

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Craig Hughes (CN=Craig Hughes/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

CREATION DATE/TIME:14-DEC-1999 10:16:17.00

SUBJECT: One more ProJo

TO: Marty J. Hoffmann (CN=Marty J. Hoffmann/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Ruby Shamir (CN=Ruby Shamir/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])
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TO: Melodie E. Greene (CN=Melodie E. Greene/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:

Raising the bucks: Hillary Clinton on the
East Side

That blondish blur in a brown outfit on the East Side (of Providence)
yesterday was New York Senate candidate Hillary Clinton, whizzing into
Democratic activist Jack McConnell's home for a pricey fundraising lunch.

When event co-chair Mark Weiner told me the take was \$108,000, Clinton
national finance director David Rosen gushed, ``He's speaking my
language."

In an Elmgrove Avenue neighborhood of drop-dead gorgeous homes, the
event was beautiful: Fir, tulips, roses, red tablecloths, gold chairs and
green
Astroturf lent a festive air in a heated tent. In caterer Guy Abelson's
buffet
was roasted boned rosemary and lemon chicken on herbed polenta. Did I
mention the lobster crab cakes?

The first lady talked up issues dear to many folks -- health, minimum wage
etc. -- and displayed political skills. ``She's very engaging . . . she
knows
how to make big issues resonate with individuals," enthused Myrth York,
former gubernatorial nominee.

Host McConnell marveled at how Mrs. Clinton made sure on her way out
that she posed for a photo with his parents. ``She said, 'Grab them both
for
me.' She went to the Secret Service and said, 'Let them through,' and
pulled them in. She's a cool lady."

But the day also had harsher realities. First of all, admission to the
fundraiser was \$1,000. Abelson, who spends a lot of time working to help
the needy, said of the tariff, ``It's expensive, but to get the right

people in
office, you have to do it, right?"

It's not just getting into office and it's not just New York candidates coming here. Sen. Jack Reed, an incumbent three years away from his next race, told me he just had a \$1,000 fundraiser with Wall Street types and others in New York. How much did it bring in? "I don't know. I'm in sales, not accounting," Reed quipped.

More seriously, he said you need to raise big bucks early to scare away some prospective challengers. And, for the race you do wind up in, you still
need so much you can't wait until late in the cycle to raise it.

And don't think New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Mrs. Clinton's prospective Republican opponent, isn't also raising money wherever he can. An amused McConnell got a Giuliani mailing that warned, "Every left-wing group in the nation will pour in massive amounts of money and other support to help her win." Giuliani asked for donations of up to \$1,000.

McConnell sniffed, "You don't even get lunch out of it."

Mrs. Clinton may have dazzled yesterday's guests with her political skills, but she didn't dazzle me. Journalists generally were kept out, although a TV reporter attended on a background basis. It made me wonder again how this woman, whose fear/contempt of the press is well known, will fare in the hurly burly of a New York campaign.

I would have liked to shoot the breeze with her about Al Gore's constant pounding of Bill Bradley's health program as overly ambitious, even though it still falls short of what she and the administration tried to put across.

And I would have liked to talk to her about the fact that she last week deplored the nation's don't ask/don't tell gays-in-the-military policy, with her
husband then echoing her lament. I might have asked her: Where have you and he been? It takes a Senate campaign to raise this issue?

It also was interesting that Mrs. Clinton, who's essentially abdicating her role as first lady, milked it enough to justify as official business her
visit
later yesterday to a school forum in Cumberland. This meant she could fob off to the taxpayers some of the costs of her trip.

There are people in Rhode Island who adore Mrs. Clinton and if they want her campaign to bring her here so they can give her money, that's terrific. But if she wants to meet with a group of school kids, can't she find any in New York? Why do we have to chip in so she can meet with some here?

M. Charles Bakst, The Journal's political columnist, can be reached by E-mail at mbakst@projo.com

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Lisa Ferdinando (CN=Lisa Ferdinando/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

CREATION DATE/TIME:15-DEC-1999 10:03:02.00

SUBJECT: FOX Special Report, December 14, 1999

TO: Dorinda A. Salcido (CN=Dorinda A. Salcido/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Brian A. Reich (CN=Brian A. Reich/O=OVP@OVP [UNKNOWN])
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TO: Emily Karcher (CN=Emily Karcher/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Gilbert S. Gonzalez (CN=Gilbert S. Gonzalez/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Maura M. Pally (CN=Maura M. Pally/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Jennifer H. Smith (CN=Jennifer H. Smith/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Rebecca J. Salay (CN=Rebecca J. Salay/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Kristina Wolfe (CN=Kristina Wolfe/O=OVP@OVP [UNKNOWN])
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TO: Jenni R. Engebretsen (CN=Jenni R. Engebretsen/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Natalie S. Wozniak (CN=Natalie S. Wozniak/OU=NSC/O=EOP@EOP [NSC])
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TO: Beth Nolan (CN=Beth Nolan/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Lisa Ferdinando (CN=Lisa Ferdinando/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Lowell A. Weiss (CN=Lowell A. Weiss/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TO: Julia M. Payne (CN=Julia M. Payne/OU=WHO/O=EOP@EOP [WHO])
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TEXT:
FOX SPECIAL REPORT WITH BRIT HUME
December 14, 1999

BRIT HUME, HOST, SPECIAL REPORT: Welcome to
Washington. I'm Brit Hume.

The differences between the campaigns of the two
leaders in the Republican presidential field were evident in what they did
the day after their debate in Iowa. John McCain headed straight for South
Carolina, where even more than New Hampshire has bet the ranch. George W.
Bush stayed in Iowa, where he, unlike McCain, is mounting a major effort.
Carl Cameron picks up the story from Des Moines.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CARL CAMERON, FOX NEWS (voice-over): A day after what many regarded as his strongest debate performance yet, Texas Governor George W. Bush was on offense, campaigning not just more aggressively for the presidency, but also more noticeably against his rival, John McCain, on the tax issue, where Bush thinks he has an advantage with Republican voters.

GEORGE W. BUSH (R), TEXAS GOVERNOR, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I look forward to having a respectful debate with Senator McCain over taxation.

CAMERON: Bush won endorsements from former rival Lamar Alexander and former Iowa governor Terry Branstead (ph), but his emphasis remained taxes and McCain.

BUSH: He's arguing that my tax cut is too big, but that's what primaries are all about.

CAMERON: Campaigning in South Carolina, McCain, who will propose his tax cut plan in January, said it's not the size of Bush's tax cut he opposes, but its reliance on budget surpluses to be implemented.

U.S. SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: No, I don't say it's irresponsible, but it's based on assumptions that I would not base tax cuts on.

CAMERON: The tax duel began during the previous night's debate. Bush knew he needed to appear more relaxed, prepared and presidential, and decided in advance to draw contrasts with his most serious opponent.

BUSH: That's why I have proposed a \$450 billion-plus tax plan--tax cut plan, which he called "excessive."

CAMERON: McCain, who is debating but not aggressively campaigning in Iowa, continued casting himself as the rebel Republican maverick. He trashed the ethanol corn subsidy that so many Iowa farmers depend on.

MCCAIN: Ethanol is not worth it. It does not help the consumer.

CAMERON: McCain went to South Carolina immediately after the debate for a health care speech endorsing HMO reform, medical savings accounts, more prescription drug benefits and better health care for kids. He managed to tie it all to his signature issue of campaign finance reform.

MCCAIN: No reform is possible until we give our government back to the people by cleaning up the scandal that is campaign finance.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CAMERON: It was no coincidence that McCain chose South Carolina for this speech right after the debate. He wants to change the subject from Iowa and focus on South Carolina, the primary that he today called "transcendent." McCain has pretty much put all of his political eggs in the South Carolina basket, aides sayin if he doesn't win there, he'll pretty much drop out. The Bush campaign loves to hear that, Brit. They have internal polls that suggest, like the rest of the country, in South Carolina they have a better than 30-point advantage over Mr. McCain.

Brit?

HUME: So Carl, are we looking at a situation where

by some time in February, after South Carolina, before any of the big states has voted, that this could be over?

CAMERON: Well, if John McCain is true to his political word that he has to win in South Carolina or go home, right now, despite his surging, in some cases, lead in the New Hampshire race, in South Carolina he's got a huge hill to climb, and the Bush campaign's confident they'll win there.

HUME: All right, Carl. Thanks very much.

And now the Democrats. If you were drawing up a plan for their eventual victory next November, you probably would not put gays in the military at the head of a list of issues to dwell on. But gays are an important part of the Democratic Party, and once Hillary Clinton brought up the issue and the president joined in, the vice president may have felt he had no choice but to declare himself. Senior White House correspondent Jim Angle reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JIM ANGLE, FOX NEWS (voice-over): Vice President Gore has now joined the first lady in repudiating the president's police of "Don't ask, don't tell."

ALBERT GORE (D), VICE PRESIDENT, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: When the policy was adopted, I argued for it to be implemented as well as possible. I think the evidence clearly shows that it has failed, and I think it should be changed.

ANGLE: Failed because gays have been harassed and forced out of the service. One man, Barry Winchell, was even beaten to death last July in his barracks. Gore now believes it's time to allow gays to openly serve.

GORE: I think that they should be able to serve their country without discrimination.

ANGLE: His campaign put out the word that Gore never supported "Don't ask, don't tell" and had urged Mr. Clinton not to adopt it in the first place. But only three months ago, Gore told a gay publication called "The Advocate" that he supported "Don't ask, don't tell" but would implement the policy with more compassion. That, say gay activists, was just an effort to keep from criticizing the president, that Gore has always shared their view of the policy.

ELIZABETH BIRCH, HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN: This creates an atmosphere where from the get-go, gays are devalued as servicemembers. It creates an entire environment where the goal is to ferret them out, to undermine them, to turn them in.

ANGLE: Though Mr. Gore has long since overcome any reluctance to criticize the president, his challenger couldn't help but wonder why he's just now addressing this issue.

BILL BRADLEY (D), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I'm glad to see that he's finally doing what is right. I believed that "Don't ask, don't tell" wasn't going to work from the beginning.

ANGLE: Bradley has consistently argued for gays serving openly in the military. Ironically, it is now the leading Republican candidate who supports the policy implemented by President Clinton.

BUSH: I support "Don't ask, don't tell," and I think it ought to be made to work. I think it ought to be made to work.

ANGLE: And Bush raises a question also raised by some activists (voice-over): If the six-year-old policy hasn't been

working, why hasn't something been done about it before now?

BUSH: That's what leadership is all about. It's to make it clear to commanders who then need to make it clear through the chain of command that we expect people to be treated with respect.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANGLE: At this point, Brit, aides say not even the president likes the policy, but he's apparently not going to try to change it because he seems to have made the judgment that he doesn't have the political capital to get a new policy through Congress.

Brit?

HUME: So how does it--I mean, how did--how did this manage to become for Mr. Gore something he would talk about now? I mean, does this help?

ANGLE: Well, it certainly doesn't help. One of the problems is, of course, he can't let everyone else get out in front. And as you noted at the top, you already had the president and the first lady. Bradley has been consistently in favor of a more open policy.

One of the problems here, say gay activists, is that this may come up and get Gore in the same position President Clinton was when he took office back in '93, and that, of course, was a disaster.

Brit?

HUME: All right, Jim. Thanks very much.

Up next, the latest on Bradley, and a judge rules Linda Tripp did not have immunity when she turned over tapes to Ken Starr's office. That story when we come right back.

(18:09)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: Former New Jersey senator Bill Bradley is hoping campaign finance reform will push him to the top of the polls with voters. It's an issue on which he's trying to carve out some policy differences with Vice President Gore to give himself an edge in the Democratic presidential race. As FOX NEWS correspondent Rick Leventhal reports, Bradley is now sounding a lot like John McCain.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

RICK LEVENTHAL, FOX NEWS (voice-over): Bill Bradley wasn't looking for money when he came to New York, he was looking for support in his effort to change the way he and other candidates raise money, telling voters he wants to give them more power.

BRADLEY: Money tends to set the agenda in politics. If we reduce the role of money in politics, then the people's agenda, ideals and ideas will have a better chance of determining the outcome of politics in Washington.

LEVENTHAL: Bradley told his audience at Fordham University he wants to outlaw big contributions from corporations and special interests, and he plans to cross party lines for the cause, joining hands in New Hampshire with Republican White House hopeful John McCain, who's tried but failed to get a campaign finance reform law passed by Congress.

BRADLEY: Joining hands with John McCain demonstrates that this is different kind of campaign. It also demonstrates the important symbol that it will take both parties to make this happen.

NEWT GINGRICH (R-GA), HOUSE SPEAKER: Let's shake hands right here in front of everybody...

LEVENTHAL: President Clinton and former Republican

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich tried the same thing four years ago with no apparent results. And the latest poll here in New York suggests Bradley should be more concerned with Democrats than Republicans. It shows the ex-New York Knick has lost his 9-point lead over Vice President Al Gore. The two are now in a statistical tie.

MAURICE CARROLL, QUINNIPIAC COLLEGE POLLING

DIRECTOR: Bradley's surge--this big up, up, up--has been halted. It doesn't mean it's stopped. It doesn't mean he's going to lose. But it does mean that the continual movement up in New York has been brought to a halt.

LEVENTHAL (on-camera): Are you concerned about the latest polls?

BRADLEY: No.

LEVENTHAL (voice-over): Bradley is clearly hoping to score points against Gore by slamming the vice president's record on campaign finance abuses, but now Gore is firing back, releasing a statement saying that Bradley spent 6,219 days in the Senate, more than 17 years, and announced he was quitting before pitching his campaign finance reform bill.

In New York, Rick Leventhal, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: A state judge in Maryland has ruled that Linda Tripp did not have immunity from prosecution when she turned over her secret tapes of Monica Lewinsky to independent counsel Kenneth Starr. Even though Starr had given Tripp letters and promises confirming their deal, the judge declared the deal really wasn't done until a federal judge signed it six weeks into the Lewinsky investigation. Legal experts say this ruling is destined for the appellate courts, but in the meantime the Tripp wiretap case moves forward. FOX NEWS correspondent David Shuster has the story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DAVID SHUSTER, FOX NEWS (voice-over): The ruling was a setback for Linda Tripp and her lawyers, who considered the immunity question a key opportunity to get the case dismissed.

JOSEPH MURTHA, TRIPP ATTORNEY: You know, this is a war of attrition. There will be battles that are won, and there will be battles that will be lost. But in the process, we just believe that it is within the confines of the courtroom that ultimately we will find justice.

SHUSTER: Calling it a technicality in the law, Judge Diane Leisure ruled that Linda Tripp's immunity agreement with Kenneth Starr's prosecutors wasn't a formal deal until it was presented to a federal judge. ``Unfortunately for Mrs. Tripp," said Leisure, ``the office of the independent counsel waited six weeks."

The judge acknowledged that at the beginning of the Lewinsky investigation, Kenneth Starr and his staff were scrambling and didn't think the law required them to ratify the deal immediately. She also said that Linda Tripp clearly thought she was protected. Nonetheless, the judge ruled the Tripp-Lewinsky tapes are fair game for Maryland prosecutors.

STEPHEN MONTANARELLI, MARYLAND PROSECUTOR: We're very pleased, but we've got a long way to go. It's not over. It's just one more step in a very, very long and arduous investigation.

SHUSTER: The next step for the state involves the question of whether the wiretap charges against Tripp were assembled

independently of Starr's investigation. Montanarelli himself took the witness stand. He said Maryland investigators found members of Linda Tripp's bridge club, who claimed she talked openly about taping a friend named Monica and knew it was illegal. Tripp's attorney tried to remind reporters this is just a pre-trial hearing.

MURTHA: We're here today not to deal with guilt or innocence, but to determine whether or not the state actually can bring forward a case that isn't filled with the taint of the Office of Independent Counsel investigation. So at this time, you know, we're far from guilt or innocence. These are procedural issues that we will challenge as we go forward. I anticipate that there are a lot of bridges to cross before we even deal with guilt or innocence.

SHUSTER (on-camera): The hearings in this case will continue throughout the week, but legal observers say that with the ruling on immunity, Linda Tripp may have lost her best opportunity to keep this case from going to trial.

In Ellicott City, Maryland, David Shuster, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: Up next, analysis of the Iowa debate with David Yepsen of the "Des Moines Register" when we come right back.

(18:16)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: John McCain debated in a state where he had little organization and little chance of winning. George W. Bush had plenty of both, but he was under pressure of a consensus view that he had done badly in other debates. Both men had reasons for going after each other the way they did. So how did they do? And how about the others?

We turn for some analysis to the veteran political reporter David Yepsen, political editor of the "Des Moines Register."

Hi, David. Welcome back.

DAVID YEPSEN, POLITICAL EDITOR, "DES MOINES REGISTER": Hi, Brit. Good to be with you.

HUME: Let's--let me ask you a couple of questions about Iowa Republicans, first of all, so people can understand. Is the ethanol subsidy really as critical to them as everyone makes it sound?

YEPSEN: No, it isn't. We've done some polling on that question. It ranks down in low single digits as something that's important. I think John McCain sets it up as a bit of a straw man, if you will. If you talk to activist conservative Republicans in Iowa, they care about issues like returning morality in government, abortion, the economy, tax cuts. So when John McCain beats up on ethanol, there are some Iowans that are miffed at that, but I think a lot of them simply don't care. Some of them even agree with him.

HUME: So he can't have done himself much harm but probably not much good, either, on that issue.

YEPSEN: No, I'll tell you, Brit, I think he did himself some good here. He's not been here. I think voters and caucus-goers admire a stand-up guy who's willing to take an unpopular stance. But you got to remember that many--most caucus-goers have nothing to do with the farm. I mean, only 20 percent of Iowa's gross state product is agriculture. Our polling indicates that only about 10 percent of the caucus-goers are farmers. So beating up on ethanol--I think it's pretty easy politics for McCain, but it does show him to be a courageous guy, and

I think it kind of helps him here.

HUME: Now, let me turn to these other issues you mentioned. You mentioned tax cuts. George W. Bush made a--clearly made a point of getting into it with McCain on tax cuts, noting that McCain had complained that his tax cuts were excessive, and so on. Does McCain or Bush--who gains there, in your view?

YEPSEN: Well, I thought Governor Bush--I thought they both gained, but I thought Governor Bush did well on the tax cut question. One of the things he had to do coming into this debate was talk to conservatives. I think he did that with the talk about the tax cut. I think he did that with the talk about his relationship with Jesus Christ.

And this is important to caucus-goers. This is important to activists. We're not talking about voters. We're not talking about all Iowans. We're talking about 120,000 pretty conservative folks. They love tax cuts. They--half of them say they're born-again Christians, and his discussion of his relationship with Jesus Christ--I think it helped to flesh out a little bit who Governor Bush is, what he stands for.

And after the first two debates, where he didn't do well, I think his performance here was important not only because of Iowa, but because of the national bouts. His people were very happy, and the Republicans I talked to today were fairly pleased with his performance.

HUME: Now, so your view would be that given the level of his organization and the fact that he remains very high in polls in that state, he does look to be a pretty strong favorite still, would you say?

YEPSEN: Yes.

HUME: In that state?

YEPSEN: Yes. The one thing he has to do is he has to focus on that organizational component. There are other people who've been working at this a little bit longer--say, Steve Forbes. Governor Bush has got to work on the organizational piece. And I think--he said so today. He knows he's got work to do there.

HUME: Are you suggesting that his organization is as yet incomplete?

YEPSEN: Yes, it is incomplete and...

HUME: Really?

YEPSEN: And he's got--he's got--there are a lot of--there are 2,100 precincts he's got to organize. He's got to--there's a lot of phone banks and mail and just a lot of nitty-gritty organizational work that needs to be done.

HUME: And Forbes is...

YEPSEN: But John...

HUME: And Forbes's is in place, is that--is that fair to assume?

YEPSEN: Yes. Steve Forbes's is in place. He has been working at it. He's been doing a good job organizing. His performance was kind of disappointing to his people. He was sort of literally off to the side on the screen, and he sort of--he was just sort of lost in that shuffle between Bush and McCain. And so I think Steve Forbes's people were not--not too happy with what--what they were able to produce last night.

HUME: So if we can project ahead a little bit, this appears to come down to McCain really not being that much of a factor because he's got--doesn't have the organization in place, Bush still ahead but needing to put his organization together. Is it possible that Forbes

could mount a serious challenge here, or is this--or is this now about second place?

HUME: It's about second place. I think at one time, Forbes's people thought they might be able to take Bush, but I think now they're going to be content with second place. There was some concern in the--both--both the Forbes and the McCain camp over just how they were going to overtake Bush here.

Keep an eye on John McCain in Iowa, Brit. The expect--he's setting up an expectations game here. He's bashing ethanol every--he's not organized here. Nobody thinks he's going to do well here. What I think they're trying to do, though, is to finish maybe in third place and surprise all of you folks in the national media so that everybody going into New Hampshire says, ``Wow. John McCain didn't even go to Iowa. He bashed ethanol. And he still finished third." I think that's very possible for him to do that.

He may not physically be here, Brit, but he's here on television. he was here for the debate. He'll be here again in another debate. So don't--I wouldn't take your eye off John McCain in Iowa just yet.

HUME: Really? Well, that's--but even--but isn't it critical that you need numbers of people out there making sure--I mean...

YEPSEN: That's--traditionally, that's been true. But I think let's not underestimate how the game changes and the power of television in this game.

HUME: I always thought that--David, I always thought that talking to you was such a good thing because you lived in a state where the power of this medium wasn't so great, so I'm--I'm--I don't know whether I'm pleased or not to note that that seems to be...

Now, did anybody else do anything?

YEPSEN: No, I really don't think so. I think Alan Keyes, Gary Bauer--I mean, they were--they were fairly predictable. I--but they didn't--they didn't get any particular special bounce out of that. Keyes is a great speaker. He's very persuasive and very powerful, but he was almost a little too angry, a little too hot in the--and I thought Gary Bauer was a little too aggressive in constantly attacking Governor Bush that way.

Now, I think--the people I talked to today seemed to put the real winners on Bush and on McCain.

HUME: And Hatch out of the running, I take it.

YEPSEN: Yeah. I mean, his second time he turns in the great joke line of the night, in the sound bite that we all enjoyed, and we get a big chuckle out. He makes quote of the day on ``The Hotline."

HUME: Which was that one?

YEPSEN: The argument about, ``Steve, I couldn't begin"...

HUME: Oh, ``lift your"...

YEPSEN: ... ``to lift your wallet."

HUME: ... ``wallet," yeah. That's right. That's right.

YEPSEN: Yeah. You know, that was a good line.

HUME: You know how I--you know, it's funny about that. When the minute Forbes said the word ``wallet," I thought to myself, you know, ``Memo to Forbes advisers. Tell the guy not to talk

about wallets," you know?

YEPSEN: You know, it was a great line, but we're running for president here, not for stand-up comic.

HUME: Right. Now, I did want to ask you a bit about Bauer because you noted--you felt that Governor Bush's reference to his faith and his belief that Jesus Christ was the great spiritual and philosophical figure, at least in his life, that that did him some good. It seemed to me that when Gary Bauer finally got around to that question--of course, he gave the same answer, but he gave it in perhaps somewhat richer terms. And I wondered if you thought there was any chance that might have had any impact on the--on the Christian voters out there?

YEPSEN: Oh, I think--I think so. I think Gary Bauer has a real following with those people. I think the--what Governor Bush is trying to do is he's trying to get a few of them. He's trying to at least be acceptable to those people. The Bush people have got one eye on this primary. They've got one eye on the general election. And it's a tough line they've got to walk. They've got to appeal to social conservatives without alienating voters in the middle that they're going to need in November. But he's worried right now about this primary. Governor Bush was much more aggressive, and I think he went out there last night, and he kind of bit back. He wasn't--he wasn't just going to...

HUME: And--and...

YEPSEN: ... be a pincushion.

HUME: And the refusal--last question, very quickly--the refusal to take the pledge that Bauer took on a running mate that would be definitely pro-life--no harm done, you think?

YEPSEN: No, I don't think so. I think he's keeping his options open.

HUME: Good. David Yepsen, always glad to have you. Thanks a million.

YEPSEN: Thanks, Brit.

HUME: We have details on the handover of the Panama Canal next, but first we got to take a break to do some news headlines. Don't miss them. Stay tuned.

(18:27)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: The United States has now given up symbolic control of the Panama Canal, but President Clinton says he still wants it open for global commerce. The president skipped the ceremonies in Panama marking the end-of-the-year transfer but sent former president Jimmy Carter instead. As FOX NEWS correspondent Wendell Goler reports, Mr. Carter was the only one who--was the one who signed the handover treaty back in 1977.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

WENDELL GOLER, FOX NEWS (voice-over): Twenty-two years after signing the controversial treaty that gave up U.S. control of the Panama Canal, former president Jimmy Carter witnessed its formal handover.

JIMMY CARTER, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: This is indeed an historic occasion, perhaps one of the most significant that has ever occurred in this hemisphere.

GOLER: It was a day of celebration for Panama, but it was a dark day for critics of the canal treaty.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE SPENCER BACHUS (R-AL): What we've done is turn our backs and walk away from any ability to safeguard the canal as a viable transit for ships.

GOLER: Fourteen thousand ships pass through the canal every year, fully half of all U.S. shipping. Over the past 20 years, Panama has gradually assumed control of the canal, and there have been few complaints.

EDWARD EMMETT, NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL TRANS. LEAGUE: It may not have been as great as it was when we were running it, but I haven't had people say, "Oh, it's a disaster."

GOLER: Panama was created through U.S. intervention and a desire to construct the canal. When Colombia, which owned the isthmus, balked at giving its permission, then-president Theodore Roosevelt armed a group of rebels and cut a deal with the new country they formed. Roosevelt began a pattern of intervention that continued until 1989, when U.S. soldiers invaded Panama to arrest dictator Manuel Noriega and bring him to this country on drug charges.

The U.S. has now closed the Panamanian headquarters of the Southern Command, which was the hemisphere's main base against drug traffickers. A recent raid by Colombian drug smugglers just 15 miles from the Panamanian border has raised concerns Panama might be vulnerable. And Panama's decision to hire a Hong Kong firm to operate ports at either end of the canal has been sharply criticized.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE DANA ROHRBACHER (R-CA): If we end up five years or ten years from now where because of our inaction the communist Chinese can put the Panama Canal out of operation during a crisis, we're going to be under the gun.

GOLER (on-camera): Treaty supporters often note a provision gives the U.S. the right to defend the canal, but one of the people who helped write the treaty says that Panama has never agreed on the exact circumstances under which that would happen.

In Washington, Wendell Goler, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: U.S. officials now say it was the arrest of a dozen suspected terrorists last week that prompted that State Department warning to Americans abroad. The suspects are all being held in a Middle Eastern country and allegedly have ties to Osama bin Laden. Senior correspondent Rita Cosby explains.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

RITA COSBY, FOX NEWS (voice-over): The State Department says planned attacks on Americans overseas may not have been thwarted despite the arrest of about a dozen individuals believed to have ties to suspected terrorist Osama bin Laden.

JAMES FOLEY, DEPUTY STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN: Suspects have been arrested in connection with this threat. We believe they are members of Osama bin Laden's terrorist group.

COSBY: Bin Laden is believed to have masterminded last year's bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which killed 220 people. U.S. officials tell FOX NEWS these new planned attacks include bombings, but also other methods. Americans living and traveling abroad are told to take extra precautions since the planned attacks target Americans at millennium celebrations and during the Islamic month of Ramadan, which ends the first week of January. U.S. sources say large gatherings in a number of countries in the Middle East could become

targets, especially Israel. But they're also focusing on other nations, such as Italy and Greece.

FOLEY: ... that Americans overseas should review their security practices, remain alert to the changing situation, exercise caution, be in touch with the American embassy and consulate and avoid large crowds and gatherings.

COSBY: Since American officials believe Osama bin Laden is behind the planned attacks, they have already told the Taliban regime, which is harboring bin Laden in Afghanistan, that the U.S. will hold the Taliban responsible for any bin Laden attacks on American citizens and won't rule out military retaliation.

KEN BACON, PENTAGON SPOKESMAN: We've demonstrated our ability many times in the past, and I think the government has made it very clear that it's serious in its dealings with the Taliban.

COSBY (on-camera): U.S. officials tell FOX NEWS that some of the individuals who were arrested have confessed to planning at least two attacks. The State Department says more suspects are at large, some with ties to other terrorist groups apparently working in conjunction with bin Laden's organization.

In Washington, Rita Cosby, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: And up next: Hillary Rodham Clinton tries to patch things up with Jewish voters, and Mideast leaders get ready for those peace talks. Stay tuned.

(18:37)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: Hillary Rodham Clinton is trying to undo any damage she may have caused with Jewish voters in New York because of a controversial appearance she made during a recent trip to the Middle East. As FOX's Molly Falconer reports, Mrs. Clinton has now met with representatives with a key bloc of New York voters for the first time since becoming a Senate candidate.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MOLLY FALCONER, FOX NEWS (voice-over): Jewish voters make up 12 percent of the population in New York City, and many were outraged when Mrs. Clinton on a trip to the Mideast embraced Yasser Arafat's wife, who just accused the Israelis of using poison gas against Palestinians. So a month later, in her first meeting with a Jewish group as a Senate candidate, it was damage control time.

CLINTON: People have to stand against any such anti-Semitic and wrongful accusations, but also because they are, you know, really out of place when we are attempting to further the peace process.

FALCONER: Members of the Orthodox Union received her remarks with lukewarm praise.

MANDELL GANCHROW, ORTHODOX UNION PRESIDENT: Mrs. Clinton was well prepared. There was a constructive dialogue. We had an honest exchange of views.

FALCONER: But some Jewish leaders think the first lady's damage cannot be undone.

DOV HIKIND (D), NEW YORK ASSEMBLYMAN: I'm a Democrat, and I represent a community that is 90 percent Democrats, and I do support Republicans sometimes. But when I mention Hillary in a positive way in my own community, people get furious with me. At this point, she is

in major, major trouble.

FALCONER: That's what her probable Republican opponent, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani hopes. He got a sizable percentage of the Jewish vote in his last election to City Hall and is counting on strong support in his Senate bid. His exploratory committee was quick to react to Mrs. Clinton's comments with this statement: ``The voters of New York will assess the adequacy of the way Mrs. Clinton has handled the situation."

(on camera): Giuliani is set to meet with Jewish leaders on Wednesday, marked by a fundraiser attended by the mayor of Jerusalem. Israeli officials have criticized Ehud Olmert for getting involved in New York politics, but then again, Israel's own prime minister praised Hillary Clinton after the Arafat incident.

In New York, Molly Falconer, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: Leaders from Israel and Syria are set for a historic round of peace talks Wednesday in Washington. These are their first land-for-peace negotiations, at least between those two countries, in almost four years. And as FOX NEWS correspondent Jennifer Griffin reports, the main sticking point is expected to be a piece of land that's been disputed since 1967.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JENNIFER GRIFFIN, FOX NEWS (voice-over): It took a newly elected Israeli prime minister who promised to end decades of war with his neighbors, an aging Syrian ruler whose economy is as bad as his health, and a U.S. president at the end of his term who wants to go down in history as the man who brought peace to the Middle East. These are the factors bringing leaders from Israel and Syria to Washington this week to negotiate what could be a momentous land-for-peace agreement that could stabilize relations throughout the entire region.

SHIMON PERES, FORMER ISRAEL PRIME MINISTER: There is a young generation that grew up in hatred and belligerency, in war and in danger. They are sick and tired of it, and we are so near really settling down all the remaining issues.

FALCONER: On the table will be the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau captured by Israel from Syria during the 1967 war. In exchange, Israel wants to end a 50-year-long state of war with Damascus and keep some Israeli presence in the heights to prevent any surprise attacks.

(on camera): Even with security guarantees, it won't be easy for Israelis to give away the Golan Heights. Many remember the Syrian guns planted in these hills, firing at Israeli farms down below.

(voice-over): Israelis are divided about whether to compromise on the Golan.

DANIELA SHAUL, GOLAN RESIDENT: It is suicide for Israel, suicide for the future of the Jewish state, of the Jewish homeland!

FALCONER: Others, like Ehud Rostiker, who's lived here since 1974, say most of the 17,000 settlers realize this is the price for peace.

EHUD ROSTIKER, GOLAN RESIDENT: We here are like a patient that has a terminal illness, and we're going through--everyone on his own and as a group, through the different phases, from denial to anger to acceptance.

FALCONER: Some are already paying their last respects to the Golan Heights, while the leaders in Washington look for a lasting peace for the Middle East.

In the Golan Heights, Jennifer Griffin, FOX NEWS.
(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: Don't go anywhere, folks. Our panel of pundits is coming up next.

(18:44)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: So it's the night after the big debate in Iowa, and you get to sit in on a bull session among some of the top reporters about what went on out there--Mort Kondracke, executive editor of ``Roll Call," Mara Liasson, in from the cold, White House correspondent of National Public Radio, and from the scene of the debate in Des Moines, Bill Sammon, White House correspondent of the ``Washington Times."

Somebody has to be outdoors every night, and Bill, there you are in the steppes of central Iowa. You got the short straw tonight. So...

BILL SAMMON, ``WASHINGTON TIMES": Mara's in from the cold, I'm out in the cold.

HUME: Right. Exactly. Now, Bill, what's the sense out there today from the various camps that you've been able to pick up about how it all went?

SAMMON: Well, the consensus seems to be coalescing that Bush came away pretty much the winner, if only by not imploding and not doing very badly, and by doing a half a notch or maybe a notch better than he did in the first two debates. The expectations were quite low after those first two debates, and for him to even give a halfway decent performance was enough for him now to go into the holiday break heaving a bit of a sigh of relief. You've got a lot of Republicans here whose worries are a little bit soothed now. I don't think he's out of the woods yet, but this was--he needed to do this to get through the holiday break.

HUME: A little bit better, Mort?

MORT KONDRACKE, ``ROLL CALL": Yeah, I think--I think better. Not greatly better. I don't think--I do not think that he still measured up--if Clinton would be the 10, that he measured up to filing the room the way Bill Clinton might in such a debate. I mean, I--he's--his responses were less programmed, a little bit more spontaneous, more sincere, not as memorized. But you know--but--but--and--and a definite improvement, so he's making progress.

MARA LIASSON, NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO: And he started to actually go after McCain on two issues, on McCain's tax plan, which he hasn't explained in the depth and detail as Bush has explained his own tax plan, and campaign finance reform. He came out saying that that would--that would really defeat the Republican Party...

HUME: Let's listen to a little of that on campaign finance reform. I think we have it. May take a second. But let's listen to it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MCCAIN: We can get the special interest money out of American politics, we can give the government back to the people.

BUSH: Here's my worry with your plan. It's going to

hurt the Republican Party, John. And I'm worried for this reason.

MCCAIN: Then how did Ronald Reagan...

BUSH: Let me--let me fin--let me--let--let me...

MCCAIN: How did Ronald Reagan...

BUSH: May I finish...

MCCAIN: ... get elected in 1980?

BUSH: Let me finish.

MCCAIN: There was no such thing as soft money then.

BUSH: May I finish? The late--the Democrat party's

really the Democrat party and the labor unions in America. And my worry is, is that you do nothing about what's called ``paycheck protection." We do nothing about saying to the labor, ``You can't take a laboring man's money and spend it the way you see fit." There's a lot of laboring people who are Republicans and conservatives, and yet under the vision you've got, or I guess you got, or people in Washington have, it's OK that they just take their money and spend it the way they want to spend it. I don't think it's fair.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HUME: And he later went on to say, you know, that our vision wouldn't have a chance or whatever. He didn't really spell out very clearly how it is that this money is extracted from the wages of--as dues and then spent by labor unions on politicians and political causes that the members have not specifically agreed to.

LIASSON: That's right. And one of the reasons...

HUME: But that's the issue.

LIASSON: One of the reasons that's not in McCain's plan is because he was forging a compromise with Feingold...

HUME: Right.

LIASSON: ... and that was something that he had to get rid of. But it does point out how unique New Hampshire is because I think in New Hampshire, this is an issue that does work for John McCain. For the rest of the Republican primary electorate, it doesn't mean much.

HUME: Go ahead, Bill.

SAMMON: I think it is a legitimate argument that union workers, at least a portion of their pay is going indirectly to support Democratic candidates. There was that whole--I think it was the Beck (ph) Supreme Court decision...

HUME: Right.

SAMMON: ... that's never really been enforced. So a lot of times, part of the dues that a union worker pays just by default through paycheck deduction goes to the AFL-CIO, goes to the big labor operations. And believe me, they're not supporting Republicans. So I think there is some legitimacy to his argument.

It also--you know, McCain--much has been made of his great relationship with the press, and they love his contrarian views on certain issues that break with the Republican hierarchy. Well, here's one where it's coming home to roost. Here's where, you know, Bush will pick up the conservative vote by opposing campaign finance reform and campaigns--and McCain's going to have to go with the more moderate thing. It's going to be a real clash there.

KONDRACK: Well, I--you know, what's interesting is that he didn't actually go after the point where McCain is most vulnerable, and that is the unilateral disarmament point. McCain promised...

HUME: Well, he did mention that.

KONDRACKER: Well, in the last debate, McCain said that he--if he were the nominee, he would renounce soft money for the Republican National Committee. Now, if Bradley is the Democratic nominee, that's fine because Bradley said that he would agree to such a deal. Al Gore's not making that pledge. In other words, the Democratic National Committee can collect all the soft money that it wants to, and the Republican National Committee, with McCain as the champion, will not have that soft money advantage. So it would hurt the Republican Party.

HUME: Now, let me ask you this. Do you see in this the beginning of--of the--of McCain being identified in a way that will come to hurt him here and later with Republican voters? He's now opposed, it was highlighted in this debate, to the Bush tax plan, which whatever its specific contours, is a relatively ambitious tax plan, and much more so than anything McCain is proposing. Now--now you have the issue drawn on campaign finance reform, and you have Bush making this point about his faith, which with Republican voters, and I suspect with voters in Iowa, perhaps in particular among the Republicans--that helps him. McCain did not echo, as did Gary Bauer, Orrin Hatch and others that. What about that?

KONDRACKER: Well, I don't--I don't know that McCain's strength was among religious conservatives anyway. I mean, he's a--he strikes you as a secularist, I mean, even though I'm sure that he would say all the right words, if asked. Bush--I thought Bush's answer, even though it's been criticized for not being specific enough and, you know, explained enough...

HUME: On?

KONDRACKER: ... was totally genuine. On Jesus Christ being...

(CROSSTALK)

HUME: Let's listen to it for a second. I think we have it. Let's listen to it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BUSH: Christ, because he changed my heart.

MODERATOR: I think the viewer would like to know more on how he's changed your heart.

BUSH: Well, if they don't know, it's going to be hard to explain. When you turn your heart and your life over to Christ, when you accept Christ as a savior, it changes your heart and changes your life.

MCCAIN: Obviously, all of our Founding Fathers, probably the most remarkable group of men ever assembled in history in Philadelphia. But my modern-day role model and hero is Theodore Roosevelt. Theodore Roosevelt was larger than life.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HUME: And Theodore Roosevelt was probably the father...

LIASSON: A reformer and a maverick.

HUME: ... a reformer and, in some respects, by today's standards...

KONDRACKER: He was a renegade.

HUME: ... a renegade in the Republican Party and a moderate.

KONDRACKER: Well, Mark Hanna (ph)...

HUME: If not a liberal.

KONDRACKE: ... famously--Mark Hanna, later Republican national chairman, famously said when he was being considered for vice president, "Don't you damn fools realize that that madman will be one life away from the presidency of the United States?" And he, of course, became president because of the assassination of William McKinley.

LIASSON: Don't forget...

SAMMON: The Christ remark is resonating very well here among the conservative caucus-goers, which make up--maybe 40 percent of the caucus-goers are considered conservative Christians. And believe me, this is the kind of thing they wanted to hear from Bush. This is one of the things that is putting their worries to rest, at least temporarily. One of the other things about that remark is that it didn't seem rehearsed. He was very reticent. He gave a little answer, and they had to draw him out. So it didn't seem like he was preaching. He was almost reluctant to go there. You know, you made a comparison to Clinton. Clinton--Clinton is a better orator, but he fills the word--the room with words. Bush was very reticent, only let a few words out, and they had to draw it out of him. I think that contributed to the authenticity of his remark.

LIASSON: Yeah, well, don't forget the question was "Who is the political philosopher or thinker who has influenced you the most?"

HUME: Well, wasn't it just philosopher or thinker?

LIASSON: It was...

HUME: I don't--did it say "political"?

(CROSSTALK)

LIASSON: He said "political philosopher or thinker." Steve Forbes started off, and I think he said John Locke. He took the question literally, and he answered it.

KONDRACKE: Right. Right.

LIASSON: And my first impression was that Bush didn't have a political philosopher or thinker, so he said, "Well, who's influenced me the most or who's somebody who's my hero or my ideal?" And then I think he got appropriately reticent to talk about it in detail because I don't think that people want to hear you--people flaunting their religious beliefs.

KONDRACKE: Well, but the next time it comes up, I would like to hear more. I'd like to hear that he has thought this through. I mean, I accept that Jesus has changed his way of looking at the entire world, including the political world. And "compassionate conservatism," you could say, arises out of his faith. But I'd like to--I'd like to hear him explain it.

HUME: Good question. We'll try to get you in a debate, Mort, and get it answered for you.

That's all the time we have for the panel. Thanks, everybody.

Stay tuned for a look at some of Carl Cameron's new friends.

(18:56)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: Finally, have you ever wondered why a usually sensible person would want to drop everything, leave home and hearth to head off to the wilds of such places as New Hampshire and Iowa and December and January to slog around listening to politicians? Well, being

a political correspondent does have its moments of glory. Sort of.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CAMERON: Do you watch? Do you watch FOX?

FEMALE FAN: You have no idea, Carl!

CAMERON: Really?

FEMALE FAN: No idea! It's such an honor to meet you!

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HUME: That Carl, he makes me jump up and down, too,
sometimes.

And that's SPECIAL REPORT for this time. Please come
again next time, and in the meantime, stay tuned for news, fair and
balanced, as always.

END

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1 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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December 15, 1999, Wednesday, Home Edition

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. 20A

LENGTH: 442 words

HEADLINE: Editorials: Reunite Cuban family;
The administration has let politics delay the return of a son to his father.

BYLINE: Staff

SOURCE: CONSTITUTION

BODY:
Enough of the dallying. The Clinton administration and the Immigration and Naturalization Service have fumbled the case of Elian Gonzales far too long.
Law, custom and common decency demand the 6-year-old boy should be reunited with his father in Cuba without further delay.

If Elian had been a refugee from any other wretched land whose inhabitants try to sneak into this country, there's no question he would be back in his homeland already. The only reason the Clinton administration and the INS have dithered over Elian's situation is politics.

They behave as if they are fearful of offending anti-Castro Cubans who have shamelessly turned Elian into a poster boy for their cause, framing the question of his status in ideological terms: Shall he grow up in freedom or under tyranny? Shall he share in America's bounty or suffer deprivation in Cuba?

Let's look at this in human terms. Elian suffered a grievous loss when his mother and stepfather drowned last month during the treacherous sea voyage to the United States. His current guardians are a great-uncle and great-aunt he never knew until now. Granted, he has been showered with gifts and treated to trips to Florida's grandest amusement parks, but he must be bewildered at all the media and exile community attention.

The right thing to do is send him back to people who have loved him all his life: his father and both sets of grandparents. Florida law would indicate otherwise if Elian's father were a neglectful or abusive parent, but he isn't. In fact, an out-of-the-ordinary INS interview of Juan Miguel Gonzales this week showed him to be a caring, attentive dad who routinely looked after Elian five days a week before Gonzales' ex-wife decided to flee Cuba.

The most fervent of the Castro haters in this country will complain that sending Elian back condemns him to a life of want and subjugation. Their bleak scenario doesn't have to work out that way.

Fidel Castro's Marxist dictatorship must bear most of the blame for the fact that Cubans subsist on an average of 1,200 calories a day and are chronically short of medicines, electricity and other essentials. But the 40- year U.S. embargo has also been a powerful drag on Cuba's economy, compounding the damage Castro has done and, by the way, giving him a handy excuse for his regime's

failings.

Ending the embargo will help alleviate Cuba's plight. Opening up Cuba to tourists, family visits, cultural exchanges, even investment will hasten the day Castro's creaking regime is swept away by a Cuban population energized and inspired by contact with the outside world. May Elian be one of that number.

GRAPHIC: Photo
Elian Gonzales

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

2 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The Atlanta Journal and Constitution

December 15, 1999, Wednesday, Home Edition

SECTION: News; Pg. 3A

LENGTH: 661 words

HEADLINE: Cuban inmates take hostages at Louisiana jail;
INS prisoners demand right to leave U.S.

BYLINE: Anne Rochell Konigsmark, Staff

SOURCE: CONSTITUTION

DATELINE: New Orleans

BODY:

At least six Cuban prisoners, five of whom are federal immigration detainees, continued to hold a warden and two sheriff's deputies hostage Tuesday in a south Louisiana jail surrounded by heavily armed police and federal agents.

The hostage-takers, reportedly joined by at least two other inmates Tuesday, released a fourth hostage --- another deputy --- but were threatening Tuesday morning to kill the remaining hostages unless their demands were met within 72 hours.

Being held at knifepoint were Warden Todd Louvierre and deputies Jolie Sonnier and Brandon Boudreaux.

"Everybody is working very hard in this situation to bring about a

peaceful
resolution," said Mike Gilhooly, a spokesman for the Immigration and
Naturalization Service, which is responsible for at least 60 Cubans being
held
at the jail.

The incident at St. Martin's Parish jail in St. Martinville focused
attention
on the longstanding issue of Cuban refugees held in jails around the
United
States. And it comes at a tense time in U.S.-Cuban relations because of
the
custody battle over 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez, a refugee rescued from the
sea
two weeks ago.

His mother and stepfather died in the waters off Florida as they tried
to
flee Cuba with Elian. Elian's father and the Cuban government want the
boy back.
Relatives here want him to stay.

Five of the Cubans who took over the jail Tuesday were being held there
by
the INS. The sixth was held on state charges.

Nationwide, 2,400 Cubans still are imprisoned by INS in a legal and
diplomatic standoff that grew out of the Marielito boatlifts of the
1980s. Most
are refugees who committed crimes either here or in Cuba.

Cuba, which U.S. officials accused of emptying its jails during the
boatlifts, resists taking back the detainees, and laws often bar their
release
here.

"If we don't believe they're going to stay out of crime, we don't
release
them," Gilhooy said.

The Cubans in St. Martinville took four hostages as they were leaving a
rooftop recreation area Monday afternoon. They said they want to be set
free and
sent to Cuba or another country.

At least one of the five INS prisoners has been in jail as long as 13
years,
according to a prisoner who spoke with a Spanish-speaking television
reporter.

The INS would not give details of their cases. Officials identified the
five
as Gerado Santana of Miami, Elisalte Orta of Sacramento, Calif., and Jonne
Ponte, Juan Miranda and Roberto Grana Villar, whose hometowns were not

given.

The prisoner being held on state charges was not identified.

In Washington, State Department spokesman James Foley said the U.S. continues to seek a solution to the long-standing problem of detainees but little progress has been made.

"We have raised the issue of the return of criminal excludables, as they're called, with the Cubans during each round of the migration talks since 1984," he said. "The Cuban government has not agreed to accept the return of such individuals."

Human rights groups have argued for years that the INS system for reviewing the prisoners is inefficient and flawed.

"Because they are immigrants they are being treated differently," said Ruby Feria of Mothers for Freedom, a Miami support group for Cuban detainees.

Frustration among detainees has spawned at least three prison riots over the years, including one at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary in November 1987. That same year, rioting detainees burned to the ground a holding facility in Oakdale, La., about 50 miles from St. Martinville.

In Atlanta, Cuban inmates took 89 hostages and held the facility for 12 days. After negotiations, some of the Cubans were released and some were sent back to Cuba.

But many remained in prison.

In 1991, Cuban inmates in Talladega County, Ala., held hostages in a facility for nine days. That siege ended when the FBI stormed the prison.

ON THE WEB: For more on the prison disturbance in Louisiana:
> www.ajc.com/links/

GRAPHIC: Photo

Deputies remove an inmate from St. Martin's Parish jail in Louisiana on Tuesday, clearing out the area after Cuban detainees took three hostages. The Cubans are demanding to be let go. / BILL HABER / Associated Press

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

3 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The Christian Science Monitor

December 15, 1999, Wednesday

SECTION: OPINION; COLUMN; Pg. 9

LENGTH: 786 words

HEADLINE: How little boy riles Castro

BYLINE: John Hughes

BODY:

In Cuba, he has never tasted chocolate. When he turns seven, his milk ration would be discontinued. He would face a life of economic hardship and political uncertainty.

And so, in search of freedom, his mother and stepfather packed him with other refugees from Fidel Castro's communist domain into a little aluminum motorboat and set out for Florida.

The boat capsized, the mother and stepfather and other passengers drowned. Elian Gonzales, aged six, drifted for two days on an inner tube - dazed, frightened, alone - in the open sea before being picked up by American rescuers, then turned over to Cuban-American relatives.

A happy ending and a merry Christmas, right?

Well not exactly, because Elian has become a highly politicized pawn in Mr. Castro's bitter propaganda war with the United States. Thousands of Cubans, under the direction of their block captains and party officials, have been demonstrating in Havana's streets, demanding Elian's return. The boy's natural father says he wants the boy back and has larded his statements with anti-American rhetoric.

Meanwhile, the boy's Cuban-American relatives in Florida, supported by the sizeable Cuban-American community, want him granted political asylum to

stay
with them and enjoy a life of freedom. His father may be in Cuba, they
reason,
but didn't his mother give her life so that her son could live in America?

The struggle is complicated by the issue of parental rights. The father,
Juan
Miguel Gonzalez, says he had joint custody of the child. US immigration
officials are investigating just what his rights were.

For reasonable men, there would be a third option besides US government
agencies
simply deciding whether Elian should stay or go back to Cuba. It would be
to
bring the father, his second wife, and his current family, to the US.
Here, free
from Cuban government coercion, and without the threat of his current
family
being held hostage in Cuba, he could meet with Elian and decide what
would be
best for the boy. Some think Mr. Gonzales would himself want to remain in
America.

But that, of course, is improbable. Mr. Castro is unlikely to permit
Elián's
father to come to America. He's even less likely to permit his family to
accompany him.

Thus the real villain in all this is Castro, who created the miserable
society
from which Elian's mother was fleeing, who has denied freedom of speech
to his
subjects, and who forbids them to depart their island prison.

In a September commentary on Castro's character, London's Financial Times
found
him showing signs of "distinctly obsessive behavior." A random dope test
on him,
suggested the respected newspaper, might show, in addition to the "known
substances of durability, stubbornness and veracity, strong traces of
performance-enhancing paranoia."

For the fading Marxist egomaniac, 1999 has done little to enhance his
international reputation. That may be why he has elevated the tragedy of a
six-year-old boy to an international dispute with the US.

The year began badly for Cuba when the United Nations Human Rights
Commission,
upon a Czech resolution, agreed to monitor human rights abuses in Cuba,
and
establish a structure to do this.

Then a July meeting of Latin American and European heads of state in Rio de
Janeiro gave Castro short shrift when he attacked European states for

their lack
of support for Yugoslavia in its confrontation with Kosovo and NATO.

In August, Castro exploded over the treatment of Cuban athletes at the Pan American Games in Winnipeg, Canada. Four of them were disqualified for drug use, their gold medals were withdrawn, and Cuba finished second to the US. In a paroxysm of rage against the US, Castro denounced Canada as the "second enemy to the north." He was even further agitated by the defection of eight or nine of his athletes.

Then Castro abruptly withdrew the Cuban boxing squad from the world amateur boxing championships in Houston because he disagreed with several decisions by the referees.

Finally, at the Ibero-American summit in Havana in November, Castro took it on the nose again when Cuba's human rights record got more attention than the conference's official topic: globalization. A few countries boycotted the summit. Others made a point of seeking out Cuban dissidents and supporting them.

Too bad that six-year-old Elian Gonzalez should have to suffer because Mr. Castro is having a bad-hair year.

*John Hughes, a former editor of the Monitor, is editor and chief operating officer of the Deseret News, in Salt Lake City.

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LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 1999

4 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The Legal Intelligencer

December 15, 1999 Wednesday

SECTION: REGIONAL NEWS ; card; Pg. 3

LENGTH: 3463 words

HEADLINE: Cardinal Rules

BYLINE: By William C. Smith, Special to the Legal

BODY:

A Conversation with Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, Esq.

There are a few dozen attorneys in this city who wear black robes to work, demand the attention of litigants and lawyers who appear before them and are called "Your Honor."

But there's only one lawyer in Philadelphia who wears a red robe on the job, commands the respect of thousands who have never met him and is called "Your Eminence." Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua, 75, is the leader of 1.35 million Catholics in Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware counties. He also holds a 1975 J.D. degree from St. John's University Law School in Queens, N.Y. In 1956, he received a doctorate in canon law from Rome's Gregorian University. While serving as a canon lawyer and priest in the Brooklyn Diocese, Bevilacqua established the diocese's Catholic Migration and Refugee office, where he trained and supervised paralegals who represented immigrants before the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. He taught immigration law at St. John's Law School from 1977 to 1980. Bevilacqua's legal publications include articles on the constitutionality of tuition vouchers, 76 Marq. L. Rev. 487 (1993), and the confidentiality of the confessional, 29 Loy. L.A. L. Rev. 1733 (1996). Since coming to Philadelphia in 1988, the lawyer in charge of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has spoken out on a range of controversial legal topics. Bevilacqua has consistently championed the Catholic church's pro-life position, both in the pulpit and in the political arena. He has called abortion the "willful murder of a living, innocent, defenseless human being," and has been unequivocal in condemning the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. In January 1998, Bevilacqua marked the 25th anniversary of Roe [with a "Mass for Life" at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul in Center City, where he vowed that that church's crusade against abortion would continue "until we have changed our laws and changed the hearts of our fellow Americans." Toward that

end, the archdiocese distributed 400,000 postcards addressed to Sens. Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, urging them to overturn President Clinton's veto of a ban on late term, so-called "partial birth" abortions. Bevilacqua also led 6,500 local Catholics on the 1998 "March for Life" in Washington, D.C.]Bevilacqua's, pro-life, stance includes opposition to the death penalty. In April, the cardinal joined the other U.S. bishops in a joint Good Friday statement calling for "an end to the death penalty in our land." "If every member of the Catholic faith took one small measure toward ending the death penalty, one loud voice of opposition would be heard," he said. "On the day when we recall the execution of Jesus Christ, the faithful should give careful consideration to their own position on this issue." In July 1995, Bevilacqua publicly implored Gov. Tom Ridge to cancel the then-scheduled execution dates of five Pennsylvania inmates including journalist/convicted cop-killer Mumia Abu-Jamal. He noted that there are "many other modern methods within our penal system to punish guilty persons without taking human life." Bevilacqua has also spoken out on political and legal matters beyond the pro-life agenda opposing racism as an "evil that violates Christ's command to love your neighbor as yourself," condemning Philadelphia's domestic partnership law as an effort to "establish a legitimacy for homosexual unions" and supporting private school vouchers as needed for the "equal treatment" of Catholic parents and students. Earlier this month, William Smith, a Philadelphia lawyer and former assistant editor of The Legal Intelligencer, interviewed Cardinal Bevilacqua at the archdiocese's headquarters in Center City. In a wide-ranging conversation, the cardinal discussed his dual careers in law and the priesthood, the obligations of faithful Catholic lawyers and the church's position on ongoing legal controversies.

Many attorneys are probably unaware that you're also a lawyer, with degrees in both civil and canon law. Why did you choose to become a lawyer?

In both cases, I was assigned. At the time [of my canon law training], you didn't ask for it, you were just told. But I liked it. ... While I was

working
as a canon lawyer in the bishop's office in the Brooklyn diocese, I
became very
interested in immigrants [and] the bishop asked me to set up a diocesan
office
for migrants and refugees. This was to help immigrants pastorally, from a
spiritual point of view, because most of them were Catholics from South
America
or elsewhere. However, I found that so many of them were undocumented. I
told
the bishop, 'I can't do much for them pastorally unless we take care of
their
legal problems.' I suggested to him that we set up paralegal offices and
said
that someone has to be the lawyer. He asked me to do it. While I was doing
my
work, I went to St. John's Law School. Then I set up seven offices
throughout
the diocese and trained paralegals, who handled close to 4,000 cases a
month.

Did you practice before the INS?

No. I could, theoretically, but I didn't consider it appropriate, and I
had
so many other things to do. The paralegals went to the courts, [since] the
immigration law allows paralegals to represent clients.

But you've kept up your bar membership?

I have. I'm admitted in New York State and Pennsylvania ... and the
Supreme
Court of the United States. But I don't get more money for it (laughs).

How has being a lawyer affected your work as a priest, and now as a
cardinal?

Many of the issues we deal with as bishops involve civil implications. I
recently chaired a subcommittee [of bishops] to write a document on the
relation
of the church to the Catholic universities. Being a civil lawyer helped
me a
great deal when we drew up the norms to implement the general document. We
always
had to keep in mind the legal implications, both of funding for students
and of
direct funding to the universities. We had to be careful about anything
that
might increase the challenge of being pervasively sectarian. Plus [we had
to
consider] the hiring practices and the requirements of the canon law that
certain [theology] professors had to get a certain certification [from
the local
bishop]. Did that interfere with accreditation [or] academic freedom,

which
would in turn endanger funding? In other issues over the years since I've
been a
bishop, the civil and canonical aspects have touched each other a number
of
times.

Your role as a bishop is obviously different from being a CEO of a
corporation, but in some ways it seems similar. You have a large staff and
operations throughout a very large area. You have a headquarters in the
Vatican,
like a corporate subsidiary might report to a headquarters office
elsewhere. Has
your legal background helped you to deal with the church administration
issues?

I think it's helped me a great deal. First of all, the law likes
structure.
Some define law as a "cowhide" it's that which keeps everything else
together it
keeps the whole cow together. Structure is very important to me. That has
helped
me in this archdiocese. When I came here, I realized it needed a new type
of
structure based on Vatican Council II, which had not as yet been carried
out.
And so my legal training helped me in setting up a very logical
structure, but
in accordance with the spiritual element. The structure became the
skeleton. The
rest of the spiritual life, the church life, was the fleshing of that. My
whole
attitude is influenced by the law being very logical, getting to the point
rather quickly and to be very orderly in my presentation. A lot of that
has come
from my legal training as a civil lawyer.

Do you think it makes you a more exacting client for Stradley Ronon, or
the
other firms that represent you?

(laughs) Sometimes. It makes me exacting on my staff too. I'll tell
them,
'Wait a minute! You're using a word there that has all kinds of meanings.
What
do you mean by this?' It's almost unconscious. I demand clarity. Say what
you
mean, and mean what you say. Today there's an abuse of that in many
cases. 'Well,
you should know what I mean.' I've been told that: "You should know what I
mean." I say, 'I'm sorry. What does it say? That's what I go by.' That's
mostly
from my legal training.

What does it mean to be a "Catholic lawyer?" Aside from following the ethical rules that apply to everyone, how should faith guide a Catholic lawyer in his or her day-to-day practice?

I believe a Catholic lawyer is just what that says. You cannot separate your Catholicity from your lawyering. I believe you are a person first, a human being, and by your faith you are a Catholic human being. God has called every person to a destiny, which means you have to return to God. ... Some choose to be a lawyer, some a priest, but the fundamental thing is to remain faithful to God.

As a lawyer, are you sometimes disappointed in the perception of the law by Americans, or by the acts of individual lawyers?

I am disappointed sometimes by individual lawyers. I am disappointed in lawyers who do not see law as a calling, but as something more materialistic, more as means of getting power or fame or money. If that's the only motive, then that person cannot be a good lawyer. He may be good as a technician, but I don't think you can be a good lawyer without having some calling of faith.

Are there clients or causes that a faithful Catholic lawyer should not represent?

You have to be very careful with that. ... Any issue that would be contrary to a lawyer's Catholic faith, like abortion, he or she could not defend as a lawyer. Those are absolutes. As for people, there might be some that you should not represent depending on the person, and what you feel they stand for. But you can't be absolute about that. Let's take a vicious criminal, who you know is guilty. One might say you shouldn't represent such a person. If it's against your conscience, that's one thing, but even that person has rights. First of all, maybe the person's not guilty. ... But even granting that the person is guilty, a good Catholic lawyer should realize that that person has a right to a defense against the state, so that the state doesn't abuse its authority. A Catholic lawyer should bring in a sense of temperance, mercy and compassion

towards even a criminal. So I can see a good Catholic lawyer defending someone who's guilty of a crime.

The pope has spoken out against capital punishment as part of modern society's "culture of death." What steps are you taking against the death penalty?

The U.S. bishops have issued several statements against capital punishment.

The Catholic bishops in Pennsylvania issued a statement in 1995 against capital punishment. Every time a criminal is going to be executed in the state, we come out with a statement [opposing the death penalty]. When any bishop [in Pennsylvania] has someone in his diocese who's going to be executed, we're all going to sign the statement.

In 1995, you called on Gov. Ridge to cancel five executions that were then scheduled, including that of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has become the focus of a lot of international attention. I take it your opposition to capital punishment is not individual-specific.

You're absolutely right. No matter what my feelings are [about a defendant],

I would still be against it. It's not a church teaching to be against capital punishment, it's a discipline. The distinction is that the church teaches that the state does have the right to inflict capital punishment. That has not changed. What has evolved is the church's attitude toward the use of that right.

That's what we call a discipline. It's like the church's teaching is that we must do penance. The discipline was that you can't eat meat on Friday. It was application of the teaching. Well, the church changed that. Same with Mass on Sunday. The teaching is that you must worship God. The church applies that by saying you must go to Mass every Sunday. The church could change that. So the application of the teaching has evolved. The Pope now feels that today's criminal justice system can prevent a criminal from harming society through imprisonment. ... So what need is there to terminate that person's life? Life is sacred no matter who has it. The most heinous of crimes, no matter how horrible the crime that a person has committed, that person is alive and that person's

life is still sacred. So the Pope has said that unless it's absolutely necessary to protect society from an individual, one should use unbloody means of punishment. It's hard for him to fathom any case where the state cannot protect society from a criminal.

Should Catholic prosecutors exercise this discipline by [avoiding] the death penalty?

I believe that they should. But for someone who has no ability to change the procedure or the attitude, for someone who is compelled to prosecute for a death penalty unless he feels strongly that it's against his conscience he can still go ahead and prosecute for a death penalty. Again, it's not against church teachings. By persuasion the church is trying to convince the Catholic population to be against the death penalty, and in favor of life, although we know that most Catholics still are in favor of the death penalty.

On another pro-life issue with legal implications: There have been a number of pro-life protests in this area over the years. Most have been peaceful, but some have involved blockades of clinics and confrontations with patients and staff. In other cities there have been occasional acts of violence directed at clinics and their staff. What is your position as a lawyer and a priest on pro-life protests that violate court injunctions or criminal laws?

First of all, I condemn any kind of action that would involve violence, whether against property or against persons. I abhor that, and the church has always condemned that. As far as violating a court injunction, I believe in peaceful means always. It must always be peaceful. One should try to avoid any kind of disruption, even civil disobedience, as much as possible. Sometimes that creates a backlash, discrediting the pro-life movement. But is it possible to be involved in some civil disobedience? I say yes. It depends on the situation. There are people who believe that there's a higher law, that you cannot have a law that is unjust. The abortion law now is an unjust law, and therefore you must use all prudent means to overturn that law. If the judgment is made honestly that civil disobedience could help bring attention to this injustice, and help to overturn it, then yes. Again, provided there's no

violence, and it's done peacefully. Mahatma Gandhi used civil disobedience to bring attention to the independence of his country. He disobeyed the law for a higher calling. So you can't make any general rule, you have to determine the individual situation.

You campaigned vigorously, but unsuccessfully, against the domestic partnership bill in Philadelphia. What are your legal and moral objections to the city treating domestic partners homosexual or unmarried heterosexual couples as equal to married couples when it comes to job benefits.

First of all, let me make clear that the church does not condemn homosexual orientation. [Having] a sexual drive toward the same sex is not that person's fault. Therefore, there's nothing wrong with that in the eyes of the church. But when it goes into the action of living a homosexual lifestyle, and then trying to equate [homosexuals] to married people, that's an erosion of the culture of our country, which is pro-family pro-traditional family: man and woman and children. Anything that equates them to the family and to marriage really breaks down the whole traditional marriage and the traditional family system. That marks an erosion of civilization, and that's my major reason for opposing [domestic partnership legislation.] As it continues, it will be accepted by society, as already it's beginning to be accepted that the homosexual lifestyle is moral. The homosexual community that lives the lifestyle has as its ultimate aim not just the [job] benefits. I don't think the benefits mean that much to them. Some have said it, 'It's not the benefits; it's to be accepted like everyone else.' The ultimate aim is to have their unions be accepted as marriages, which is already starting Hawaii and some other states that have begun to take action to [recognize homosexual] marriage. That, to me, destroys the family, and that's very harmful to society and to civilization.

You're an advocate of the school voucher program. How would you respond to critics who say that taxpayer support of parochial education violates the spirit or principle of the separation of church and state?

Well, I say it does not violate it. I would go further and nuance that phrase, 'separation of church and state.' ... The whole notion of a wall

of
separation between church and state is not in the First Amendment; it's
not in
the Constitution; it's not in the Declaration of Independence. It's just
a term
used by Jefferson in 1803 in answer to a letter from some Connecticut
ministers. It was not the intent of the founding fathers to have a wall of
separation between church and state. If anything, they looked for a
partnership.

If you read the history, which I've studied pretty deeply, they were very
much
in favor of religion. When you come to the First Amendment itself, it
doesn't
say that religion and the state are to be formidable opponents. It just
says,

Congress may not pass any laws that will establish one religion, or
prohibit the
exercise of religion. When it comes to vouchers, church and state are not
involved because the funding is not given to any religious institute;
it's given
to the parents. The G.I. Bill is a good example. It gives federal funds
for
college education to veterans. The only question asked is, 'Are you a
veteran?'

It doesn't ask what religion you are, or what college or university you
want to
go to. A number of our priests went to the seminary on the G.I. Bill.
What's
more sectarian than a seminary? And yet, under the G.I. Bill, they were
able to
go to the seminary and become priests. Lawrence Tribe from Harvard, one of
the
country's best-known constitutional lawyers, says that as long as
vouchers may
be used completely across the gamut for public schools, private schools,
charter
schools, any schools then it's constitutional. In fact, he said that if
you ever
had a voucher system that was only for public schools, then that would be
unconstitutional. The famous Lemon case [Lemon v. Kurtzman, 411 U.S. 192
(1973)]
had a three-pronged approach to judge what makes [state action]
constitutional
when it involves religion. Vouchers fall very nicely under each one of
those
[prongs]. To me, [vouchers] are in conformity with the original intent of
the
founding fathers, who really wanted to promote religion as a support for
the
good order of society. They felt religion was essential. Adams said it,
Jefferson said it, George Washington, Madison, they all saw the need for
religion to make this new democracy work. Without it, they thought, it
would
disintegrate. There's a couple of passages in the Bible concerning law and

lawyers. Jesus, after he got through criticizing the Pharisees, criticized lawyers for loading people with burdens, without lifting a finger to help. [Luke 11:46] The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the early church at Corinth, criticized church members for taking their disputes to the law courts, rather than working things out among themselves. [I Corinthians 6: 1-7].

You speak of law as a "higher calling," but I wonder if those passages indicate that litigation is not the most Christian way to resolve a dispute.

I believe that. When [Catholics are involved in] conflicts, the church says first you go for mediation, ... to try to resolve it as brothers and sisters under God. If that doesn't work and you feel you need a third person, we have certain processes here to help you. [In the Brooklyn diocese,] I prepared a due process arrangement, and practically every diocese has one now. It's a very informal manner to resolve disputes, whether they're between a parishioner and his or her pastor, or between parishioners. Yes, litigation should be a last resort. Unfortunately, it's becoming a first resort today. It is more Christian to be reconciled. Before you haul your brother into court, go to him and try to be reconciled. That certainly is the ideal.

So you're a fan of alternative dispute resolution?

That's right.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 1999

5 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The New York Times

December 15, 1999, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section B; Page 8; Column 4; Metropolitan Desk

LENGTH: 123 words

HEADLINE: METRO NEWS BRIEFS: NEW YORK;
Woman Jailed for Thefts Is Ordered to Be Deported

BYLINE: AP

DATELINE: ROCHESTER

BODY:

A woman jailed for shoplifting about \$25 worth of cigarettes, eye drops and deodorant was ordered yesterday to be deported to Italy, which she left at age 5 when her family emigrated.

Maria Wigent, 37, who is married to an American and has two teenage sons, drew a two-year sentence last year for three misdemeanor convictions after she had committed multiple attempted larcenies at neighborhood stores. Under a 1996 change in United States immigration law, any noncitizen who is sentenced to more than a year in jail can be classified as an "aggravated felon" and be subject to deportation.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service said that Ms. Wigent's case would be turned over to the Board of Immigration Appeals.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

6 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The Vancouver Sun

December 15, 1999, Wednesday, FINAL

SECTION: News; A14

LENGTH: 163 words

HEADLINE: United States: Woman sentenced for renting baby to smugglers

DATELINE: HOUSTON

BODY:

HOUSTON -- A Honduran woman has been sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for renting her seven-month-old daughter to a smuggler trying to slip immigrants into the U.S.

For \$200, Susana Clemintina Espinal, 30, allowed a smuggler to disguise her daughter as the child of illegal immigrants on at least three different occasions, the Immigration and Naturalization Service said. Border Patrol special agent Rick Aguirre said the infant -- called Baby Stephanie -- was an unwitting prop for Honduran adults. It is fairly common for Latin American adults to pair off and borrow an infant accomplice in order to cross the border, he said.

Posing as parents of a baby is valuable: The INS by procedure allows the families to roam the United States free until their immigration court dates arrive. Espinal was sentenced Friday after pleading guilty to conspiracy to induce undocumented aliens to come to, enter or remain in the U.S. The child remains in state custody.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

7 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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The Washington Post

December 15, 1999, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A29

LENGTH: 904 words

HEADLINE: NATION IN BRIEF

BODY:

Cuban Hostage-Takers Want to Leave U.S.

ST. MARTINVILLE, La.--A growing group of Cuban inmates frustrated with their incarceration held three hostages for a second day yesterday and threatened to kill their captives if they aren't freed.

St. Martin's Parish jail warden Todd Louvierre and deputies Jolie Sonnier and Brandon Boudreaux have been held at knifepoint since Monday, when they were grabbed as five inmates left an exercise area. A deputy sheriff was released.

"We want to be released and sent back to our country or any other country. We don't care," said Jonne Ponte, one of the Cubans who telephoned television station KLFY in nearby Lafayette. Ponte claimed to have been in detention for 13 years.

Authorities said as many as four inmates have joined the original group of five. The recruits apparently came from a group of about 70 other Cubans who had control of a section of the jail adjacent to the area with the hostages.

Sheriff's Capt. Audrey Thibodaux said the large group is outside the control of guards but unable to get out of the building.

State Department spokesman James Foley said the Cubans cannot be freed because of their past. Cuba will not accept them and the United States does not want them on the streets.

Four of the five Cubans in the original group were among 60 being held in the jail for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, pending deportation or other action. The fifth man was being held on state charges, the INS said.

St. Martinville, in south-central Louisiana, is about 50 miles from Oakdale, where a federal deportation center was burned by 1,000 rioting Cuban inmates in 1987.

Teacher Ignored Girl About Mom's Death

PEABODY, Mass.--A 7-year-old girl spent a night sleeping in her dead mother's arms after a teacher apparently ignored the girl when she claimed her mother had died.

"From what Lydia told me, the teacher said, 'You shouldn't talk like that,' and sent her back to her seat," said Richard Tucker, the girl's grandfather.

Lydia Hanson went through the rest of the day on Thursday at the Kiley School, went home on the bus and then spent the night with her mother, Kimberly Hanson.

Hanson, 33, had diabetes and most likely died of natural causes, Peabody police Sgt. William Caico told the Salem Evening News. Tucker discovered the body on Friday, when he visited because he hadn't heard from his daughter since Wednesday, when she had told him she was feeling ill. Lydia had not gone back to school.

Lydia didn't know how to use the phone in her house, Tucker said. She told her grandparents that she finished her homework and microwaved leftover spaghetti and meatballs for dinner. She also made popcorn because it was something Lydia and her mother did every night.

Peabody Schools Superintendent Louis Perullo called the incident a tragedy.

"The school made a mistake," Perullo said in a written statement. "I wish we had done otherwise. This has never happened before."

Meanwhile in Memphis, a nine-year-old boy who lived alone with his dead mother's body for a month attended her funeral and was given the U.S. flag that covered her coffin.

Family friends dropping by for a visit on Dec. 6 found Travis Butler alone with the corpse at the Memphis apartment where he lived with his mother, Crystal Wells, 30. Wells had apparently died of natural causes Nov. 3, though autopsy results are incomplete.

Wells, who had served in the Army, was buried at the West Tennessee Veterans Cemetery. Travis sat silent and stern during the brief service, looking up occasionally at his maternal grandparents, Shirley and H.P. Wilder, who each kept an arm around his shoulders.

Jury Awards \$ 66,400 For Stroller Incident

NEW YORK--A Danish mother arrested for leaving her baby in a stroller outside a restaurant for more than an hour while she and the child's father drank margaritas was awarded \$ 66,400 in her \$ 20 million lawsuit against the city.

A federal jury rejected most of the claims by Anette Sorensen, 32, who had argued that she was falsely arrested and that leaving babies outside is a common practice in Denmark.

The jury concluded only that she should not have been strip-searched and that the city commonly failed to advise arrested foreigners of their right to notify their consulates.

Sorensen said she was disappointed by the verdict. "I wanted to be cleansed in this way," she said. "That didn't happen."

Sgt. Gregory Ajose said he was grateful that the jury realized "we acted in good faith that evening to protect the interests of a 14-month-old child."

Youth Pleads Guilty In Columbine Case

GOLDEN, Colo.--A 17-year-old acquaintance of Columbine High School killers Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold pleaded guilty to two minor charges arising from a threat to "finish the job" the gunmen started.

The boy was ordered to participate in a juvenile diversion program for one year, said Pam Russell, spokeswoman for the Jefferson County District

Attorney's
Office. She said the boy had seen a therapist who reported that he was no
threat
to himself or others.

The teen, whose name was withheld because of his age, pleaded guilty to
one
count of theft and one count of interfering with staff, faculty or
students in
an educational facility.

Harris and Klebold killed 12 students and a teacher and wounded 23
others
before killing themselves on April 20.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

8 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press

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Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, PM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 164 words

HEADLINE: Woman sentenced for renting baby to smugglers

DATELINE: HOUSTON

BODY:

A Honduran woman has been sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for
renting her
7-month-old daughter to a smuggler trying to slip immigrants into the
country.

For \$200, Susana Clemintina Espinal, 30, allowed a smuggler to disguise
her
daughter as the child of illegal immigrants on at least three different
occasions, the Immigration and Naturalization Service said.

Border Patrol special agent Rick Aguirre said the infant - called Baby
Stephanie - was an unwitting prop for Honduran adults.

It is fairly common for Latin American adults to pair off and borrow an infant accomplice in order to cross the border, he said.

Posing as parents of a baby is valuable: The INS by procedure allows the families to roam the United States free until their immigration court dates arrive.

Ms. Espinal was sentenced Friday after pleading guilty to conspiracy to induce undocumented aliens to come to, enter or remain in the United States. The child remains in state custody.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

9 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, PM cycle

SECTION: International News

LENGTH: 523 words

HEADLINE: Cuba works to overturn law allowing Cubans to stay in the United States

BYLINE: By MARK STEVENSON, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

Cuba is hoping a growing wave of immigrant-smuggling and what it calls contradictions in U.S. policy will spur the United States to change a law easing residency for Cubans who reach American shores.

The political jockeying comes as the U.S. government works to gracefully resolve the custody battle over 6-year Elian Gonzalez, who has become a political symbol for Cuba's communist government and its exile foes.

Cuba's top negotiator in Monday's immigration talks with the United States,

Ricardo Alarcon, said the meeting ended "without any progress whatsoever."

Alarcon said applying the Cuban Adjustment Act to Elian - against the wishes of his father in Cuba - illustrates the problems with the law.

The act, passed in 1966, makes Cubans who reaches U.S. territory eligible for parole in the United States. Under 1994-1995 immigration accords, the United States agreed to return Cubans picked up at sea unless there was a strong chance they faced persecution - ending a policy under which they, too, were generally allowed into the country.

Alarcon said the law encourages Cubans to risk the dangerous trip across the Florida Straits.

Elian was found Thanksgiving Day clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., after a boat accident that killed his mother during an apparent effort to illegally enter the United States.

Elian has been staying with relatives in Florida since his rescue, and lawyers hired by the Elian's relatives in Miami filed a U.S. appeal for political asylum for the boy.

The State Department has said the boy's return is in the hands of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, whose representatives visited Elian's father in Cuba on Monday to assess his claim to the boy.

The father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, seemed encouraged by the talks.

"These people (the INS) have been on our side all along. They agree that he should be back here, that the child should be returned as soon as possible," a beaming Gonzalez said in an interview outside his two-story home in Cardenas, 95 miles east of Havana.

But in Washington, INS spokeswoman Maria Cardona said, "I can tell you they (U.S. officials) were not there in any way to take sides on the case."

Gonzalez said he did not want to have to go to the United States to retrieve his son.

The INS is questioning Gonzalez to determine if he is actually the

father and
if he can care for the boy.

Alarcon said the deaths of Cubans at sea, and the 56 Cuban-Americans now
under arrest in Cuba on immigrant smuggling charges, were among the
reasons to
change the U.S. law, which was meant to aid those fleeing communism.

He said the current application of that law - the "wet foot, dry foot"
policy
that allows Cubans who walk ashore to stay in the United States while
those
caught at sea are returned - violates the 1994-1995 accords in which the
two
countries pledged to discourage waves of immigration.

Despite the dispute, there have been modest improvements in some
aspects of
the U.S.-Cuba relationship: more travel, educational, and sports
exchanges due
to recent relaxations in U.S. restrictions.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos HAV102,106,107

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

10 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press

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materials may not be republished without the express written consent of
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Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, PM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 428 words

HEADLINE: Cuban detainees take warden, deputies hostage

BYLINE: By NATALIE GOTT, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ST. MARTINVILLE, La.

BODY:

Negotiators worked today to persuade five armed Cubans frustrated with

their
incarceration to release two deputies and a warden from the St. Martin
Parish
jail.

The hostages were taken in an "uprising" that began shortly after 4 p.m.
Monday as the detainees left an exercise area, Sheriff Charles Fuselier
said. No
injuries were reported.

A fourth hostage, a deputy sheriff, was released after six hours of
negotiations.

"We want to be released and sent back to our country or any other
country. We
don't care," said Jonne Ponte, one of the Cubans who telephoned television
station KLFY in nearby Lafayette.

As the tension mounted, 43 of the facility's 160 prisoners were herded
into
buses and transferred to other facilities, officials said.

Maria Placer, KLFY's vice president for news, talked to Ponte in
Spanish and
relayed messages to negotiators. Video showed the detainees using
walkie-talkies
and holding two shivs, or homemade weapons.

Ponte said he has been held for 13 years and was frustrated at the lack
of
progress in his case, the station said.

In Miami, Ruby Feria of with Mothers for Freedom, a support group for
Cuban
detainees in the United States, said her group received two telephone
calls from
the detainees early today.

The callers, who did not identify themselves by name, left messages in
Spanish.

"We have a situation where we can no longer endure this and we want to
be
taken out of here and out of the United States," the first caller said,
according to Ms. Feria. "If they kill us, it is probably going to be
after we
have killed somebody."

INS spokesman Mike Gilhooly said he could not verify how long Ponte has
been
in jail. He acknowledged some cases can go on for years because the
detainee can
neither be released in the United States nor deported to Cuba.

"In the case of many Cubans, we can't remove them to their country because we don't have agreements with the Cuban government," he said.

Four of the five Cubans were among a group of 60 being held in the jail for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, pending deportation or other action.

Officials described it as a typical intergovernmental arrangement like those with numerous county jails around the nation. The fifth man was being held on state charges, the INS said.

St. Martinville, in south-central Louisiana, is about 50 miles from Oakdale, where a federal deportation center was burned by 1,000 rioting Cuban inmates in 1987. Twenty-eight employees were taken hostage and held for eight days before all were released unharmed.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos LALAF101-102

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

11 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 183 words

HEADLINE: Woman jailed for shoplifting to be exiled to Italy

DATELINE: ROCHESTER, N.Y.

BODY:

A woman jailed for shoplifting \$25 worth of cigarettes, eye drops and deodorant was ordered Tuesday to be deported to Italy, a country she left behind

at age 5 when her family came to the United States.

Maria Wigent, 37, who is married to an American and has two teen-age sons, drew a two-year sentence last year for three misdemeanor convictions after she had committed multiple attempted larcenies at neighborhood stores.

Under a 1996 change in U.S. immigration law, any non-citizen who gets more than a year behind bars can be classified as an "aggravated felon" and be subject to deportation.

"What kind of Christmas is this?" a tearful Anna Gaglianese, 58, said in broken English after an immigration judge in Buffalo ordered her daughter returned to their native land.

Unlike her parents, Wigent never bothered to obtain citizenship. She apparently believed she didn't need to once she married an American.

Wigent appealed the ruling, effectively setting aside the prospect of deportation for several months. She was jailed under orders from immigration authorities.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

12 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 265 words

HEADLINE: Utah man jumps bail, flees to native Brazil

DATELINE: PROVO, Utah

BODY:

A Mapleton man who faced multiple criminal charges in connection with an immigration scam has fled the country after asking a judge to deport him.

Now, investigators fear they won't be able to have him returned from his native Brazil.

Utah County prosecutors contend that Manoel F. Silva, 38, asked to be deported and failed to tell an immigration judge that he faced criminal charges in 4th District Court. Silva was charged with 19 counts of communications fraud, seven counts of money laundering and one count of racketeering. All are second-degree felonies.

A treaty between the United States and Brazil does not allow for the extradition of Brazilian nationals from their country to the United States, prosecutors said.

Silva, who was scheduled for a preliminary hearing in January, allegedly was part of a scam operated by Caballero Tax and Immigration that sold green cards to illegal immigrants, according to court documents.

In August, a 4th District judge ordered Silva's immigration attorney not to give Silva his passport after prosecutors expressed fears he might flee to Brazil. On Nov. 4, Silva appeared before an immigration judge, who entered an order of deportation at Silva's request.

The next day, Silva told officials at the Brazilian consulate in Los Angeles that he had lost his passport, according to court documents. He said he needed temporary papers to enter Brazil, prosecutors said. He flew to Brazil on Nov. 7.

Utah County prosecutors were not notified of the Nov. 4 immigration hearing, according to court documents filed this month.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

13 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 470 words

HEADLINE: Woman sentenced for renting baby to smugglers

BYLINE: By MEGAN K. STACK, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: HOUSTON

BODY:

A Honduran woman is headed to federal prison for renting her 7-month-old infant to a smuggler for \$200.

Susana Clemintina Espinal, 30, allowed smuggler Jose Guerrero to disguise her baby daughter as the child of illegal immigrants on at least three different occasions, the Immigration and Naturalization Service said.

"It's an all-time low for smugglers," Border Patrol special agent Rick Aguirre said Monday. "And those guys are pretty slimy to begin with."

Aguirre said the infant - called "Baby Stephanie" and now believed to be about a year old - was an unwitting prop for Honduran adults trying to slip through a loophole in immigration law.

Ms. Espinal received 30 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, after pleading guilty to conspiracy to induce undocumented aliens to come to, enter or remain in the United States.

The mother, who was arrested in the past for possession of crack cocaine, was sentenced Friday by U.S. District Court Judge Melinda Harmon.

For the price of about \$2,000, couples could cradle Ms. Espinal's baby while passing under the gaze of border officials.

Though Ms. Espinal and Guerrero went to unusual lengths, it is fairly common for Latin American adults to pair off and borrow an infant accomplice in order to cross the border, said Aguirre, based in McAllen.

Posing as parents of a baby is valuable: The INS by procedure allows the families to roam the United States free until their immigration court

dates
arrive.

"We don't have the facilities to take in mama, papa and baby," Aguirre said.

"So we set them up with hearings, and then we let them walk."

Ms. Espinal's scheme apart last spring, however, after two adults passing themselves off as a married couple swam across the Rio Grande with Baby Stephanie held over their heads.

At the Border Patrol station in Brownsville, an agent recognized the infant as having crossed the border before - with a different set of parents. Peering closer, the agent remembered the infant's bracelet.

"It's really a sad case, what they did," Houston INS spokesperson Luisa Aquino said. "Subjecting an innocent child to that kind of activity is heinous."

Under questioning, the couple admitted to renting the child for thousands of dollars. They were sent back to Honduras.

"We had the baby then, but she couldn't talk," Aguirre recalled. "We didn't know who her real parents were."

But a few days later, Ms. Espinal walked into a Houston police station, said her child had been kidnapped and filed a missing person report for a baby matching Baby Stephanie's description.

When questioned by INS, Ms. Espinal confessed.

The child remains in Child Protective Services custody in Harlingen. Guerrero, also a Honduran national, fled into Mexico after Espinal's arrest.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

14 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: International News; State and Regional

LENGTH: 528 words

HEADLINE: Cuba works to overturn law allowing Cubans to stay in the United States

BYLINE: By MARK STEVENSON, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

Cuba is hoping a growing wave of immigrant-smuggling and what it calls contradictions in U.S. policy will spur the United States to change a law easing residency for Cubans who reach American shores.

The political jockeying comes as the U.S. government works to gracefully resolve the custody battle over 6-year Elian Gonzalez, who has become a political symbol for Cuba's communist government and its exile foes.

Cuba's top negotiator in Monday's immigration talks with the United States, Ricardo Alarcon, said the meeting ended "without any progress whatsoever."

Alarcon said applying the Cuban Adjustment Act to Elian - against the wishes of his father in Cuba - illustrates the problems with the law.

The act, passed in 1966, gives most Cuban emigres who reach U.S. shores a chance for residency in the United States. Under 1994-1995 immigration accords, the United States agreed to return Cubans picked up at sea unless there was a strong chance they faced persecution - ending a policy under which they, too, were generally allowed into the country.

Alarcon said the law encourages Cubans to risk the dangerous trip across the Florida Straits.

Elian was found Thanksgiving Day clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, after a boat accident that killed his mother during an apparent effort to illegally enter the United States.

Elian has been staying with relatives in Florida since his rescue, and lawyers hired by the Elia's relatives in Miami filed a U.S. appeal for political asylum for the boy.

The State Department has said the boy's return is in the hands of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, whose representatives visited Elia's father in Cuba on Monday to assess his claim to the boy.

The father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, seemed encouraged by the talks.

"These people (the INS) have been on our side all along. They agree that he should be back here, that the child should be returned as soon as possible," a beaming Gonzalez said in an interview outside his two-story home in Cardenas, 150 kilometers (95 miles) east of Havana.

But in Washington, INS spokeswoman Maria Cardona said, "I can tell you they (U.S. officials) were not there in any way to take sides on the case."

Gonzalez said he did not want to have to go to the United States to retrieve his son.

The INS is questioning Gonzalez to determine if he is actually the father and if he can care for the boy.

Alarcon said the deaths of Cubans at sea, and the 56 Cuban-Americans now under arrest in Cuba on immigrant smuggling charges, were among the reasons to change the U.S. law, which was meant to aid those fleeing communism.

He said the current application of that law - the "wet foot, dry foot" policy that allows Cubans who walk ashore to stay in the United States while those caught at sea are returned - violates the 1994-1995 accords in which the two countries pledged to discourage waves of immigration.

Despite the dispute, there have been modest improvements in some aspects of the U.S.-Cuba relationship: more travel, educational, and sports exchanges due to recent relaxation in U.S. restrictions.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos HAV102-105

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, PM cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 909 words

HEADLINE: Cuban detainees take warden and deputies hostage at jail

BYLINE: By NATALIE GOTT, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ST. MARTINVILLE, La.

BODY:

Negotiators worked today to persuade five armed Cubans frustrated with their incarceration to release two deputies and a warden from the St. Martin Parish jail.

The hostages were taken at knifepoint Monday afternoon while escorting the Cubans from an exercise area on the roof of the two-story downtown jail that also houses the sheriff's office. No injuries were reported.

A fourth hostage, a deputy sheriff who had been on the job only two weeks, was released after six hours of negotiations. But there were no signs of a break in the situation by late this morning as mattresses were delivered to a secure area of the sheriff's office for staffers who had kept an overnight vigil. "Our people need to rest," a sheriff's office spokeswoman said.

"My country doesn't want us," said Jonne Ponte, one of the Cubans who telephoned television station KLFY in nearby Lafayette. "We want to be released and sent back to our country or any other country. We don't care."

In Miami, Ruby Feria of Mothers for Freedom, a support group for Cuban

detainees in the United States, said her group received two telephone calls from the detainees early today.

The callers, who did not identify themselves by name, left messages in Spanish.

"We have a situation where we can no longer endure this and we want to be taken out of here and out of the United States," the first caller said, according to Ms. Feria. "If they kill us, it is probably going to be after we have killed somebody."

The five Cubans were the only inmates involved in what Sheriff Charles Fuselier called an "uprising." Some of the 160 prisoners were herded into buses and driven away while others were moved to more secure locations. The sheriff's office said about 117 remained after being given the option of transferring to other facilities.

A SWAT team surrounded the building, backed by state police, FBI agents and officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Four of the five Cubans were among a group of 60 being held in the jail for the INS, pending deportation or other action, the INS said today in a release. Officials described it as a typical intergovernmental arrangement like those with numerous county jails around the nation. The fifth man involved in the hostage standoff is being held on state charges, the INS said.

When Ponte called the station, he said he had been held 13 years with little progress in his case.

"I am a detainee of the INS and have been sent to different county jails because I am a Cuban," Ponte said. "All I'm asking for is to be released."

Maria Placer, station vice president for news, talked to him in Spanish and began relaying messages to negotiators. He said he wanted to go on television to plead his case, and soon Placer and a crew went to the jail where they got video of the Cubans holding shackled hostages.

A station report described three Cubans holding two hostages in one of the

prison's units, while two Cubans held two others in another unit.

The video shows the detainees, dressed in orange jumpsuits, pounding on walls and mumbling in Spanish at each other through walkie-talkies. Their conversations were not loud enough for camera microphones to clearly pick up the sound. The detainees were also shown holding two homemade knives. One appeared to be at least six inches long, while the other resembled a screwdriver.

Fuselier identified the Cubans as Ponte, Gerado Santana of Miami, Elisalte Orta of Sacramento, Calif., Juan Miranda, and Roberto Grana Villar. He did not say why they were being detained.

Deputy Mac Wiltz was identified as the hostage who was released. Still held were Warden Todd Louvierre and deputies Jolie Sonnier and Brandon Boudreaux.

Today, Fuselier said that the Cubans had asked for a video tape of Wiltz being released so they would have evidence of their good faith. In return, negotiators were asking for the release of another hostage, the sheriff said.

Fuselier said the prisoners had not made any direct threats, although they may have said some things out of anger.

Mike Gilhooly, an INS spokesman, said in a telephone interview that he could not confirm how long Ponte had been held. He acknowledged some cases can go on for years because the detainee can neither be released in the United States nor deported to Cuba.

"In the case of many Cubans, we can't remove them to their country because we don't have agreements with the Cuban government," Gilhooly said.

About 49 other inmates were evacuated from the jail last night and an undetermined number of prisoners left today aboard another bus for other jails in the area. Some prisoners still remained in the jail.

St. Martinville is about 10 miles southeast of Lafayette in south-central Louisiana. It is also about 50 miles from Oakdale, where a federal deportation center was burned down by 1,000 rioting Cuban inmates in November 1987. Twenty-eight employees were taken hostage and held for eight days before

all

were released unharmed in that incident.

The Oakdale riot was almost simultaneous with another at the federal prison in Atlanta, Ga., and came shortly after the State Department announced that Cuba had agreed to take back some of the refugees from the 1980 Mariel boat lift.

Both takeovers ended after the government agreed to a moratorium on deportations and a one-time-only Justice Department review of each U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service decision.

GRAPHIC: AP Photo

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

16 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 419 words

HEADLINE: Cuban detainees take warden, deputies hostage

BYLINE: By NATALIE GOTT, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ST. MARTINVILLE, La.

BODY:

Negotiators worked Tuesday to persuade five armed Cuban detainees frustrated with their incarceration to release two deputies and a warden from the St. Martin Parish jail.

The hostages were taken at knife point in an "uprising" that began shortly after 4 p.m. Monday as the detainees left an exercise area, Sheriff Charles

Fuselier said. No injuries were reported.

A fourth hostage, a deputy sheriff, was released after six hours of negotiations. Some of the 160 prisoners were herded into buses and driven away while others were moved to more secure locations.

"We want to be released and sent back to our country or any other country. We don't care," said Jonne Ponce, one of the Cubans who telephoned television station KLFY in nearby Lafayette.

Maria Placer, station vice president for news, talked to Ponce in Spanish and relayed messages to negotiators. Video showed the detainees using walkie-talkies and holding two shivs, or homemade weapons.

Ponce said he has been held for 13 years and was frustrated at the lack of progress in his case, the station said.

In Miami, Ruby Feria with Mothers for Freedom, a support group for Cuban detainees in the United States, said her group received two telephone calls from the detainees early Thursday.

The callers, who did not identify themselves by name, left messages in Spanish.

"We have a situation where we can no longer endure this and we want to be taken out of here and out of the United States," the first caller said, according to Ms. Feria. "If they kill us, it is probably going to be after we have killed somebody."

Mike Gilhooly, spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said he could not verify how long Ponce has been in jail. He acknowledged some cases can go on for years because the detainee can neither be released in the United States nor deported to Cuba.

"In the case of many Cubans, we can't remove them to their country because we don't have agreements with the Cuban government," he said.

The Cubans were among a group of 60 being held in the jail for the INS pending deportation or other action. Officials described it as a typical intergovernmental arrangement like those with numerous county jails around the nation.

St. Martinville, in south-central Louisiana, is about 50 miles from Oakdale, where a federal deportation center was burned by 1,000 rioting Cuban inmates in 1987. Twenty-eight employees were taken hostage and held for eight days before all were released unharmed.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos LALAF101-102

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

17 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

The materials in the AP file were compiled by The Associated Press. These materials may not be republished without the express written consent of The Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 521 words

HEADLINE: Polls: Many support Cuban boy's return to father

BYLINE: By WILL LESTER, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Almost half of Americans say a 6-year-old Cuban boy, now in Florida with relatives, should be returned to his father in Cuba, two polls indicate.

But the percentage that favors Elian Gonzalez staying in this country varied, depending on how the question was asked.

Asked what was in the best interests of the boy, about 45 percent said he should stay in this country with relatives and an equal number said he should be returned to Cuba to live with his father, according to a new poll by

CNN/USA
Today/Gallup.

"What we're seeing reflected here is that there are arguments on both sides," said Frank Newport, editor in chief of the Gallup Poll. "That's probably why the public is split down the middle."

In another poll, ABC News asked a question about Elian, mentioning that "his mother drowned and his father in Cuba wants the boy back." In that poll, support for him staying in this country was 33 percent, compared with 46 percent who said he should go back to Cuba and 17 percent who didn't know.

"We thought we should specify where the two parents are because that's very relevant when you ask where the child should be sent," said ABC pollster Gary Langer.

Elian was found Nov. 25, clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., after a boat accident that killed his mother and 10 other people. The boat was apparently attempting to illegally enter the United States from Cuba.

Now Elian is at the center of an international custody fight that has caused thousands in Cuba to march in the streets waving posters of him. Exiles opposed to Cuban President Fidel Castro have also made him a cause celebre.

In South Florida, nine out of 10 in the Cuban-American community say he should stay in this country, according to a recent Miami Herald poll. About half of non-Cubans polled in South Florida said he should go home and a third want him to stay.

Nationally, interest in the boy's story has been high, with four out of five people saying they have followed it at least somewhat closely, the CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll said.

Elian has been staying with a great-aunt and great-uncle in Miami since his rescue, and attorneys have filed a political asylum claim for him. The State Department has said the boy's return is in the hands of the Immigration and

Naturalization Service.

The boy's father Juan Miguel Gonzalez met Monday with INS representatives, who said they wanted to certify his paternity and hear his preferences. No decision on the custody fight has been made public.

In the ABC News poll, 50 percent of men and 43 percent of women said they favored the boy's return to Cuba. The CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll also showed men were slightly more inclined than women to favor his return.

The CNN-USA Today-Gallup telephone poll of 1,037 people was taken Thursday through Sunday. The ABC News poll of 1,013 people was taken Wednesday through Sunday. Both polls had error margins of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The Herald poll of 800 people, taken Thursday and Friday, had an error margin of plus or minus 4 percentage points, larger for subgroups.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

18 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

The materials in the AP file were compiled by The Associated Press. These materials may not be republished without the express written consent of The Associated Press.

December 14, 1999, Tuesday, AM cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 512 words

HEADLINE: Woman jailed for shoplifting faces exile to strange land

BYLINE: By BEN DOBBIN, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ROCHESTER, N.Y.

BODY:

A woman jailed for shoplifting about \$25 worth of cigarettes, eye drops

and
deodorant was ordered Tuesday to be deported to Italy, a country she left
behind
at age 5 when her family emigrated to the United States.

Maria Wigent, 37, who is married to an American and has two teen-age
sons,
drew a two-year sentence last year for three misdemeanor convictions
after she
had committed multiple attempted larcenies at neighborhood stores.

Under a 1996 change in U.S. immigration law, any non-citizen who gets
more
than a year behind bars can be classified as an "aggravated felon" and be
subject to deportation.

"What kind of Christmas is this?" a tearful Anna Gaglianese, 58, said in
broken English after an immigration judge in Buffalo ordered her daughter
returned to their native land. "This is stupid. She no kill nobody, she no
stealing a million dollar."

Unlike her parents, Wigent never bothered to obtain citizenship. She
apparently believed she didn't need to once she married an American.

Wigent speaks only a little Italian, has no relatives left in Italy and
could
end up in a homeless shelter, said her father, a retired construction
worker. He
and his wife left the village of Albi near Naples and settled in
Rochester in
1968 with their four children.

Wigent immediately appealed the ruling, effectively setting aside the
prospect of deportation for several months. Although her jail sentence
ran out
last month - good behavior shortened it to 16 months - she has since been
ordered held by immigration authorities at another jail in rural western
New
York.

"This is overkill," said her lawyer, Jeffrey Jayson. "She's horrified.
I'm
even crying. In 10 years of practice, I have never seen what I would call
a
travesty of justice."

The Immigration and Naturalization Service said Wigent's case will be
turned
over to the Board of Immigration Appeals.

"I can't answer for the lady why she did or did not naturalize," said
an INS
official, William Cleary. "But I can say there are many cases of people
that

have committed crimes who regret the fact they never naturalized because
it now
makes them deportable."

After being charged with more than a dozen attempted petit larcenies,
Wigent
pleaded guilty to two counts of petit theft and violating probation on an
earlier conviction for attempted petit theft. The items taken in those
three
cases were: eight packs of cigarettes, two bottles of eye drops and three
sticks
of deodorant, her lawyer said.

A psychiatrist recently diagnosed Wigent as suffering from kleptomania,
an
abnormal compulsion to steal. Jayson noted she had never been in trouble
until
age 32 when she began having marital problems and, along with her husband,
Larry, developed a cocaine addiction. Their sons are 15 and 14 years old.

Arguing that Wigent's original defense had been mishandled, Jayson
attempted
last week to have her sentence reduced to eight months to safeguard her
from
deportation. But a city court judge denied his motion Monday, even though
prosecutors had decided not to oppose it.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

19 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 594 words

HEADLINE: Documents turned over to INS shed light on boy's life in Cuba

BYLINE: By MARK STEVENSON, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

The 6-year-old Cuban boy at the center of an international custody dispute is a "disciplined, affable, hard-working" boy with parents who attended school meetings, took him to restaurants and maintained an interest in his grades and homework, according to school records released Tuesday.

Also made available were documents detailing how Elian Gonzalez's parents took him to a march commemorating revolutionary hero Camilo Cienfuegos and a day-care center connected to a Communist Party youth group, the Young Pioneers - a group to which almost all Cuban children belong.

The boy's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, a gatekeeper at a national park near Havana and member of the island's Communist Party, hopes the records - together with birth and marriage certificates, and affidavits from friends and neighbors - will be enough to persuade the U.S. government to return Elian, who is now staying with relatives in Miami.

"It's looking better," said the 31-year-old Gonzalez, whose custody fight for his son began two weeks ago when Elian was found clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Florida. The young boy was one of three people who survived a boat accident that killed his mother and other Cubans trying to reach the United States.

The custody fight has caused thousands in Cuba to march in the streets waving posters of Elian. Exiles opposed to Cuban President Fidel Castro have also made him a cause celebre.

Gonzalez said he speaks to his son most every morning by telephone, and that the great-aunt and great-uncle who have temporary custody of the boy in Miami have backed off from "pressuring the boy and grabbing the phone away from him."

The relatives in Miami want him to stay, saying he will have a better life off the communist island. But the boy's father - who has a picture of

revolutionary Che Guevara hanging in his living room - may not be the man who
Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain predicted would change his
views if he were allowed to travel to the United States.

"There's no reason for me to go there, and I won't do it," Gonzalez said.
"They have to bring my son back here." He claimed the Cuban American National
Foundation - a conservative exile group - is paying for Elian's gift- and trip-laden stay in Miami, and said the boy now misses Cuba.

Relatives say the boy previously split his time between his divorced parents
in Cuba. Gonzalez says he received no warning that the mother was going to flee
to Florida with Elian.

The records from Elian's primary school in Cardenas, Cuba - where he was in
the first grade - were turned over to U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service officials during their interview with the father Monday and released to
reporters Tuesday.

The documents include a record of an unidentified teacher's visit to Elian's
comfortable two-story home in Cardenas, 95 miles east of Havana, where the family "had all the things they needed," according to the teacher's report.

A doctor's affidavit described how Gonzalez had stayed at a hospital with
Elián after the son had undergone an operation, while written testimony from
local residents noted that he also took Elián to restaurants, birthday parties
and other festivities.

Yamilin Morales, one of Elián's teachers at the Marcelo Salado grade school,
described him as "an intelligent, timid boy with good grades." Attached to her
statement are classroom exercises: connect-the-dot pictures of a horse and carriage and geometric figures, all completed in the wavy, uncertain hand
of a first-grader.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos planned

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 526 words

HEADLINE: Those who want boy to stay in U.S. hold mass; opponents hold protest

BYLINE: By ALEX VEIGA, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: MIAMI

BODY:

More than two dozen people held a protest Tuesday demanding the U.S. government return a 6-year-old boy to his father in Cuba, hours before another group was to hold a prayer service in hopes of keeping the boy here.

A coalition of Cuban American groups opposing U.S. policy toward Cuba held a protest at a south Miami intersection facing the district office of U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

"We're calling for ... a national day of protest to demand the immediate return of Elian Gonzalez to his father and family in Cuba," said Andres Gomez, of the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

The protesters held signs saying "Elian kidnapped by the U.S." and "Where is my father?" They traded insults with rush hour commuters. More than a dozen people gathered across the street shouting "Liberty!" The protesters yelled back "Elian to Cuba."

Elian Gonzalez has been at the center of an international custody battle between relatives in Cuba and the United States since his arrival from Cuba on

Thanksgiving Day.

He was found clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Fort Lauderdale after the boat carrying him, his mother and other Cubans sunk in the Atlantic. His mother and stepfather died.

His relatives in Miami want him to stay, claiming he will have a better life off the communist island. The boy's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, wants his son back. Monday U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service officials met with Gonzalez in Cuba to assess his claim to the boy.

Attorneys representing the boy's family in Miami have filed a request for political asylum on Elian's behalf, seeking to keep him in the United States. They met Tuesday to discuss the timing of their next legal option: filing an emergency petition for custody.

The attorneys have said they should be allowed to present their case before a family court judge in Florida.

The custody fight has caused millions in Cuba to march in the streets waving posters of Elian.

Many Cuban Americans in Miami have also embraced the child, insisting the boy should remain here with his great-uncle, Lazaro Gonzalez, and his cousin Marisleysis Gonzalez.

Tuesday night's Mass was planned amid increasing concerns from Cuban Americans that INS officials' visit to Elian's father could indicate the beginning of a deal between the U.S. and Cuba to return the boy.

"We have called a Mass for everybody in the community to go there and pray for the second half of the miracle ... that he is allowed to stay," said Jose Basulto, president of Brothers to the Rescue, a Miami-based anti-Castro organization.

INS "is intervening to the point of giving away the child," said Basulto.

Basulto's group planned the Mass at La Ermita de la Caridad Catholic church.

"We want to see this in court; that's where this belongs so the boy's rights and human rights are not violated," Basulto said.

It was not clear whether Elian and his family were going to attend. They returned Monday night from a two-day trip to Disney World and Universal Studios in central Florida.

"He's been trying to relax after many days of excitement," said Armando Gutierrez, spokesman for the boy's relatives.

GRAPHIC: AP Photos planned

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

21 of 62 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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December 14, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 484 words

HEADLINE: Those who want boy to stay in U.S. hold Mass; opponents hold protest

BYLINE: By ALEX VEIGA, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: MIAMI

BODY:

A group of Cuban Americans held a prayer service Tuesday night on behalf of a 6-year-old Cuban boy they say should be allowed to remain in the United States, despite his father's demands that the child be returned to him in Cuba.

About 60 people, including Elian Gonzalez, attended the Mass. Elian was found clinging to an inner tube last month off the coast of South Florida after a

boatload of Cubans fleeing to the United States sank in the Atlantic.

His mother and stepfather died in the crossing, and the question of whether the boy will go back to Cuba or remain with relatives here has received international attention.

"I came to ask God and the Virgin to grant another miracle so the boy will stay here. His mother paid with her life to bring him to a country with liberty," said Silvia Rosales, who attended the service at La Ermita de la Caridad Catholic Church, which sits alongside Biscayne Bay.

But members of Cuban American groups that oppose U.S. policy towards Cuba gathered outside the district office of U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and demanded Elian be sent back to his father.

"We're calling for ... a national day of protest to demand the immediate return of Elian Gonzalez to his father and family in Cuba," said Andres Gomez, of the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

The protesters held signs saying "Elian kidnapped by the U.S." and "Where is my father?" They traded insults with rush-hour commuters. More than a dozen people gathered across the street shouting "Liberty!" The protesters yelled back "Elian to Cuba."

The Cuban government and Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, have insisted that the boy be returned to his family in Cuba. The father met with U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service officials Monday to assess his claim to the boy.

The custody fight has caused millions in Cuba to march in the streets waving posters of Elian.

The father's relatives in Miami who are caring for Elian believe he will have a better life off the communist island and have filed a request for political asylum on the boy's behalf.

Attorneys for the U.S. relatives also have said they should be allowed to present their case before a family court judge in Florida.

Tuesday night's Mass was planned amid increasing concerns from Cuban Americans that INS officials' visit with Elian's father could indicate the

beginning of a deal between the U.S. and Cuba to return the boy.

Jose Basulto, president of Brothers to the Rescue, a Miami-based anti-Castro organization, said they were calling on the community to "pray for the second half of the miracle ... that he is allowed to stay."

Elian and his relatives returned Monday night from a two-day trip to Walt Disney World and Universal Studios in central Florida. Said family spokesman Armando Gutierrez as they left the church Tuesday night: "They believe in God and that God will help this little boy."

GRAPHIC: AP Photos planned

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

22 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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ABC NEWS

SHOW: GOOD MORNING AMERICA (7:00 AM ET)

December 14, 1999, Tuesday

TYPE: Newscast

LENGTH: 367 words

HEADLINE: ABC'S GOOD MORNING AMERICA HEADLINES

BODY:

TEXT CRAWL:

Secretary William Cohen has ordered a review of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

EX-NYPD COP GETS 30 YEARS IN TORTURE CASE White former New York city police officer Justin Volpe was sentenced this morning to 30 years in prison for the torture of black Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in a police station bathroom.

CUBAN BOY'S FATHER IS FOR REAL U.S. immigration officials met today in Havana

with Juan Miguel Gonzalez and concluded that he is truly the father of 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez. That removes an obstacle to Elian going back to Cuba.

RULING EXPECTED ON TRIPP'S IMMUNITY A Maryland judge is expected to rule today on whether the federal immunity deal Linda Tripp struck with Kenneth Starr's prosecutors would protect her from state wiretapping charges.

GUN MAKERS WIN ROUND IN MIAMI A judge dismisses Miami-Dade County's lawsuit against gun makers Monday, saying the county had not suffered any direct injuries from guns.

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SUSPECTS ARRESTED IN TERRORISM PLOT More than a dozen people have been arrested in the Middle East in connection with a terrorist plot to strike Americans at Christian sites during the upcoming New Year's holiday, U.S. intelligence sources have told ABCNEWS.

POLL: CUBAN BOY SHOULD BE WITH DAD Forty-six percent of Americans think 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez should go home to his father in Cuba, while only 33 percent believe he should remain with relatives in the United States.

DENIAL OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS Shame and the expense of treatment keep millions of Americans from seeking treatment for mental health disorders, according to a new study.

"DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL' TO BE REVIEWED Just days after an Army private was sentenced to life for fatally beating a soldier rumored to be gay, Defense Secretary William Cohen has ordered a review of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

EX-NYPD COP GETS 30 YEARS IN TORTURE CASE White former New York city police officer Justin Volpe was sentenced this morning to 30 years in prison for the torture of black Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in a...

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

23 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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ABC NEWS

SHOW: GOOD MORNING AMERICA (7:00 AM ET)

December 14, 1999, Tuesday

TYPE: Newscast

LENGTH: 158 words

HEADLINE: DETAILS EMERGING ABOUT WHY WARNING WAS ISSUED TO AMERICANS TRAVELING ABROAD FOR NEW YEAR; US IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS HAVE MOST INFORMATION THEY NEED TO MAKE DECISION ABOUT FUTURE OF CUBAN BOY; PARENTS OF COLUMBINE SHOOTING VICTIMS FINALLY SEE VIDEOTAPES MADE BY KILLERS

ANCHORS: ANTONIO MORA

BODY:

ANTONIO MORA, anchor:

US officials are being more specific about why they issued a warning to Americans traveling abroad for the new year.

(VO) They say nearly a dozen people, some with apparent links to Osama bin Laden, were arrested in the Middle East.

The suspects were reportedly in advanced stages of planning a terrorist attack on Americans abroad.

US immigration officials now have most of the information they need to make a decision about the future of Elian Gonzalez.

(VO) The six-year-old spent yesterday at Universal Studios in Florida with relatives. In Cuba, Elian's father met with US officials and said he now expects the boy will be returned to him.

The parents of some victims of the Columbine High School killings finally saw the videotapes made by the killers. The families were angry because the contents of the tapes were seen by a reporter for Time magazine before the parents had a chance to see them.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

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ABC NEWS

SHOW: GOOD MORNING AMERICA (7:00 AM ET)

December 14, 1999, Tuesday

TYPE: Newscast

LENGTH: 329 words

HEADLINE: LARGE NUMBERS OF AMERICANS THINK CUBAN BOY SHOULD BE RETURNED TO HIS FATHER IN CUBA

ANCHORS: ANTONIO MORA

REPORTERS: MORTON DEAN

BODY:

ANTONIO MORA, anchor:

Large numbers of Americans think a six-year-old Cuban boy should be returned to his father. In a new abcnews.com poll, 46 percent said he should be sent back, while 33 percent want him to stay with relatives in the US. Meanwhile, the US Immigration Service now apparently has most of the information it needs to make a decision on the boy's future. ABC's Morton Dean is in Havana.

Good morning, Mort.

MORTON DEAN reporting:

Good morning, Antonio. American and Cuban officials here in Havana continue to mull over that information, information picked up here yesterday while the young boy, Elian, continues to take advantage of life in the United States.

(VO) The boy who is the subject of the bitter international custody debate was visiting yet another Florida theme park with relatives yesterday while in Cuba significant headway continued to be made in determining where he will live. His father, obviously with the endorsement of the Cuban government,

finally
agreed to a US demand for an interview. Juan Gonzalez said he met with
two
American officials and was convinced they were sympathetic to his effort
to gain
custody of his son. At pre-scheduled migration policy talks in Havana,
both
sides seemed satisfied Elian's case may be moving toward a resolution.

Mr. WILLIAM BROWNFIELD (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State): We are
working
to determine the views of the child's father in order to contribute to
the fair
resolution of this case.

Mr. RICARDO ALARCON (President Cuban National Assembly): Recently,
there has
been indications that the US has realized that this is an issue that only
has a
possible way out, seen fit to abide by international law.

DEAN: US immigration officials in Washington say they will act quickly
now,
but any attempt to bring Elian back here to Cuba is likely to be met with
a
court battle by his Florida relatives. Antonio:

MORA: Thanks, Mort. ABC's Morton Dean in Havana.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 1999

25 of 62 DOCUMENTS

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Agence France Presse

December 14, 1999, Tuesday

SECTION: Domestic, non-Washington, general news item

LENGTH: 1064 words

HEADLINE: Cuban detainees take hostages at Louisiana prison: CNN

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, Dec 14

BODY:

Five Cuban detainees took three prison officials hostage at a Louisiana
jail
after overpowering a guard with a home-made knife, CNN reported early

Tuesday.

No injuries were immediately reported in the standoff, in which anti-riot police surrounded the prison in St Martinville, 75 miles (120 kilometers) west of New Orleans, CNN said.

The detainees had released one hostage but held the three others, the prison warden and two deputies, captive inside the compound, CNN said.

The trouble began at around 4:00 p.m. (2200 GMT) Monday, as the detainees left the prison exercise area, the report said.

One of the inmates overpowered a prison guard with a home-made knife.

A short while later, the prison warden contacted CNN's Miami bureau by telephone, and a man who identified himself as one of the hostage takers told CNN that he had been imprisoned for no reason and wanted to leave the United States.

A local television station, according to CNN, said one hostage taker claimed he had been held at the Louisiana prison for 13 years.

The five Cuban detainees were being held at the Louisiana facility on behalf of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, a spokeswoman for the local sheriff's department told CNN.

fgf/ns

Five Cuban detainees took three prison officials, including the warden, hostage at a Louisiana jail after overpowering a guard with home-made knives, police confirmed Tuesday.

Local authorities have begun negotiating with the hostage takers, but have had little success so far, said a spokesman for the St. Martinville police department, Newman Braud.

"We are at present in a hostage situation," he said.

The trouble began at around 4:00 p.m. (2200 GMT) Monday, as the detainees left the prison exercise area, police said.

The Cuban nationals, brandishing self-made knives, took four hostages,

including the prison warden, but "one was released at 10:00 p.m. (0300 GMT Tuesday) last night," Braud said.

No one was injured in the incident, he said, adding that police have surrounded the building in St. Martinville, some 193 kilometers (120 miles) west of New Orleans.

The five Cubans were detained at the St. Martinville prison on behalf of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, he said.

But Braud refused to give further details on their detention, saying "negotiations are ongoing ... I don't want to jeopardize them."

One of the prisoners told CNN that he had been imprisoned for no reason and wanted to leave the United States.

bur/sba/jlp

Five Cuban detainees took three prison officials, including the warden, hostage at a Louisiana jail after overpowering a guard with home-made knives, police confirmed Tuesday.

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"We are at present in a hostage situation," he said.

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The Cuban nationals, brandishing self-made knives, took four hostages, including the prison warden, but "one was released at 10:00 p.m. (0300 GMT Tuesday) last night," Braud said.

No one was injured in the incident, he said, adding that police and members of the FBI have surrounded the building in St. Martinville, some 193 kilometers (120 miles) west of New Orleans.

The five Cubans were detained at the St. Martinville prison on behalf of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, he said.

According to the local paper, the Times-Picayune, four had unclear immigration status in the United States and were being detained while awaiting a

decision.

One of the prisoners, Jonne Ponce, told CNN that he had been imprisoned for 13 years and wanted to leave the United States.

Police said the Cubans had been detained for less than one year at St. Martinsville, where 162 people are incarcerated.

Braud called the release of one of the hostages encouraging but refused to give further details on the Cubans' detention, saying "negotiations are ongoing ... I don't want to jeopardize them."

The hostage taking came as Washington and Havana concluded a fruitless day of talks on immigration policy, with Cuba demanding the return of Elian Gonzalez, a six-year-old rescued off Florida after a shipwreck which killed his mother, to his father in Cuba.

bur/ksb/mac

Negotiations were continuing Tuesday between local authorities and five Cuban detainees holding three hostages in a Louisiana jail, as police and FBI agents kept guard around the facility.

The five Cubans were being held at the Saint Martin Parish jail by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) when they took four people hostage Monday -- including the jail's warden -- using home-made knives.

No one was injured in the incident, said local police spokesman Newman Braud, adding that police and agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation have surrounded the building in Saint Martinville, some 193 kilometers (120 miles) west of New Orleans.

"The negotiations are ongoing," Braud said, refusing to give any further details on the Cuban's demand or the progress of the negotiations so as not to "compromise those efforts."

However, he said there had been "some encouraging aspects" of the negotiations, relating to the fact that "one hostage has been released, there is no violence and no injuries." The hostage was released Monday at 10:00

p.m.
(0400 GMT Tuesday).

About 50 prisoners were relocated to the center of the prison, where 162 people are incarcerated, Braud said.

The stand-off began around 4:00 p.m. (2200 GMT) Monday, about 120 miles (193 kilometers) west here, as the detainees left the prison exercise area, police said.

According to the New Orleans Times-Picayune, four of the Cubans had unclear immigration status in the United States and were being detained while awaiting a decision.

Police estimated that about 60 of the prisoners at the Saint Martinville jail were being held by the INS pending decisions about their status.

One of the hostage-takers, Jonne Ponce, told CNN that he had been imprisoned for 13 years and wanted to leave the United States.

Police said the Cubans had been detained for less than one year at St. Martinville, where 162 people are incarcerated.

lb/jlp/mac/gs

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 1999

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TO: Kristina Wolfe (CN=Kristina Wolfe/O=OVP@OVP [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

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TO: gamble-bennett@dol.gov (gamble-bennett@dol.gov @ inet [UNKNOWN])
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FOX SPECIAL REPORT WITH BRIT HUME
December 15, 1999

BRIT HUME, HOST, SPECIAL REPORT: Welcome to
Washington. I'm Brit Hume.

Once more, Vice President Gore has broken with
administration policy. Earlier this week, he joined Hillary Clinton in
criticizing the president's policy of ``Don't ask, don't tell" regarding
gays in the military. The president later joined in that. Now Mr. Gore has
followed his Democratic presidential rival, Bill Bradley, in saying he is
open to the use of marijuana for certain medicinal purposes. FOX NEWS

White House correspondent Wendell Goler has more on the story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

WENDELL GOLER, FOX NEWS (voice-over): It was the second time in as many days candidate Al Gore found himself at odds with the vice president of the same name. This time the issue was the medical use of marijuana.

ALBERT GORE (D), VICE PRESIDENT, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: We have not given doctors enough flexibility to help patients who are going through acute pain.

GOLER: The official administration position is that medical marijuana should be used only in tightly controlled research settings.

BARRY MCCAFFREY, WHITE HOUSE DRUG POLICY DIRECTOR: It's the business of the National Institute of Health and the Food and Drug Administration.

GOLER: Democratic candidate Bill Bradley also says the issue needs more study before it's put into law. Gore revealed marijuana was prescribed for his sister under a Tennessee law when she was dying of cancer, but he said she hadn't found it effective.

GORE: And if it had worked for her, I think that she should have had the ability to get her pain relieved that way.

GOLER: President Clinton has opposed a half dozen state referendums on the medicinal use of marijuana, saying they open the door to unregulated use, and aides say he's not certain the benefits are worth the risk.

JOE LOCKHART, WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN: We don't have yet conclusive scientific evidence that marijuana provides a therapeutic benefit that exceeds currently prescribed drugs.

GOLER: Of course, Bill Clinton has indicated he never found any use for marijuana, claiming he didn't inhale when he tried it in college. Gore, on the other hand, admits to using pot when he was stationed in Vietnam and after returning to Tennessee, though he says nothing should be done now to open up more access to its abuse.

GORE: The marijuana that's commonly available today, I'm told, is many times stronger, typically, than the kind of marijuana that was commonly available several decades ago.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

GOLER: The White House says there really isn't any significant difference between its position and Gore's, but Gore himself admits he's not on the same page as drug czar Barry McCaffrey, and McCaffrey is supposed to speak for the administration.

Brit?

HUME: Wendell, the Gore camp released his health records. What do they tell us?

GOLER: Well, this would appear to be an effort to capitalize on Bradley's episode of atrial fibrillation within the past week and Bradley's refusal to release his health records. Gore had a group of specialists analyze the results of a physical he underwent last May. It basically gives him a clean bill of health--high cholesterol level, skin cancer removed several years ago, but looking good now.

Brit?

HUME: Wendell, thanks very much.

As he headed for New Hampshire and his joint appearance with Bradley to promote campaign finance reform, John McCain

felt the need to shore up his standing as a conservative. In Monday's debate, Texas Governor George W. Bush said McCain's campaign finance reform scheme would not cover labor union money and would amount to unilateral disarmament by Republicans. Our Carl Cameron is also on his way to New Hampshire to cover the McCain-Bradley meeting and filed this report from Chicago.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CARL CAMERON, FOX NEWS (voice-over): On the campaign trail in South Carolina, Arizona Senator John McCain defended himself and his support for campaign finance reform against growing Republican criticism that neither are conservative.

U.S. SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I'm a conservative. The conservative agenda we promised the voters is still an unfinished work. Every conservative should see this clearly. If you believed in the vision of Ronald Reagan and his conservative philosophy of smaller government that serves the public interest rather than the special interests, then you should want to join in the fight for campaign finance reform.

CAMERON: In what was a seven-minute speech, McCain used the word "conservative" ten times to describe himself or his reform proposals. But campaign finance reform is a double-edged sword for McCain. Most conservatives and the rest of the GOP presidential field oppose much of what McCain advocates.

GEORGE W. BUSH (R), TEXAS GOVERNOR, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: It's going to hurt the Republican Party.

CAMERON: But most Democrats support campaign finance reform.

BRADLEY CAMPAIGN WORKER: I was just trying to see if you've maybe given any thought to who you might be supporting for president.

CAMERON: At Bradley headquarters in New Hampshire, as well as McCain's Granite State offices, preparations are under way for a highly unusual joint appearance between McCain and Bradley. Though they are presidential candidates from opposing political parties, they have made campaign finance reform centerpieces of their respective candidacies.

For Bradley, as a Democrat, campaign finance reform is easy to support and has the added political benefit of drawing attention to campaign finance scandals that have dogged Al Gore. McCain's support for campaign finance reform has underscored his reputation for bucking Republican orthodoxy but has him under growing criticism, particularly in New Hampshire, where his rivals and other conservatives say his reform proposals would undercut the GOP's ability to communicate its message and violate the principles of free speech. McCain's in the delicate political position of advocating policies that create questions about his conservatism.

MCCAIN: As conservatives, our priority must be to give government back to the people.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CAMERON: And Senator McCain says campaign finance reform, in place, would allow conservatives to better advocate their position, and without it they will be blocked by special interests. Of course, the big concern for McCain's strategists is while he calls himself a conservative, he will be standing next to Bill Bradley, a Democrat that even in McCain's words is a "liberal's liberal."

Brit?

HUME: Since independents can cross over and vote in either party's primary and both these men would seem to be trying to appeal to them, aren't they really competing for the same vote, in part?

CAMERON: Right.

HUME: In New Hampshire.

CAMERON: In New Hampshire...

HUME: Yeah.

CAMERON: And in New Hampshire, the independent vote is as large as the registered Democrat and Republican vote. The underlying issue, however, is you see McCain standing with a Democrat and talking about--talking to independents, not Republicans.

HUME: All right, Carl. Thanks very much.

Democratic fundraiser John Huang is the main attraction at three days of hearings on Capitol Hill. He's already pleaded guilty to breaking campaign finance laws, but this is the first time he has spoken publicly to investigators, and House Government Reform Committee chairman Dan Burton is hoping Huang will give more insight into the Clinton administration's alleged ties to the Lippo Group. FOX NEWS correspondent David Shuster reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DAVID SHUSTER, FOX NEWS (voice-over): Giving his first public testimony about the campaign finance scandal, Democratic fundraiser John Huang rejected allegations he was trying to help China.

JOHN HUANG, FORMER DNC FUNDRAISER: I'm not and never was a spy.

SHUSTER: Huang apologized for arranging illegal foreign donations and said he was only attempting to give Asian-Americans more political power. Huang charged, however, that lawmakers are using the scandal to demonize them.

HUANG: The politics of pitting religious, ethnic and racial groups against one another threaten to harm this great country.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE DAN BURTON (R-IN): I really hope you'll not try to blame the Justice Department or the Congress for things that you're responsible for.

SHUSTER: Burton asked Huang about a 1996 fundraiser put together for Vice President Gore at a Buddhist temple in California. Impoverished nuns gave tens of thousands of dollars.

HUANG: I was told some of these nuns were very wealthy, that it was their money.

BURTON: So you--you believed that 11 nuns gave the \$5,000 themselves?

HUANG: Yes, I did.

BURTON: You had no doubt about that.

HUANG: I did not.

SHUSTER: Committee Republicans were just as perplexed by Huang's testimony about James Riady, his boss at an Indonesian banking conglomerate. In 1992, Riady rode in a limousine with then-governor Clinton and offered to raise a million dollars for the presidential campaign. Huang and Riady put together a scheme to funnel the money from foreigners.

HUANG: Mr. Riady probably has multiple purposes in doing so--for the status, as I mentioned already--you know, the standing--and also the benefit for the business...

SHUSTER: Democrats tried to establish, though, that Huang and his associates were acting on their own.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HENRY WAXMAN (D-CA): Mr. Huang, do you have any knowledge that would implicate the president of the United States in any illegal activity?

HUANG: No, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Do you have any knowledge that would implicate the vice president of the United States in any illegal activity?

HUANG: No, Mr. Waxman.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SHUSTER: There is expected, of course, to be some news about that Indonesian banking conglomerate called the Lippo Group. There will be some allegations later in the week that Vice President Gore had the services of John Huang offered to him back as far as 1989, when Gore was a senator. But in any case, the hearings continue throughout the week.

Brit?

HUME: David, let me ask you something on another story you've been watching this week, the case against Linda Tripp on wiretapping charges. When might we hear from Monica Lewinsky in that case?

SHUSTER: Brit, sources close to Monica Lewinsky say that she is scheduled to testify in those pre-trial hearings on Thursday. Subpoenas can sometimes be altered or adjusted, but we are told to expect her at the courthouse on Thursday. The point is that Maryland prosecutors have to try and establish that all of their evidence has been collected independent of Starr's investigation. Monica Lewinsky, of course, though, will face some cross-examination about that issue.

Brit?

HUME: All right, David. Thanks very much.

San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown has kept up his 35-year streak of winning elections. He easily won the city's run-off mayoral election Tuesday, defeating a grass-roots challenger. Brown spent 10 times more than his challenger, but Tom Ammiano still won 40 percent of the vote. Brown says that won't make him change his policies. He says elections are, quote, "winner take all."

And when we come back, Rita Cosby with new information about those alleged terrorists who had planned to harm Americans during the New Year holiday. Stay tuned.

(18:12)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: An American citizen has been implicated in the thwarted terror attacks in the Middle East. This comes after 13 arrests in Jordan this week of alleged followers of Osama bin Laden. Senior FOX NEWS correspondent Rita Cosby has been following the story and joins us now with details.

Hi, Rita.

RITA COSBY, FOX NEWS: Hi, Brit. U.S. officials are telling me that the U.S. government has been told in the last 24 hours that an American citizen was arrested in Pakistan in connection with these planned attacks on Americans. Now, we're told that he has dual citizenship, that he's a Jordanian-American who's been spending a lot of time in Jordan and also recently in Pakistan.

This news comes after a key Jordanian official said that his country made some earlier arrests.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): Jordan's prime minister told his parliament that authorities in his country arrested 13 individuals last week suspected of planning year-end terrorist attacks against Americans overseas. Of the 13, 11 are Jordanian nationals.

U.S. and Jordanian officials tell FOX NEWS that some of those arrested in Jordan confessed that they were planning to attack two specific religious sites in that country over the holidays, when thousands of American tourists were planning on being there. One is Mount Nebo, located near Amman, considered to be a religious site for Christians and Jews. It is where Moses first sighted the promised land and where Moses died. The other planned target was also in Jordan. It's near the Jordan River and is where they believe Jesus was baptized.

The State Department tells FOX NEWS it's still warning Americans in Jordan to be cautious, but believes the threat there has been reduced with the recent arrests. A State Department official said, quote, ``If we had reason to believe that the threat was not effectively countered, we would have to report it to protect American lives."

(END VIDEOTAPE)

And U.S. officials say the threat extends well beyond Jordan to other countries in the Middle East, particularly Israel. We're told that in recent days they have beefed up security in that country.

Brit?

HUME: Rita, thanks very much.

And coming up next, we'll talk to Republican presidential candidate Steve Forbes. Stay tuned, folks.

(18:16)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: The latest polls put the multi-millionaire publisher and GOP presidential candidate Steve Forbes third behind John McCain and George W. Bush in New Hampshire. In Iowa, where Forbes has spent a lot of time campaigning, he registers a distant second, with John McCain focusing little effort there. So when and where might he make a breakthrough? I'm joined now by Steve Forbes himself, from our headquarters in New York.

Welcome, sir.

STEVE FORBES (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Nice to be with you, Brit.

HUME: As you look ahead to this, and let's just assume for the sake of discussion that the polls basically hold and we get you and Bush finishing 1 and 2 in Iowa and perhaps Bush, McCain 1 and 2 in New Hampshire, where, as you look down the road after that, do you feel like you can make a strong stand and really get a foothold in this race?

FORBES: Well, I think the foothold is going to come in the early contests next year, starting in Iowa. Right now I know from experience polls don't mean very much. I was just looking at some old ones today. At this time four years ago, Pat Buchanan was 36 points behind Bob Dole in Iowa, and he came close to winning there. He was about 30 points behind in New Hampshire, and actually won New Hampshire.

It's not until early next year that people start to focus truly on this race as to where they're going to cast their ballots.

I think as they do, they're going to be very impressed with the kind of program that I've put forth, a real conservative agenda, bold ideas on the table. And I think that's what people are looking for, so I remain very optimistic.

HUME: Let me ask you what you make of this Bradley-McCain entente, if it can be called that, scheduled Thursday in New Hampshire. What is your view of that?

FORBES: Well, obviously, it's going to give them both a lot of publicity because everyone's going to be there. As you know, the fourth estate, the media, is very much in favor of their kind of campaign finance reform. I think it's a violation, and others do, of the Constitution, restricting people's ability to give views that they believe in, come together and expound those views, get them across to the public.

I believe true campaign finance reform would allow individuals to give as much to a campaign as they want, or to a candidate, as long as there's full and prompt disclosure. And let the public decide if you've sold your soul to somebody or something.

HUME: Now, let me ask you a question that you may be uniquely suited to answer among the candidates in the field. Mr. Bush is advised, among others, by Lawrence Lindsey (ph), the former Fed governor, who is very, very frightened of the current stock market levels and has been himself out of the market for a year and a half or more and warns anybody who will listen that there's a bubble out there and you're about to get popped.

John McCain has said that long-term he's very optimistic, but that he, too, worries about the stock market at current levels. And he said in the first debate that it may be a bubble.

First of all, what is your view of the market, as the publisher of a finance magazine? And if you don't think it's a bubble, tell me what your theory is about this market.

FORBES: Well, it should say something about Mr. Lindsey that he's been out of the market for 18 months, and he's got a lot of losses--I mean, gains that he could have had that he's lost. So I'm glad I didn't have him manage my money.

But in terms of the market, what I worry about is not the current levels. What I worry about is the Federal Reserve tightening up--I think that could really hurt early next year--and Congress's inability to get the president to sign a tax cut. The president's veto of even the small tax cut that was passed last year was a very real disappointment. So if we don't make real progress in getting the Fed back on track of a sensible monetary policy, and if Congress isn't able to get a tax cut through, if Clinton keeps blocking it, then yes, you're going to have trouble.

And that's why I've put forth ideas and proposals, bold proposals, breaking with the past, so we can keep the economy not only going but ratcheting it up to a new level of growth and productivity.

HUME: What I'm...

FORBES: It's within our bounds to do so.

HUME: It's still not clear to me, though, why you don't believe that this market, which has exploded in terms of valuations--we're having, you know, price-earnings ratios at a level for the market as a whole that are much higher than have been experienced at any length historically before. These sorts of numbers have been the prelude in the past to sharp downturns. You seem not to fear that.

FORBES: Well, I fear...

HUME: Why not?

FORBES: Well, Brit, I fear the policies that knock markets down. And yes, there are a lot of dot-coms that are way out of the stratosphere, and eventually they'll be brought down, many of them that don't come through. You see that happening all the time. Many of the hot stocks a few months ago are now eating dust today.

But the key is, if you have the proper environment, the proper tax environment, the proper monetary and regulatory environment, you can have sustained long-term growth. And if you go back to 1929, what precipitated that crash was a tight Federal Reserve policy, disastrous trade policies, and then higher taxes. And you see crashes in the past--'87, fear about the dollar, fear about trade restrictions. These are policy mistakes.

So yes, individual stocks--yes, some of them I wouldn't touch. They're too high. They're going to bust. You know they are. However, the market as a whole--actually, most stocks today, individual stocks, are lower than they were a year ago. So in that sense, the correction has already been under way.

HUME: Now, let me turn, if I can, to the rest of the field. John McCain has been out since the debate in Iowa assuring everybody that he is a conservative. In your view, is he a conservative?

FORBES: Well, he can call himself anything he wants. I must say, I was a little disappointed--and I'm being diplomatic about his health care proposal. I was very pleased that he was in favor of helping patients, but he didn't really cut the Gordian knot, and that is to give patients control of their health care resources, as I propose to do. There's this disconnect between the supplier of health care services and the patient. And I want to get those third parties out of the way so patients can choose their own doctor. You should be able to make that choice, whether you want an HMO or fee-for-service or something else.

HUME: Now, let me turn, if I can, to the race itself. You're optimistic that you'll have a breakthrough in New Hampshire or Iowa. Let's--assume for the sake of this question that it doesn't happen. Are you prepared to stay the course? I mean, there are those who are saying that you haven't spent the money on advertising, for example, this year that you did four years ago, and that perhaps you're holding back. Are you in it to the end? We know that if you choose to stay in, you can.

FORBES: Well, I am in for the duration, and one thing you learn, whether it's in business or the political arena or anything else, and that is you never fight the last war. You look at the circumstances today. I think we've put together a superb grass-roots citizen effort in Iowa and New Hampshire, Arizona, Delaware, the other early states, and that's why we have staying power. And I think that's why--what worries the Bush campaign is they know they can't knock us out in one contest. We can come back. And because we have that strong message, I'm optimistic we're going to do well early.

HUME: Let me ask you this, though, about the advertising you've done so far. Is there a concern that because John McCain has, as you--in your view, captivated the national media and enjoyed a tremendous rush of attention and--and an uptick in the polls, that any advertising you might do that was, you know, comparative and critical of the positions of George W. Bush would end up, at the

moment--for the moment, at least, helping him, not you?

FORBES: Well, again, you can't worry about other campaigns, other candidacies. The key thing is getting your message out there. We have a bold...

HUME: Ten seconds.

FORBES: ... exciting message, and that's how ultimately you win. And I think that people want to see that kind of a debate, and I hope we have more debates so we can get these issues out there.

HUME: Steve Forbes, good of you to come in. Hope you'll come back. Thanks very much.

Coming up: Al Gore's put on the spot about Juanita Broaddrick.

(18:27)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: President Clinton is calling on Israeli and Syrian leaders to write a new chapter of history. Mr. Clinton called the latest round of peace talks in Washington the first chance for a comprehensive peace between the two countries. Correspondent Jim Angle has been following the talks from the White House.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JIM ANGLE, FOX NEWS (voice-over): President Clinton, acting as political matchmaker, brought the Israeli and Syrian leaders together for the highest-level meeting ever between the two nations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: What we are witnessing today is not yet peace, and getting there will require bold thinking and hard choices. But today is a big step along that path.

ANGLE: Mr. Clinton called it ``an extraordinary opportunity." Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak said his nation had come here to put behind it the horrors of war.

EHUD BARAK, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: ... to begin this march together with our Syrian partners to make a different Middle East, where nations are living side by side in peaceful relationship...

ANGLE: Barak spoke briefly, but Syrian foreign minister Farouk al-Sharaa delivered a lengthy statement in which he called these talks ``the dawn of a real hope for peace," but also made clear what Syria expects to get from them.

FAROUK AL-SHARAA, SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER: It goes without saying that peace for Syria means the return of all its occupied land.

ANGLE: Israel has occupied the strategic Golan Heights since the 1968 war. Druse Arabs living there and loyal to Syria are supporting the Golan's return, but many Israelis want to keep the high ground, which overlooks Syria as well as Lebanon, from which Israel is often attacked by Islamic guerrillas, as it was again just hours before the Washington talks began.

So many Israelis oppose the return of the Golan, but al-Sharaa warned that such opposition will only prolong the bloodshed.

AL-SHARAA: Those who reject to return the occupied territories send a message to the Arabs that they conflict between Israel and Arabs is a conflict of existence in which bloodshed can never stop.

ANGLE (on-camera): After meeting with the president,

the two leaders spent the afternoon in talks with Secretary of State Albright, but the meetings began on a chilly note with no handshake between the two leaders and a lengthy and bitter statement from the Syrians. Nevertheless, getting together was a good sign and shows that both sides believe the Syrian description of these talks as a moment of truth for the peace process.

At the White House, Jim Angle, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: Coming up next: The nation's homeless are not embracing the idea of replacing holiday turkey with tofu. And Al Gore takes on the Juanita Broadrick issue when we return.

(18:34)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: With the holidays coming up, many homeless people may be looking forward to a nice hot meal with all the trimmings, but now there's a movement to make their holiday dinners more politically correct. As FOX's William La Jeunesse reports, some folks are trying to replace the holiday turkey with tofu, and the homeless aren't happy about it.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAM LA JEUNESSE, FOX News (voice-over):

America's hungry--no home, no money, and now for the holidays, no turkey.

HOMELESS MAN: They want to take the turkey away to make some tofu--"to-turkey."

LA JEUNESSE: Animal activists and actor Martin Sheen have teamed up to offer homeless shelters free "Tofurky," a meatless alternative.

JASON, HOMELESS: What makes Martin Sheen an authoritarian on separation of tofu for turkey?

STEVEN WOODS, HOMELESS: He doesn't have a right to take turkey away from the American citizen.

JANE GARRISON, PETA SPOKESWOMAN: He's not telling anyone what he should eat. He's doing a wonderful, beautiful thing. He's offering a meal for someone who chooses not to eat animals.

LA JEUNESSE: In a letter sent to 350 shelters across the country, Sheen says, quote, "With 17 million vegetarians in the United States today, you will doubtlessly have some visitors who have given up meat."

(on camera): The vegetarians say Tofurky is a great alternative to meat--no cholesterol, low in fat and calories, and it tastes surprisingly like turkey. But it's not. And they say, "Hey, we might be homeless, but we want the real thing."

FRIEDA, HOMELESS: I've tasted tofu, and it tastes all right. But I still like turkey.

LA JEUNESSE (voice-over): The Los Angeles Mission serves 2,000 meals to homeless people every day. The menu, which usually includes chicken or turkey, is largely donated, and tofu isn't exactly rolling in.

RONALD RECTOR, LOS ANGELES MISSION: It's not donated regularly. There's not a demand for it. We get more demand for real milk, bacon and eggs for breakfast and steak.

LA JEUNESSE: Unlike trendy Hollywood, which can afford the \$22 Tofurky, it is unlikely the homeless will develop a taste for tofu.

In Los Angeles, William La Jeunesse, FOX NEWS.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HUME: That Tuesday night televised town meeting in Derry, New Hampshire, where Vice President Gore was asked about medical marijuana, also yielded this exchange between Gore and a woman who asked him about Juanita Broaddrick. She, of course, was the Arkansas woman who claimed that Bill Clinton raped her more than two decades ago. Here's the question and Mr. Gore's lengthy response.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

QUESTION: When Juanita Broaddrick made the claim, which I found to be quite credible, that she was raped by Bill Clinton, did it change your opinion about him being one of the best presidents in history? And do you believe Juanita Broaddrick's claim? And what did you tell your son about this?

GORE: Well, I didn't know what to make of her claim because I don't know how to evaluate that story. I really don't.

QUESTION: Did you see the interview?

GORE: No, I didn't...

QUESTION: Did you see the interview?

GORE: No, I didn't see the interview, no. Uh-uh.

QUESTION: I'm very surprised that you didn't watch the interview.

GORE: Well, which--what show was it on?

QUESTION: ABC, I believe.

GORE: Yeah. I didn't see it. There have been so many personal allegations and such a non-stop series of attacks--I guess I'm like a lot of people in that I think that enough is enough. I do not know how to evaluate each one of these individual stories. I just don't know. I would never violate the privacy of my communication with one of my children or a member of my family, as for that part of your question.

QUESTION: So you didn't believe Juanita Broaddrick's claim.

GORE: No, I didn't say that. I just--I said I don't know how to evaluate it, and I didn't see the interview. But I want to say something else to you about this. Why don't you stand back up, and I'd like to be able to look you in the eye.

You know, I think that--I think that whatever mistakes he made in his personal life are, in the minds of most Americans, balanced against what he has done in his public life as president.

My philosophy, since you ask about my religious faith--I'm taught in my religious tradition to hate the sin and love the sinner. I'm taught that all of us are heir to the mistakes that--are prone to the mistakes that flesh is heir to. And I think that in judging his performance as a president, I think that most people are anxious to stop talking about all the personal attacks against him and trying to sort out all of the allegations and want to instead move on and focus on the future.

Now, I'll say this to you. He's my friend. And that friendship is important to me. And if you've ever had a friend who made a serious mistake and then you repaired the friendship and moved on, then you know that that relationship has been like for me.

Secondly, I felt the same disappointment and anger at him during the period when all this was going on that most people did. You may have felt a different kind of emotion. I don't know. I sense that

maybe you did. I certainly felt what most Americans did.

Third, I have been involved in a lot of battles where he and I have fought together on behalf of the American people, and I think we've made a good, positive difference for this country. Number four, I'm running for president on my own. I want to take my own...

QUESTION: (INAUDIBLE) pep rally supporting...

GORE: I want to take my own values of faith and family to the presidency. And I want you to evaluate me.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HUME: Don't touch that remote, folks. The FOX all-stars are coming up next.

(18:44)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: And now the analytical nuggets of Fred Barnes, executive editor of "The Weekly Standard," Mort Kondracke, executive editor of "Roll Call," and from the White House lawn, Mara Liasson, White House correspondent of National Public Radio, FOX NEWS contributors all.

Let's just quickly get a sense of your take, Mort first, on the--on that Gore answer on Juanita Broaddrick question.

MORT KONDRACKE, "ROLL CALL": Well, look, this was a hard one, right? Whoever that question-asker was was like a diamond pointed right at his forehead. And I thought he handled it about as well as he possibly could. I mean, he has this sort of "Don't ask, don't tell me" attitude toward whether the rape actually took place.

HUME: "Don't ask, don't tell me"!

KONDRACKE: And you know...

HUME: "I won't ask. Don't tell me."

KONDRACKE: Yeah. Exactly. And then--and then he tried to change the subject to, you know, "I'm the candidate. That's not the candidate. And I'm supposed to forgive the sinner," et cetera, et cetera. I mean, what else could he possibly say? Could he say, "Yes, I believe Juanita Broaddrick, but I stayed in the administration because it's my--for my political benefit? I don't think so."

FRED BARNES, "THE WEEKLY STANDARD": Well, I didn't expect him to say that. But what he did say I thought was I thought was painfully inadequate. I mean, to say that the American people believe enough is enough, that we're going to just brush all these charge aside and pay no attention to any of them--this was a charge of rape! It wasn't molesting some woman or winking at some woman or making a phone call to some woman in Richmond, Virginia, or even having consensual sex with somebody. The charge was rape, and I don't think you can brush it off by just saying "We've heard enough of these charges, and enough is enough."

MARA LIASSON, NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO: Well...

BARNES: That doesn't quite do it for me.

LIASSON: But Fred, I mean, you can't--you can't expect the vice president to say, "Well, I'm going to conduct my own investigation into this." I mean, this is--as Mort said, this is the last thing that Gore wants to talk about. This is the most uncomfortable thing about President Clinton's behavior he could be asked about. And I really--I agree with Mort. I don't know what else he could say.

BARNES: Well, I'll tell you...

KONDRACKE: For another thing...

BARNES: I'll--wait a minute! Let me tell her what I think...

KONDRACKE: Yeah, OK.

(CROSSTALK)

BARNES: Well, no. Here's what he could have said. He could have said, "Look"...

KONDRACKE: "I quit the race."

BARNES: "Look, there is"--no, I don't expect him to say that, either. Al Gore isn't charged with any of these things, and--far from it. From all I know, he has a totally upstanding life in that regard. But look, he could have said, "Look, these are very grave charges, and I don't take them lightly. I haven't looked into them. I didn't see the interview. I don't--I can't quite make out what--I don't know what to make of it. But it is something that is very serious." That's what he could have said.

HUME: Well--well, it was striking that he didn't say "I found those charges not credible."

BARNES: He didn't say that.

HUME: That was striking that he didn't say it. All right, probably not much more that we can--you know, this is one of those stories that--there's nowhere to go with it, at a certain point.

BARNES: Right.

KONDRACKE: Right.

HUME: Which is, you know, why, I guess, we haven't heard more about it.

Now, in the--in "The New York Times" this morning, widely read here in Washington, Maureen Dowd, the columnist, also widely read, had some things to say about George W. Bush's performance in the Iowa debate, particularly his answer when he was asked about which political philosopher or thinker was most influential, and he answered, of course, "Jesus Christ."

This is--here's a little slice of what--what Maureen Dowd said. "This is the era of niche marketing, and Jesus is a niche. Why not use the son of God to help the son of Bush appeal to voters? W. is checking Jesus' numbers, and Jesus is polling well in Iowa. Christ, the new wedge issue."

Now, harsh.

KONDRACKE: Yeah.

HUME: Mort, what do you say?

KONDRACKE: Well, I mean, look, Maureen Dowd is a wonderful writer, but she is a cynic, and she's a cynic about all this. I mean, I thought that George Bush's answer was entirely genuine. I thought it should have been more articulate. It also sounded exclusionary. "If you don't understand how your life can be changed by Jesus Christ, you know, then I--it's hard for me to explain it to you," as though people who were not devout Christians can't possibly understand such a thing.

But the fact is--the fact is that--that Maureen Dowd is one of those people, and there are lots of them, who think that religion is entirely private. It's sort of like something you do in the bathroom. You close the door, and you don't let anybody know about it. Christians are supposed to proclaim their faith. That is one of their--one of the--one of the lessons of the Bible is that you go out and you announce the good news. And I think that's what George Bush was doing.

LIASSON: Well, but you know what...

HUME: Go ahead, Mara.

LIASSON: Maureen Dowd--I mean, I don't know anything about her personal religious...

HUME: She's a Catholic.

LIASSON: ... activities, but...

HUME: She's a Catholic.

LIASSON: ... we do know she's a Catholic.

HUME: Right.

LIASSON: She was raised by nuns, and she often discusses that fact, at least, in her columns. But I thought it was a little odd, when he was asked, "Well, who is your--the political philosopher or thinker who most influenced you?" I thought that it was an odd time to bring up his faith, which I think is completely sincere, in Christ. And I think there is this rush to make your personal beliefs and your personal devotion part of the political campaign, and I guess I feel like the people who are the most religious are the people who don't flaunt it.

HUME: Well, you know, Mara, Thomas Jefferson believed that--that Jesus Christ was the greatest moral teacher of all time. And if it was--I mean, if that was...

LIASSON: I think that's fair. Somebody said "moral teacher." I think that's fair. I think the question about "political philosopher and thinker" was headed in a different direction.

BARNES: Well, he answered sort of the question that wasn't asked, and it wasn't...

LIASSON: Yeah.

BARNES: And if the--and if the complaint is that his answer was not totally responsive to that particular question, well, you may have a case. But I--here we are at a period where a person's character is enormously important, particularly after seven years of Bill Clinton as president. People care about that. Reporters care about it. Voters care about it. Candidates care about it. It's something worth looking into. Now, what is a better window into someone's character than their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs or--that's a great window. Some people don't like it. They don't mind it when you say "God" or they don't mind it when you mention the Bible. But when you mention Jesus Christ, a lot of people get upset, and like Mort, they say it's exclusionary and so on.

KONDRACK: Well...

BARNES: I didn't think there was anything exclusionary...

LIASSON: I wonder--I wonder what answer...

BARNES: ... about it at all.

LIASSON: I wonder what answer he would have given if this--if the New York primary was the first in the nation. I mean, my feeling was he was in Iowa. The Republican Party in Iowa is very conservative. There are a lot of conservative Christians there. There was just--there was something that made me a little bit uncomfortable about that.

HUME: Well, but Mara...

LIASSON: And I think...

HUME: But Mara...

LIASSON: I would like to hear George Bush talk about his religious faith, and I think that is appropriate. But I thought there

was an element to--to politics...

HUME: But this was not a proclamation of faith that he hasn't made before in many another format. Do you really--I mean, that's interesting. It's...

LIASSON: Yeah, and I think--I don't doubt him one bit.

HUME: Mara, that's an interesting question, whether--do you think, Fred, that had this been New York...

KONDRACKE: That he would have picked Moses?

HUME: ... where you have an important Jewish--he would have said "Moses"?

BARNES: He might not have. I--I don't know. He might not have...

(CROSSTALK)

BARNES: But look, after all, he said...

HUME: You don't...

BARNES: ... this is in--he said this in Iowa. But it was on national television, you know. It's not that New York--people in New York aren't going to hear about it. They sure heard about it from Maureen Dowd in their morning newspaper this morning, if not elsewhere. But look, what--I think what George W. Bush did--and I've talked to no one in the campaign about it. Here's something that he truly believes, but it's also something that is useful politically. And so he said that.

LIASSON: Right. And both things are true.

BARNES: I don't think there's anything wrong with that.

LIASSON: Yeah, and both things can be true at the same time.

BARNES: Right.

LIASSON: I completely agree with you, Fred.

KONDRACKE: But I think--I think what Mara said--I think it was last night--I think it was Mara who said it last night, that--that he couldn't think of another--a regular political philosopher, so he...

BARNES: Oh, come on!

KONDRACKE: Wait a minute. She he went to the person who has affected his moral outlook on life. And I--I believe that he's entirely sincere.

HUME: So--so...

KONDRACKE: And the fact is that the message of Jesus Christ in the Judeo-Christian tradition together have profound political implications.

BARNES: Of course.

KONDRACKE: I mean, it was out of the religious belief that people fought against slavery, for example. I mean, the dignity of the individual comes right out of the Bible.

LIASSON: I mean, you know what? I'd like to hear him relate--that's exactly what I want to hear him talk about, relate his religious beliefs to his public philosophy, his political philosophy.

BARNES: Well, there's a good way to...

LIASSON: Yeah.

BARNES: There's a very good way to get George W. Bush to talk about that, and that is ask him. He always...

LIASSON: Yeah, and I...

BARNES: He likes to talk about it. He's always ready to talk about it. I've talked to him about it at great length, and sometimes you don't even have to ask the questions. He--he goes and just yaps right on about it, and it's fascinating, at least to me.

HUME: Now, let's rate the--just for a moment, if we can, by comparison, the other candidates' answers. It was interesting that Orrin Hatch felt called upon to say that yes, he shared that view of Christ, as well. But he said he thought it went without saying.

LIASSON: Yes.

HUME: And--and Gary Bauer, of course, echoed it and...

KONDRACKE: Gary Bauer quoted some scripture.

HUME: Scripture, yes.

KONDRACKE: ... along with it. I thought Gary--Gary--this is thoroughgoing in--in Gary Bauer's life and--and it--what his--what his whole story is about. I mean, I think he--he is a religious conservative first, last and always, as a--as a candidate, and George Bush is also a regular politician.

BARNES: Yeah, George--I think George W. Bush was a little clunky in the way he expressed himself there.

KONDRACKE: Right. Exactly.

BARNES: And Gary Bauer was much better...

HUME: Well (INAUDIBLE)

BARNES: But for Orrin Hatch, it obviously didn't go without saying because he said it.

HUME: All right. OK. That's it. Last word, Fred. Thanks, Mara. Thanks, Mort. Thanks, Fred.

That's all the time we've got for the panel. Stay tuned for a peek into the bedroom of Bob and Elizabeth Dole.

(18:56)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: Finally, after all the melodrama about the Clinton marriage, have you wondered what life is like for other political couples? Well, we bring you a little slice of the private world of Bob and Elizabeth Dole, as she described it to an audience here in Washington.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ELIZABETH DOLE (R), FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE:
"People" magazine wanted to do an interview with Bob and me during the campaign. And they came to our apartment to do this because they wanted to make some pictures around the apartment. And they ended up somehow in our bedroom, and they took a picture of the two of us making the bed.

Well, that picture went coast to coast in "People" magazine. And one irate man wrote to my husband, and he said, "Dear Senator Dole: About that picture of you and your wife making the bed in 'People' magazine--I am now helping my wife make the bed. Please, sir, no more of that domestic support around the house, or you're going to get all us fellows out here in a heck of a lot of trouble. Otherwise, all the best. Signed H.K. Bate (ph)."

Bob wrote back, and he said, "Buster, you don't know the half of it."

(LAUGHTER)

"The only reason she was there is because the camera was there."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HUME: And that's SPECIAL REPORT for this time.

Please come again next time, and in the meantime, stay tuned for news,
fair and balanced, as always.

END

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TEXT:
ABC GOOD MORNING AMERICA
DECEMBER 16, 1999

SPEAKERS: SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, REPUBLICAN PARTY
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
DIANE SAWYER, ANCHOR

SAWYER: Senator McCain joins us now from West Lebanon, New Hampshire, and we welcome you this morning, sir.

If I can start by asking: For those of us who are getting up and brushing our teeth and getting the kids ready for school, make the

case that this is an issue that really matters to somebody at home.

MCCAIN: It really matters, Diane, when the government of the country has been taken out of the hands of the people and put into the priorities and agenda of the special interests, depriving them of their voice in Washington and indeed harming them. Because every time we pass a tax bill, we have benefits and loopholes for the special interests. The pork barrel and wasteful spending continues to go up and up. And on simple--relatively simple issues, we're gridlocked because of the big money from the special interests.

The best example I can give you recently is the HMOs. We can't get a bill of rights because the Democrats are gridlocked by the trial lawyers who want anybody to sue anybody for anything, and the Republicans are gridlocked by the big insurance companies and the HMO money. So average patients who are members of HMOs get no relief.

SAWYER: But your critics say that you are talking about corruption without naming any people who are corrupted, who have sold out, and that you can't do this without saying the names of people you think actually are changing their votes because of the money.

MCCAIN: Start with me--start with me, my name. All of us are corrupted by the pernicious influence of these huge amounts of money. And there's direct...

SAWYER: You've hedged your bet on a vote, you've changed a vote because of money.

MCCAIN: No. I'm sure that there are times when the big-monied interests who have bought access to my office have come in and influenced me in a way that probably was not counterbalanced by that of the interests of the average citizens.

Look, it's pernicious when you look at--any of our viewers who have checked their cable rates lately have seen they've gone up some 23 to 25 percent in the last three years because we passed a law that protected the cable companies, and they're just an example.

I can show you a direct relationship between these large, huge hundred-thousand-dollar checks, million-dollar checks from labor unions and big corporations and tax breaks and the benefits that they got from it. There's a direct correlation, everybody knows it.

MCCAIN: You were talking about that I wouldn't name someone who's corrupt. The CEO of a major corporation wrote a piece in the op-ed--op-ed piece in the New York Times, it said: You could hear laughter in board rooms all over America when senators said they were not corrupted by this sophisticated shake-down system.

SAWYER: As you know, another argument has been that you are essentially turning against your own party on this. And George W. Bush said in the debate recently that the Democrats will continue to get labor money but you want to hamstring the Republican money. I'm going to play just a bit of what he said in that debate.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GOVERNOR GEORGE W. BUSH, REPUBLICAN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: There's a lot of labor people who are Republicans and conservatives, and yet, under the vision you've got--or I guess you've got, or people in Washington have--it's OK that they just take their money and spend it the way they want to spend it. I don't think it's fair, and I think that's unilateral disarmament.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SAWYER: Have you turned against your party?

MCCAIN: Oh, Diane, we all know that labor gives millions and millions and millions of dollars. They could walk two blocks to give multimillion-dollar checks. They would be harmed by this as much as anybody else would.

Look, the vice president--we've had Chinese money, Indonesian money, transfer of technology as the result of these huge amounts of money.

The scandal in Washington in '96 wasn't the debasement of the institutions--wasn't Monica Lewinsky. It was the debasement of the institutions of government by the Clinton-Gore campaign. Vice President Gore said there was ``no controlling legal authority." I can understand that. I don't understand why Governor Bush wouldn't want to get rid of this foreign money that's come in and has corrupted our government--and everybody knows it.

SAWYER: Senator, if I can switch issues just for a minute.

Vice President Gore has now said that gays should be allowed to serve openly in the military. ``Don't ask, don't tell" isn't working. In fact, there's been a 68 percent increase in the discharge of homosexuals in the military since this went into effect. And yet, you have said you're appalled by this shift in what he's saying. Why?

MCCAIN: Everybody's free to shift their position. I think when you're in a position of responsibility, you should consult with the military leaders who we give the responsibility for these young men and women's lives. I would consult with the joint chiefs of staff, people like General Colin Powell, who were the architects of this policy.

MCCAIN: I hear from the military commanders in the field that it's working.

I'm particularly disturbed when it happens to follow hard upon the heels of the first-lady-who's-running-for-senate's comment. I think that this policy has to be reviewed in a rational manner, in consultation with the men and women we give the responsibility to lead our military.

SAWYER: But would you urge them to change it?

MCCAIN: I would rely upon the advice and counsel and experience of those men and women who are in positions of command who we literally place the lives of our young men and women into, and I support the ``don't ask, don't tell" policy, and I hear from them that it's worked and worked well.

MCCAIN: All right. Senator McCain, again we appreciate your joining us this morning. Thank you so much.

MCCAIN: Thank you.

END

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: MElskowitz@aol.com (MElskowitz@aol.com [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME:17-DEC-1999 07:50:38.00

SUBJECT: No Subject

TO: Sandra Thurman (CN=Sandra Thurman/OU=OPD/O=EOP [OPD])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Kidpac@aol.com (Kidpac@aol.com [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:

see end of story on Africa.....

Clinton urges gays to promote change through votes

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Clinton told leading gay and lesbian Democrats Thursday the best way to bring about change in the controversial policy on gays in the U.S. military was through the ballot box.

Clinton, who recently admitted his ``don't ask, don't tell" policy had failed, told a Democratic National Committee fund-raising luncheon attended by about 50 gay and lesbian leaders that there was still much to be done to end discrimination but it needed the support of Congress.

After the luncheon speech, Clinton was asked about the compromise ``don't ask, don't tell" policy that he adopted in 1993 after Congress and the military strongly opposed his plan to ban discrimination against gays in the military.

The policy, which permits gays and lesbians to serve in uniform if they do not openly discuss their sexual preference, has come under increased scrutiny after a soldier was recently found guilty in the beating death of a gay infantryman.

Clinton told people at the luncheon, who had paid at least \$10,000 per person to attend, they had to elect lawmakers who were sympathetic to gay and lesbian issues and would push for a better policy for gays in the military.

``The president said we had made a lot of progress in changing attitudes in the country but there was still a long way to go," an administration official said after the closed-door, question-and-answer session. ``He urged them to get involved in winning the hearts and minds of candidates for Congress in the upcoming election cycle."

In a radio interview Saturday, Clinton said the ``don't ask, don't tell"

policy had not worked the way it was intended and said he hoped the next administration and next Congress could pass the right kind of law to make the policy work.

People at the luncheon said Clinton gave detailed explanations of his policy and agreed that it had not worked.

Elizabeth Birch, head of the Human Rights Campaign that lobbies for gay rights, said Clinton was urged to push for more legislation to ensure equal rights and safety for gays.

“There has not been a piece of watershed legislation that has truly delivered practical benefit and safety to gay Americans,” she said.

Clinton said he still wanted to pass hate crimes legislation to broaden prosecution of violent crimes to include those motivated by the fact that the victim is gay.

He also supported an employment nondiscrimination act, which calls for an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Clinton asked for support from the gays and lesbians in an effort he plans next year to get Congress to help control HIV and AIDS in Africa and part of Asia.

“I think we ought to do more on that around the world and we're going to try to do more, but I want to ask for your support as we go to the Congress and ask them to take a strong stand on that,” he said.

“Otherwise you're going to see whole countries collapse under the weight of AIDS-related deaths, AIDS orphans and managing the situation,” Clinton added.

18:19 12-16-99

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CREATION DATE/TIME:19-DEC-1999 20:44:09.00

SUBJECT: CNN Late Edition, December 19, 1999

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TEXT:
CNN LATE EDITION
DECEMBER 19, 1999

SPEAKERS: WOLF BLITZER, HOST, CNN LATE EDITION
STEVE ROBERTS, CNN COMMENTATOR
TUCKER CARLSON, CNN COMMENTATOR
BRUCE MORTON, CNN CORRESPONDENT
SUSAN PAGE, CNN COMMENTATOR
KEN STARR, FORMER INDEPENDENT COUNSEL
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JOHN CONYERS, (D-MI)
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE ASA HUTCHINSON, (R-AR)

U.S. SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, (R-AZ), PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE

BLITZER: It's noon in Washington, 9:00 a.m. in Los Angeles; 5:00 p.m. in London; and 7:00 p.m. in Jerusalem. Wherever you're watching from around the world, thanks for joining us for the 90-minute LATE EDITION.

We begin today with the race for the White House. It's the last weekend for campaigning before the Christmas holiday. Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley faced off on NBC's Meet the Press earlier today. More on that later.

Republican front-runner George W. Bush is spending the weekend in his homestate of Texas. And the man who's now polling ahead of Governor Bush in the first primary state, New Hampshire, Senator John McCain, is campaigning in New England. He joins us now live from city hall in Burlington, Vermont, where he'll be hosting a town meeting immediately after this interview.

Senator McCain, welcome back to LATE EDITION. Thanks for joining us.

MCCAIN: Thank you, Wolf.

BLITZER: The campaign finance reform is the key issue that you've been raising. You raised it this week with the joint appearance--with the Democratic candidate Bill Bradley, but look at these numbers in a CNN-USA Today/Gallup poll.

When the American people were asked, what are important issues that they're concerned about, 84 percent cited Social Security; 79 percent said health care; 78 percent, Medicare; 61 percent, gun control; 60 percent cited tax cuts. Only 40 percent, less than half of the American people think campaign finance reform is an important issue. How do you hope to generate the kind of support you need if less than half of the people think your key issue is an important issue?

MCCAIN: Well, first of all, I think we already have, because I've been campaigning on reform of government all over--the government, whether it be education or the military or the tax code. But my message is, if you're a conservative--and the only way you're going to reduce the size of government and the only way you're going to get participation on the part of young people is, you're going to have to eliminate these effects of soft money.

And if I may quickly add, if you ask that question in the following way, "influence of big money and special interests in Washington," I think you'd get a different result.

My challenge is to connect the influence of these uncontrolled contributions on the legislation and our government, which really shuts them out of the government. And that's why I think we've had some success. It's a tough fight.

BLITZER: It's a tough fight, and you know, earlier today on Meet the Press, Al Gore, the vice president, responded to your criticism of him earlier in the week on this issue of campaign finance reform. You cited the irregularities in the '96 campaign, the money going to the Democratic campaign, including Al Gore's involvement.

Listen to what he said earlier today--and I'd welcome your response.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE, DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRESIDENTIAL

CANDIDATE; What John McCain left out is that when the McCain-Feingold measure was put before the United States Senate, every single Democratic senator voted for it. John hasn't been able to convince his colleagues to support it in the Republican cloak room.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: His point, Senator, that only a handful of Republicans have joined you, all of the Democrats joined you on this issue of campaign finance reform.

MCCAIN: That's a good point, Wolf. I have difficulty in convincing the leadership just as we had trouble convincing the Democrats when they were in a majority back in 1993 and '94 when they passed campaign finance reform, it never went to conference.

The majority is always more reluctant, obviously, because they have more to lose.

MCCAIN: But in the last round of these--of this 15-rounder, when Russ Feingold and I had just the proposal to ban soft money, it was the Democrats that blocked debate in amending on the bill as well as Republicans.

So when it gets close, you find the opposition becomes more bipartisan because this system is an incumbency protection racket, and we all know that. And the desire to change becomes less and less as the incumbency becomes threatened.

And by the way, as is now becoming well-known, the Democrats are raising almost as much money or as much money, soft money, the uncontrolled contributions, as the Republicans. And I don't see how that then would motivate Republicans to take another look at this issue, as average Republicans are supporting it all over the country.

BLITZER: You know, the front-runner, I guess he's still the front runner, certainly nationally he's the front-runner, Governor Bush, he takes strong issue with your campaign finance reform as well. Listen to what he said in Des Moines at the debate earlier this week.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Here's my worry with your plan: it's going to hurt the Republican party, John. The Democrat party is really the Democrat party and the labor unions in America. And my worry is, is that you do nothing about what's called paycheck protect. We do nothing about saying to labor, you can't take a laboring man's money and spend it the way you see fit.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: He says your plan would unilaterally disarm the Republican party, that's why almost all Republicans oppose your plan.

MCCAIN: Wolf, first of all, Wolf, let's take a quick look at history. In 1980, there was no such thing as these uncontrolled contributions and labor unions were powerful then, Ronald Reagan became the president. We got a majority in the Senate. In 1994, we were raising less money than the Democrats, who took control of both houses. Then we raised more money than the Democrats. We lost seats in 1996; we lost seats in 1998. Now the House of Representatives is up for grabs and most pundits would say we're going to lose seats in the Senate again.

So, one, that's a political reality. Second of all, look it's now illegal--excuse me, it's now legal in America for a Chinese Army-owned corporation with a subsidiary in the United States of America to give unlimited amounts of money to an American political campaign. I want to

make that illegal. And I hope the Governor of Texas would join me in making that illegal.

This system makes good people do bad things. And young people are opting out in droves. We had the lowest voter turnout in history of the 18-to 26-year-olds in the last elections. A recent Pugh research poll, 69 per cent of young Americans say they're disconnected from government because of special interests. We have an obligation to all Americans to represent them and everybody knows that the special interests rule in Washington, which is why we've earned the sometime well justified representation as a do-nothing Congress.

BLITZER: The point though, that Governor Bush makes about the labor unions, that you would not do anything, in effect, to stop the labor unions who support by and large, Democrats, that that would be unfair to Republicans. That's why Republicans oppose what you're doing.

MCCAIN: Look at the contributions to the Democratic Party. There are millions of uncontrolled so-called soft money contributions from guess who? The labor unions. You ban soft money, you ban the labor unions from doing that too. Sure, I would like to see union members only give their permission. But I would also like to in fairness say only stockholders should give their permission, too, before their money is used for political campaigns, as well.

Look, this system as we all know, is harming America and harming us badly. We had transfer of technology to China. We had all kinds of terrible things happen that we all know about. We've got to fix it. We should sit down together, rather than use the old line that this hurts the Republican Party. What's really hurting the Republican Party is Americans and Republicans who are losing confidence in our leadership.

BLITZER: All right. Let's move on and talk a little bit about the overall campaign. This past week, Lamar Alexander, the former Republican candidate, the former Tennessee governor, endorsed Governor Bush. And in the process, he seemed at least according to some observers, to take a snipe at you. Listen precisely, it's a very short sound bite, but listen to what he said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LAMAR ALEXANDER, FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I look for temperament and steadiness and character before I look for anything else.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: That was seen at least as a reference to the accusations by some critics that you have a temper. Did you see it as such?

MCCAIN: I didn't see Governor Alexander's statement, but I'll--we're good friends and we've known each other many years. I think we share a mutual respect for one another.

BLITZER: I know one of the issues that is an issue obviously very passionately held by you, the issue of POWs, MIAs, that some say are still around and unfortunately this is an issue that has troubled you, ironically, given your own history by some in that POW-MIA community.

In fact, Newsweek magazine has an article today that's just coming out saying that they're going to haunt you, these critics, some of them accusing you in effect of being the so-called "Manchurian Candidate."

How are you going to deal with these people who show up at your events? And we've discussed this before, but it is an issue that is out

there, as you well know, that you of all people have not done enough to help in the search for POWs and MIAs?

MCCAIN: May I take a point of personal privilege? This gives me a chance to correct a misstatement about Maureen Dowd. She said that Angela Lansbury in the movie, "Manchurian Candidate," turned over the Queen of Diamonds. I said it was the Queen of Hearts. Maureen Dowd was right. It was the Queen of Diamonds that makes me now want to assassinate the president.

But, look, the ones that American's will rely on are those I served with: my senior ranking officers who observed me every day, Jim Stockdale--Admiral Jim Stockdale (ph), Bill Lawrence (ph), Orson Swindell (ph), so many wonderful people I had the privilege of serving with.

I won't dignify those comments with a response except to say: Ask those that I had the great and wonderful privilege of serving with.

As far as the MIA issue is concerned, I think we ought to continue, make every effort until there's a full accounting. We're spending about \$100 million a year on that effort. Our military is still in Hanoi, recovering remains and pursuing allegations, and I will continue to--as long as I possibly can, until every single one is resolved to make sure we have as full accounting as possible--and I'm proud of my effort in that direction.

BLITZER: All right, let's move on to talk about some of the issues out there in the news today. For example, the issue of terrorism, the arrest that occurred over the weekend in Oregon and now in Seattle, fears that there could be terrorists incidents aimed at the United States allegedly by Osama bin Laden. Is the Clinton administration, in your opinion, doing enough right now to prevent these kinds of suspected terrorists acts?

MCCAIN: I think we need to improve our human intelligence, which is the dirtiest, nastiest of all business, but it tells--it's able to give us people's intentions rather than snapshot as regular intelligence does. I think that we ought to continue--or begin what I've call rogue-state rollback, and that is efforts to overthrow the regimes from within and from without, not with U.S. military action but through supporting opposition groups to overthrow these regimes that harbor, train and nurture these terrorists organizations so that they can be sure that there's no safe place on earth for them.

BLITZER: On another issue that is out there: gays in the military. Both the Democratic presidential candidates--Bill Bradley and now Al Gore--say that if gays can be police officers, firefighters, members of Congress, why can't they serve in the U.S. military?

MCCAIN: Because the U.S. military is a very unique culture. People live very close together under very difficult conditions. According to Colin Powell, General Norman Schwarzkopf, and every military leader that I respect, they say that unit cohesion has to be preserved, and that the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, despite problems with it--as there is with every policy that has to do with personnel--is working, and I would at minimum, at minimum, call for a review of the policy engaging those military leaders with whom we entrust these young people's lives.

I support the policy, I believe that it's working. I will be glad to have it reviewed.

But in the context of a political campaign, to change an administration position without consulting our military leaders I think is not the proper approach to this very difficult and sensitive issue.

BLITZER: OK, Senator McCain, we have to take a quick commercial break.

When we return, more questions and your phone calls for the Republican presidential candidate John McCain.

LATE EDITION will be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

U.S. SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, REPUBLICAN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I'm here to tell you that I want to tell you the things that you don't want to hear as well as the things you want to hear, and one of those is ethanol. Ethanol is not worth it. I hope that hardy band of brave souls will go out and vote for me...

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Senator John McCain during last Monday's debate talking tough with the voters with Iowa.

Welcome back to LATE EDITION. We continue our discussion now with John McCain.

Senator McCain, was it a mistake for you to skip Iowa, given how well you're doing in the polls in New Hampshire?

BLITZER: I don't think so, Wolf, but we'll find out at the time of the Iowa caucuses and what impact they have on New Hampshire. I have limited time and limited assets, and I thought I should devote them to New Hampshire and South Carolina.

I think that strategy so far has paid off. It's certainly saved me hundreds of thousands not competing in the so-called Iowa straw polls. There are four candidates that did that are no longer in the race. We'll find out about the caucuses.

But we had--I don't have unlimited amounts of money obviously. And what we had to do was spend our time in finances in New Hampshire and down in South Carolina and in the Northeast.

BLITZER: Do you have to win in New Hampshire and South Carolina in order to stay viable in this campaign?

MCCAIN: Yes, sir. And I say that in quotes because, as you know, the word "win" sometimes can mean a second or even a third place, but, yes, I have to win.

BLITZER: OK. Win maybe even means a first place, too.

MCCAIN: Yes, sir.

Let's take a caller from Carlotta (ph), California. Please go ahead with your question for Senator John McCain.

CALLER: Yes, Senator McCain. I was wondering if you would ever consider sharing the ticket with Bill Bradley for the race for the White House.

BLITZER: Senator McCain.

MCCAIN: Thank you, I thank you for that question. I have the greatest respect and friendship for Senator Bradley. In being a mediocre high school athlete, I have the utmost admiration for his skills.

But the fact is that he is a liberal Democrat, I am a proud, conservative Republican. We've come together on the issue of reform, and when the day comes when we all sit down together and reform this broken system, I think he would be at the table. But there is no way that he and I could possibly run together because we have totally diverse views about the role of government in society. I respect those views. I just don't share them.

BLITZER: All right, let's on and take a caller from Paradise, California. Please go ahead with your question.

CALLER: Yes, Senator McCain. I'm wondering how are you going to fix the many problems in the Social Security system and keep it viable?

MCCAIN: Thank you very much. It must be very nice to live in a place called Paradise.

We've got to take 60 percent of the surplus and put in the Social Security system; take the Social Security trust fund off budget, including not being raided for emergency reasons--you know, most any reason now that Congress has to find money is, quote, "emergency"--allow people to invest part of their taxes in the private investments, which would be a broad menu decided by the government; take 10 percent of the surplus, put it in Medicare; and the rest to pay down the debt and some tax relief.

I'm worried. I'm worried about the projections that would then cause some to use all of that for tax cuts. I think if we didn't have those projections, then we would be--and we didn't have the surpluses and we enacted those tax cuts, we would be taking money out of the Social Security trust fund. I think that's a bit risky.

Thank you for the question.

BLITZER: Senator McCain, we have less than a minute. This is--today is exactly one year to the date that the House of Representatives impeached President Clinton. Ken Starr is about to come on our program right after you. There's speculation, there's word that President Clinton may ask to be reimbursed some \$5 million in legal fees as a result of the entire exercise under the independent counsel statute. Technically he might be able to be reimbursed just as President Reagan--former President Reagan and former President Bush were reimbursed because of the Iran-Contra investigation.

Do you think it would be appropriate, A, for the president to ask for the reimbursement and, B, for the reimbursement to go forward?

MCCAIN: I don't know enough about the law except to say that if I were the presidents--all presidents are very, very concerned about their role in the future and how they are judged, if I were President Clinton, I'd pay close attention to the impact of American public opinion if I took such a move.

BLITZER: OK, Senator John McCain, always good to have you on LATE EDITION.

MCCAIN: Thanks, Wolf.

BLITZER: I know you're going up to a town hall meeting in Vermont, in Burlington, right now. Wish all the people in Vermont our best regards.

Thanks for joining us.

MCCAIN: Thank you, and they enjoyed watching I'm sure. Thanks very much.

BLITZER: Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

And up next, it was exactly one year ago today that the House of Representatives voted to impeach the president of the United States. We'll talk with the man who brought the investigation of the president to Congress, former independent counsel, Ken Starr.

LATE EDITION continues right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)
(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE RAY LAHOOD: On this vote, the yays are 228, the nays are 206, Article I is adopted.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Republican Congressman Ray Lahood, presiding over the impeachment vote against President Clinton one year ago today. Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

Joining us now is the man who led the investigation that resulted in that historic vote, former independent counsel Ken Starr. Mr. Starr, thank you so much for joining us on LATE EDITION.

STARR: Thank you, Wolf.

BLITZER: You just heard Senator McCain advise the president against asking for reimbursement of these legal fees. Is that good advice?

STARR: Well, I wouldn't advise the president. This is now in the hands of a wonderful and very able career prosecutor, Bob Ray, the new independent counsel.

BLITZER: Your successor.

STARR: My successor, who is a career prosecutor. And I think that the country should have great confidence in someone whose background is as distinguished as his and as Mr. Kendall, the president's lawyer also put it, it's a bit premature. So, I think we should just be patient and see what the future brings.

BLITZER: But under the independent counsel statute, is he entitled, since he was never indicted, to be reimbursed?

STARR: There are a variety of considerations that the court will eventually take into account. And the statute itself speaks to these various factors and so, the fact that, if that is the case--and again the future is the future, as to a particular criminal disposition or non-disposition, is one of the factors. But it's only one of the factors.

One of the issues is, what was caused by the uniqueness of the independent counsel process as opposed to what would have happened in an ordinary investigation, would the individual involved have been subjected to the same kinds of processes in a regular investigation had that been the case.

BLITZER: Is it your opinion, though, as a legal scholar, that impeachment is tantamount, is equal to indictment?

STARR: Well, under the statute actually is silent with respect to that, and I think that will be a novel issue for the court. Happily for the country, we've never had to face this kind of issue before and perhaps we won't have to face it now.

But under the statute, it is absolutely clear that Congress, when it passed the statute in 1978, wanted an independent counsel, instead of considering indictment of an individual such as the president, to bring that information to the attention of the Congress, so the Congress could then work its will with respect to impeachment. But the statute then doesn't speak to the attorney's fees issues that flow from that dichotomy between impeachment on the one hand and a criminal charge on the other.

BLITZER: I'm going to move onto some other subjects, but let's just nail down this one issue right now. As you know, Presidents Reagan and Bush were reimbursed for their legal expenditures, their legal costs as a result of the Iran-Contra independent counsel investigation. If President Clinton didn't ask to be reimbursed, would he be undermining future presidents if they were faced with a similar situation? In other words, would he set a precedent that would be bad for his successors?

STARR: Not as a matter of law. I understand there might be a

concern that would be evaluated by his very able attorneys. But no, as a matter of law, this is essentially a judgment call by the president himself, advised by his counsel as to what's right, what's proper for him to do. That's a judgment he will have to come to. But it will not be a matter of legal precedent, regardless of what he does. If he chooses not to.

Now, if he chooses to, and then there are issues with respect to the appropriateness of the fees, and I'm not saying that there would be, again, it's premature, we should allow the process to run its course and look to Bob Ray's decision if there is, in fact, an application for attorneys' fees.

BLITZER: All right, let's move on. I want to look back a little bit, then look ahead to draw some lessons that we've learned over this past year. There was an interesting article last month in the New Yorker by Jeffrey Tubin (ph), I don't know if you read it, but he makes the point that the immunity agreement that Monica Lewinsky received in the summer of '98 was basically the same as she could have received in January or February when Bill Ginsburg was her principle attorney.

In fact, Jeffrey Tubin (ph) goes on to say this: "Starr's decision to reject Monica Lewinsky's immunity deal in February, 1998, marked the precise moment when Bill Clinton's survival in office became assured."

Meaning that by waiting six months, you gave the president and his supporters time to undermine the case, to undermine you, and to rally support for himself.

STARR: Well, it's an interesting perspective. I think he's wrong and I think he's wrong for a very fundamental reason in the critique. And reasonable minds can differ over these kinds of issues because this was a judgment call. But my judgment then and it remains that now, is it was my obligation to follow the book. And what her attorney at the time would not permit us to do was to see Monica Lewinsky, to ask her questions, to assess her credibility. And we could not understand for the life of us, why that traditional method would not be allowed.

And because the stakes were so high, it was important to get the truth and nothing but the truth. I said then and I say now, a prosecutor has the solemn obligation to gather the facts and all of those facts and to do it in a professional way.

STARR: We were being asked to violate the book, to violate prosecutorial norms and procedures, and I was not willing to do that.

Now, at the same time, nothing that we did prevented the president, had he seen fit, to come forward sooner rather than later to tell the truth about the nature of the activity that was relevant to the civil litigation.

BLITZER: All right. I'm going to pick up on that point. But unfortunately, we have to take a quick commercial break. A lot more to talk about, including Linda Tripp on trial; did Ken Starr's office drop the ball? We'll ask the former independent counsel, and I'll also be taking your phone calls, when LATE EDITION continues. Stay with us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DAVID IRWIN, ATTORNEY FOR LINDA TRIPP: Our argument has always been the same is that Linda Tripp never would have cooperated with the office of independent counsel. She didn't have immunity.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Linda Tripp's attorney, speaking this week outside a Maryland courthouse. The hearing was held there to determine whether Tripp should stand trial on charges she illegally taped conversations with Monica Lewinsky.

Welcome back to LATE EDITION. We're talking with the former independent counsel, Ken Starr.

As you know, Linda Tripp signed her immunity agreement on January 16th. It wasn't filed, though, with the court until February 19th. The Maryland prosecutors, in going after Linda Tripp right now, say that delay has given them the opening to go after her for illegally recording her conversations with Monica Lewinsky. Did your office make a mistake in delaying by about a month the actual filing of that immunity agreement?

STARR: No. Under our understanding of the law--and maybe this is going to remain in litigation for a while--there was in fact immunity in the act of production or producing those tapes, and that the judicial act was a ministerial act.

But these issues are in litigation, the judge has given her initial ruling, and I think we should just allow that process to go forward. There are a lot of...

BLITZER: Excuse me for interrupting, but why did you wait?

STARR: We were extraordinarily busy at the time. You may very well remember that those early weeks were extraordinarily demanding weeks on all of us, including the court. And in our judgment then, this was entirely, as I say, a ministerial act because an individual had given up certain interests protected by the Fifth Amendment of the Bill of Rights based upon the representations of federal officers.

Now the judge has issued her ruling, at least initially, but the hearings continue. And I don't think we've had the last word, even on this particular issue.

BLITZER: Irrespective of the immunity agreement--and that issue has obviously been already decided at one level, but it could go up the process--Maryland law specifically states that in order to record telephone conversations, both parties must agree. Monica Lewinsky did not agree. Did Linda Tripp violate the law, according to your opinion, by secretly recording her many phone conversations with Monica Lewinsky?

STARR: Well, Wolf, I don't think I should be commenting on whether there is a violation of state law. It's clear that certain individuals in the state of Maryland believe that the law of that state was violated.

And in our system it is their prerogative to determine what their view of the interests of Maryland are and to pursue those interests, and I don't think it would be proper for me to be opining about Maryland law at all.

I will say this: It is unusual for an individual who has been assisting a federal investigation to then find herself or himself caught up in a state criminal prosecution. It is unusual, but it's still within the prerogative of the state of Maryland, and they've seen fit to exercise that prerogative.

BLITZER: And the New York Times in an editorial today says it's important to maintain that this was a valid effort to deal with the issue of privacy law in the state of Maryland. The New York Times also adding, ``Ignoring such a well-publicized violation would have weakened the statute's deterrent value and made it harder for the state to justify

prosecutions of less meritorious violations in the future."

That's an argument that we've heard from some of your supporters as well--not in this particular case, but on other issues, that no one is above the law, but no one should be below the law either.

STARR: Well, laws are to be taken seriously, and I think that is part of the lesson that has come out of this for the country as a whole, that we shouldn't say that laws don't matter, but that it's basic to our system, that the laws do count.

Now I do note that the state of Maryland, at least as far as I know, has not previously brought prosecutions under this statute. But again, that's a judgment that's entrusted to the authorities of Maryland.

BLITZER: OK, Judge Starr, let's take a quick caller from Dallas, Texas. Please go ahead with your question.

CALLER: Yes, thank you. First of all, Mr. Starr, I would just like to say that I respect your honesty a lot. And my question is, if you could do it all over again, looking back on it now, would you do--would there be one thing that you would do differently?

STARR: Well, I thank you for the comment. And, yes, there is something, Wolf, that I would do very differently and that is I would have been engaged in this kind of thing, meeting with you and your counterparts to try to explain to the American public during the height of the investigation what it is that we were doing, within the limits of grand jury secrecy under which I was operating.

I think it was a mistake not to be informing the American people of certain basic facts and to reiterate those facts, namely that our investigation was authorized by the attorney general of the United States, that the Justice Department had the information that we had with respect to possible serious federal offenses.

STARR: I think those were important facts that I should have let the American public become more aware of. They were there but weren't being emphasized.

BLITZER: Should you have been, and I think you've discussed this in the past, more forceful when you released all of the documents to the House of Representatives, including a lot of salacious material? Should you have been more forceful in urging the House, be careful in what you put on the Internet, be careful what you release to the public? Because a lot of this is very, very embarrassing?

STARR: Well, I think in retrospect, I could have done more, Wolf, to say this really is very privacy-sensitive material that we felt was necessary for the elected representatives to have for them to assess one of the most important and grave issues that any elected representative must face, and that's the possible impeachment of the president of the United States.

Now at the same time, this was a judgment that was made based upon a very broad, bipartisan sense, that the American people needed to have this information and they needed to have it immediately.

BLITZER: All of that information? Did the American--in other words, this was basically raw, grand jury material. In your knowledge of legal history, has all this grand jury material ever been released in that kind of abundance in any case?

STARR: No, but this was an unusual circumstance involving the connection of a grand jury investigation by an independent counsel, and then that being turned over pursuant to the statute that Congress passed

to the House of Representatives.

So we were all in uncharted territory. There was just no precedent to go by and people were coming to their judgments, in this uncharted territory, as best they could.

BLITZER: OK. Judge Starr, we have to take another quick break. A lot more to talk about.

When we return: Ken Starr. What's ahead for him. LATE EDITION will continue right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back. We're continuing our conversation. With former Independent Counsel Ken Starr. We have a caller from Hobart, Indiana. Please go ahead with your question.

QUESTION: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Starr. I wondered what is in store for the Clintons in the future, keeping in mind I know they're still an ongoing Independent Counsel, are there any indictments possibly in store for them?

BLITZER: Good question.

STARR: Well, I should not comment. As I said in response to the earlier set of questions, Wolf, these matters are now in the hands of a very able career prosecutor in Bob Ray, the new Independent Counsel. And I note that at least there's a published report that the president's own attorney has noted that there is an Independent Counsel investigation that's ongoing. Now in the House of Representatives, there was a good deal of discussion about this very issue, in terms of the constitutionality of the indictment of a sitting President, and I think it is appropriate for me to say that the Justice Department's position has historically been, since the days of President Nixon, that a sitting President cannot be indicted. Beyond that, I don't think I should comment.

BLITZER: The New York Times today says there's some informal August 1st deadline that your successor, Robert Ray, has for wrapping up the entire investigation. Is that true?

STARR: Well, I don't know. Bob, quite appropriately, Mr. Ray, quite appropriately is not informing me and I don't talk about these things.

BLITZER: You're out of the loop right now?

STARR: I am completely retired. I am sitting in my rocking chair and it's in Bob Ray's very able hands. And I think, Wolf, that should be a source of real assurance to the American people, that this is a career prosecutor who is devoted his life to service in the Justice Department and the United States attorney's office in New York.

BLITZER: As you know, the first lady is running for the Senate in New York state. There are some legal questions still hovering over her. Would it be fair to keep that open as the campaign gets going? Or would you advise--would you think it would be appropriate to wrap up her involvement sooner rather than later?

STARR: Well, Mr. Ray has to do his duty and he now is privy to facts and is becoming privy to additional facts, I assume, in the course of the investigation. But at the same time, I'm sure he, like other officers, is very mindful of the interest in not needlessly affecting an election process. So that's the balancing that will have to be done to do his duty as he sees it, as the Independent Counsel and at the same time, not needlessly, unnecessarily interfering with our representative process.

BLITZER: All right. What's next on the agenda for Ken Starr?

STARR: Well, I'm delighted to say that in addition to taking out my trash in peace and quiet at the house, and it's very nice to be able to do that, as I've done for 20 years before. I'm now teaching at New York University, which I have been doing for a number of years, at George Mason University. And I'm writing a book on the Supreme Court.

BLITZER: On the Supreme Court but not on your involvement in this Independent Counsel statute?

STARR: As I say, I'm not writing a book on you-know-what. I'm writing a book on the Supreme Court of the United States where I was privileged to argue a number of cases as solicitor general and I hope that it will be an informative book. But I'm certainly enjoying working on it.

BLITZER: You've heard that William Buckley in the National Review this week writes that you might be a good candidate to become the next president of Hillsdale College in Michigan, as you know there have been problems with the former president. A very conservative, highly respected college, not exactly Pepperdine in California, but it's Hillsdale. Would that be something you would be interested in, going to Hillsdale and becoming the president that college?

STARR: I think it's premature having not even seen the article to comment at all, other than to say at this stage, I will not issue a William Tecumseh Sherman-like statement. But we're very happy and frankly enjoying the stability that's returned to family life and regular life in our home in Northern Virginia, which we have made our home for over 20 years. So a little peace and quiet is very enjoyable.

BLITZER: And so you're going to stay in this Washington, D.C. area for the time-being?

STARR: That's the intent.

BLITZER: OK, but no Sherman-like statement on Hillsdale college. Thank you so much, Judge Starr, for joining us on this first anniversary of the President's impeachment.

STARR: Thank you, Wolf.

BLITZER: Thank you so much. And just ahead: one year later, what has been impeachment's impact on Congress? We'll ask two lawmakers who played a key role in the proceedings: Michigan Democrat John Conyers and Arkansas Republican, Asa Hutchinson. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HUTCHINSON: We have a pattern here, where the President of the United States flaunted the truth-seeking process of the civil courts.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CONYERS: They say the president has to be impeached to uphold the rule of law, but we say the president can't be impeached without denigrating the rule of law.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Two of the key players in the impeachment saga in the House of Representatives, speaking out exactly one year ago today. Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

Joining us now are those two members of Congress. In Detroit, Michigan Congressman John Conyers, the Ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee. And here in Washington, Arkansas Republican Asa Hutchinson. He also serves on the Judiciary Committee, and was one of 13 House Managers who argued the case against the President in the Senate

trial.

Congressmen, good to have both of you back with us on LATE EDITION.

And I'll begin with Congressman Hutchinson. In the end, what saved the President, according to most accounts, was that this was seen as a partisan attack; that all the Democrats basically, voted against conviction in the Senate, all the Republicans basically voted for conviction. There was no, there were no serious Democrats who were willing to join with the Republicans and make it a bipartisan operation.

HUTCHINSON: Well, and that obviously had to happen to obtain a conviction in the Senate. The public perception at the time bought into the spin machine of the White House about partisanship, about this being a personal matter. And I think that you'll see, when there's more time for reflection, those public attitudes change.

It was very, very difficult for us to go through that with popular opinion being against us. But you look back and I wish that there could have been a bipartisan foundation, but it takes Democrats to come over in order to create that, and that didn't happen.

BLITZER: Well, in our most recent poll, Congressman Conyers in fact, we asked the CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, on this first anniversary of impeachment, whether the American people approved of the House of Representatives' decision to impeach Mr. Clinton. Fifty percent now say they approve, 49 percent disapprove, roughly evenly divided.

A year ago though, only 35 percent said they approve of the impeachment, 63 percent disapprove. So over time, more people have come around to Congressman Asa Hutchinson's opinion.

CONYERS: Well, I think that's because the Republicans were so busy being partisan, were so busy showing that they wanted to get the president, or damage him in some way, that that actually built up. Remember, it was in the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee that we couldn't even get them to agree on a time limit, or to fix the issues on which we were going to debate.

They released the video of the president hoping it would damage him, and in fact it helped him. They continued to defend Kenneth Starr's incredible number of leaks unprecedented. So what it really turned into is an ideal way of not to initiate an impeachment.

When I think about Leon Jaworski and Kenneth Starr, Leon Jaworski in Watergate, who afforded the total access of Nixon's lawyers, that he didn't try to advocate impeachment. You have to remember that the public, and many people who weren't Democrats, were totally fed up with the politicalization of a very serious tool that's really reserved to be used very rarely.

BLITZER: All right.

CONYERS: President Clinton's the second president. And the conviction couldn't work because the partisanship was too obvious.

BLITZER: Well, let's pick up on that point, Congressman Hutchinson. Same CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, another question asked, "Was Congress fair and impartial?" Forty-four percent now say yes, but 52 percent, a majority, say no, Congress was not fair and impartial.

HUTCHINSON: Well there's still a problem of perception there. And I agree with Representative Conyers, that you look back in the House Judiciary Committee, we made some mistakes there. I wish we could have had a bipartisan agreement on the time frame.

BLITZER: When you say we made mistakes, what was the biggest

mistake?

HUTCHINSON: Well the biggest mistake was probably publicly releasing the video deposition of the president before it was actually used as evidence. That came across as heavy-handed, it prevented the people from actually focusing on the important part of the testimony. I,--so that probably would have had the biggest...

BLITZER: What about releasing all the salacious material en masse, immediately?

HUTCHINSON: Well, I mean, I believe that that was an error as well.

HUTCHINSON: I heard Judge Starr make a comment about wishing he had given more warning or at least that was what I understood from that. I wish we had been more careful in far as releasing that. We believed and understood that was going to be acceptable to release it. I wish we had not released it in that fashion, but there was a lot of public interest at that point.

I think that the mistakes we look at that were made did not make an ultimate difference in the outcome. Representative Conyers points out that he wished there was a bipartisan foundation, but it appears that gave the Democrats an excuse not really to look at the substance of the facts, and I wish that they'd been more focused on the obstruction of justice that I presented to the Senate on the perjury under oath that Judge Wright, even a federal judge, found was deliberately given.

BLITZER: Congressman Conyers, over the--there was 13 months of the investigation of the president, the impeachment, the acquittal in the Senate trial, how much did that entire 13-month experience poison the well in the U.S. House of Representatives this past year in getting actual legislation passed?

CONYERS: Well, I think we got by it fairly well, Wolf. I'm, first of all, happy to hear Asa say that the release of these materials that were so salacious and had very little to do with articles of impeachment was probably a mistake, because we did it three times actually. And I'm in quiet agreement with him and I want to compliment him about that.

But it seemed to me that we got past the personal divided House, but the problem was we had lost a year in using it up for an impeachment process that ultimately failed. And so, we couldn't make it up and many people were wondering, well, why can't we get to protecting the Social Security? How come we can't get a Patients' Bill of Rights? How come we can't do many of these things that we would like to.

BLITZER: Well, let me pick up on that point. Congressman Conyers, we only have a few seconds before this--in this current block. Congressman Hutchinson, was the entire process, looking back now with hindsight, a waste?

HUTCHINSON: Oh, absolutely not. It was probably one of the most important endeavors that we have done as a nation because the whole world saw our commitment to equal justice, that a president is not above the law, and that we did it in a way that was respectful to the United States Constitution.

It was a very worth while thing, and I think the American public understands that the doom and gloom scenarios did not come to fruition. We went ahead, we enacted, we passed the House, patient protection legislation is still in conference. We got back to the serious

business of the country from education to saving Social Security to creating a surplus. And so I think that the American people see in that, that our country is strong, our democracy is strong, really shows a greater respect for what happened.

BLITZER: All right, Congressmen, stand by, we have to take a quick break. For our international viewers, World News is next. For our North American audience, another 30 minutes of LATE EDITION. We'll have the news headlines with Gene Randall. And Congressmen John Conyers and Asa Hutchinson will be back and they'll be taking your phone calls.

Also, our LATE EDITION roundtable, and Bruce Morton's "Last Word." It's all ahead, when LATE EDITION continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION. We'll get to your phone calls for Congressman John Conyers and Asa Hutchinson in just a moment. But first let's check in with Gene Randall for the hour's top stories. Gene.

(NEWSBREAK)

BLITZER: Thanks, Gene. And now back to our conversation with two congressmen who played a key role in last year's impeachment proceedings: Michigan Democrat John Conyers and Arkansas Republican Asa Hutchinson.

Congressmen, let's take a quick call from Phoenix, Arizona.

Please go ahead with your question.

CALLER: Hello.

BLITZER: Go ahead.

CALLER: Yes, Hi. Mr. Hutchinson, I'm wondering why the Republicans chose this tawdry Lewinsky affair to pursue impeachment over rather than far more serious allegations like putting a Chinese spy, Mr. Huang, in the commerce department and the funneling of millions of dollar of Chinese money into the DNC.

BLITZER: Well, just for the record, John Huang has not been convicted of any espionage. He's not been even accused of being a spy by the U.S. government, but go ahead and answer the question.

HUTCHINSON: Well, this is not something that we asked for. It was put in our lap. There was a report by the independent counsel. We had to deal with it in a responsible fashion. We did that and we moved on.

As to other issues, you know, we were focused on this because that was our mandate in the Judiciary Committee to take a look at the independent counsel report.

BLITZER: Congressman Conyers, do you think it would be appropriate for President Clinton to now come forward and ask that his \$5 million in legal expenditures be reimbursed under the independent counsel statute?

CONYERS: Well, Wolf, it's permissible, and whether he's going to do it I think is going to turn on whether it appears to be the right thing to do. I think that it's something that has to be explored. It's been done before. As you know, other presidents have been reimbursed.

The matter has ended in terms of any implication of the president in terms of impeachable offenses, and so I think that's something that should and would have to be considered.

BLITZER: Vice President Gore, earlier today, Congressman Hutchinson, said if it were him, he wouldn't ask for the funds to be reimbursed. But do you think legally, since Presidents Reagan and Bush

were reimbursed as a result of the Iran-Contra investigation, do you think it's appropriate that the president ask for that money?

HUTCHINSON: Based upon what happened previously with Iran-Contra, it's appropriate for the president to request reimbursement for fees on the Whitewater if there's not any indictments that are issued. It think that...

BLITZER: On the land deal.

HUTCHINSON: On the land deal. And there might be some other periphery issues. But when it comes to the substance of the impeachment inquiry, the Monica Lewinsky, the obstruction of justice, the perjury, the independent counsel should forcefully oppose that. He should not be entitled. That's one of the problems with the independent counsel law, and I think it would be a very serious mistake for the taxpayers to be stuck with that bill whenever the federal judge found that he deliberately misled the American public, and most importantly testified falsely under oath.

BLITZER: Congressman Conyers, we only have a few seconds left, but let me just ask you to sort of look ahead. The next time a president is accused of wrongdoing--it might be a Republican president, it might be a Democratic president--what do you think the House of Representatives, the Judiciary Committee, has learned from this Clinton impeachment experience that should be followed the next time around?

CONYERS: Well, the most important thing to me is that the selection of an independent counsel has to be more carefully approached. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Starr always wore his politics on his sleeve.

CONYERS: His connections in his law office with the tobacco forces and other cases that were directly in opposition to the president. The fact that he had no prosecutorial experience himself. All, I think, are lesson that's we have learned here that we have to go forward in a bipartisan manner. And without bipartisanship, that's why our founding fathers put the two-thirds requirement in, and that's why nothing happened in this matter. It just wasn't there.

BLITZER: It's a very high bar to scale. Congressman Conyers, Congressman Hutchinson, it's nice of both of you to join us on LATE EDITION on this Sunday. Thank you so much for reflecting on the year that has passed since the impeachment of the president. Thank you so much.

HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

CONYERS: Pleasure.

BLITZER: Thank you, Congressman Conyers. And when we return, another week of face-offs in the Gop and Democratic race for the White House. Who gained ground? We'll go 'round the table with Roberts, Page, and Carlson, when LATE EDITION continues. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Time now for our roundtable. Joining me, Susan Page, White House Bureau Chief for USA Today. Steve Roberts, contributing editor for U.S. News & World Report, and Tucker Carlson, political writer for the Weekly Standard.

Steve, all the polls, the national polls, show George W. Bush still way ahead of John McCain. But look at this CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, that if McCain does well in the early primaries in New Hampshire, in South Carolina, would that have an impact on the national polls? They say

yes, the Republicans say that Bush would have a 37 percent margin to McCain's 34 percent, it would be statistically a dead-heat if McCain does well this early strategy of winning in South Carolina and New Hampshire.

ROBERTS: With all due respect to the pollsters, I think those questions are useless. If questions really don't take into account so many variables, I do think it will be a boost for McCain.

BLITZER: If he wins New Hampshire.

ROBERTS: If he wins New Hampshire, no doubt about it. Bush's aura of inevitability will be punctured, and that is part of what his strength is, people are for him because they're for him, because he's a winner. If he's no longer seen as an obvious winner, that could erode some of the support. But the basic fact remains, he still has a lot of--Bush has the organization, he has the money, we've seen it happen many times in New Hampshire, with Buchanan, with Hart, with Paul Tsongas. You've got to have a second act, and McCain still does not have the organization or the money for a second act, I don't think.

BLITZER: Tucker, is that right?

CARLSON: I think that's probably right. But people have been saying, you know, the Bush campaign has given up on New Hampshire, that it's going to cede it to John McCain. I don't think that's right. I mean, New Hampshire has a relatively small spending cap, I think it's about \$600 or \$61,000. Bush, of course, isn't abiding by spending caps, and I think in the Bush campaign you're going to see them really pull out all the stops to stop McCain there, because I mean, despite the fact that Bush is going to win Iowa, if McCain did take New Hampshire and South Carolina, that would be a real threat to Bush, so I think they're going to try to nip it as quickly as possible.

PAGE: You say this poll question isn't really meaningful, and of course that's true in polls just are a snapshot. But when asked a question on the Democratic side, the same question they found very different results, where Gore was much better able to sustain some early losses in New Hampshire or elsewhere. His voters tended to stay with him, it showed a depth of support that Bush doesn't have. I thought that was the interesting thing about the poll, the difference between the standing of the two front-runners in the two different parties if they have some trouble in New Hampshire.

BLITZER: Is that going to help McCain, the fact that he had this photo opportunity with Bill Bradley, the Democratic candidate on campaign finance reform. An issue that is rarely listed in the top 10 of most important issues affecting the American people.

ROBERTS: Rarely? Never. It's never listed in the top 20. The fact is, campaign finance reform, McCain, even though he tried today with your interview to try to show people how it effects their lives, he has failed to do that.

However, the issue works in another way, because it's symbolic of a certain attitude, a certain approach, of being a bit of a rebel, willing to take on powerful interests. So people who don't care and don't know anything about the details of his plan, I think the aura that surrounds his crusade is a help particularly against Bush.

BLITZER: Tucker, you know New Hampshire. To a certain degree, aren't Bradley and McCain running against each other in New Hampshire, seeking the same independent votes. They can only vote for a Democrat in the Democratic primary or Republican. They can't vote for both, so why did the two of them agree to join forces on this issue, this past week?

CARLSON: Well, I mean, so they could get on television, of course. Yes...

BLITZER: We're talking about them.

CARLSON: Yes, well that's exactly right.

BLITZER: Do you think it was smart politics for both?

CARLSON: Of course it was, oh absolutely. I mean, campaign finance, I agree with Steve, nobody cares about it except a small group of good government eggheads in Washington, and that's a good thing, you wouldn't want a lot of people caring about campaign finance reform.

ROBERTS: I think they should care.

CARLSON: But no, it is--it's a symbol on McCain's part that yeah, here's a guy that's not a partisan, who cares about the average person, you know, who is willing to step to special interest. I don't know, I think that that's a message that plays pretty well. And actually, I think there's a lot of talk about how the campaign finance stuff alienates conservative Republican voters. I don't think that's going to be a problem in New Hampshire.

BLITZER: All right, Susan, let's move on. Earlier today, Gore and Bradley were on Meet The Press and they had a little lively debate. Listen to this little snippet from that show.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GORE: If you will agree, I will stop running all television and radio commercials until this nomination is decided.

BRADLEY: This is a ridiculous proposal. You know, the way you communicate with people is when you talk to them.

GORE: Let's debate twice a week from now until the nomination is decided.

BRADLEY: For ten months that I was running for president, you ignored me. You pretended I didn't exist. Suddenly I start to do better and you want to debate every day. It's ridiculous.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PAGE: You know what? Bradley kept calling Gore's challenge a ploy, and of course it is a ploy. On the other hand just because it is a ploy, doesn't mean it doesn't work. And I thought it was smart of Gore, I thought that Bradley's response was not particularly effective. And I think a lot of voters say gee, the deal of having, not having these 30 second ads and instead having a debate twice a week, gee, that sounds pretty good to me.

PAGE: I thought that was one of the--that was obviously the moment Gore had gotten ready for, to be a kind of a centerpiece at this Meet the Press today.

ROBERTS: You know, when you look at those two framed as they were right there, I think Bradley has a certain advantage. I think he comes across as a calmer, more centered person. I think Gore--there's a jitteriness to him. There's a--yes, a feistiness, but also an anxiousness, an edge of uneasiness. Whereas, Bradley is just sort of a calming influence. And I think on a very elemental level, Bradley does well in that kind of comparison.

CARLSON: Well, he's calm because he feels like you know, "Why do I have to go through all this? Why can't someone just appoint me president? I was a great basketball player." I mean, there is a sort of contempt that I don't think is appealing.

BLITZER: He is responding to Gore this time. A month ago, he

wasn't responding, but we have a lot more to talk about.

Stay with us. We'll take a quick break. More of our round table when we come back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to our LATE EDITION roundtable. All right. Susan, a year ago exactly today, this is what Al Gore said about Bill Clinton.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GORE: What happened as a result, does a great disservice to a man I believe will be regarded in the history books as one of our greatest presidents.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: One of our greatest presidents. Listen to what he said today when he was asked about that on Meet the Press.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GORE: We all know who our greatest presidents are from Washington and Jefferson to Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy.

RUSSET: You put Bill Clinton in the same company as Washington and Lincoln?

GORE: Listen.

RUSSET: It's a very serious question.

GORE: No, of course not. Of course not.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: All right, so he's not one of our greatest presidents. This is part of the distancing that we've seen over the past year. Is it helping Al Gore?

PAGE: You know, I think there are two things you can guarantee you will see in ads against Al Gore, assuming he is the nominee this fall, and one is that clip and the other is him coming out of that Buddhist temple after doing a fundraising event.

Obviously, these are words he wishes he could eat. He backed off some this morning, which he hadn't really done before. In fairness to him, he went on to say he thought Clinton had done some good things as well as personal misbehavior. But clearly these are words Al Gore wishes he had never spoken.

ROBERTS: You know, it's really an oddity. Because here we are, at the end of this year, polls show three-quarters of Americans think it's been a good year for them. Consumer confidence is sky high, stock market is continuing to set records. You would think that Al Gore would be trotting out Bill Clinton every chance he could, keep the economy going, keep the prosperity going, it's so striking that he barely mentions him because of course, for all the obvious reasons and his personal problems.

But Gore does want to take advantage of that feeling of confidence and well-being in the country. He has a fine line to walk. He doesn't want to distance himself totally from the prosperity.

BLITZER: It's amazing: a politician wants the best of all worlds.

CARLSON: I've been shocked by it. No, I think for Al Gore, Bill Clinton is a really embarrassing president. I can see why he doesn't want to mention him. But I don't think you will see ads by Republicans with Gore saying this. I think there's this feeling among Republicans that somehow Clinton is bad luck. Bring him up in a political ad, it will

always come back to bite you. It did in the '98 cycle. And I just think they have an icky feeling about it. I doubt they will do it.

BLITZER: Today is the first anniversary of impeachment. Look at this poll we did this week, CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll. You work for USA Today; I work for CNN; so nobody here works for the Gallup Poll. Clinton's job approval rating, Susan, a year ago on December 19, 1998, he had a 73 percent job approval rating. Americans approved of the job. The day he was impeached, 25 percent disapproved. Now a year later, 56 percent, still pretty high but a lot less than it was a year ago, say they like, they approve of the job he's doing, 41 percent disapprove. How do you explain that?

PAGE: I think it's easy to understand. People did not like the pursuit of President Clinton. They didn't think Ken Starr was doing a fair job and the Republicans in the House either. And that was a vote against Clinton's accusers, I think. To some degree now people feel free to express disapproval for the acts that got Clinton into the pickle into that first place.

BLITZER: Because there's really no threat to Bill Clinton now. He will be president until January 20th, 2001.

ROBERTS: The fact is Bill Clinton throughout his entire career was very lucky in his enemies. Ken Starr only being one of a long line of persecutors or opponents that Clinton managed to turn against him. But 56 is still pretty good. And even though he's entering the last year of his presidency, he still has a lot of power.

Look at the meeting just this week in Washington, the Syrian and Lebanese. They wanted--Israel and Syria. They wanted to come to Washington. They wanted Clinton there, the administration to continue to play a major role. And in fact, they said they wanted Clinton because it was his last year and he might have more incentive to be helpful. So this guy is not going to go away. You'll have Clinton for another year.

BLITZER: We have to leave it right there Steve Roberts, Tucker Carlson, Susan Page. Our roundtable will be back next week.

BLITZER: When we return, we'll reveal what's on the cover of this week's major news magazines, including Time's Person of the Year. Also, Bruce Morton's ``Last Word'' on who Americans admire most.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: Gallup has been doing it for 50 years, since 1948, and presidents have won it 42 times. War heroes Dwight Eisenhower and Douglas MacArthur beat Harry Truman...

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Bruce tells us who tops this year's list, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Time now for Bruce Morton's ``Last Word'' on the annual poll of whom Americans admire most.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MORTON: The Gallup poll people have done their annual number, asking Americans who's the man they most admire, living in any part of the world. The winner, did you guess? William Jefferson Clinton. The president who was impeached one year ago this day.

This is not, mind you, some landslide vote of approval. Mr. Clinton was named first or second choice by just 10 percent of those polled. Last year, Mr. Clinton also finished first, but was named by 18 percent, so that's a drop.

Second place? The Reverent Billy Graham at seven percent, followed by Pope John Paul II with six percent, and then Ronald Reagan and Nelson Mandela, tied at four percent.

Women: Hillary Rodham Clinton at 14 percent. That's down from her first-place finish last year with 28 percent, when presumably, she got a lot of sympathy because of the Monica Lewinsky scandal. But this year's 14 is exactly what the first lady got when she finished first two years ago.

Oprah Winfrey was second this time at six percent. Margaret Thatcher and Elizabeth Dole tied at third for four percent. The poll, by the way, surveyed 1,037 Americans, 18 and older.

If you're puzzled by Mr. Clinton's first place finish, some of you will be, some won't, including the viewer who wrote me a scolding letter a couple of weeks ago, for not acknowledging the president's good moral character.

Anyway, the fact is, presidents usually win this poll. Gallup has been doing the poll for 50 years since 1948, and presidents have won it 42 times. War heroes Dwight Eisenhower and Douglas MacArthur beat Harry Truman. Eisenhower, by then a former president, twice beat Lyndon Johnson, who was trapped in the Vietnam War.

Henry Kissinger, who negotiated the Vietnam settlement, twice best his boss, President Richard Nixon, mired in Watergate. And in 1980, the Pope beat Jimmy Carter, defeated for reelection after failing to free American hostages held in Iran.

Most often admired? You have to be alive, remember, so people who died young: John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, didn't get listed that often. Billy Graham, on the other hand, has been in the top 10 in 41 of the poll's 50 years. Ronald Reagan has made it to the top 10, 26 times.

So, those are the people we admire most. What does it say about them? About us? Something to think about while wrapping your presents.

I'm Bruce Morton.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Thanks, Bruce.

Time now for a look at what's on the cover of this week's major news magazines. Time magazine announces its person of the year: Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos on the cover, with a report on how e-commerce is changing the way the world shops.

On the cover of U.S. News & World Report, its pick for man of the century: from movies to microchips, Uncle Sam led the way.

And Newsweek says ``Good Grief" with a tribute to Charlie Brown and ``Peanuts" cartoonist Charles Schulz on the cover.

That's your LATE EDITION for Sunday, December 19th. We'll be back here next Sunday and every Sunday at noon Eastern for the last word in Sunday talk.

Next week: 1999, the year in review. Among our guests: Henry Kissinger, Mike McCurry, and Marlin Fitzwater. And I'll be back here tomorrow night at 8:00 p.m. for The World Today.

For now, thanks very much for watching. Enjoy the rest of your weekend. I'm Wolf Blitzer in Washington.

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