unfair it is. So that's all I have to say about it.

WALTERS: Okay. You know, people who want to be president especially these days, must pay a huge price. Are there times when you just say to yourself, "It isn't worth it. I could have a nice life. What do I need this for?"

Vice Pres. BUSH: No, because I know for me there's no fall-back. This isn't kind of a strategic ploy to be running for something else, or if this doesn't work, I'll come back as something else. That's not— that's out of it to me. I've had many years of public service more diverse and I hope as successful as anybody in public service, and so this for me is what they call up in Boston the last hurrah. Sometimes it's hurtful, and sometimes your children get hurt, and nobody likes that. But I'm a good man, a decent man, and I'm going to stay in this game no matter how ugly it gets, and I'm going to give it my all. I'm going to win it, I really believe that in my heart of hearts, the whole thing, but no regrets— go forward, do your best and take the shots.

DOWNS: Why does he follow the President down the line? You know loyalty is commendable, but remember that Hubert

Humphrey, his downfall was his loyalty to Johnson, when he could have spoken his own true feelings, shown himself to be his own man, and maybe won.

WALTERS: Well, the times were different. Remember that Johnson decided not to run again, it was in the middle of Vietnam, and people wanted Humphrey to do something different — that is, get us out of Vietnam. But Bush feels that Reagan's record's very good on the economy and foreign policy. He wants to stick with that. He may have that as a problem. He's also going to have to distinguish himself from the other leading candidate, Robert Dole, and that may end up being a question of personality, which is why it would be interesting to know the real George Bush and the real Robert Dole.

DOWNES: Well, we'll learn more as time goes on, I'm sure. Good, Barbara. Well, next, call your Mom and Dad, and call your grandparents. Maybe their future will roll by — recreational vehicles, much more than a home away from home, now the only home for thousands of retirees. Bob Brown reports, "The Best Is Yet To Come."

[Commercial break]

The Best Is Yet To Come

DOWNES: We want to tell you now about a trend blowing through the country that's fairly significant. If someone in your family is retired, do them a favor and make sure they see this next story. A lot of retirees, bored with their surroundings and tired of the same old routine, are selling their homes and moving into recreational vehicles fulltime. For them, Florida is now just a drive-through and Arizona is on the way to somewhere else. Is this life in a recreational vehicle, or RV as they're called, an option for you? And if you want to do this, how do you get started? Well, Bob Brown shared the pleasures with some people who have done it. And we will now go along for the ride.

BOB BROWN [voice-over]: Sometimes, if you follow the music, you can find them. The songs they love are among the memories they carry when they leave home. They are retired Americans who have gone off to see the country in recreational vehicles, otherwise known as RVs. That's not so unusual, but some of these people are not on vacation, they're here because they've left their homes for good, sold them, said good-bye to the neighborhoods where they'd lived until retirement. They now live on the road year round, traveling north in the summer, south in the winter, and they have a word to describe themselves — they're fulltimers.

WHITEY CARPENTER: The real estate lady came by and offered me what I thought was a good price for the farm. Now, I had to talk her into selling the farm.

BROWN: Uh huh. Well, how did you persuade her? What did you say?

Mr. CARPENTER: You don't persuade her, she has to agree.

JOYCE PIERCE: I was afraid that we'd sit in the trailer and say, "Okay, life, pass me by," but we don't—

WINIFRED TREMAINE: —because the more you go and the more you see, the more you want to see.

CHAY LEE: So we'll be in Oregon and Washington and Canada, and then we'll start back down through Idaho and come down through Colorado again.

BROWN: It's an intimidating thought at first, leaving your home, your relatives, your neighborhood friends, taking off on the road. And yet, according to estimates from the RV industry, around 100,000 Americans have done it. How do you start? Where do

you get your mail? Where do you bank? We learned the answer to some of those questions as we traveled along with fulltimers: who, no matter where we stopped, were surprisingly easy to find.

[voice-over] It is a morning in July near the California redwood forests in the Benbow Valley RV Resort. It's a place that attracts a lot of fulltimers because it's part of a chain called Good Sam that offers special services to them, mail service, for instance. The staff will receive it here or forward it on to the next stop. They take phone messages too, and there's a golf course that skirts the bottom of the hill overlooking the resort. After spending a few days here, Jude Pierce is getting his 33-foot trailer ready to travel again. His wife, Joyce, is working inside.

Mrs. PIERCE: It's just like home except in miniature, and I have a nice big freezer, a big refrigerator.

BROWN: Is it stocked inside there?

Mrs. PIERCE: Uh huh. Oh, yeah. So I enjoy my kitchen.

BROWN [voice-over]: Next door to the Pierces are the Lees, old friends from Durango, Colorado. Chay Lee is also getting her trailer, a 38-footer, ready to go back on the road.

Mrs. LEE: This has always been what we've looked forward to. This is what we have wanted to do when we both retired. And this is Amanda [dog]. One of the things that my husband likes around here is he has his computer with him.

BROWN [voice-over]: At the present, though, Chay's husband, Dick Lee, is performing another necessity for fulltimers — running through a personal checklist as he unhooks their home from the water and electricity lines, and even the cable TV that's part of the package in this resort.

[interviewing] So nobody in this group owns a house now. You sold your houses.

Mrs. LEE: Their home sold one week, our home sold the following week. We had yard sales, we had ads in newspapers selling cars, selling furniture—

Mrs. PIERCE: He says, "Honey, I sold the bedroom set." I went, "What? Where are we going to sleep?" We had two weeks in the house yet. Well, we slept on the floor.

BROWN [voice-over]: Ironically, one of the motivations for that decision to move on was the fact that Mr. Pierce had had triple bypass surgery two and a half years ago.

Mrs. PIERCE: We came so close to losing him once, and you know, it makes you stop and think how long is life going to be? It's a very short distance, and this is a big world to see, and we want to see part of it.

BROWN [voice-over]: And because the Pierces and the Lees had been friends in Durango, they decided to see it together, each couple putting up the basic investment of between \$25,000 and \$50,000 that will buy a nice trailer home and a truck to pull it. And now that they're on the road, the total expenses per couple run less than a thousand dollars a month. Dick Lee says the only thing that's missing when you buy an RV is a little drivers' training.

DICK LEE: The biggest thing is that I don't think any dealer probably does is teach anybody how to pull one down the road, and she'll take that thing down the road 60 mile an hour and not think a thing about it.

Mrs. LEE: Oh, well, now, I wouldn't say that.

Mr. LEE: Well, 55 is—

BROWN: At least not on television.

Mrs. LEE: No, not on television.

Mr. LEE: She drives probably 90% of the time.

Mrs. LEE: You'll find you have to drive the hills, you can't coast down and then expect to pull this rig up a hill. You have to drive



20/20

BARBARA WALTERS

INTERVIEW WITH

ROSS PEROT

LATEST

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 1.

NARRATION:

Our visit began with Ross Perot taking us to the town where he was born 61 years ago...Texarkana, Texas. The first stop, his childhood home on a tree-lined street where he used to rollerskate.

set

NARRATION:

His father was a cotton broker, his mother a homemaker. Young Ross and his sister Bette remember a happy childhood in a small town that got its name from the fact that it sits on the Texas-Arkansas border. As a boy, Ross was introduced by his father to Gospel

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 2.

music in this church where few white people ever went. He became an Eagle Scout. Since then, the town has preserved the boyscout badge of its most famous resident.

act

NARRATION:

Perot excelled in business at an early age. In return for delivering the local newspaper on horseback to this poor neighborhood, he negotiated a higher rate for each new subscription and made so much money the newspaper tried to break the deal.

act

NARRATION:

He can't walk a block in this town without old friends and supporters coming to greet him.

act

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 3.

NARRATION:

Ross admired an older boy who went to the U. S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and although he had never seen an ocean, young Ross decided to follow. When he graduated, he married his college sweetheart, Margot, and together they raised four daughters and a son. Perot made his fortune by offering individually tailored computer systems to help companies use computers. At 38, when his company, Electronic Data Systems went public, he became a multi-millionaire. He sold EDS to General Motors for an estimated 2.8 billion dollars. Two years later, in a highly publicized disagreement with GM, Perot was bought out for another 700 million dollars, adding to his growing reputation as a maverick. By then, Perot had already made headlines by trying to get food and supplies to American POW's in North

06/16/92 14:58

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ABC NEWS 20/20

2 035

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 4.

Vietnam and by staging a daring rescue attempt for two of his employees who were imprisoned in Iran. During this homecoming, Perot took us to Bryce's Cafeteria, where he used to eat as a kid. The word got around and many former classmates turned up.

so

NARRATION:

On the way back on the plane we began our interview talking about some recent controversies.

so

NARRATION:

We continued our talk on the back porch of the beautiful house the Perot's have owned for 24 years.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 5.

WALTERS

You have--talked a great deal about your idyllic childhood. What are the qualities that you got from that childhood?

PEROT

Well, we lived in very modest circumstances. But I've always said when people asked me how it felt when I was first rich at 38, my reply was "I was born rich." And I was born rich because of my parents. No child could have had better parents than I had. For example, the blacks that worked for my dad in this East Texas area, which was--not a kind place for blacks to be when I was a child--each one of them carried his business card with the understanding that if anyone was ever rude to them to show them my father's business card. But more importantly, every Sunday afternoon he would take me and we would

THE PEROT'S**PART ONE**

5/27 3:00pm

P. 6.

go into their homes, and white people didn't go into black people's homes then; in the summertime we'd sit on the porch. In the wintertime we'd go into the--little room if it was a living room or what have you. Now, he never said, "Ross, I love them," he never said, "Son, this is the way you should be." He just did it. And my mother, God bless her, was the same way.

WALTERS

Would you say in your deepest heart that you're a man without prejudice?

PEROT

I hope that I have absolutely--no prejudice in my heart, and I have said publicly and I will be saying again and again--between now and November--if you hate people I don't want your vote.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 7.

WALTERS

Well, you say that you're a man without prejudice and I--believe that what you're saying you feel. Is it true that you belong to a club that excluded or excludes Jews?

PEROT

Well, I did, and then once I started this I resigned because it was obvious that this was--you know, not the right thing to do. They all--

WALTERS

Didn't you know before that it wasn't the right thing--

PEROT

Well--interestingly enough, they don't exclude Jews, and they were very sensitive when I resigned; they don't exclude blacks, but they don't have any.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 9.

PEROT

I don't want to be in politics. Thousands of fine, decent people have written me mainly handwritten letters, urging me to run as either--a Democrat or Republican...my classmates and friends from the military had given me a bad time about being too soft and too lazy to go up there for a few years--is that if anybody in this country ought to go do a dirty, thankless job, I should because I have been so blessed all my life.

WALTERS

Is that how you see the Presidency, "a dirty thankless job"?

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 10.

PEROT

It is a brutal, dirty, thankless job that-- in--just--puts an awful penalty on every member of your family and people you love and care about.

WALTERS

Any misconceptions about you you want to clear up? A lot of stuff's been said.

PEROT

Well--none of it--most of it is just absolutely untrue. And I wouldn't dignify it because to me these are just like little spitballs. But isn't it interesting that the more they throw, the better we seem to do in the polls.

WALTERS

Well, the biggest criticism about you, the one that's said again and again-- because you're a businessman--is you're an autocrat. Someone even suggested you could be a dictator.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 11.

PEROT

I love it, I love it because--that was not my image until two months ago. Look at everything that's been written, printed and shown on television about me for the last 25 years, and it's just the reverse. I work very closely with people. I give other people the credit. I stay in the background as things get done, and build consensus. And I do know that Congress would be my equal and I do have enough everyday common sense to know that if two equals have to get something done for the benefit of the people, they'd better link arms, not throw rocks at one another all day every day. Now isn't that--a simple little observation from a guy who's an outsider?

THE PEROT'S**PART ONE**

5/27 3:00pm

P. 12.

NARRATION:

Ross Perot's idea, which he has expressed often, is to have televised town halls. He as President, members of the Cabinet and Congress would explain major issues to the public who would then respond to their congressman. The government would pay for the television time.

PEROT:

Now, but here are all these wonderful checks and balances. Congress can still vote their conscience. The President can still veto it. It's not as though we have this demonic thing that some of the columnists like to write about.

WALTERS

Mr. Perot, you are really using television now--to revolutionize the process, aren't you?

PEROT

Well, I don't know a better way.

THE PEROT'S**PART ONE**

5/27 3:00pm

P. 13.

WALTERS

You have said that the people are not that interested in your positions on this and that. But last week a CNN, USA Today and Gallop poll all showed that the majority of the people really did want to hear some of your answers.

WALTERS:

Are there any issues today that you are willing to put yourself on the line for?

PEROT:

Well, I've put myself on the line on all kinds of issues. And I will put myself on the line on any issues that anybody wants to talk about.

WALTERS

The deficit, what are your thoughts on it? How do you clear it up?

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm.

P. 14.

PEROT

Number one, we need a real Gramm Rudman. Gramm Rudman doesn't work. It started out as a good idea, it's got holes and leaks in it. The second thing you've got to do--is then just turn the world upside down aggressively, getting rid of the waste. And there is a lot of waste. And in a few weeks I will be able to-- go down my detail list of where the waste is so that we can get in very, very specifics. But you've got to get rid of the waste, you've got to stop--the bleeding.

WALTERS

So the first thing you'd want to do is to have a congressional act that limited spending.

PEROT

Yes. Then the next thing we need to do--is replace our current tax system with a new tax system.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 15.

WALTERS

Okay, any ideas? Sales tax?...Gas tax?
Income tax?

PEROT

Step one. We start with a blank sheet of paper. Then the way I'd like to operate, I would sit down with the congressional leaders and say, "Now, these look like the best ways to me, what do you think the best ways are."

We would work all this through together, see, as opposed to the confrontation o--operation that goes on now.

Then we develop these systems and we go the town hall, we explain them to the people.

Then we build a consensus first in Congress, with the people, then we put it in; we go on to the next problem.

WALTERS:

Bottom line, somehow or other you feel we have to raise taxes.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 16.

PEROT:

No, I'm absolutely against raising taxes, but now stay with me. We have a declining job base and I guess if there's one fascination with me, maybe this is it.

NARRATION:

Perot says to have a growing, expanding tax base, you first have to give credit to the small businessman and then tackle the giant companies, helping them so that Made in the U.S.A. becomes the world's standard of excellence.

PEROT:

Now, we're down to what I do for a living. And that is, see, the businesses I'm involved with are first and best. If you're looking for me after November or January, if I get stuck up there, you'll find me buried in meetings with people on subjects like this night and day. I'll be like a mechanic who's under the hood, working on the engine--because sound bites won't fix this.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 17.

WALTERS:

You have said again and again, that the most important thing is to have a strong family unit. You said the need for a father in every home. What action do you take to put a father in every home?

PEROT

Well, you can't force a father in every home by law. But you can certainly make it an issue and talk to the American people about it. We should not create a new life unless we want a new life.

WALTERS

So the, therefore you are what we would call pro-choice. Right? You said this before.

PEROT

Well, but I'm, I, I'm basically, it's more significant, it's finally the woman's decision--

WALTERS

Yeah?

PEROT

--in terms of abortion.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 18.

WALTERS

Then would you say that government would fund abortions for the needy, and if a child is born, the government would help the needy family?

PEROT

Well, I've been helping people like that all my adult life --

WALTERS

Should government --

PEROT

-- so I think the answer is pretty obvious how I feel. I'm a great believer personally in first contact with the mother should be while she's pregnant. Make sure the child's properly, gets -- the mother gets proper nutrition, proper prenatal care. Make sure the child is, gets proper nutrition.

WALTERS

Government funded if necessary?

PEROT

It costs nothing compared to putting that child in jail as an adult or keeping him on welfare.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 19.

WALTERS

Let's talk a little bit about foreign policy. How do you feel about giving financial aid to Russia?

PEROT

I think the most cost effective thing we can do is to help Russia get through the transition successfully. And we should do it in a hard minded way. You know, the Japanese give money, and they say that you have to buy Japanese products. We give money and say lots of luck, fellows, just buy whatever you want anywhere, and they take our money and buy German, Japanese, French and English products -- not too smart, Barbara.

WALTERS

You have said about the State Department if you ever depend on the State Department you're fresh out of luck.

THE PEROT'S**PART ONE**

5/27 3:00pm

P. 20.

How would you change the State Department if you were President?

PEROT

Well, first off, the embassies are relics of days of the sailing ships. At one time, when you had no world communication, your ambassador spoke for you in that country. But now with instantaneous communication around the world, the ambassador is primarily in a social role. If some American walks in with a problem, at least in all my experiences, you're just treated sort of a nuisance...and I would recommend we redo the whole embassy structure. I don't think it has any relevance anymore.

WALTERS

You have said that your vice president would also be your chief of staff, an entirely new role for a vice president, and one that takes some management skills. Right?

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 21.

PEROT

I would not consider a person that could not step in as President of the United States.

WALTERS:

And would he be your chief of staff?

PEROT:

And if he is chief of staff, or she is chief of staff, then they know everything that's going on. I think that's just silly land, that you'd pick a person based on appealing to some group or some electoral vote.

WALTERS

I want to ask you a little more about some of your personal values. You have said that you would not permit a man you knew was unfaithful to his wife to work for you. You said if your wife can't trust you, why should I? Does this disqualify...John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Franklin Roosevelt, all of whom, we have heard, have been unfaithful to their wives?

06/16/92 15:09 1 212 458 2889

ABC NEWS 20/20

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THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 22.

PEROT

I put a very strong store on ... strong moral values.

WALTERS

Would you hire someone who'd been unfaithful to his wife?

PEROT

Not knowingly, no. Have I ever, I don't know. For example, anybody that has Secret Service around them that feels like they can bring just women in for swims and so on and so forth, if any of that ever occurred, obviously something happened to the person's mind, it's just like suddenly the switch went off.

Doesn't make any sense.

And the American people deserve that, and no, I wouldn't have people like that.

NARRATION:

And then we asked a very controversial question which, in fairness, neither Governor Clinton or President Bush has been asked.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 23.

WALTERS

Would you have an admitted homosexual on your staff?

PEROT

It would all depend, we'd have to be far more specific in what job --

WALTERS

There is a very good person, he's going to be working in the White House--

PEROT

Doing what?

WALTERS

-- maybe even in the -- well, maybe even in a Cabinet level.

PEROT

Well, let's assume, there are certain places I think where it would be, you know, very difficult. You know, if you had somebody with that background that you were trying to make Secretary of Defense, where you have a structure all--

WALTERS

Secretary of the Treasury. Secretary of Education.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 24.

PEROT

None of this has anything to do with fixing the problems we've talked about. These are the kinds of things we love to, you know, just dig around in --

WALTERS

Yes, but it has to do with values and emotions --

PEROT

Yes.

WALTERS

-- and the kind of, you know, thinking.

PEROT

No, I don't want anybody there that will be at a point of controversy with the American people. It will distract from the work to be done--and don't limit it to that one area -- see, as far as I'm concerned what people do in their private lives is their business.

WALTERS

What about guys in the military?

PEROT

I don't think that's realistic.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 25.

WALTERS

You've also said that you won't just live in the White House, that you're going to get out and around. How are you going to do that-- and--the way--realistically, the country is?

PEROT

Well--you've got to do that.

WALTERS

What about the danger--

PEROT

Hiding in the White House would be like having a general that's afraid to go in the battlefield. It wouldn't make any sense...I want to do everything I can--so that the American people look on me as their servant, not on--not as their king.

WALTERS:

What about the danger to you?

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 26.

PEROT:

I've--been exposed to danger on a number of occasions in my life, and the best analogy I can give you: it goes with the job. And it's like a general that says, "Gee, I won't go in the battlefield. I'll hide up here in the bunker and send privates out in the battlefield."

WALTERS

What about a motorcade?

PEROT

No motorcades.

WALTERS

What about "Hail to the Chief"? Are you going to have "Hail to the Chief" if you get into the White House--and music?

PEROT:

No, none of us --none of us--we don't have a regal presidency, and should not have a regal presidency.

WALTERS

So you just walk out to regular music.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 27.

PEROT

If there's any music at all.

WALTERS

Do you have any flaws?

PEROT

Oh sure.

WALTERS

Name one.

PEROT

I could be a lot better looking. I
could--

WALTERS

That's not a flaw, that's--physical.

PEROT

I could--I could have a better nose.

WALTERS

No, no, no--personal.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 28.

PEROT

I'll tell you, this nose has been
broken--

WALTERS

No, no--no--no--

PEROT

--too many times.

WALTERS

Personal.

PEROT

Bad ears.

WALTERS

Not--not--physical. Not physical! Come
on, one personal flaw.

PEROT

This is television. I thought we'd
just--

WALTERS

Now, one personal flaw, one thing you
want to change.

THE PEROT'S

PART ONE

5/27 3:00pm

P. 29.

WALTERS

You're almost too good to be true. Okay,
give me one flaw.

PEROT

Well, you can ask Margot. She'll give
you some.

WALTERS:

Shall we ask Mrs. Perot to join us?

PEROT:

You bet.

MRS. PEROT:

Hello.

WALTERS:

A pleasure to see you.

MRS. PEROT:

Thank you. Thank you.

PEROT:

Hi.

MRS. PEROT:

Nice to be here.

PEROT

Now, I'm going to leave you all
for--frank conversation.

END OF PART ONE

06/16/92 15:17

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ABC NEWS 20/20

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THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

PAGE 1.

5/27 3:00pm

WALTERS

Just between you and me?

MRS. PEROT

Yeah.

WALTERS

Does your husband have any flaws, and if so, would you just--name one?

MRS. PEROT

[LAUGHS] I don't think so. And of course, I- -I don't like to look. But--[PAUSE]--I suppose the only flaw I can think of is he brags about his children a lot. [PAUSE]

WALTERS

And bores people with that, you think?

MRS. PEROT

Probably.

WALTERS

Did your husband consult you about this decision of possibly running?

06/16/92 15:22

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ABC NEWS 20/20

001

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 2.

MRS. PEROT

No, no he didn't, it was a--as much a surprise to me really when "The--Larry King Show" was on, as to anybody else. I was in a hotel room in Washington. And--I was sitting there, peacefully watching, and it was all very interesting, and--then toward the end, as you probably know, Larry King said, "Are there any circumstances under which you might run," and Ross said, "Well, if all the people put my name on a petition I think maybe I would." And I--was stunned. And that night he came back and I said, I said, I, I was so surprised, and he said--said, oh don't worry, you know, it's--it's not going to happen, it's just a hypothetical sort of thing. And--and I said, "Well, I'm not so sure," and a few minutes later a--an envelope came under the

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 1:00pm

PAGE 3.

hotel, the door of the hotel room, and it was--had five dollars in it. And the next morning there was another with a message from a--relative of a--a man missing in action and she said--something-- words to the effect that she was so pleased. And, and then I--it began to sink in that this could be a reality.

WALTERS

How do you feel about all this?

MRS. PEROT

I'm overwhelmed in one way, but I think it's just a--a wonderful outpouring of faith in Ross and, and I'm happy for him.

WALTERS

You're a school teacher.

MRS. PEROT

Yes.

WALTERS

What did you teach?

MRS. PEROT

It was all elementary school.

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 4.

MRS. PEROT

Fourth grade.

WALTERS

It was your money from school that was the first check--that enabled your husband to go into business.

MRS. PEROT

That's true. We always saved my salary. And it was that money that he used when he started HDS.

WALTERS

How do you see yourself, your role as First Lady?

MRS. PEROT

Well, I'm--I see myself-- as having a supporting role. I-- really, I--say that because my first priority is the family. And creating a happy home life for Ross.

WALTERS:

It's sort of expected these days that First Ladies have to have some project even if they have to manufacture a project.

06/16/92 15:24

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ABC NEWS 20/20

Q 004

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 5.

WALTERS

Do you have a specific interest? Is there something that with the power that you might have--that you would be able to accomplish?

MRS. PEROT

I have been involved with The Salvation Army and their work in Dallas for the last eight years, and I like the way they deal with the problems of the inner city. And so, I think I would--be wanting to continue. I--I worry about the children who are born into poverty, children who are victims of violence, and incest, homelessness. I think this is what probably--touches me more than--than all the other serious problems. So I, I'd want to see if I could do something there.

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

PAGE 6.

5/27 3:00pm

WALTERS

Barbara Bush, of course, says that the most important thing is, is the family and she has not worked. Hillary Clinton has a child and feels family is important but she has worked and is very active in, in a career. Which-- which woman do you feel is more like you?

MRS. PEROT

I'm--maybe in the middle.

WALTERS

Because you have worked and yet you live more like Barbara Bush--

MRS. PEROT

Mmm-hmm, that's true--

WALTERS

--today. Would you describe yourself as an independent woman?

MRS. PEROT

Yes, I would.--

WALTERS

In what way?

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 7.

MRS. PEROT

Well, I think I--I r-I read and I think
and I--have my own opinions and--yes,
I--and, and Ross has encouraged that,
with me and with all his daughters. He
wants us to be--self-reliant and
independent. He admires that.

WALTERS

Do you give your husband advice ever?

MRS. PEROT

No. He doesn't need my advice.

WALTERS

Never? There's no area?

MRS. PEROT

No, we--we discuss everything. He's--we
talk a lot. But I wouldn't say that
I--say--seriously that I'm, I'm giving
him advice.

WALTERS:

Do you share your husband's views on
pre-choice--

MRS. PEROT:

Yes.

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 8.

WALTERS:

--on abortion when necessary?

MRS. PEROT:

Yes, I do.

WALTERS:

Would you imagine that you might, as some First Ladies in recent years have, want to sit in on Cabinet meetings and be involved in any of the government decisions?

MRS. PEROT

I can't imagine. I've never sat in-- a board room with him, when there were problems or--or any other board meeting. I don't think he needs me to do that. And--no, I would--I would not be--breathing down his neck.

WALTERS:

Will you campaign?

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 9.

MRS. PEROT:

I don't think Ross really expects me to campaign. I don't think he needs me. I'll support him 100 percent and do whatever needs to be done. I take it a day at a time. I --we're new at this. And so--I hope I can help.

WALTERS

What about the whole fishbowl life that you're now entering? I mean, even having to do--an interview like this. Is this your first, by the way?

MRS. PEROT

Oh absolutely.

WALTERS

Okay. You're doing very well.

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 10.

MRS. PEROT

Thank you. People warned about--us about that, that---that it might be brutal. And I hope that it isn't.

WALTERS

What do you think is the biggest misconception about your husband?

MRS. PEROT

That he's thin-skinned--

WALTERS

That he's thin-skinned.

MRS. PEROT

I read that a lot.

WALTERS

Yeah.

MRS. PEROT

I think they're trying to--to build a persona that I, I wouldn't recognize at all. I think he's--very warm--

WALTERS

Testy--

MRS. PEROT

Well, he may be impatient with some of the questions that they ask him but I--I find that that's--not the man he is, certainly not at home.

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 11.

WALTERS

Your husband says that he doesn't look forward to being President, that--in that sense, that it's a dirty job--

MRS. PEROT

In that sense--

WALTERS

--but someone has to do it. Do you feel that way about First Lady?

MRS. PEROT

No. No, I don't. I think it would be a--a tremendous honor, the finest honor of all, and-- and a great challenge...I've always wanted my days to count for something...and I'd certainly do my best and--to--do a good job.

NARRATION:

And then we asked Mr. Perot to join us at the end of our interview.

WALTERS

Was it love at first sight?

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 12.

PEROT

I loved being with him, and--and my affection grew and grew and grew. And it's still growing. But--probably not love at first sight, not--not quite.

WALTERS

Was it love at first sight?

PEROT

Absolutely, even though she was a Yankee.

WALTERS

Oh--where's home?

MRS. PEROT

Pennsylvania.

WALTERS

How do you hope that history will remember you?

PEROT

If they just put on my tombstone that he created a lot of jobs and a lot taxpayers--that's good enough for me.

WALTERS

Mrs. Perot, how do you hope that history will remember--this man you've been married to for 35 years?

THE PEROT'S

PART TWO

5/27 3:00pm

PAGE 13.

MRS. PEROT

I think they'll always remember him as the great patriot and a--courageous man and a man of principle and integrity. And whether he makes his contribution in Washington or here won't matter, I think. This is how they'll remember.

WALTERS

I'd keep her if I were you.

PEROT

Well, I work awfully hard at it.

MRS. PEROT

That's true.

PEROT

I work awfully hard at it. And I'm-- all--as I say, all my friends--and everybody that knows us both will say that I'm way over my head here with Margot. And it's the truth, it's the truth.

END OF PART TWO

5/27/92
15:27
1 212 456 2869

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 12, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR MEDIA AFFAIRS STAFF

FROM: ANN HUGHES

RE: LOCATION CHECKS ON SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1992

FYI: I've sent a memo re: both of these sight checks to Marcia, Gary Walters, and to the "Uniform Division" of Secret Service. I've also cleared in the below names with WAVES. The following is a list of the people coming on Saturday with both the **Campaign Advertising Team** and with **20/20** :

I. Advertising Team *Coming at 3:00 p.m.

Geoffrey Kelly
10/13/38

Finley Hunt
1/24/38

II. 20/20 *Coming at 4:00

Martin Clancy
8/21/42

Cindy Bickford
8/9/55

George Paul
7/4/28

Joseph Kamfor
5/15/42

If there is any problem, the contact names and numbers for both groups are:

Advertising:

Chris Flinn
(ph) 212-366-4851
(f) 212-366-4567

20/20:

Ann Brady
202-887-7380

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 30, 1992

File

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DORRANCE SMITH *DS*

SUBJECT: 20/20 RATINGS

Your interview with Barbara Walters was the highest rated program of the night, averaging a 12.7 rating and a 26% share. That translates into an audience of 27.6 million viewers.

bcc: Bob Teeter
Marlin Fitzwater
Sam Skinner

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

Internal Transcript

June 22, 1992

INTERVIEW OF
THE PRESIDENT AND MRS. BUSH BY BARBARA WALTERS OF ABC'S 20/20

The Veranda

10:45 A.M. EDT

Q Mr. President, you've just come off of a terrific week. You have -- history was made in foreign policy and you have a bill that was passed to aid the cities. Yet, if one goes around the country, the word one hears the most is anxiety. Now, a year ago you were at your height of popularity -- here, around the world; now one year later you're criticized as indecisive and a weak leader. What went wrong in so short a time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think one of the things that concern Americans is the economy. And I think any decline in these ever-living polls that we see is the correlation between the decline and the economy and the problems I have. But I am absolutely convinced it's going to turn around, and I'm absolutely convinced that things are going to be better in terms of the economy; and then we get in focus what we've got to do for this country.

Q By election time, are you sure the economy is going to be turned around enough so that the perception of you will be different?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And while I'm convinced of that, also I'm convinced when you get into the election and you get it right in focus for the American people they look at the whole record.

You see, when I came into this job, the major concern was what -- nuclear war, the lack of peace. And what we've been able to do, through working with the Soviets and through Desert Storm is transform all of that. Now I want to take that same energy, that same leadership and affect change domestically. And we can do it. But it's out of focus right now.

Q One of the criticisms, Mr. President, is that you've waited too long before you attacked the economic problem, but it wasn't until January that you admitted there was a recession and talked about the country being in a free-fall. Why did you wait that long?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't waited that long because we've been trying, through incentive and investment opportunity, to get the country moving. I will concede, I have had difficulty with an old-thinking Congress, and that's the case we're going to make in the fall very loud and clear. But I have not waited, but I must confess to a certain frustration over the last few years in terms of moving this country forward on the economic front. And the answer is not to go out and spend and tax; and so I am fighting the battle there. We do have now caps on discretionary spending. In other words, there is some controls in place, coming out of a very bloody fight with Congress, that I think are going to benefit the American people in the long run.

Q Mr. President, again and again, what you hear people saying is, we don't know what the President's vision is. They

MORE

tease sometimes and they call it that vision thing. Okay. Mr. President, what is your vision?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my vision is partially achieved, not totally. Because I would go back with you and cite where things were when we started. My passion is about a world at peace. And I think because of what we've been able to do with the Soviet Union and now Russia, and because of what we were able to do in Desert Storm, world peace is better enhanced -- better secured, you might say.

Now, my vision is to see an educated country -- a country that wins the battle against crime and drugs that is fighting every American family. The drug problem is infecting our country, and the result is this terrible decline in the family. And so what I want to do now, take the same energy that you might say -- I don't want to sound immodest -- but helped change the world and use that to change America. In these fields particularly. They're so big issues, there is a wide array of issues. But the ones I feel passionately about are education and winning the battle against drugs and crime. And that will mean better surroundings for the families.

Q Well, you know, you and I talked on the eve of your inauguration in 1989. And at that point you said a lot of people in this country are hurting; my vision is to see that they are hurting less and doing better. Well, the numbers say they're not doing better. Unemployment is up by 3 million people, food stamp recipients up by 7 million. Now, you blame Congress, but isn't your administration to blame as well?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. Everybody in office is to blame, local, state, city, every place, because we've gone through a very long, drawn-out recession. And, yes, I'm not trying to shift the blame. I am saying that if I had had a different Congress, I could have gotten through investment incentives that would have moved this economy forward. It still would move faster if we could pass, for example, a first-time credit for homebuyers, \$5,000 credit for first-time homebuyers. I mean, this is big stuff; this is important.

And I've got a whole list of these things we're trying to do. I don't want to bore your listeners with lists; but, yes, everybody can take some share of the blame. But we've been through a long recession or anemic economic growth. And what I'm trying to do is hold the line on spending, hold the line on taxes and get this economy moving through investment incentive.

Q Okay. With all respect, though, President Reagan had a divided Congress, President Eisenhower had a divided Congress. Ross Perot has said, elect me and I'll break the gridlock. I can deal with the Congress where this President cannot. Isn't it a test of leadership to be able to work with a Congress of the other party?

THE PRESIDENT: President Eisenhower controlled both houses of the Congress when he started.

Q But then it changed.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but that's when he got his most done. President Reagan had control of the United States Senate, we did, as Republicans, for the first six years and that's where we got the most done. The problem is, we've never had a Republican President to have control both houses of Congress at the same time. Give me one and we would do better; give me two and you would really move this country forward. It hasn't been tried.

Q What if you don't? I mean, suppose someone wants to vote for a Democratic senator; does he have to make a choice between his senator and President Bush? Suppose, suppose it happens

that it is again a Democratic Congress. You don't want to be voted out of office because of that reason, do you?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look, we've gotten certain things done. And I will have taken my case to the American people, I will be reelected, and then we will move fast to fulfill the promises and the pledges we all make in the campaign. We did it in the beginning of this administration. We got through the Clean Air Act; we got through the Disabilities Act, the most farsighted piece of civil rights legislation in modern times; we got through the Clean Air; Child Care Bill that gives parents a choice. And these things have been accomplished. You don't hear much about them.

So the time to move is when you're first elected; because even if you don't control the Congress, people still say the President was elected to do these things, and give him a shot at it.

So I'm not discouraged about that. But I do think when you see what's happening up on Capitol Hill, 70 members getting out, you know, the President's having problem but take a look at the Congress. There's a chance to really make a change, and that is to change the Congress. And so that's the case you'll be hearing a lot more about.

Q You know the expression "throw the bums out"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You know, there is that feeling of change, any change -- and it does spill over on you.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think it's going to spill over on me come November. I can't wait for the campaign to start. In the meantime, without attacking these opponents -- once in a while a glancing blow -- without attacking them I'm trying to get certain things done. And you were generous enough to mention aid for the cities. We are finally getting something done to help the cities. The summer jobs program is good. We're still holding back on enterprise zones, incidentally, which I want to see passed. Congress is holding back.

Q What I'm trying to do is to bring up some of the questions that we hear all around in the public. And one of them is the feeling that you were taken by surprise with the Los Angeles riots; that you hadn't known how bad things were in the city until those riots.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that's a fair charge, and I haven't heard anybody out front saying there's going to be riots in South Central L.A., if that's the question. I haven't even heard that.

Q You weren't surprised at the decay?

THE PRESIDENT: I've heard a lot of charges but not that one.

Q You weren't surprised at how terrible things were in the cities, you knew it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, yes. Everybody knows there are some big problems in the cities. There's big problems in rural America, too. And the question is, let's try to solve these problems.

Q Mr. President, you have been saying repeatedly that you will not say anything about Ross Perot, although earlier this week you did talk about a "pig in a poke," I assume the danger of

voting for somebody just for a change. "Pig in a poke," I assume was Ross Perot?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's your assumption.

Q All right. Let me go on, then.

THE PRESIDENT: That's your assumption.

Q The Washington Post has reported that in the late '80s, Ross Perot was trying to have you investigated to damage your reputation and your children as well. What is your view of that? Can you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me put it this way: If he was having my children investigated, that is beyond the pale. Leave my kids alone, I'd say. They're good, honest boys; and a daughter -- good, honest girl. And to have somebody investigating another -- the family of another American, I'm sorry, I don't like that and I don't think the American people do. Now, I'm just saying if that's true. I don't know if it's true. But that is beyond the pale. And I am sick about it if it's true. And I think the American people will reject that kind of tactic to go around investigating the family of the President of the United States or then-Vice President -- or any other American. That's how I feel about it.

Now, I'm not saying it's true. You asked the question, I'm just trying to tell you how strongly I feel about this.

Q What about investigating the Vice President to try to get something on him?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'm not too happy about that. But I can take care of myself. And my record is known to the American people. And they may have problems about the economy, but nobody has raised questions about my integrity. And I've been in public life, and I've been in private life a long time. But when it comes to my children, that's too much for me.

These are honest boys, out making an honest living. And I don't need to have the feeling that they are being investigated.

Q At the time of the investigation, Mr. Perot is quoted as having said to you, "The world is full of --

THE PRESIDENT: I've got to have a drink of water. I'm getting a little hot when you bring this up.

Q Well, while you sip: Mr. Perot had said, "The world is full of lions and tigers and rabbits, and you are a rabbit." Do you remember his saying that?

THE PRESIDENT: Never.

Q Any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You're not going to say anything, you said, until after the convention. But I wonder why. I mean, we all know you're going to be the nominee. Why wait?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, because I think the thing to -- I think people are a little tired of the smearing of each other in politics. And I think I can stay off to the side a little bit and try to get something done for the country. I'm still trying to work with the Congress. And, indeed, we did get something passed for the cities.

We're still trying to get something done that has a big dimension to it, and that is the freedom support act that will help guarantee democracy and freedom in Russia -- and thus guarantee enormous markets for us here, for our workers here at home.

And so I've got some big things we're trying to get done. And I've got to keep my focus on that. But everyone knows, Barbara, that after August, things shift into a campaign mode. And then I will be ready.

Q And then what would you say? What would you say then?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't even want to give you a preview of coming attractions. But if I think the opponents are not properly defined, I will do my level best to define them. And I will be all-out. And I'm a tough fighter when it comes to a campaign. I don't relish it, particularly, but I'm certainly going to defend myself and advocate, get sure the American people know what my heartbeat is and why I should be elected for four more years.

Q Mr. President, why should you be elected for four more years?

THE PRESIDENT: Because we've already accomplished big things, and because I don't leave the job unfinished. And I don't quit and I don't pick up my marbles and go home when the going gets tough, nor should a President. And I believe in this country and I want to see it better educated -- and that means I'm going to drive right down to the finish four years from now to see that we have passed this America 2000 education program.

I want to see us win the battle against drugs. We've made a very good start. There's some heartening statistics about teenage use of cocaine being 60 percent down -- substantially down. But we still have to win it. We've got to win it by interdiction, and we've got to win it by reducing demand.

And there's an unfulfilled agenda that I feel very, very strongly about. And I believe I'm the person to do it.

Q You don't mind, though, when your Press Secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, calls Ross Perot destructive and a monster; and when your Vice President calls him a temperamental tycoon who has contempt for the Constitution. They wouldn't be saying these things without your knowledge.

THE PRESIDENT: Hey, listen, if you felt strongly about it, I wouldn't mind you saying it. I'd like to get some defense out there -- that suits me.

Q But you know -- but they're saying this with your knowledge and agreement, no?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. I don't censor what anybody says around here. But when I see somebody defend me, when my mode is to stay on trying to get things passed for the country, listen, I don't get upset by that; I'm pleased. We've got some fighters down there, including my son, and our campaign chairman in Texas and our leaders in Arkansas, who are defending me every single day. I like that. Do you think I'm going to turn my back on that? You're crazy.

Q You're not going to say don't do it, boys.

THE PRESIDENT: Heck no, I'm not.

Q Who do you consider your main competition? Ross Perot or Bill Clinton?

THE PRESIDENT: Let the American people sort that one out. I'm going to be President. I feel very confident about it. But I know we've got to overcome some of the image things that you're asking -- properly asking about. But I'm confident I can. I know what my heartbeat is. I think people know my record. I think they know me to be a person of integrity. And I hope they know that I finish what I start.

Q Why do you think that your image has been tarnished in this way? I mean, a year ago, the strongest leader; a year later, weak, indecisive?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, a year ago --

Q Is it just the economy?

THE PRESIDENT: You see the -- yes, I think it largely is the economy because the recession lingered on. Actually, it will prove that we -- nationally the recession is over. We're growing at 2 -- a modest 2 percent, or whatever it is, for the first quarter, and hopefully will do better the second. But I am convinced it's the economy.

Q I'm sorry, I have the end of a cold, which I caught from my daughter.

THE PRESIDENT: God, I've just gotten over a terrible one.

How old is your daughter?

Q Well, I always forget -- my daughter's 24.

THE PRESIDENT: Twenty-four?

Q She lives in Seattle, Washington, and she votes.

THE PRESIDENT: You okay?

Q I'm fine, thank you.

Mr. President, we've talked about some of your achievements. Looking back over your four years, what was your biggest mistake?

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara, I think that the -- I think that in reaching compromise with Congress in 1990 on the budget act, that that was a mistake, because it undermined to some degree my credibility with the American people. But let me go back on that one, if I could, and say, look, what we were trying to do at the time is to keep the government moving, keep supplying our forces we'd moved abroad. We have succeeded in getting spending caps on the discretionary spending -- that's the spending that a President can control and the Congress can control. So we got that done. But in the final analysis, I made one compromise on taxes, and it -- in itself it wasn't destructive to the economy. There was a five-cent gas tax and gas prices were down after that was passed. So it didn't have a deleterious effect on the economy. But I think it caused a credibility problem at the time. So I would have to rank that as not a howling success, put it that way.

Q Are you sorry that you ever said, "Read my lips, no new taxes"?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'm sorry in that it -- that this one concession has kind of thrown that into a focus that has caused problems. But I'm not sorry in the sense of trying to hold the line on taxes. I had to veto a bill not so long ago because it contained yet another tax increase. And over and over again since I've been President, I have fought to keep the taxes down.

So the principle is all right. But as I say, that focus by that statement, contrasted with the budget agreement, has caused problems. But people recognize, and I think when you look again -- go to surveys -- well, presidents have to do this from time to time.

Q Could you say -- would you say today "Read my lips, no new --

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter.)

Q You want to say it --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, only because it -- look at the problems --

Q -- okay. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: But look at the overall record of standing up against tax increases. Look at my program on the Hill right now that says how to get the deficit down without raising taxes -- and that's through controlling the growth of mandatory spending. And I don't have to raise taxes, and I will fight against tax increases. That's what I'd say.

But please don't ask me to reslogan it.

Q Should the wealthy carry a greater tax burden?

THE PRESIDENT: I think everybody is taxed plenty. And this concept that you hear out of the Democrats every four years -- in fact, every day -- on Capitol Hill: Well, let's just shift and make other people pay more taxes, is not the answer to prolonged economic growth in the country.

The American people are not taxed too little; we're spending too much. And it is there that I have a big difference with opponents in this presidential race and with the United States -- the liberals, the Democrats, that control the Congress.

Q You obviously --

THE PRESIDENT: A big difference.

Mr. President, we hear constantly about the breakdown of the family in America. It is a recurring theme in the Republican Party. Yet, family values have gone steadily downhill from the time President Reagan took office; a steady decline for 12 years of Republican presidents. Why?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think -- surely you're not trying to assign decline in the American family to the Reagan presidency.

Q I thought I might try.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Nice try, but it won't work.

Q But for 12 years of Republicans it has been going down.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's been happening for a long time, the numbers of split families and all. What we're trying to do is to change that. We can do it legislatively to some degree -- reform in the welfare system. A little girl saved \$1,000, or a little over \$1,000 so she could go to college. Her mother was on welfare. And they were told, well, your mother will have to go off welfare if you're able to save money like this. Now, that's wrong. We've got to change these deterrents to keeping families together.

But there's been a decline. I'm not sure the media is totally free of it. Some of the filth you see out here in the media I think is awful -- just terrible.

Q What kind of filth that you see in the media?

THE PRESIDENT: Loud, vulgar language on some of these programs. I think -- and, you know, the media's --

Q You mean fictionalized programs or the --

THE PRESIDENT: No, I mean some of these stand-up comedians that kids listen to. I think we've gone too far. I don't want censorship, but I don't think this is a question of the party in power being blamed for. We advocate the strengthening of family values -- families staying together, families reading to their children. Barbara does that all the time. And it's very, very important. Staying off drugs, less permissive lifestyles. I don't approve of some of these programs that they have that just distribute condoms at random to people. I don't think that's the answer to it. Why don't we get in there and try to teach these kids that -- more understanding about what love is and how they ought to behave.

So there is a decline and it does worry me. When those mayors came to see me from the National League of Cities, Democrat and Republican alike, they said the major problems facing the city is the decline in the American family. And that's why we're pushing hard to get jobs into the inner cities through enterprise zones. That's why we're trying to say, hey, read to your children. That's why we're trying to say, have parents involved in education, have them stay off of drugs. It's a whole wide array of things that threaten family.

Q Mr. President, there is an impression that in the late '70s you were somewhat pro-choice; that you even considered leaving the question of abortion up to the states. Was there ever a time when you were moderate on the issue of abortion, leaning towards pro-choice?

THE PRESIDENT: I've always been for family planning. In other words, I think education in terms of population control is important. In fact, our administration, I believe, has higher funding for AID. But the abortion question, I don't believe, was really in focus back when I was in Congress working with -- heading the task force on earth resources; it included it.

Q You never changed your opinion? You never modified your opinion?

THE PRESIDENT: I think my opinion as the abortions have gone up and -- have some personal experience here of love for adopted children. My opposition to abortion has increased. I can't -- I just think it is too bad that we have so many abortions. And some people are using it as preventive -- you know, just because they don't want to have a child, they just go out and get rid of it. Some are saying that parents shouldn't even be consulted. And I'm sorry, Barbara, I opt on the side of life.

And so I've -- yes, I think it's clearer to me now, and I'm not going to change my position.

Q In almost every poll, the majority of people in the country are pro-choice. And some feel the question of abortion may be a definitive one in your election. How strong a factor do you think it will be?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know, but this is a matter of principle for me. And I wasn't -- you know, I'm not in this majestic office to govern by polls or do what's easy or to say what's popular. And I respect people that have a difference of opinion from me. But this is my view. This is my view. I opt on the side of life.

And I know there's a difference on this issue. And I respect the people that differ, but I'm not going to change.

Q And if it's a question of a single parent or abortion? I mean, you know -- I'm going to skip that -- I'm not going to get into that whole thing, we'll go on further.

In the sense of fairness, I must ask you the same question that I asked Ross Perot which was, would you knowingly have a homosexual in your Cabinet or appoint a homosexual to your Cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: We have no litmus tests on that question here and there aren't going to be any. And I would say, how do I know; and secondly, I say I do support our policy in the military, and I will continue to support it.

Q Banning homosexuals?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I will continue to support it. It's been that way through history, and I accept the recommendation of the professionals that make that recommendation to the President.

Q A lot of good people are getting thrown out.

THE PRESIDENT: I support our policy on that. And everyone knows my adherence to traditional family values. I might say that's the case. But there are no litmus tests on this question here.

Q A record number of women are running for Senate and Congress. And this year some are inspired by anger over the Clarence Thomas hearings and some are winning because of this issue. What effect do you think the Clarence Thomas hearings will have on the reelection of Republicans to Congress? You're shaking your head, what --

THE PRESIDENT: I'm shaking my head because we're getting into a little bit of a revision here. As I remember, a majority of women supported Clarence Thomas when he went to the bench and doubted the testimony of Anita Hill. The answer is, Clarence Thomas is going to prove to be a very good Justice on the Supreme Court. The answer is, I am delighted with some of the women that our Senate candidates are going to be taking on because they will be easier to beat. They're way over on the liberal spectrum and I don't think the American people want to go way off to the left. And that's where many of the candidates are proving to be.

So when I'm smiling, you're saying it's going to be so terrible. And I'm saying some of these guys are getting the best opponents possible.

Q And some of these guys are losing.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know about that.

Q I know the majority of the Senate voted for Clarence Thomas. Are you sure the majority of women were for --

THE PRESIDENT: Go back and look at the surveys on it. People did not trust Miss Hill's testimony. I didn't. I didn't have to vote on it. But I stand by my nominee. I stand by the Justice. And let's wait and see.

You know, it's interesting that you hear a lot about, we've got all these wonderful women candidates. Where were these women's groups in backing the good Republican women that were running for office two years ago? Bob Dole had a marvelous op-ed piece on this where he pointed out the number of women that were standing on the Republican side, and the women's groups were running for cover. Why? Because they're off on some special issue.

It's weird, but I don't think that -- I think we're going to pick up seats. So let's just see how it is after November.

Q Okay.

THE PRESIDENT: We've got strong candidates, men and women.

Q Your Vice President has criticized not just the media elite but also the so-called "cultural elite." I wonder who he's targeting? For example, you represent a family of six generations of fairly wealthy, university-educated people; you were, your sons and daughter was.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope he's not talking about me.

Q Well, I just wonder. Do you think his bullet --

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe he's talking about the --

Q You know, the bullet he's firing is hitting you by accident?

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe he's talking about the same people I talked about in the 1988 campaign. You remember, I talked about the "Harvard boutique"?

Q Well, what about the "Yale boutique"?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Not quite as offensive.

Q Awww. Of course.

THE PRESIDENT: But this was in context. This was in context of Michael Dukakis.

Q Are you part of the culturally elite?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, people ridicule me for taking exception to the Pledge of Allegiance. I still feel strong that you ought not to pass laws saying that you shouldn't say the Pledge of Allegiance. I mean, I think we should say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Q And you think people who are culturally elite are against the Pledge of Allegiance?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, quite a few of them. Sure. These symbols -- you know, I got ridiculed for standing up, saying, well, I really don't believe we ought to burn the American Flag. And everybody said, free speech --

Q That's cultural elite? Cultural elite are people who feel they should burn the American flag?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, they're culturally out of it, I think. I mean, they're elitists of the strangest sense. But, Barbara, I can't define exactly what cultural elite means, but I know it when I see it.

Q And it isn't you?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I don't think so.

Q Am I media elite?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm considered elite in some way because I was lucky at birth and had some privilege. But I've tried to put something back into the system. I've tried to serve. I served my nation in war, and stayed right with it. And I've served in politics; tried to do my part in business. And so I don't plead guilty to being out of step with the values that the Vice President is talking about.

Q Mr. President, am I or my colleagues media elite?

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara, you're certainly an elitist. How much money do you make a year? It's not in the --

Q Does that have to do with being elite?

THE PRESIDENT: Could be. Could be.

Q I see, everybody who makes a lot of money is elite?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as everybody that has had some advantage of a good education is elite in a certain way. But I think what we're talking about is celebrating values that are wrong. So you'd be innocent on that. You'd have clear sailing there.

Q You're only saying that because I have the questions.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I've got the answers, and I know you're fair in editing. (Laughter.)

Q Yes.

What do you think about the jokes about your Vice President; or, she said, is that too much of a hot potato?

THE PRESIDENT: Funny one. Dan Quayle is doing a first-class job. And people understand what he's getting at when he talks about family values, and he's got a tough skin. And he's been a good Vice President. And if he deflects fire from me, okay. All right. And he knows that. And he's a good man with a very good, decent family and he has my full support. And I'm glad -- giving me a spelling bee test everyday. Because surely they'd get me on one I should know what it is.

Q Would you --

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe he was thinking of the Chaucer version of potato.

Q Oh, uh-huh.

THE PRESIDENT: As one of the great Shakespearian scholars, I thought that back somewhere I saw that Falstaff spelled

potato with an "e". Maybe not. What do you -- fellow elitist. One of us should know --

Q I don't think that's -- one of us should know.
(Laughter.) But I don't think that's what the Vice President was referring to.

THE PRESIDENT: One of us should know the answer to it.

Q I don't think he said, oh, my, is this from Falstaff; one of us should. We'll both check it out.

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara, have you ever made a mistake in your life?

Q Oh, so many, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you? So have I.

Q Probably in this interview, leaving out questions I should have asked.

THE PRESIDENT: So have I. So have I. And that's the way I'd answer the question.

Q Any possibility of your making your Vice President Chief of Staff?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No chance.

Q You don't think that that works when he's a heartbeat from the President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it would work. That was first suggested by -- I think by President Ford. And I just don't think, given the responsibility that I'd like the Vice President to have. In this instance, he's running the the Space Council; he's running the Competitiveness Council; both very, very important that he could do that -- and be Chief of Staff at the same time.

You know, maybe somebody would want to try it, I wouldn't. I've been --

Q Ross Perot wants to try it.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. Well, let him try it. I don't think he'll have an opportunity.

Q We read a great deal of disarray in the White House. Will there be any changes in the White House staff between now and election?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I can predict. We may bring in some new people, but I have great confidence in the Chief of Staff. Do you know something? I just completed a swing around the country -- I do it quite a bit, as a matter of fact -- and not one single question was asked about the staff. I think people are focusing more on the big issues and the questions you've been asking about.

Q Well, while we're on it, though, what about the possibility of the Secretary of State James Baker or of your Defense Secretary Dick Cheney coming on to the White House staff?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there's any chance of that at all. Not discussed it with anybody. I keep reading the gossip columns about it, but there's no -- that won't happen.

I'd like to ask one or two questions about foreign policy.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Israel. Will you continue to stand firm on linking aid to Israel with the freeze on the settlements?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, our policy is very, very clear. And people -- let me put that one in context: what has Israel always wanted? They wanted to sit down across the table from their ancient enemies. And the others have wanted that, too. And because of our foreign policy, and because of our achievements, they are talking to each other.

Secondly, the American foreign policy has always had as a covenant that these settlements -- a little disconcerting having Millie go through here in the middle of this answer. But American policy has been that 242 and should be implemented -- the U.N. resolution, withdraw the secure and occupied boundaries.

Now, we have felt that settlements are counterproductive to peace. And that is the policy, and I will not change that policy.

Q You are now in the fight of your political career and your nemesis, Saddam Hussein, is still in power and, some people say, getting stronger. Does it bother you that Saddam Hussein could remain even though you may not remain in power?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't agree that I won't remain in power, obviously. But, look, we have to go back again. The United Nations took concerted action in the Security Council. And that action was: kick Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. Do not let aggression stand. Our military succeeded with a pride that just reinforced the spirit of this country. So our objectives were met.

Now, do I like it that Saddam Hussein, this brutal dictator is still there? No. Do I like it that some revisionists who stood against me when I had to move force are now saying we should have done it? Listen, if I had listened to them, Saddam Hussein would be in downtown Riyadh and you and I would be paying \$10 a gallon for gasoline. Saddam, himself, said the other day said his biggest mistake was that he didn't move into Saudi Arabia. And the second one, he didn't kill more Americans on the way out.

So Saddam is an evil person. He is brutalizing his own people. But it was not our objective to go in to downtown Baghdad and put American lives at risk in the process, incidentally, in some guerrilla warfare to get Saddam Hussein.

Q No regrets?

THE PRESIDENT: No regrets. But I have to say, I regret that he's still in power. Yes, regret there because he's an evil person who's brutalizing his own people, and someday he won't be. But it wasn't our policy to go in and get Saddam Hussein. And some of the people who gave me the biggest grief when I had to make very tough decisions are now saying, well, I made a mistake not getting Saddam Hussein. And that is simply not right.

Q Last question. To the people out there, some who voted for you, some who didn't but who say, we need a change, we need some one who can work with Congress, we don't know what we're feeling, but we're just concerned. Why this man?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I believe that what we've done in changing the world -- on saying to a little, you don't have to worry as much about nuclear warfare as you did a decade before or the

last few years ago. That's important. And that is big. And I want to take that same energy and leadership and change things here at home, and I can do it.

But I'm going to take the case to the American people. The way to do it is, give me more people that think as you, the American people do, that want to stand up against crime and drugs, that want to strengthen the American family, that want to see us better educated, and that means new thinkers in the United States Congress. And that's going to be the test and that's going to be the way I'll form it when we get into this campaign that's going to start in -- sometime late in August.

Q And you think you're going to be President again?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes, I do.

Q How certain?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm positive I will. And the reason I say that, I hope it doesn't come off as arrogance, because I am in touch with the American people. And I think the values that I feel so strongly about are the values most Americans feel strongly about. I think the economy is going to move and that will restore some of that luster and some of that innate optimism that America has. We're not a declining nation; we're a rising nation. And, yet, those who want to tap into this bad economic condition are saying we're in decline, we can't make it. We can make it, and we will make it. And we can make our cities safe and we can make our families stronger and we can better educate our kids.

And I know I'm the person to do that. And I've been tested by fire, Barbara. And I hope I've met the test to the satisfaction of the American people in very difficult times.

Q I think this would be a very good time to bring in your number one asset.

THE PRESIDENT: Millie.

Q Millie. (Laughter.) Do you want -- Millie.
(Laughter.)

MRS. BUSH: He should have said Ranger. That's the love of his life. How are you?

Q I'm just fine.

MRS. BUSH: Glad to see you. How are you?

THE PRESIDENT: I'd kiss you, but your makeup might smear. Am I staying here?

Q For a little while.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

Q For a little while.

MRS. BUSH: What do you mean, you'd kiss me but my makeup might smear?

Q He's always so charming, right?

MRS. BUSH: No, he is charming.

Q You know Mrs. Bush is your number one asset, don't you?

THE PRESIDENT: I certainly know that.

MRS. BUSH: I'm his number one fan.

THE PRESIDENT: Number one asset.

Q You know, one of the things I want to ask each of you because I see you both really looking so well -- you've both been through so much in terms of health in the past four years. How are you feeling? Are either of you on medication? And are all symptoms gone?

THE PRESIDENT: You want to go first?

MRS. BUSH: Both of us take thyroid because --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, both of us take thyroid.

MRS. BUSH: -- that's what we had was Graves disease. I'm glad you asked about George's health, because we have the most ridiculous questions about his health. Someone said the other day, I hear the minute the election's over he's going to have heart surgery.

THE PRESIDENT: Heart transplant.

MRS. BUSH: Heart transplant or something. George runs three times a week; besides that, he's up at 5:00 a.m every morning and he plays tennis. I mean --

THE PRESIDENT: I'm blessed with very, very good health, and so is Barbara.

Q So no symptoms now?

THE PRESIDENT: None.

Q Everything good?

MRS. BUSH: Everything great.

THE PRESIDENT: I guess I'm the only guy in America whose health records are as widely distributed. (Laughter.) If you don't believe it, read some guy in -- The New York Times doctor that writes this up. He knows everything there is to know.

Q Of course, Japan didn't help. You were wonderful in Japan. You were so composed and --

MRS. BUSH: Well, he had flu. I think he held his breath, too.

Q That was a battle --

THE PRESIDENT: It was a case of the flu and that went away.

MRS. BUSH: And you know, he rolled over and said, sort of, look, why don't you just push me under the table and continue with the dinner, which led me to believe, he was going to survive.

Q That Oval Office is such a pressure cooker. How do you help each other cope with stress?

MRS. BUSH: I laugh at him a lot.

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara comes over. Once in a while we'll have lunch here, here, over there. Grandchildren help. Got a

little swing back there. I look out in the middle of some serious business and I see Marshall or Sam or Ellie or Walker or the ones that live around here swinging there and yelling and giggling and pushing each other and chasing the dogs, and that helps. They come in, put their arms around me, give me a hug and tell me of some enormous problem that some toy got broken. (Laughter.) And that helps.

MRS. BUSH: Ranger certainly helps you. You love Ranger.

THE PRESIDENT: The boys check in. Our kids from around the country. Family is key to this. Family is absolutely key. And our sons have been magnificent, and so has Doro.

Q You mentioned Ranger. I understand that there was a presidential edict to ask people to stop feeding your dog because he was getting so fat?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we put out an order on it. We had several confess. For fear of their lives, they confessed that they had indeed been bringing biscuits right here into the White House.

Q Serious.

THE PRESIDENT: The Ranger trolls around. And he was standing at this door, not so many months ago, with a squirrel -- tail out of one end of his mouth; head drooping out of the other -- proudly showing that he is still a good hunter.

Q You must have been thrilled as he dragged in the --

MRS. BUSH: He was thrilled.

THE PRESIDENT: I was thrilled.

MRS. BUSH: He was thrilled.

THE PRESIDENT: They catch rats.

MRS. BUSH: We hated it, but he loved it.

Q Mrs. Bush, have you ever suggested that the President not run again? He was just --

MRS. BUSH: No.

Q Well, people seem to feel that there is -- they think, look -- yes. And they said that you have --

MRS. BUSH: I get credit for wonderful things I haven't done, and that's one of them. I'm absolutely convinced that George must be President again.

Q Even though you'd have -- he was just 68. You could have a wonderful life --

MRS. BUSH: I plan to have a wonderful life with him -- while he's 69, 70, 71 and all the way up.

Q But you want him to run?

MRS. BUSH: I think he has to. I'm happy anyplace with George Bush, as you well know. But I think he has to for the country's sake.

Q Is it very painful to you when he's criticized?

MRS. BUSH: Yes. I'm not going to lie to you.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. You're used to it now.

MRS. BUSH: Oh, I am not. I just fake and let you think I like it. No, I don't like it at all, and I really don't like it when our children are brought into it all.

Q There's been -- your children have had to be under the glare of the spotlight for the past four years.

MRS. BUSH: They're fabulous children. And --

Q Is that what hurts in particular, when the sons --

MRS. BUSH: Well, because it's so unfair to them and that does kill you.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What's the biggest misconception about George Bush?

MRS. BUSH: Well, first of all, I could think of 10 misconceptions. One is, he does work very well with the Congress. I mean, he's had 27 vetoes that have been carried. You can't do that unless you work well with the Congress. And they have gotten through wonderful bills -- transportation bill and all the ones you've heard this morning. And he is very healthy. He's considerably taller than people think he is. That's what people always say to us: "Oh, you're so much taller than we thought." And he's full of energy. And he's the most decent, honest person. I shouldn't say that in front of him, should I? And very funny -- not just funny looking. I mean, very funny.

Q Funny looking?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. (Laughter.)

Q Mrs. Perot told me that she never gives her husband advice; he doesn't need it, she said. Do you ever give the President advice?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I don't know whether he needs it or not -- but maybe he doesn't take it. There may be a difference. George Bush listens to everybody. That's one of his best qualities. He doesn't always take my advice, but at least he listens.

THE PRESIDENT: She'll give good, sound advice.

MRS. BUSH: He listens to everybody. And that's a wonderful quality in all honesty.

Q What kind of advice does she give you, and in what areas?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I might get mad at something that I see or read, and she might calm me down on that and say, don't overreact. Or she'll come back from holding an AIDS baby, and saying it's really important that people know how strongly we feel about caring for these kids and showing compassion for those kids that are suffering this way; and you'll have to try to show that a little more. I mean, it can be substantive or it can be just family advice.

Q What about urging him to give more money to AIDS? Is that part of it?

MRS. BUSH: Well, we give \$4.3 billion to AIDS.

THE PRESIDENT: And it's up to \$4.9 billion next year; and it was \$2.9 billion when we started. And so we have a very good record in terms of what the federal government can do. We've got our best researchers on it.

NIH, under Dr. Fauci and others -- Dr. Broder -- out there doing a superb job. Dr. Sullivan's fighting hard on it. But it is something that I think -- I think if I need to do more it is to get people to understand the fundamentals of this disease and get them to understand that it calls for compassion, it calls for love, it calls for caring. But I think that government participation is pretty effective.

You know, we're spending 10 times as much per AIDS victim as we are on a cancer victim; and that's fairly impressive. But we've got to stop this. This disease can be halted to some degree through behavior, as we all know.

MRS. BUSH: Of course, money spent on cancer also is spent on AIDS. That's how the AIDS virus was isolated, through leukemia research. So we're spending a lot of money.

THE PRESIDENT: It's not -- it's strictly a question of funding.

Q Have either of you known anyone personally who died of AIDS?

MRS. BUSH: Lots.

Q You have?

MRS. BUSH: Who have it.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure.

Q Can you tell me how each of you has changed in the past four years? How has Mrs. Bush changed?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I think we've both changed. But I think she recognizes that being President is not totally a bed of roses and that the -- Truman was right, that the buck stops there. So I think she has a very realistic view of the presidency. And that has made her maybe more vocal in defense of her husband. She hadn't changed in terms of caring for family. She still finds plenty of time to call the kids to get them around, to be with them, to do things for them. You remember the birthdays. So that part hasn't changed. But I think both of us recognize the importance of that more just because we're in this job. And I don't know how else she's changed -- a little better golf swing.

MRS. BUSH: (Laughter.) I just took it up. That's why.

Q Are you beating him yet?

MRS. BUSH: I'd like -- I think -- no, I don't even come -- he doesn't even play with me and I wouldn't play with him.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, wait a minute.

MRS. BUSH: I wouldn't because it would put too much pressure on him. You all follow him. You don't follow me. Well, I've changed, I think, is that I look at this as a very small window in your life where you can really do a lot of good things. And you raise a lot of money for the private sector. I really don't fool around on the government side. But I really have thought of this as

a wonderful chance for me to have made my life worth something -- pretty big. I mean, when you raise a lot of money for illiteracy and AIDS and the hungry, that makes you feel very good. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance. And I plan to take it.

Q How has George Bush changed in the past four years?

MRS. BUSH: I don't really think he's changed. But I'll tell you what I've noticed about him, which is that I am overawed by how stable and steady he's been. I mean, there's been a lot of things --

THE PRESIDENT: There they go. I can see them going out of the flight pattern --

MRS. BUSH: I can't believe we're freezing to death out here. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara had a cold, too.

Q -- yes, I went to visit my daughter. I never have a cold. Stayed in her little house and came home with this. But you'll have to tell Mrs. Bush what happened when you sat down.

MRS. BUSH: I heard. You were live. (Laughter.)

Q I guess that'll keep us very alert.

Now we have to have Millie walk in again because she wasn't here. Can we move her out and have her walk in?

THE PRESIDENT: Susan, call Millie.

Q Call Millie and then have her come back in again. I don't want to --

Okay, now she can come in.

Your friend is here.

MRS. BUSH: My friend.

Q Mrs. Bush, how has the President changed in the past four years?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I don't think he's changed at all. But my opinion of him has changed a little bit. I always thought he hung the moon; everybody knows that. But -- I'm embarrassed to say this in front of you, but it's true. George has remained so extraordinarily stable and steady through some very difficult times. I don't think anybody suffered more than he did when we had 500,000 young men and women in Desert Storm or Desert Shield. And he never changed.

THE PRESIDENT: Remember up there at Camp David? Gosh.

MRS. BUSH: I mean, it was a terrible time. And, yet, George remained stable. Still called his mother every day or every other day. He still would, when Doro would call or somebody would call, he still had time for all of us. I think that's one of his best qualities is that he's not volatible. He doesn't go up and down. He stays absolutely steady. It's a wonderful quality.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't overreact in the face of criticism. You can't let it get you down. You can't let it get you tense. And you just have to go try to do your best. I keep saying this and it sounds so silly, but I go back to mother -- my mother, now 91. When we were little -- do you best, try your hardest,

George. I'm President, and that's probably the best advice you can get -- care about people, be kind. All of these fundamental little things you learn from your parents when you were five or ten just make as much sense now when you're President of the United States. And particularly if the going is not particularly smooth, don't quit. You never give up. Finish what you start. Do the job.

I mean, it's a wonderful -- you get a wonderful strength from this. Some guy come rushing -- have you seen this poll, or people don't feel this way or feel that way. Do your very, very best -- give it your all. And have a lot of faith. And that's what you get from a wonderful family.

Q Just because you mentioned it, you said, remember Camp David. Was there a particular incident in Camp David during the war?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, there were -- I mean, there were planning ahead of time when we had all the generals up there, including the now-famous Norm Schwarzkopf. But I was thinking of the -- just before we committed the forces to battle.

Q Terrible.

THE PRESIDENT: It was kind of emotional.

MRS. BUSH: Well, and telephone calls. You know, that coalition didn't just happen. It happened because George Bush stayed on the phone night and day. I mean, we'd awaken at 6:00 a.m. in the morning to "Bonjour Francois." And at night we'd go to bed to the other side of the world where George kept those 27 or 29 coalition --

THE PRESIDENT: I think the human part of it, when a President has to make a very tough decision to send somebody's sons and daughters into battle, that is not an easy moment. Nobody knew exactly how well it was going to go. It was there then, it was there to some degree in Panama.

But, again, I'm not asking for any sympathy about it. I was just saying it was a very moving time. I mean, a very moving time for us as husband and wife.

Q Mr. President, I know you have a few other things to do besides sit for this interview, and we appreciate the time you've given us. And we're going to talk to your absolutely better half.

THE PRESIDENT: Am I being thrown out?

Q Well, if you want to take it that way.

THE PRESIDENT: Am I being -- all right.

Q Thank you, sir, for being with us.

THE PRESIDENT: Good to see you. Good to see you, Barbara -- Barbaras -- Barbara squared. Barbara squared.

All right, I'll go around this way.

MRS. BUSH: He could have gone weeks without saying Barbara squared.

THE PRESIDENT: Say something nice, Bar.

MRS. BUSH: Well, I've said everything good I know about you.

Now, you can -- now we'll really talk.

MRS. BUSH: Now I'm going to tell her the real truth.

Q Mrs. Bush, we asked the President what he thought went wrong in just this past year. But the magazine, U.S. News and World Report, quotes friends of yours as saying that you realized far earlier than the President's advisers --

MRS. BUSH: Spare me my --

Q -- the public was dissatisfied with the status quo.

MRS. BUSH: I don't believe that's true at all, you know, when you have five people who do nothing but badger the President. I mean, we know all the Democrats -- more than five, maybe -- and the Republican doing nothing but talking day after day after day about how awful George Bush was, plus a little help from the media, plus George being the only one who had a full-time job. I think it's pretty hard to expect people not to begin to feel badly about George.

Q The Republicans? You think his own party's --

MRS. BUSH: Well, certainly he had an opponent, Barbara. His opponent -- speak well of him.

Q Mr. Buchanan, yes.

MRS. BUSH: And there were a lot of -- that kind of thing going on for a long, long time. I think the Democrats had at least five candidates, and we had two. So there were six against one.

Q So you think it was more than the economy?

MRS. BUSH: I think the economy had an enormous amount to do with it; I would never argue with that. But, you know, exports have gone up 70 percent now? I mean, all the things are coming back.

You ought to talk to Mrs. Yeltsin and people from foreign countries. They say, why are Americans wringing their hands? Things are coming back. You're so much better off than we are. Or, peace is expensive. And that's true. We've done these wonderful things, but we've brought home hundreds of thousands of soldiers that -- put back to work, men and women. We've closed down plants that have to -- because they were for military defense.

Peace is not cheap. But our economy is coming back. It's okay.

Q How do you know all of the statistics?

MRS. BUSH: Well, because I've been out on the campaign trail for George Bush. Contrary to what you read about me, I have been out on the campaign trail. And I don't know all the statistics, but I also listen, and I read.

Q How much will you be campaigning?

MRS. BUSH: As much as they ask me. I mean, I'm so proud to campaign for George that I would go anyplace, anytime for him. And I do a lot of campaigning for candidates -- men and women. And, you know, we have wonderful women running this year. I don't want anyone to discount the women we have running for state offices, and all the way up and down the line.

Q You know, it's interesting -- but last week, almost for the first time, you were criticized in two magazines.

MRS. BUSH: Imagine! Lucky me.

Q Home free.

MRS. BUSH: This is a campaign year.

Q New Republic writes that you are the most political of recent first ladies and the least criticized. And Newsweek Magazine said that you have influence when it comes to appointments.

MRS. BUSH: I love that. And I'm going to take credit for Louis Sullivan, although I didn't -- I shouldn't get it, but I'm more than willing. I think he's a superb Secretary of Health and Human Services.

But guess who introduced me to Louis Sullivan? George Bush.

Q And then you pushed to have him --

MRS. BUSH: No, I did not. But I want to take credit for it, anyway, because it's such a good appointment. But, no, I didn't. George knew Louis Sullivan long before I ever laid my eyes on him. Then I worked on his board and saw what a superb president he was of Morehouse School of Medicine. But I did that because George said Lou Sullivan's a great guy and this would be a board you'd be proud to be on. And then when it came time to look for a good Secretary of Health and Human Services, he never asked me a word.

Q Do you have influence on your husband when it comes to appointments?

MRS. BUSH: No.

Q Hiring or firing?

MRS. BUSH: No. And he's never fired a living human that I know of. But in any case, had he, it had nothing to do with me.

Q All right -- not firing, but hoping that they might resign?

MRS. BUSH: You're talking about John Sununu, who I adored, and still adore.

Q It was said that you wanted him out.

MRS. BUSH: I know what was said. I did not want him out. I love John Sununu and I love his wife, and they know it -- I guess that's what counts. But, no.

You know, George Bush doesn't need someone to tell him what to do. And that, maybe, is one of the things you ought to know about George. He makes up his own mind.

Q How do you explain the phenomenon of Ross Perot?

MRS. BUSH: I don't even think about him, to tell you the honest truth. I really don't. I have to confess that I maybe feel slightly stronger than George does about investigating. I'm not quite sure what I think, but --

Q Investigating your husband?

MRS. BUSH: Yes -- and my boys. I'm not sure if I feel outraged, or violated. I feel slightly violated. I don't feel like that should sort of happen in America. But in any case, I think it's bizarre -- you know, particularly for someone who did come and spend the day with us and for someone who, at one time not too long ago, offered George a big job. I think it a little strange.

Q As what?

MRS. BUSH: Well, you'll have to ask George, I don't know. But he did when he left government.

Q Well, you must know a little bit about it. What kind of a job did Ross Perot --

MRS. BUSH: Well, he didn't even consider it. I think it was to head his oil company or something.

Q Ross Perot asked George Bush to come and work for him?

MRS. BUSH: And what I'm wondering is, maybe people don't say no to Ross Perot, and maybe that's why he feels this way.

Q And George Bush said no, I will not take a job working for you?

MRS. BUSH: Well, he was offered a lot of jobs when he left government -- you remember in 1976, or '77.

Q And one of them was with Ross Perot? And he said no?

MRS. BUSH: He said no.

Q Why?

MRS. BUSH: Well, because he didn't want to do that. He had many other jobs that he did do. You remember, he went and worked for a bank and he did some other things. Served on some boards. I don't know why he turned down -- he turned down a lot of jobs. I'm not saying -- but he did turn down one. It seems very funny to me that someone who you were friends with would investigate you. I can't imagine. It's bizarre.

Q Mrs. Quayle has said that Ross Perot is trying to buy the presidency. Do you agree?

MRS. BUSH: Until Sunday I really hardly thought about him, because I think George is going to be the next president. He ought to be the next president.

Q You mean, until you've read about the investigation?

MRS. BUSH: Then I thought about him a little bit; I'll confess.

Q Mrs. Bush, there is a feeling that you don't totally agree with your husband when it comes to abortion. Where does that belief come from that you have a somewhat different view?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I don't know exactly. But I've never talked about that, and I'm not going to talk about it now. And, you know, I would like to say, I know there's a feeling that George changed his mind. He didn't change his mind. He has always, as he said, worked for family planning, and we worked for Planned

Parenthood until they got into the abortion thing. But he hadn't changed his mind. He'd love to, I guess, if you want to be political. But he can't because that's what he believes. It's like saying don't believe in God to George. He believes that. I don't doubt his beliefs. And I'm not going to talk about what I believe.

Q Why won't you -- I mean, why --

MRS. BUSH: -- I'm not running for President.

Q Yes, but he --

MRS. BUSH: I have backed George 100 percent.

Q Okay. So that's it then, isn't it?

MRS. BUSH: That means I back George 100 percent. Does that mean I agree with him? Of course, I don't agree with him on everything. But I'm not going to tell you what I do and what I don't because it's the differences that you would highlight, not the things I agree with him on. And I agree with him on all the basic things that count.

Q It's quite common for families to disagree. Is the disagreement within your family? Can you tell us that? I won't ask who, I won't ask names.

MRS. BUSH: I'm not -- I'm not going to answer that.

Q Okay.

MRS. BUSH: And we've got a great family. And all of them support George; that's what counts. Oh, Lord, do they. I mean, they are wonderful.

Q Do you think that there's too much emphasis these days on the private lives of politicians?

MRS. BUSH: Yes, I really do.

Q Where does one draw the line?

MRS. BUSH: Maybe at the truth.

Q Well, but it's sometimes hard to know the truth. And there's been so much of that. We certainly have seen it in Mr. Clinton's campaign.

MRS. BUSH: It was ugly. I don't think that's important. I think what's important is what he believes.

Q Vice President Quayle disapproves of one-parent families. But the --

MRS. BUSH: I don't think that was true. I don't think he really knew the story for starters.

Q Well, it's what he -- you know, it's how the whole Murphy Brown thing began. And then people said, but, look, if an unmarried woman is pregnant, her choice is to be a single parent or to have an abortion. And there's the paradox.

MRS. BUSH: Well, the Vice President, along with the President and I, have never seen Murphy Brown, or hadn't at that time. But I think what he was thinking is -- I do spend a lot of my time in the private sector doing teenage, young -- just this week I went to something that Elaine Bennett has started, called "Best Friends," which is fabulous, which is talking to teenage girls and

telling them to abstain and to get through school and we'll help you. And it's a lot of mentoring and arm-hugging.

Then I go to places where I see a lot of teenage mothers who are not finishing high school, who have been into drugs and who have problems. I think those girls are just locking themselves into a life of welfare and poverty. So I think what he was thinking is, we should be helping these young women. We shouldn't be setting examples. Now, Murphy Brown, I modestly say, being a very famous TV commentator, probably makes a million dollars a year. She's going to have a nanny. She's going to -- she has all those things. And she probably has a lot of love in her heart -- who knows? But what we're saying --

Q -- in the fictional --

MRS. BUSH: In the fictional series. Well, maybe in real life, too. But what we're saying is, don't cut out grandparents and aunts and uncles and that support system. And certainly don't cut a man out of your life. If you can't help it, that's one thing. But don't just start out. We're saying to a 13- and 14- and 15-year-old little girls, don't start out saying I don't need, because the little kid does need a family. Whether it's the satellite, or whatever they call those new families, that's fine. But just make sure that you're not also saying to yourself, I can never grow up to be a TV commentator or announcer or whatever it is. You've got to finish school. You've got to learn to speak well. You've got to feel confident. You've got to stay off drugs. That's all I think the Vice President was talking about.

Q Don't make it seem glamorous to be a single parent.

MRS. BUSH: Right -- that's all. I think that's what he was talking about.

Q There's a lot of problems that -- that you think that's what it is.

MRS. BUSH: There are a lot of problems that go with it. And a lot of good people, like Oprah, and a lot of good people are working hard, saying, stick with us, get through school. Let's get -- and then you'll have strong, healthy, well-taken care of children. That's all. Murphy Brown was not a great example, I guess, because none of us have ever seen her.

Q Have you since?

MRS. BUSH: No. But I've since read they replayed the scene, and she opted not to have an abortion. But she could afford all those lovely things.

Q Do you and the President watch television? If so, what -- besides news? We know you watch every news program.

MRS. BUSH: I don't, but George does watch quite a few. But we watch the top of the news at night. Yes, we do watch. We watch -- we watch a lot of sports. Since I've taken up golf now, I'm fantasizing on the golf course every Saturday and Sunday. And we watch Murder, She Wrote sometimes. But we're very rarely home for it. But we do watch that sometimes.

Q What were your feelings watching or reading the Clarence Thomas hearings?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I know Clarence Thomas. And I know people who worked with him for years. John Ashcroft, the Governor of Missouri, told me that he was in a tiny little office with him with three other -- he and three other men -- for two years. He said he

never heard him say a filthy word. He never heard him say anything suggestive. So I went into it, I confess, believing 100 percent in Clarence Thomas. And I came out of it believing 100 percent in Clarence Thomas. And I think what we did to him was absolutely outrageous. All of that should have been done quietly, not as a circus on public television. I'm a big Clarence Thomas and Virginia Thomas fan.

Q You do not believe Professor Hill.

MRS. BUSH: No, and I'm sad about that. But I don't think she should have been subjected to all of that, honestly.

Q Mrs. Bush, Hillary Clinton said -- she may be sorry, but she said: "I suppose I could have stayed home, baked cookies, and had tea, but I decided to fulfill my profession." Now you have gone the other route -- stayed home, cared for your children, your husband, and put your children and your husband first. What do you --

MRS. BUSH: Well, I have put my children and my husband first. But I also have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for charitable things. I was lucky enough --

Q But you didn't get a -- you didn't go out and get a job --

MRS. BUSH: Well, I was lucky enough because I had a husband who could support me. But I didn't just sit home and bake cookies. I wrote a book that raised, as we all know, almost a million dollars for charity. In fact, I've written two books. I've spent my life being very lucky. I think I'm the elitist you're talking about, because I had a husband who made it possible for me to stay home and go to baseball games and take care of my children. But I also have spent a lot of my life doing -- helping others. That sounds so smug and horrible, but I feel a little put down when someone says you stayed home and just raised your children.

Q Is there anything wrong with staying home and raising your children and maybe even baking cookies?

MRS. BUSH: Not if you're -- all those things are good. But you've got to do for others, too. I think that's one of the big things George has done for this country is he's made us realize we can make a difference. I mean, I see programs daily where people give two hours a week -- Martha's Table, where Mrs. Yeltsin and I went. They have 70 volunteers a day. That's how they feed 900 people, tutor adults and take care of children. Those people give two hours a day. I think that's important. I don't mean they do every day, but maybe two hours a week. But they give. I think everybody has something to give and everybody should give something.

Q It interests me that you feel put down when --

MRS. BUSH: A little bit.

Q -- you just stay home and take care of children -

MRS. BUSH: Just is the word.

Q It's the just.

MRS. BUSH: It's the just.

Q Like there's something bad about that. Because a lot of women are just doing -- raising their children.

MRS. BUSH: And they should be. And that's great because that's their first priority. I believe if you have children, if you opt to have children, by darn, you ought to take care of them. They're the most valuable -- not only selfishly, but just for your country, for all of us. It's a real responsibility. Having said that, I also think because our country needs us now that we've got to help others. I really feel -- I've always felt that about it. I was brought up that way.

Q What do you think has been your greatest accomplishment? Your number one accomplishment, if you can point your finger on it, and the biggest disappointment?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I'm very practical. I don't ever spend time worrying about my biggest disappointment. I don't think I've had one. It's been painful. I mean, I'm not going to kid you about that. It's been an extraordinarily high, thrilling, exciting, wonderful time. But it has been painful. I mean, our children have been hurt. I know that.

Q Is that the toughest part --

MRS. BUSH: -- by far the toughest part. But, I mean, I have to confess I'm thinking I had a great father. And if I said to him one day, you know, I wrote a book that almost raised a million dollars and gave it away, he might have said, that's your greatest accomplishment. He might have. I mean, he'd never have bought it, I'll tell you that.

Q In an interview sometime back, you talked about having a severe depression when you --

MRS. BUSH: Not severe.

Q Well, depression --

MRS. BUSH: I had a depression when --

Q -- when you came back from China.

MRS. BUSH: Because I suddenly wasn't -- my children were all gone, and I had been such a part of George's life in China. I mean, we were together every single minute. I probably missed him. But then he took on a job that I couldn't share in as much because I can't keep a secret -- everybody knows that. If I know it, I'm going to tell it. And it was very brief, but I'm glad I had it. It's sort of like I'm glad I got into tear gas. I think it makes you more understanding of other people. I worked my way out of it. And I was lucky. But I now know I would say to people, for heaven's sake, go see your doctor. They know how to cope with those things. I didn't. But it took about six months. And now I'm -- as I say, I'm sort of glad I had it, because now it tells me that other people really suffer. I mean, not just partially -- and I think William Styron's book sort of tells you a little bit about that. And it's good for you to know that other people really need you.

Q Do you get depressed now?

MRS. BUSH: None. Absolutely not. I never had it again. I rather suspect it might have been my age, too, Barbara -- might have.

Q But physical problems you've had the past four years -- has that been very difficult?

MRS. BUSH: They've been so minor --

Q The eyes?

MRS. BUSH: -- I'm so used to it now. I am seeing single, looking at you now. But I see double quite a lot. But I feel great. You know, I ride my bike every morning and I did this morning.

Q Swim?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I didn't swim this morning because my wonderful people who helped me say you get a mask mark on your face -- please don't do that today -- television.

Q But you swim --

MRS. BUSH: A mile.

Q You swim every day in the pool, which is just behind us.

MRS. BUSH: Yes. I rode the bike an hour this morning -- with a book.

Q Put me to shame.

You keep a diary.

MRS. BUSH: Daily.

Q On the computer?

MRS. BUSH: Yes.

Q You know how to use a computer?

MRS. BUSH: Yes.

Q I am impressed.

MRS. BUSH: I love it. And I'm actually putting my old diaries on it, which is sort of fun because when you think things are bad this year, I'm now putting 1968 on my computer. That was a terrible year for America; I mean terrible year. We had assassinations.

Do you remember that year?

Q I do when you mention it.

MRS. BUSH: It was a terrible -- I mean, I'd forgotten what a year it was.

Q It was the worst -- well, the whole '60s. You remember schools closed --

MRS. BUSH: Well, but the --- '68 was -- Kent State happened. I mean, '68 was -- well, I don't know if you remember, but in 1968, we started the year with -- practically by the President announcing he was not going to run for reelection -- President Johnson.

Q Johnson.

MRS. BUSH: And we had the people's march on Washington. It rained for 40 days and 40 nights. And they got bogged down. And we had -- Martin Luther King was killed and we had riots in Washington. My car was rocked on a bridge one time. And, oh, I was so scared. I mean, feelings were terrible. People had very vulgar

words written on their shirts. And then Bobby Kennedy was killed. We had a terrible year. It was an election year.

I don't know if you remember, but I look at those years and say, look, always you're going to have problems. And just be prayerful; you have a great man like George Bush to help you get out of them.

Q Looking back over these past years since your husband has been President, as I say this, what has been the happiest memory? What pops into your mind?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I think -- you know, we went through all those weeks of body bags -- 50,000 body bags and all those things. The 100-hour war had to be -- I mean, that was a very big high for me because like -- I mean, I've lived with George and watched how able and steady he was. But he hated having those American young men and women over there. So that was a great time. There's no question about that.

Q What was your husband's finest hour?

MRS. BUSH: I think pulling -- I think George Bush has changed the world. I think pulling all those other countries, making a U.N. coalition. This was not our war. This was a war by 27 or 29 countries and the United Nations backed. I think he's changed the world because now one aggressor will not dare go into another country because they know the United Nations will stand up for the country that's been invaded.

Q I have one last question -- I going to wait until this is done.

MRS. BUSH: These airplanes are coming --

Q I know it. I'm looking at this as though, what is this -- 12:00 p.m. shuttle.

Mrs. Bush, last week you were kind enough to invite me to a luncheon for Mrs. Yeltsin. And I said, what should I ask your husband? And you said, ask him why he wants to be President. Now I know I'm giving you such a nice softball, but why should George Bush be reelected --

MRS. BUSH: Should I wait until after the airplane --

Q Mrs. Bush, why should George Bush be reelected to another four years as President?

MRS. BUSH: Well, I'm tempted to say because the alternate choice is so bad, but I won't say that. I'm probably the person who knows George Bush best in the world. And I would say because he has those qualities of decency and honesty and he's wise, caring. He's stable. I put that as -- I can't tell you how much that's impressed me about him is that he stays absolutely the same. He's not volatible. He doesn't shoot from the hip. He doesn't do what's always the popular thing. He just does what's right. And I think that more than qualifies him. He's been a businessman. He's served his country in so many ways. But I think maybe the best part is the fact that his personality, his makeup is such that it makes him a perfect candidate for President. He's a proven candidate.

Q Well, I know who you're going to vote for.

MRS. BUSH: You're darned right.

Q Thank you for being with us.

MRS. BUSH: Thank you.

END

12:30 P.M. EDT