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INTERVIEW OF THE FIRST LADY
BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF
THE MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Q I guess my first question, Mrs. Clinton -- Will you be involved in the health care reform issue in 1995 and are there any issues concerning health care that were raised this year that will not be applicable next year?

MRS. CLINTON: I will be involved as will be the administration because the President remains committed to health care reforms. The exact route that he will

.. take has not been decided yet. Those discussions will begin in earnest now that the Congress is recessing, but the problems that prompted the President to consider health care reform are not going away and already there are many who are writing that they will begin to worsen. So that although we have the finest medical care in the world, with the finest doctors and hospitals and nurses, we have an inadequate, overly bureaucratic financing system that takes too many dollars away from delivering health care. So there will be a continuing effort on the part of this administration to address health care and I believe we will see some progress... in 1995.

Q Will you take a leadership role again and the same type of position?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes I will be involved. I don't know that it will be any different position because I will attempt to travel around the country and speak out and be available to work on behalf of whatever the administration decides to do, just as I did this year. That is something I'm personally very committed to and certainly after having spent the morning at St. Jude's, where every child is taken care of and where all expenses for the entire family during a time of catastrophic illness, I am even more committed to doing what I can to make sure every child in America has

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access to the quality of health care we have available in places like St. Jude.

Q -- Do you have any interest in breaking things out, expanding coverage to, say, children and pregnant women first, expanding Medicare to them? Or are you still looking at a more universal approach?

MRS CLINTON: We really have the bottom-line commitment that the President laid out of working to ensure coverage for everyone at an affordable cost. The means of getting there and how it will be done will be discussed over the next several months, so I cannot at this time answer your question. But certainly as the administration, as members of Congress, as others who care about health care reform begin to look at what the options are, we will be discussing that broadly with the American people again.

Q But in response to 128 (inaudible) by House members --

MRS. CLINTON: I am not good at offering -- our husbands and ourselves and that's what I've tried to do. So I will continue to play many different roles, which I think is appropriate given the great opportunities that come with being in this position.

Q Mrs. Clinton, the Wall Street Journal and others had a lead story about political -- Democratic political candidates distancing themselves from the White House, running scared. Every cartoonist in the country, including this one is doing similar cartoons about them trying to distance themselves. I talked to Jim Sasser today, and he says it's something scary going on out there. Do you feel that there is something scary going on, and if so, what is it?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't know that I would characterize it quite like Senator Sasser did, although I think I have an idea of what he means. It's puzzling that given the state of the economy, which is improving but not yet where it needs to be, but certainly better than it was before the President was elected, that there is so much insecurity in people's lives that is being really acted out in their opposition to much of what they see in a political scene.

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I think it's especially puzzling since if you look at what has been accomplished by this President, Vice President and Congress in the last 20 months, there's been much more achieved than people either seem to know or have really had occasion to study that.

I see as the obligation of Democrats is as it always is in a campaign, and that is to talk with people and demonstrate clearly what the choices are. And certainly, when the Republicans lined up, as they did, to sign the "Contract for America" on the steps of the Capitol, the choice is stark. Do we continue with a budget that for the first time is cutting spending, \$255 billion, eliminating government programs, reducing the deficit?

For the third year in a row, the deficit will go down, which has not happened since Harry Truman was president. Or, do we return to the kind of economic policies that brought us a trillion dollar deficit and which undermined the manufacturing and economic base in so many sectors of our country? I think one that choice is posed, despite all of the rhetoric, there's going to be a real opportunity for Democrats to make a very strong case.

Q Mrs. Clinton, Jim Cooper, who is running for the Senate seat which was held by Vice President Gore, he's having a tough time with this race. Does the Clinton administration, speaking for it loosely, feel any kind of responsibility that he's having such a difficult time because of criticism he got from the administration for coming out with an alternative health care bill?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, we are supporting Congressman Cooper, and as you know, the Vice President has already been here and we are going to do whatever Congressman Cooper thinks would be helpful in his race. Because despite any differences, the fact is that Congressman Cooper was willing to step forward and become involved in the discussion about health care reform. He did not stand on the sidelines and point fingers, and look for excuses about how we could not face our problems. He had a plan, and I regret that his plan and the President's plan and others who actually came forward with proposals did not get the opportunity that I thought everyone would to debate them and reach some kind of a consensus about what we should do.

But certainly, Congressman Cooper is a real player

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who was willing to stake out positions and fight for those positions. I think that's to his benefit and it would make for a good senator for Tennessee. Because what we need in Washington are not people who just criticize and talk, but people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and try to solve problems, and I believe he will do that.

Q Mrs. Clinton, are you familiar with Tennessee's (inaudible) Health Care Program?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, (inaudible).

Q I was wondering how closely are you and the administration watching that program and monitoring it to -- as a possible model in national health care reform?

MRS. CLINTON: We're looking at it very closely, and are encouraged by the results that are being reported. We accelerated the waiver that made TennCare possible. Again, this is a stark difference with the previous administrations. There was a lot of talk about state authority over programs, but very little action. But under the Clinton administration, states have been given much greater latitude in carving out waivers to federal law so that they can experiment in delivering health care, welfare reform, and other issues like that.

And with respect to TennCare, we are looking at it very closely because in the conversations I've had personally with Governor McWherter, the idea that we could save money through better managing Medicaid and making health care available to the uninsured without lowering quality is exactly what health reform is aiming to accomplish. So we will continue to work with Tennessee and closely watch what is occurring.

And I hope that the people of Tennessee appreciate what an important issue this is in the gubernatorial election, because this experiment, if it is going to bear fruit, needs to be continued. And certainly the Democratic nominee for governor is willing to say that this will continue and his Republican opponent, as I have been advised, is not at this point, which would be a great loss to Tennessee, but also for the entire national effort to see what works.

Q If ninety-five percent of all Tennesseans are

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going to be covered by the TennCare program, (inaudible) certainly leave it up to the states to have some kind of states rights, why should (inaudible) be involved and why should we in Tennessee worry about a national health care program?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, if indeed you can cover 95 percent, which is something that we're working with officials in Tennessee to monitor and to understand how effective the coverage is, that is certainly a major step forward. But there are federal dollars in TennCare. You could not have done TennCare without federal dollars. So the federal government already is involved.

And part of what the objective of health care reform is to make sure there is a stable basis of health care coverage. And one of the issues we have to look at with TennCare or with any of the states that are experimenting is whether in the absence of national health care reform, those model programs will be able to continue.

It is one thing to change the environment in a state for a short period of time. It is an entirely different challenge to be able to maintain it over time if the states around you do not do so, if the federal government changes policy which undermines the capacity of a state to continue what it is doing in the delivery of services.

So Tennessee has a big stake in national health care reform because of the federal government's involvement in the delivery of health care in Tennessee, as it is involved throughout the country.

Q. Before we jump into politics, (inaudible) newspaper particularly. I hear a lot of criticism from Republican leaders, in particularly Haley Barbour, in recent days and they're all saying that the Clintons campaign as "New Democrats" and the governing is old Democrat. Is there any validity to that?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I'd like to know what his example is. If it is old Democrat to bring down the deficit when both old and new Republicans couldn't get it done, then I think that's probably a good thing. But I don't know exactly what he's referring to. I hear a lot of loose talk about old and new, and left and right, but what this President and Vice President are committed to is solving

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problems.

And I believe that what you've seen -- and there was a recent article, I think today in the Wall Street Journal -- is a very centrist, mainstream approach to problem-solving.

It is unfortunate that the rhetoric of the Republican Party is too often unexamined and is not analyzed sufficiently. Because if you get behind it, what they've complained about since the day Bill Clinton and Al Gore came to town is that they did not have the presidency anymore. And the basis of their attacks are motivated by political and economic greed and are really based in ideological obstructionism.

They can't go out and say "we're upset because we no longer have the presidency." So instead they and their allies come out and say, "Well, these two men, who are known to be New Democrats with centrist policies, have somehow lost their way." But I don't know what they're talking about and I'd be glad to talk issue by issue and answer any of the charges they make.

Q Mrs. Clinton, I wonder about Pat Robertson, and Rush Limbaugh, and people like that that kind of get on that -- what you've talked about. What do you -- What do you see as their problem with the administration and how does that affect you?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that a lot of the Republicans and their allies are operating from the point of view that the Democrats -- and particularly Bill Clinton and Al Gore, who are New Democrats and are young, vigorous activist leaders -- don't have any right to be in the White House. I think if you just strip it all down, that's what it comes to.

And that the issues which are really at the heart of what it means to be a New Democrat, issues having to do with empowering people to make decisions in their own lives, issues having to do with fiscal responsibility and arithmetic that adds up in the federal budget are ones that any thoughtful analysis of would conclude that the president and the Vice President are on the right side of.

But that is irrelevant to the Republicans and their

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allies because what they want is the White House back and what they want are political victories. Look what happened yesterday with lobbying reform. Now I happen to believe that the vast majority of Americans are in favor of some kind of lobbying reform. I think that was one of the messages of the election. The Republicans make a decision that they're going to block lobbying reform because they don't want to give this administration any more legislative victories.

So what you have on the floor of the Senate yesterday is a filibuster that effectively killed lobbying reform, with one of the Republican senators leaving the chamber and going out to these cheers of lobbyists. Now I don't think that's what the American people want, but that is what is happening in Washington with this very well orchestrated disinformation campaign and obstructionism.

And it is a difficult position for both the President and the Vice President because you have a concerted advocacy communications strategy that combines radio talk shows, who get faxes every day from the Republican National Committee; some of the radical religious right broadcasters.

You have the Republican National Committee with their own television channel. You've got all that working, just literally pounding away at inaccurate depictions of what's happening in Washington, or at least incomplete stories day after day.

And what you have in the mainstream press is a desire to be objective, which means that you present both sides. So, for example, with respect to an issue, someone who reads the Commercial Appeal will get an accurate depiction of what's happening, but that's a one-day story. Whereas, the radio and all the rest of the propaganda keeps flooding the airwaves and the direct mail.

So I don't think it's any great surprise that people are confused and puzzled about what the administration stands for and what it has accomplished. But that's what elections are for and that's why I believe, now that the Congress is recessing and you will have the full attention of the President, and the Vice President, and the administration, who are going to be out there questioning a lot of these claims and charges that have flown unanswered by the Republicans, it's going to be a different political environment in a month than it is right now.

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Q Mrs. Clinton, you said Mr. Gore and Mr. Clinton are still New Democrats pursuing Democratic reforms. Who are the old Democrats and what reforms are they obstructing?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that there have been some tensions within the party about what direction we should be moving toward. And I think that doesn't do any good for the Democratic Party for me to call any names, so I don't intend to do that. But I think there has been a working through of what some of these issues are. NAFTA is a perfect example.

Bill Clinton and Al Gore took the position that NAFTA was good for American jobs and American workers, with a lot of opposition in the Democratic Party, as you recall. So I think there are a number of issues on which their positions have not been the traditional ones that you would find in a more traditional Democratic approach to solving problems, but which they have championed anyway.

Q Wouldn't that be a good example of Republicans not being obstructionists though, when they find an issue that they can solve. If you look back, they have in fact helped the administration.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, they have not been an obstructionist on every issue; I didn't say that. But certainly in the last month, they have been obstructionist. And I think they have said that. Senator Packwood is quoted as saying, "Of course, we killed health care. Now the trick is to make sure our fingerprints are not on it." So I think they have made a conscious political decision to do everything they could, using the rules, particularly of the Senate, to prevent this administration from any more legislative achievements, whether they agreed with them or not.

And I think part of the reason for that is if you look at the Congressional Quarterly analysis of this Congress, it has been a remarkably productive Congress. There are a number of issues that don't ever seem to rise to the level of people's interest or intentions, such as procurement reform, which is a huge issue, and the Vice President got through the Congress which save literally billions of dollars.

Q But wouldn't you say because the House is ruled

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by Democrats, that it should be easier to maintain that (inaudible) of the legislation that the White House has spearheaded through Congress?

MRS. CLINTON: I think that's a -- an inaccurate way of describing the situation in the Senate. If you have to get 60 votes and you don't have 60 Democrats, you don't control the Senate. So on any single issue, whether it's the nomination of an individual for a certain position or whether it's a very important piece of legislation like lobbying reform, a minority of the minority can basically stop any action.

Q You spoke earlier with some pride about the President's reduction of the deficit. There are members of your health care task force that don't believe we can have continued reduction of the deficit and the health care program. Do you believe that the two are incompatible?

MRS. CLINTON: Absolutely. The President's principal impetus for moving health care so quickly, is because if you do not reform health care, you cannot continue to reduce the deficit. All the work this President did to bring about a budget that was responsible fiscally and that has led to three years of deficit reduction for the first time since Harry Truman, he was saying unless we tackle the problems of health care costs. So they go hand in hand and they have always been part of the president's health care reform agenda and will continue to be.

Q Do you have any regrets about the way health care task force was structured and functioned early last year, that if you had been somehow more open, you would have come out of it with a plan that had a broader proposal?

MRS. CLINTON: I regret that the way it functioned was so much misunderstood and that we did not do a better job of either explaining how it functioned or making some revision in our functioning.

There has never been a process of drafting any piece of legislation that included more people. And those people were not only from the public sector, they were also from the private sector, and they included members of Congress's staff. The bill itself was drafted in the Congressional Office building by Congressional legislative drafters.

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The problem that we confronted in trying to put together a crash program to bring into one place all of the analysis of the American health care system meant that we certainly worked very quickly and often encouraged all different kinds of points of view because we wanted to be sure that no point of view was overlooked. That meant that you had to be extremely aware of how you could meld together these differing perspectives.

Think that the people working on that did a very good job in achieving a workable, defensible piece of legislation that according to the Congressional Budget Office would have reduced the deficit in the out years, which was of its objectives, as well guarantee universal coverage.

Part of our problem was that we did not have an opportunity to talk about a lot of what was going on during those early months because everybody was working so hard and because the budget was the primary objective of the administration. So health care had to take a back seat. It could not have been the primary focus during the first seven or eight months of the administration. But we always knew that once we presented the bill, there would be enormous public discussion, as there turned out to be.

So I think this idea that somehow this bill was drafted in secret by thousands of people is a little bit hard to argue. But I accept the fact that for whatever combination of reasons, people had the impression that was so. But even if it were so, the bill itself was public. And all of the analyses behind it was made available to any member of Congress who asked for it.

So there had never been a process like that. Usually bills are drafted in somebody's office and you never know who participated in the drafting of the bill. So we learned a lot from that process.

Q What went wrong with that, (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, I think that we presented hard choices. I mean, this is not a question of what went wrong with the process, I don't believe; it's a question of what choice were we going to make substantively.

The president stood for universal coverage, which he believes is the best approach for us to achieve as a

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country, because it's not only the right thing to do, to cover everybody, it's also the smart economic decision for the country to make. Because unless everybody is covered, you cannot control costs, there will always be cost shifting. And what we confronted when we came forward with our proposal were disagreements that are part of the legislative process.

There are, for example, only three ways to get to universal coverage. Either you have tax, which substitutes for the private insurance system; or you have an individual mandate, as a number of Republicans initially proposed; or you have what we proposed, which was a plan to build on the existing employer-based system. That was the real political issue that the Congress and the country confronted.

I believe most other issues could have been worked out if we could have ever figured out how we could have combined whatever resources were necessary to reach the point where every American was making a contribution; even people on welfare were making a contribution. That's what the president wanted, but we could not work out the political problems of that kind of approach.

Q How are you going to do that the next time around?

MRS. CLINTON: We are going to start talking about that, but we don't have any preconceived notion about what the President will propose or how it will be presented. We have to do a better job in rebutting the opposition to health care reform, which allowed this time to really get a life of its own.

And many claims were made that were just not accurate, but we couldn't stay ahead of those, and so next time, whatever the proposal is, we will try to do a better job in communicating and education people, so that even if they disagree at the end of the process, we will have an informed debate, which I think is critical to reaching some kind of consensus.

Q It appears to me to be a lot of resentment toward you for leading the health reform effort and a lot of resentment in general from right wing Republicans. Do you agree with that? And why do you think that's so?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, I think anytime you move from

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the level of rhetoric and speech-making to policy and legislative action, there's going to be a lot of controversy. I have said several times in the last couple of weeks that if the president when elected had decided he was going to go around the country making eloquent speeches about all of our problems and blaming all kinds of factors and people for the difficulties we face, but not really doing anything, his popularity would be considerable.

Because if you don't move from the rhetorical to policy and politics, you stay above the fray. You stay out of the controversy. But this President and this Vice President, as you all know from being in Tennessee, had this idea that part of why they were elected was to solve problems. And you know that old saying, there are two things you should never watch being made: sausage and legislation. Well, this administration has made a whole lot of sausage, and I've been, in a small way, involved in that.

And once you get in to trying to actually bring about change instead of just talking about it, there's going to be controversy, and I think that just comes with the territory.

Q Don't you feel that some of the attacks have become more personal, though, on you, as far as substantively different from policy? I hear -- I mean, you talk about the (inaudible) of Rush Limbaugh, some of the talk shows, and there's (inaudible) Franklin now. How do you explain that or -- or do you even try?

MRS. CLINTON: I think that it's always easier to engage in personal attacks than to do the hard work of policy analysis and figuring out how to solve problems in a pragmatic, effective way. And it's also something that kind of appeals to a certain element in society and you get some immediate feedback.

I think that's just part of the American political scene, unfortunately, today where there appears to be a lot of name-calling and personal attack instead of trying to work together to solve the problems that we have at the local and state and national level.

But I just can't stop long enough to worry about that because I think a lot of it is motivated by commercial considerations and political advantage, and that's the choice

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that those people make. I'd rather try to be part of solving problems instead of just sitting there criticizing other people and pointing fingers, which is not, I think, very productive.

Q Before we run out, I wonder if you'd share with us some of your personal highs and personal lows since moving to the White House.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, we've had an extraordinary experience in Washington and it has been a real eye-opener and a real learning experience. Coming from state government, as the president did, where people seem to be focussed on trying to solve problems at the local and state level, it has been something of a surprise seeing all of the gamesmanship that goes on in Washington and all of the posturing and all of the special interests that are calling the shots too often.

But having said that, it has been largely a very positive experience for me personally. I feel privileged and grateful to have been a part of what we're trying to do together in the country. And I feel, too, that history has a funny way of finally catching up with reality.

And when you look at the steps that have been taken in the initiatives that this President and Vice President have begun, I believe that people are eventually going to understand what they are doing and appreciate the steps they have taken. It just may be a little more difficult to get that across than perhaps any of us expected initially because of all the static in the airwaves, and because of the, you know, high expectations and the desire for people to have change right now.

But I am very confident about the future and certainly about the promise of this administration, which I think is being fulfilled and will continue to be. So, for me personally, that has been the great opportunity and a privilege that I (inaudible) --

Q Has there been one great moment above all?

MRS. CLINTON: No, I can't point to any one great moment.

Q Any one low moment?

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MRS. CLINTON: Oh, no. There have been a lot of tough challenges and there have been personal losses that have been hard for us. Moving to Washington, losing my father, and having our friend Vince Foster kill himself, and then losing my mother-in-law. Those have been the harder moments. Nothing political, personal tragedies that have been tough on all of us.

Q Is there another issue besides health care that we might see Hillary Clinton get involved in in the coming year, (inaudible) like welfare reform, or does baking cookies look better and better all the time? (Laughter.)

MRS. CLINTON: No, I think that I've done my share of that and I will continue to do my share of it. Nothing like a good cookie and a cup of hot tea on a cold afternoon.

Q How about (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I want to continue doing what I have done for most of my adult life, which is working on behalf of children's issues and family issues. And I really saw health care as part of that agenda. I didn't see it as something you put over on the side and say, well, I'm going to go work on health care.

I came to it from the perspective of wanting to give families the resources they needed to do the job they wanted to do with their own children, and I want to continue to speak out on that. And I think there are a number of issues that I have worked on in the past which I will continue to talk about and try to relate to the overall mission of this administration.

I am personally very concerned about the children and violence and the stresses that families face because of the level of violence in their neighborhoods and even their school. But it's also a health issue.

You cannot go to a trauma unit, as I have done repeatedly around this country, and talk to emergency room doctors, who tell me that they are now facing horrific health issues because children are being victims of gunshots at much earlier ages and with assault weapons -- they are being riddled with bullets that makes it more difficult to save them -- without caring about life. So those -- that's one example of an issue that I feel is related to what I've

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always done and that I want to continue to work on.

Q Mrs. Clinton, (inaudible) specific things you picked up on in an article in The New Yorker, and they question whether crime would be something that you'd be interested in (inaudible). Because there's something like, apparently, there's nothing like your involvement has helped to raise the spotlight on it, like you did with health reform. I know crime is up there, people are looking at it, but to get that much print about it, you know.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think we've got a real opportunity with the crime bill being passed to bring attention to what communities can do to help themselves in dealing with crime. I mean, there's a perfect example.

That crime bill had been in Congress for six years. And everybody loved to talk about it, but nobody could put together the votes to pass it until this president beat the NRA. And I know that that is not a political plus in some regions of the country, but I am personally grateful that we are beginning to talk sense about guns and violence. I do not believe that the framers of our Constitution ever envisioned 15-year-olds with Tech 9s roaming the streets of Memphis.

So if we can begin to implement the crime bill by getting the police on the streets and using them effectively to both prevent crime and apprehend criminals, if we can begin to have the tougher sentences, particularly "three strikes and you're out" and the prison construction that comes with this bill, then we can begin to try to prevent crimes.

And you have championed some of this prevention, because I think you understand that if we don't do something to give kids opportunities in their neighborhoods to have good interaction with a positive adult role model and to get off the streets with recreational opportunities, we are going to be swimming upstream for a long time in this crime battle.

So anything that any of us in the larger community, through newspapers, churches, businesses, government, whatever, to implement this crime bill right will be a big step forward. And if I can help, I'm going to do all that I can.

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Q Your husband gave what some people thought was one of his better speeches here last November. Since then I've not picked up on that recurring theme often in his the administration. Do you think that will change?

MRS. CLINTON: You know, he's spoken about it a lot, but it is hard to get coverage for a recurring theme that is not the subject of controversy. And this is one of the dilemmas we face.

The President went to an inner city school in Washington and just flat out told kids they should not be engaging in sexual activity at their ages, they should not become parents. That's the kind of message we need to hear over and over again. But if it's publicized once, it's not considered newsworthy the next time around. He's gone on numerous occasions to talk about responsibility and what every one of us has to do to become more responsible.

But somehow we've got to, as a larger community, keep this conversation going and not just highlight one speech, overlook not what the President or the Vice President or other people say on a quite frequent basis, but overlook the steps that are being taken to translate their words into action.

This welfare reform proposal is real, again. I mean, we had people in Washington who've beat up on welfare for decades without really doing much about it, because what would they have done for a political issue if we ever actually fixed welfare.

This President is a New Democrat. He gets there, he presents a bill. It is going to be hammered out in the next Congress, unless the new Congress decides they'd rather have an issue instead of a reformed welfare system, because he believes in work and responsibility.

So, at every step along the way, if you really look at these accomplishments, it is the mission of this administration, if you listen to the president and the vice president, to empower people to be responsible and then to hold them accountable for their actions. And I think that's a sea change in the way Washington has talked because we've been locked in this futile and false debate between liberal and conservative, and Republican and Democrat.

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They've been arguing with each other, one claiming that, you know, the individual is an island unto himself and, therefore, has to take total responsibility for everything that goes on and the other saying, no, no, society's responsible. A totally false debate. And we need to cut through it and start figuring out how to solve problems, and that's what they've been trying to do and talking about it as they go along.

Q Looking back at the Whitewater issue, do you wish you had gone ahead and released some documents earlier?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you know, that's always the kind of question you answer with 20/20 hindsight. We never understood why this issue got to be so blown up in the first place and I would commend to you a recent article in Harper's magazine, which points out how off-base the investigation of this whole issue has been.

So if there were some way in retrospect we could have tried to put it to bed, of course we would have done so. It seemed to us that it was blown out of proportion. I believe when it is all said and done, people will scratch their head and wonder what all the fuss and the money spent was for, but we'll just have to see it through now.

A PARTICIPANT: I think we've got time for one more question.

Q Now that you've been exposed to the Washingtonian (inaudible), per se, beyond this administration, do you see a future role for Hillary Clinton in politics?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, the premise of that question, now that I've been exposed to Washington -- you can guess at an answer. (Inaudible.)

You know, I'll tell you what, I miss the Arkansas legislature. You know, I miss, you know, getting together and figuring out what we're going to do to solve problems together and not picking up the newspaper and reading about all of this game-playing that goes on. I find a little bit out of the mainstream, at least as I understand it, about what we should be doing in Washington.

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Q The sausage looks better from Little Rock than it does from --

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I'll tell you what. You know, we've made a lot of sausage in Washington and it hasn't been easy, you know. That sausage was made while people were throwing brickbats and pulling the rug out from under the feet of a lot of folks, but at least it got made. And I think the country is better off for it and I think it's been a very important 20 months.

And I feel great about what we have been able to get done. I think our challenge is to get out there and explain it to people, and talk about it, and make sure it works, you know, make sure that what the president and the vice president have fought for actually works to change people's lives, and then I think the future takes care of itself.

Q Well, since I don't have the guts to ask you (inaudible), tell me if you and the First Lady get to coordinate your outfits? It looks great.

MRS. CLINTON: No, we both noticed that on the airplane.

PRESS SECRETARY: I'm the oddball outfit.

Q There's a memo.

PRESS SECRETARY: And I'm the press secretary, you'd think I would coordinate it.

MRS. CLINTON: No, but -- but I have to tell you that that has been the question I've been most asked in the last 2 weeks.

Q Has it, really?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, ma'am, it has. I wish it were true.

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