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AN INTERVIEW OF THE FIRST LADY  
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Q What was it (inaudible)? Could you repeat some of the discussion (inaudible) about what role Sen. Kennedy is believed to play, what role Sen. Moynihan could play (inaudible)? Can you give a kind of guarantee about what kind of role Sen. Kennedy will play in this process as it proceeds?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I don't know anything about the way the senate will internally decide all of those matters, but I do know that Sen. Kennedy will play a leading role, regardless of any other factor, because he's been a national leader on health care reform for his entire senate career. He has been a strong and consistent voice to try to cure the abuses that are in the system.

He has been a very strong supporter of what the President is attempting to do, and has brought a lot of his concerns and the concerns of his constituency to the President. So he will be one of the major national leaders, there is no doubt about that.

Q Perfect. One down, to the government.

Q So it's always good politically to include people, you know. You bring them into the process, they feel that they're part of it, but on the other hand, as you outlined the situation in health care, there were no arguments about it. We know the strengths, we know the weaknesses, and therefore I'm having a little bit of (inaudible) out exactly what we accomplish when we have a meeting like today, unless (inaudible) example it's kind of a campaign.

We need to run as a campaign. We need to maintain a certain amount of interest in events, and we need to keep

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the public focused, because that's what's going to be necessary. Is that what these do?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, I surely think they do that. I mean, I believe that events like these are responding to very real interests that exist out in the country about health care reform. This is on everybody's mind. People are talking about it, they're trying to educate themselves about it. And I think it also serves a purpose of bringing democrats and republicans, senators and congressmen, together with real people who tell their stories.

You know, it's easy to get isolated in Washington, you know. If you get there and all of a sudden, you know, things become abstract or statistical instead of down to earth in the real lives of the people that we care about -- so for me, personally, I always gain from coming out here.

I will carry the stories of the people I heard today in my head, like a never-ending movie. I will remember, you know, Mrs. Carmichael, the dairy farmer from Vermont. I will remember the Maine lobster man. I will remember the woman who ran the day care center in Rhode Island. You know, I will remember the doctor in Roxbury.

Those are the things that help me add a human face to this, and also a reality check. I mean, let's make sure that their problems and the way they see this issue are taken into account. So I find a lot of these.

Q This is not -- this is not people being props. This is policy being made.

MRS. CLINTON: This is real people, right, with real issues that are on their mind. And I don't think we can talk about it too much, because as this debate goes forward we want to make sure we're doing the right thing.

Q Okay, last question. It's always good for a reporter to prove that (inaudible). Why do you think there's so much resistance, or there's so much argumentation surrounding the issue of a choice, if the administration (inaudible)? Is it because the opponents have decided that this is a potential vulnerability? And if that is correct, who are these opponents, and what is their aim?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that choice became an

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issue because opponents of change in the system were arguing that the President's plan would undermine choice, when exactly the opposite will occur. And in fact, some of the opponents ran television ads, spent millions of dollars trying to make people fearful that they would lose choice, so there's been a concerted campaign on that issue.

But I think people are gradually seeing through it, and I suspect that in the months to come they will understand that every day people are losing choice in our existing health care system. They are being told by their employers or by their insurance company what doctors they can see, what hospitals they can go to. And if we do nothing, people's choice will disappear. It's only reform that will guarantee choice.

Q So you have a few years to go. I have a couple years to go. I could stick in another question. (Inaudible) will get frustrated. As we're standing up, tell me one thing. You can (inaudible) the microphone.

A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

Q When you get (inaudible), you know, and you're going around (inaudible) your head is (inaudible), what do you do to just kind of relax? (Inaudible) look (inaudible) something to do?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, exercise, read, go to movies, and eat (inaudible). (Laughter.)

(End of tape.)

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