

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. paper	Interview with Dotson Rader, Parade Magazine; RE: personal info [partial] (2 pages)	02/11/1993	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
 First Lady's Office
 First Lady's Press Office (Lissa Muscatine)
 OA/Box Number: 20112

FOLDER TITLE:

FLOTUS Press Office Interview Transcripts Volume V 10/19/94--04/10/97 [Binder] :
 [02/11/93 Rader, Dotson Parade Magazine]

2011-0415-S
ms102

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

Internal Transcript

February 11, 1993

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
INTERVIEW WITH DAWSON RADER, PARADE MAGAZINE

MRS. CLINTON: Lovely day.

Q Great day.

MRS. CLINTON: It was fun. Had a great time. Really learned some things, too.

Q I thought the -- some of the stuff was really moving, and was probably boiler plate. One thing that came to mind, that had never occurred to me before, that businessman who was talking about how hard it was to pay for his family insurance, and it was a one-person business, and to get his pension.

I know a lot of people that are self-employed, who can't even afford health insurance for their children, but are middle class and they can't get Medicaid. But once they get rid of their house, et cetera, et cetera. The more he talked the angrier I got. Why is it that you obey the law, raise your children right, you do everything by the book, and you can't get health insurance, and yet you are being taxed to death to pay for the government employees, to pay for the teachers, to give health care to convicted convicts. Convicts have no health care to worry about. Is that fair?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you know, all during the campaign my husband talked about how people who have really suffered in the last decade are the people who did play by the rules and worked hard and tried to take care of themselves and their families. And part of what he is trying to do is to reverse that trend so that people like the families we heard from today aren't left out there unprotected and ignored by their government which they support.

So, I don't think it's fair, and is something that we are going to have to change.

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Q The guy from the Teachers Union got up. The main thrust of what he said was change the health care system, but the one thing he can't change is making the employees pay more. It's the employer who has to pay more. Well, I'm the employer.

The Teachers Union, among other unions, are one of the main constituencies of the Democratic Party -- I am a Democrat -- but one of the main constituencies, and they have consistently blocked reform. How, politically, do you deal with that?

MRS. CLINTON: I think that everybody who knows we have to change what we are doing and have a new health care reform system, who stops to think about it more than cursorily, understands that we have to change the way we think about it and the way we deliver health care. And that means that people's attitudes about what is or isn't fair right now may not be relevant when we put together a system that truly is trying to control cost and expand coverage to every American.

I think part of what you hear, when people say, well, yes, do it but don't do that, is a feeling on the part of speakers that -- they are afraid that once again they will be the only ones to make any sacrifice or any contribution. So it's a defensive mode.

And part of what the President is trying to do, and what all of us who are working on his promise to provide a new health care system, are trying to do, is to make it clear that people have to think in new ways. They can't get locked into the old pattern and then take defensive postures which result in the kind of gridlock we've had, which will only further deteriorate the system.

So when I hear somebody say, well, we want this, this, and this, but don't do that which might affect me, I see it as an expression of fear and concern that what's likely to happen is what happened all during the eighties. People talked a great game, but the people who really had to pay for what was done, were people in the middle class. And that included people in both the public and the private sector.

So I think if the majority of Americans believe

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that we are going to design a system that is fair to everyone, and hold accountable those parts of the system that have profited enormously and really tries to right that balance, they are going to give up on some of their unalterable demands because they will not need to hang on to those anymore.

Q I'll just ask you two questions about political tactics. A lot of people I have talked to, since you were appointed, see that the way you are going about is very, very dangerous, i.e., working separate components separately. Taking on the pharmaceutical companies -- not dividing and conquering, but putting all the special interests, have them all together in one plan that could overwhelm you.

I was wondering in terms of tactics, how do you -- I know this is one of the ways you try to mobilize the American people by speaking over their heads, as it were. But, you know, the old thing about my neighbor's ox is gored, it doesn't bother me; when my mine is gored. But you are going to be goring just about everybody's ox. How, politically, will you able to pull that through?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't know that there is any choice but to do it the way that the President wants to have it done, because we have tinkered on the edges of this non-system, and we tried to deal with individual parts of it over the past 10 or 15 years, and it has only gotten worse. Because if you only take on one piece of it without creating the environment for systemic change, you are likely to have unintended consequences that make the problem you are trying to solve even worse.

I don't think there is an alternative but to design a new system and to provide a real health care system that controls costs, and ensures access to all Americans. At the same time -- and sure there will be people who don't want any change. They are satisfied with the status quo. But I just don't believe that they are anywhere near majority. In fact, I think they are a vocal, well-financed minority.

And if the task force does the job that the President has asked, which is to come up with recommendations to him, that will permit him to introduce legislation that really honestly addresses what has to be done, then I think the American people will say this is worth fighting for. And if it's worth fighting for, then I just don't think any

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individual special interest is going to be able to block it.

Q Mrs. Clinton, let me ask you something --one of the reasons presidents actually set up commissions is to give the president deniability. The commission comes out and it floats what is perceived by the president as radical reforms. There is a firestorm, but the president is able to back away from it because he can blame the commission and say, well, they haven't done their work right and set up another commission.

But with his wife as head of the commission, the President has lost his deniability. And the question is politically -- the political health of this office, is it worth that risk to have you rather than someone else?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, my husband believes it's worth any risk associated with his trying to create a new health care system for this country. I don't think he believes it's worth being president if he can't do that. He feels that strongly about it.

Q Is that his chief goal?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, it is one of his two chief goals. Obviously, creating new jobs that will bring about rising income again for Americans is the primary economic goal. But creating a new health care systems goes hand in hand with that. Because as we heard this afternoon, what's happened with health care costs is undermining our economic prosperity. It's not just the human problem, it's an economic one.

So from the President's perspective, as he has said many, many times, this country cannot go on the way it is. And we've gotten into the mess we are in because too many presidents for too long did just what you asked about. They sought deniability. They wanted to escape accountability. They wanted to continue the charade that we have lived with for the last decade where, no, the budget deficit; and, no, bailing out the S&Ls is not really a budgetary problem; and, no, the health care system doesn't really to be fixed, it just needs to be tinkered with. And all the stuff that any reasonable person, who is honest, had to know was undermining the strength and vitality of this country, as well as causing a lot of human misery.

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When my husband asked me to chair the Education Reform Commission in Arkansas, back in the early 1980s, hardly anybody thought it was a good idea. His friends were upset because they thought, well, you know, if she recommends anything hard, then he will get blamed for it. His enemies were upset because they thought it was a terrible idea. But at that time my husband said the most important issue facing the State of Arkansas is education. "I don't want deniability. I want it known to everybody that this is a high-risk proposition, and I am going to ask my wife to do this because I feel so strongly about it. And if I had the time, away from all my other duties, I'd do it myself." And I think he feels exactly the same way about health care.

So I have no doubt this is a very high-risk proposition. I read the pundits and the pollsters who all say what a high-risk proposition it is. From my husband's perspective, which I agree with absolutely, the real high-risk proposition is not trying to fix the health care system. I don't think he could live with himself if he just stated through his term mild and nice platitudes and talked about what he thought could be done, but didn't really tackle it. And he is willing to do it because he thinks that's what the American people want him to do, that's why they elected him president.

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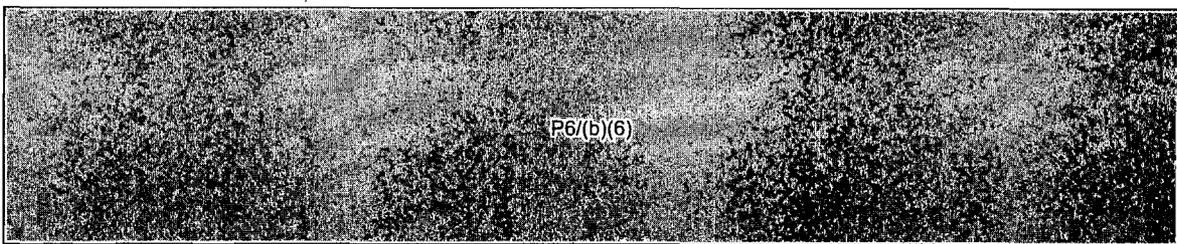
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You mentioned in the Newsweek -- people analyze it in the press, and you know how we chatter in classes. Particularly after the President appeared to back away from a lot of promises early on. One of the things that got him elected, and I am sure you have been asked this before, was welfare reform. The thing that I think -- I try to understand it all the time -- that has brought such cynicism and such contempt, it's not such the purpose of Congress and the corruption of Congress, it's the corruption of the welfare system itself.

That if I am poor, 15 years old, has three babies out of wedlock, yet I get medical care, I get a housing allowance, I get food stamps. I don't work, I refuse to work, I use drugs, I bring Aids babies into the world, drug-addicted babies in the world. We have to spend \$125-\$200,000 a year caring for each one of these babies, and I can't get proper care for my own baby, and I am paying for it.

The welfare reform, because your husband was so firm about it. And then when Secretary Shalala testified before Congress, it was like everybody watching said, uh-oh, the (inaudible) one of Hillary's people from the Children's Defense thing, and Adelman's person is in there now, that's going to be her project, and there's not going to be any -- because those two people have traditionally fought work requirements.

But that's out there in the country, and people -- and it produces cynicism. And I'd like to get a really sort of forthright statement from you --

MRS. CLINTON: That's just a total misunderstanding. The President has announced at the governors conference that we were having a working group that will come up with exactly how to implement what he said during the campaign, including the two-year cutoff. I don't know where anybody got that idea.

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Q Well, it came from her testimony.

MRS. CLINTON: Well --

Q Because she seemed to directly answer that --

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I just --

Q I'm sorry.

MRS. CLINTON: I can't speak for Secretary Shalala, but I know that she fully supports the President's agenda and fully supports this effort to define how the Family Support Act, which my husband helped to write, along with the governors, and Senator Moynihan and others, will be implemented, which it was not implemented during the Republican administration. They are the ones who talk a lot about welfare reform, and the welfare system only got worse under the Republican.

Q I don't know what the genesis of that was. I would guess that it was so clear what the President was aiming to do, which I agree with a hundred percent, that probably Secretary Shalala talked about the new initiative like the AIDS czar and -- I don't know, I didn't read the testimony, so I don't have any direct recollection. But may have not thought that it was necessary to go into it in great detail because it was clearly outlined in the campaign. And it is absolutely one of the primary objectives of the administration.

Q She was pressed at the hearings. In fact, Moynihan (inaudible) campaign promises all over the place.

MRS. CLINTON: I talked to Senator Moynihan about this.

Q But I am still talking about the public perception. She was pressed on that and she seemed very, very evasive.

That brings me back to the Newsweek thing in which you talk about responsibility, accountability. And I suppose we are just actually talking about changing what has -- is ending the sort of debasement of values in this country. The idea is that everybody is a victim. Nobody is responsible

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for what they do. And I would like if you could just speak to that point because that's another thing where people think, well, liberal Democrats talk this way, but when push comes to shove, they are not willing to go against the welfare lobby; to enforce that these people act under the same rules that the rest of us act under.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, there may be some people like that. I don't personally know any of them. Anyone who has ever followed what I have done or what I have said or written knows that I believe that personal responsibility is at the root of any kind of social structure, and that we have not done a good job in expecting people to exercise their rights responsibly and to be held accountable. So for me, it's not even a debatable issue.

What has not been very clear in the last years is how to institutionalize that kind of responsibility in the light of disintegrating families, cultural messages that undermine personal responsibility; the kind of widespread acceptance what used to be considered inappropriate behavior that allows people off the hook personally.

And I believe that part of the reason that my husband was elected president is because for more than ten years in Arkansas we have been trying to figure out in our state how you begin to re-instill responsibility where it has been undermined. It's a core issue for him and for me and for those of us who believe that without addressing it, and without providing incentives in our public systems, to alter behavior and to require people to be more responsible, we are not going to get ahead of the curve, and a lot of the serious problems like crime and drugs and the other social problems that afflict us.

Q It seems to me -- in the late sixties, because I have lived in New York -- into the late sixties I lived on Central Park West. On a hot summer night I could go and sleep in Central Park and not fear for my life. Times Square was where middle class families from the outer boroughs went to catch a movie and a cheap dinner. There were prostitutes, but there was no drugs, there was no violence. It was safe. Kids could go there.

I wouldn't walk today down 42nd Street if you paid me. Even before dusk Central Park isn't safe. We have accepted a level of violence and social disorder and anami

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(phonetic) in this country. And it's not just the social disorder and the anami. It's the attitude on the part of the criminals. I am talking about drug dealers in midtown Manhattan. Absolutely openly dealing drugs, for example, on Vanderbilt Avenue; having contempt for all these suits walking by on their way home from the train. And you sense that contempt, you sense that arrogance, and the fact they know they are going to get away with it.

Forgetting welfare reform for a moment. If the states cannot govern and produce basic human safety, where you are safe in your own homes, how does it get any legitimacy? That's the primary purpose.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I don't think it does. But look what we have come out of. We have come out of 12 years where the deterioration has accelerated and people bought this kind of rhetoric that was the substitute for action. Was there any program to try to get more police officers on the streets? Was there any support for community policing which makes a difference in the quality of people's security in their homes and on the streets? Was there any concerted effort to run a real war against drugs instead of a kind of show, a side show?

I think the people have a right to be disgusted. That's one of the reasons my husband ran for president. But they bought into this idea that symbols and rhetoric and the sort of show politics that substituted for real democracy in the last years was acceptable.

It's easy to place the blame at the top, but it goes all the way down through the system. I mean, people who cede their neighborhoods to drug dealers and 14-year old murderers have to take responsibility, too. They have to demand better behavior, starting with their own children and moving out. They have to demand better police protection of a kind that will make a difference. The kind of institutions from the grass roots level up. Have to start judging themselves on the basis of whether or not they perform the duties that they are hired and paid to perform.

All through society there has been this abdication of responsibility that goes along with a lot of social trends and economic changes. It's not just adequate to focus on the people who are at the very bottom of the income scale and whose behavior is the most obviously anti-social, because during the 1980s a lot of behavior that was counterproductive

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and antisocial took place in the boardrooms of America and in the highest political offices of America, and was not censured. It was in the midst of an esaws (phonetic) that promoted every individual for him or herself.

So that that kind of signal permeated our life as a society. It is very difficult to turn it around because once license is allowed to take precedence, and consequences are not immediate, people do get demoralized. They feel victimized. And then that feeds on itself.

So the task in front of us as a society is much bigger than the one the President has to do. And if people believe that Bill Clinton alone can reverse the social trends that have led to this rising tide of violence and the drug addiction and terrible effects we see on our children; homicide and suicide being the primary causes of the deaths of young people in America, all the other problems we all read in the newspapers, they are wrong.

He could set a tone, he can work as hard as he can to create an environment in which better policies and programs can replace those that have failed. But ultimately it has to be the entire country taking responsibility and working in partnership with a president who does not want deniability, wants to accept accountability, desperately believes that if we do not change our behavior from the individual on up, and change from the inside out, we cannot survive as a great country.

Q Let me follow up on that point. You're talking about accountability, and you are talking about in the eighties much of the damage was done in corporate boardrooms with Michael Milken (phonetic) and the others.

I spend a lot of my time, as you may know, spending time with movie stars and writing about them, celebrities. With the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, when I began to lose friends, I remember in 19 -- about 1983 I went to a movie with Rob Lowe. This was after we knew how it was transmitted; beginning to push safe sex. There was a scene in the movie where he is in bed with this girl, and she hands him a condom. And he makes a condom joke and flips it across the room.

Now, the way Hollywood presents sex, I have not seen in any significant way to have changed. From my point

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of view, whether it's Easy Rider, whatever movies, with these films and popular music, popularized drugs, popularized rebellion, traditional institutions, the church, whatever, films. I have never talked to anybody in Hollywood, I don't care whether it's Barry Dillar or Howard Rosenman or Sheri Lansing, or anybody about this where they will admit any culpability, any accountability at all. What you get is, "All we do is give the people what they want. If they didn't want it, they wouldn't buy the tickets, and we would make something else."

Now, do you think -- we are just talking about basic American institutions, those institutions which control our popular culture. In fact, 11 corporations control 80 percent of all the information, popular information, magazines, newspapers, that the American people receive.

What degree are they complicit? To what degree has the debasement of American values followed from American-produced popular culture, in your opinion?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't know if you can ascribe any particular percentage to it, but --

Q But the degree, there is a degree of (inaudible).

MRS. CLINTON: I think that there has been a reinforcement by popular culture of the undermining of social values and institutions. I don't think it's at all possible at this point and time to say what's cause and what's effect. But there certainly is a relationship.

I personally worry more about television than I do about other forms of the media because that is so pervasive, and it is the primary baby-sitter and value transmitter for many children in our society. And that the kind of lowest common denominator quality, much of what appears on television or in other forms of popular culture, reinforces the loosening of other human bonds.

I would argue as somewhat undermining of the evolution of a mature person because of the constant barrage of violence and explicit sexuality. And for many people it is affecting not just what they think about, but how they think, because it reinforces the kind of episodic, reactive, the most frantic mode of behavior. I think on both the count

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of the actual substance of the entertainment, as well as the process by which it's delivered, there are grounds to worry about the impact it has particularly on children.

Q You know that I have a little girl. I was baby-sitting last year in Manhattan for a couple, friends of mine, and they have a little daughter of seven and eleven, and they had gone out to dinner. They couldn't find a baby-sitter. I was in the city, and they said, "Can you come?" I said, "I've got to work." "Can you bring it over and just stay with the kids?"

So I came over. They didn't get home until about eleven o'clock at night. I didn't know when the kids were supposed to go to bed. And I was in the living room working, and they were watching television. The little one came in the living room, and she said, "Oh, come see, they are taking baths."

And I went in, and these two little girls are sitting there watching Channel K, which is all porn, ten o'clock at night, where a man and a woman are having sex in a shower. I thought to myself --

Mrs. Dole was portrayed as a blue-nosed prude, and I agreed with what she --

MRS. CLINTON: I do, too.

Q How can you defend -- how should the country, which allows access to a seven-year old child to hard core pornography?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I can't defend it, I wouldn't defend it. I think it's wrong. And I wish that it would go away. Because I think it's so destructive to children and to adults to have that kind of material shown. And I don't think there is anything wrong with parents groups or other groups calling for people to boycott certain kinds of entertainment. That's not censorship. That's advocacy and education and choice.

Q Mrs. Clinton, how do you boycott a channel? The problem with that is -- and I think Congress ought to take a good look at it -- it is against the law, essentially, to any way control, censor the content of cable. You can only censor the broadcast of it. You can't censor cable.

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MRS. CLINTON: I don't agree with that.

Q So, you have Channel J on in New York, and you have X-rated films on all day long on HBO and the other channels, which kids have access to.

Would you support the investigation, committee hearings, or something in terms of bringing some sort of --

MRS. CLINTON: Absolutely. I didn't know it was against the law. I would absolutely support that.

Q Oh, it's against the law on cable. There is no --

MRS. CLINTON: I didn't realize that.

Q I had a television show on for about a year and a half, a talk show, on CNBC, and -- I am going to use the word so you understand the story. One of my guests was William Conslar (phonetic), who is a lawyer. I was really angry about it. And he said he is a cock sucker. And I went, come on, settle down, settle down.

When I got home -- it's live. When I got home, I got about five calls from friends who had watched the show, saying, "I don't believe they let that through." I mentioned it to the studio. I said, how did that get through? Well, there is no seven-second delay. Because there is no censorship on cable television. That's why you can have the theatrical films uncut. We not only have theatrical films uncut, we have theatrical films, to avoid an X rating, have taken out sex scenes and put them back in when they are played for cable. Just like they are put back in when you rent cable tape.

I am not trying to make a big issue out of it. But in terms of American values and debasement, I think something --

MRS. CLINTON: I agree, but I think it's also important to look at all the various causes of the undermining of our values and to understand that this needs to be addressed on a wide range of fronts because there is a lot at stake. People's values begin to be undermined and eroded or they permit them to be when economic times get hard

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for them and they don't feel like there is any real choice.

Child abuse goes up, lots of things happen because of impoverishment, especially for people who either have given up hope or who suddenly find themselves in a position they never thought they would be in. You have the debasement of values, you have generations of leaders lying to people, so that the truth becomes debased. Because once the truth is debased, then a lot of other values fall by the wayside as well.

So, although I share your concern about the impact of the kind of constant barrage of explicit sexuality and violence that fills our airwaves and impacts dramatically, I believe, on the minds and souls of our children, there are other things that also should concern us as a society, that needs to be addressed as well.

Q One of the reasons I think -- and this is just a hunch -- one of the reasons I have always admired you is your interest in children. I did the first national story on runaway children, and homeless children, and the first story on child prostitution, the first one on incest and so on. So I think I know a certain amount about it.

What has always struck me as an anomaly, given how extraordinarily sensitive children are, is that a boy of nine can blow up another boy of eight and feel no remorse. He'll feel tears, he'll feel sorry for being punished because his mother is mad at him, but he has no sense that the boy is dead. And I think that's not just the children. It has to do with the kind of cartoons. Death has no meaning. It's a game. You kill a person, he doesn't hurt.

MRS. CLINTON: But there is a pre-existing condition for that. There are millions and millions of children in this country who watch the very same television day in and day out, and whose boundaries are intact. They don't go beyond what the appropriate internal structure is.

Unfortunately, when you combine the disintegration of the family and the lack of positive adult-child relationships that determine the lives of many of these children, with the kind of culture that encourages, or at least appears to encourage violence and blatant sexuality, that's when you have the dangerous combination.

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Because there are other countries in which pornography is readily available on the streets, but the family structure, the institutional structures are such that it doesn't have the kind of terrible impact on children that we see in our country because we have created a very fertile ground for that kind of unfortunate impact, as adults not doing what needs to be done to create strong bonds with children to give them the kind of attention and discipline that will permit them to be exposed to whatever life throws their way, but not to be devastated by it or to be so rendered conscience-less that they can engage in violent behavior without any remorse because they don't relate to anyone, because no one has ever adequately related to them.

So it's a complex set of issues, all of which we have to address if we are going to try to reverse the anami, the violence, the despair and hopelessness that not only ruins the lives of so many Americans, but which impacts on all of us in very real ways because of crime and the costs associated with that. So it's something I have thought about a lot.

Q Hopefully we will see you on Friday.
(Inaudible) in particular what, at least I could do with the growing generation of lawlessness. For every one dollar going to children, you've got \$12 going to seniors. And I think that's going to be the chief issue of the next decade.

But in any event, the next time we meet I'd like to talk to you about family, your family, where your values come from; personal.

MRS. CLINTON: Okay.

Q Thank you very, very much. I enjoyed the day.

MRS. CLINTON: Glad you could be with us.

(The interview was concluded.)

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