

03/18/94
COLORADO NATIONAL
GUARD UNIT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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PRESS AVAILABILITY WITH THE
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD UNIT

MRS. CLINTON: I want to thank the congresswoman, the governor, and I particularly want to thank the guys for doing this and showing they can work. I have seen many (inaudible) and kinds of disaster here in our country, and I have watched how they brought order into chaos and have treated people's problems that arose out of the disaster and then stayed to help with problems that had nothing to do with a tornado or a hurricane or anything like that. So it is a common-sense solution to a problem that we see here around us.

It is also a way of recognizing that we've got to have comprehensive health care for everybody. Just walking through this unit with the general, with the colonel, and with everyone who showed me around, I had conversations with people who just lost their medicaid coverage, people who didn't have insurance, people who haven't seen a doctor in years, people who have finally had somebody to help them with their dental problems, their vision problems. This is the kind of outreach that we need to see in every community and we will see when we have comprehensive health care reform that guarantees coverage to every American no matter who that person is or where that person lives.

So I mostly want to just say congratulations for a great idea and thanks for putting it into practice in a way that makes us all very proud. You're ground breakers, and I hope this will be model for what will come across the country in better utilizing our own resources to take care of our own people. Thank you all very much.

(Applause.)

Q Mrs. Clinton, on behalf of the Colorado Army National Guard and the 147th combat support hospital, we'd like to present this gift to you.

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MRS. CLINTON: That's great, thank you. If I (inaudible), what do I get? Do you all have any questions?

Q What about the Hubbell situation? Could you react to his resignation?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I am personally equally saddened for Webb and his family, but I am also very sad for the Department of Justice and the country because he had done and was doing a lot of very good work in improving the delivery of justice and really giving voice to a lot of people who had not had their concerns heard in a long time at the Justice Department. I think he's going to be greatly missed personally as a friend. I'm thinking a lot about him and his family and obviously wishing him well.

Q What about the timing? It's pretty awkward for you to come back and (inaudible) health care and have this come up?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't think it matters at all. I've been talking about health care for more than a year. I'm going to keep talking about health care, and we're going to get it done. I'll talk about it as hard as it takes until we do get it done.

Q Mrs. Clinton, on Whitewater, do you now still believe, as you've said before, that you and your husband lost \$69,000 in that (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: We are trying to figure out -- we know we lost money. We lost a bunch of money for us and we're trying to get exactly where and will be giving any information we come across, as we have all of it, to the special counsel. That's what we believe our primary obligation is, and that's what we're doing.

Q Can I follow on that? There have been reports over the weekend that you may have additional tax liability as a result of what's been found in the records. If that's the case, how can you at the same time have lost the amount of money that you've talked about? How do you (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: You're just going to have to wait along with everybody else as we work this through with the special counsel and try to figure out what we are obligated to give to him and what kinds of questions we have to answer

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in that process. We're trying very hard to be respectful of that. I've always said, you know, we lost money. Goodness knows what you all would be saying if we had made any money. I'm glad we did lose money. We're just going to do whatever is appropriate to do, and that's what we've always done over the last 15 years or so that we have dealt with this.

Q (Inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, the public doesn't ask me about it. I have tried very hard to be as understanding as I can about the concerns and questions of the press, and I've admitted that I've made mistakes in how I have perceived this and handled it. You know, you live and learn and you go on. That's what I'm doing. You know, when this is all over, it's going to be the same story we've been telling for two years. We made a bad investment. We lost money, and there's really not much more to add to it.

Q Do you think that your ability to (inaudible) reporters (inaudible) Whitewater (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't believe that any of our agenda to try to bring change to this country, to try to deal with the crime problems with a crime bill that's in the Congress now, to deal with welfare reforms, to deal with the budget which went through on a big vote last week and didn't even get much notice because we're now back to business being run in our government responsibly. So a recent budget gets a good vote and is viewed as another step for fiscal responsibility.

I think that the entire agenda is moving along because it's what the American people voted for. I think with respect to health care reform, if you look at the polls and all the data that is printed in newspapers and reported on TV stations, you would see, as we do, that the overwhelming majority of Americans want health care reform. They want it now.

When told about the principles and the president's approach, they support it. That's really what we know is going to bring about health reform in America. That's what I'm going to keep working on as hard as I can.

A PARTICIPANT: Let's take a couple more questions on non-MASH subjects. I've got a couple people that I want

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to speak about this unit. I know you have other interests. We're talking about MASH. How about one or two more questions on other than this MASH unit, and then I'd like to go back to our program.

Q Mrs. Clinton, Congresswoman Schroeder talked about the Republicans (inaudible). You said a couple weeks ago (inaudible) well-organized and well financed (inaudible). Do you still feel that way?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I'm just going to stand on what I said before. I think Pat has a lot more experience than I do.

I also wanted to say about the health care we just had 3,000 people hanging from the rafters and we had about another 6 or 7 thousand people mad that they couldn't get in on Monday. It was lovely like this (inaudible) had to pay \$15 to come. So I don't think it's effected it at all.

A PARTICIPANT: Last question.

Q Are there things that are negotiable? The (inaudible) talks about backing off of (inaudible). Could you give us an idea of when you and the Congress might get together on some of (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Let me refer you to the transcript of what the president said not to what was reported that the president said. What the president said was that there are certain functions that we are trying to get performed in our health care system, namely to pull people into large risk pools to enable them to get discounts in the health insurance markets, to enforce community ratings so we no longer discriminate against people on the basis of their health status or their age. That our approach uses the alliance as a buyer's club, if you will, to get that done.

What the president said is if there are ways to achieve the objectives that we have outlined, other than what we've proposed, we have always said we are open to that and are more than willing to look at it and see how it would work. So we are not backing up or backing forward. We are staying right where we have been, which is here's what we want to do to ensure guaranteed health coverage for everybody.

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There are certain ways that it can be done. We've put out what we have said will work as others now in Congress are coming forth with their ideas. We're going to be talking about that. That's what the congressional process is for. The bottom line has always been we want guaranteed private insurance for every American with comprehensive benefits that can never be taken away. There are different ways of getting there. We're open to that, but we need to make sure that's the end result.

A PARTICIPANT: I'd like to call upon Dr. Kenfield, COL Kenfield, and COL Gavey to explain what are the next steps in his particular program. We have some further action in Colorado. We're extremely proud of this unit, and I don't want us to close today before we talk about it some more. Dr. Kenfield.

DR. KENFIELD: One of the things we're anticipating doing in the next month is taking this mobile combat support hospital and moving it to rural areas of western Colorado where we will be able to provide health care in cooperation with the Migrant Health Council and other underserved areas.

The combat support hospital is a mobile unit and we will take our mobile unit and go to various areas of western Colorado, set up, spend several days in those areas, provide baseline care for migrant health and other homeless and/or individuals who qualify for the care, with the local health care organization, leave our records for those people, move on down the road to the next area that needs our help. That kind of ongoing training is needed for both the people who need the care and it's good training for us.

A PARTICIPANT: COL Gavey is a chief nurse. I'd like to have her comment upon just what has been the response of this community to this unit? I personally have seen some of that supporting and I was overwhelmed. Colonel, would you share some of that with us?

COL GAVEY: I've heard nothing negative about what we've done. Our (inaudible) has taken (inaudible) as they lead and everything has (inaudible) just for the responses they have given for the credits of the unit (inaudible). So we've been called angels and just want us to come back and just do this more often.

I do want to talk about Darcy Myerbackle who is one

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of the nurses at Salt Creek Clinic who has been working with me. If it hadn't been for her, we probably wouldn't have been able to manage everything either. So she's with the Salt Creek Clinic and I just want to know if she has anything she'd like to say.

MS. MYERBACKLE: We, at the Salt Creek Clinic, served the homeless for the last nine here in Denver. During that time we've been very grateful when the community comes and joins us in the work that we do. We're also very grateful for what Mrs. Clinton is doing in addressing the concerns, the health concerns of this country. We're welcoming the National Guard in a continued effort in working with the homeless that are here in Denver.

A PARTICIPANT: I just want to thank all the guards. You are the ones that are making this possible. You're getting good training. We're getting good service. We're setting an example, I think, for some other states. Thank you all for coming.

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