

5/2/95  
CNN WORLD REPORT CONFERENCE  
O & A

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 2, 1995

**QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
AT THE 6TH CNN WORLD REPORT CONFERENCE  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

Q: Good afternoon. Timothy McVeigh, accused of the Oklahoma tragedy, and abandoned by his mother at a very young age, is among the growing number of children abused, abandoned, and emotionally scared.

Mrs. Clinton, what is your advice to mothers as it relates to parenting, and the influence mothers can have in the assisting with the restoration of moral values and the strengthening of our homes?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, let me just start by saying that, I don't want to draw any conclusions about the motives or the backgrounds of anyone who has been accused of the Oklahoma City bombing, until these matters are dealt with in a proper court of law.

But I do think it's important to address your underlying question. And that underlying question is: What are the responsibilities of parents today in a world that for many of us is quite different from the one in which we were raised? And how do we, both mothers and fathers, understand that responsibility and begin to address it?

I think there is a great change going on in many societies, and certainly here at home in our own, in which people are recognizing that they must recommit themselves to their children and to their family responsibilities. And we are hoping that that recommitment takes place among both parents, both mothers and fathers, because children need and deserve both, whenever possible.

But it is necessary in today's economic conditions often for families to work harder and see themselves falling further behind economically, for many families to consist of a single parent and children and I think all of us as members of society have to be more supportive of families and of parents so that they in turn are able to do the most important job they are entrusted with doing.

So I hope that we are at the beginning of a greater recognition of the critical importance of child rearing and of

MORE

family stability around the world and also combined with that, an understanding of what it will take, in modern economies, to support families to do that job well.

As I said in my earlier remarks, it is a mistake and a false debate, to say that either society or government, or either parents or individuals are responsible for the task of nurturing children. There's an old African proverb that Mrs. [Phonetic], I'm sure of has heard: it takes a whole village to raise a child. We have to support one another in that effort and that's a particularly important challenge for a country such as my own, where we have too many pressures, too many stresses on families, that will have to be addressed in order to do the job that should be done.

Q: Mrs. Clinton, my question is: what sort of impact do you think was created when you visited Asia, and what impressed you the most about women there, whether they are from an ordinary life style or the women who [inaudible]?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I will have to leave it to others to answer what impression I and my party made. I hope it was favorable. We had a great time and enjoyed our opportunity very much.

But I can tell you that I was deeply impressed by many of the women I met in all of the countries, who were holding positions of leadership, who were in positions of economic influence, who were in the volunteer and non-governmental sector, working with other women to give them opportunities. And I was probably most impressed by the women whom I met who had made the decision in their own lives to seek better opportunities for themselves and their children.

In visiting, whether it was in a village outside LaHore, where I sat and talked with mothers about their own hopes for their daughters. Or at SEWA, the Self-Employed Women's Association in Ahmedabad, India, where I visited with hundreds of women, some of whom walked 12 to 15 hours to talk about their hopes for their lives and what they were doing through the opportunities offered to them for credit and saving. Or whether it was in Nepal, where I met with women working very hard to provide safe birthing conditions to help lower their very high maternal mortality rate. Or whether it was in Bangladesh, when I visited some of the villages that are being helped by the Grameen Bank or Brac or the government school that I referred to earlier where the food is offered so that families don't have to send their children out to work. Or in Sri Lanka where I saw a very impressive project that is trying to link all the various aspects of life together in a comprehensive approach.

MORE

I saw women and men who were determined to find better opportunities. And that often meant overcoming in their own minds, some very deeply held beliefs and some barriers imposed externally.

And I will never forget the poem that I read at the Rajin Ghandi Foundation that a young Indian women wrote about women's silence and the need for us all to speak out and support one another. So I came back with many rich memories. Thank you.

Q: Mrs. Clinton, looking back, what if anything would you have done differently with your Health Care Program?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, let's see. Some might answer that by saying I would've told my husband to sleep on it. [Laughter]

But seriously, I think that part of what we learned in that effort, is how much time it takes to talk through some complex issues such as the ones that the President put on the American agenda when he took office. With respect to the economy and health care and a number of the other matters that he thought needed to be addressed.

And I think that all of us learned a great deal from the health care reform effort. The problems that we talked about are not going to disappear. In fact they will, in many respects, become more difficult to address as time passes. But the numbers of people who are now aware of the options available to us in our country has certainly increased.

So I'm actually quite hopeful, that the opportunities for addressing health care in the future will be available to us, and that the work we did, will have helped to lay a ground work for that.

Q: Mrs. Clinton, as a mother, and as a First Lady of the United States of America, do you think that there is a role for women, and for mothers in particular, in the battle against terrorism, and what we can expect from the United States as a superpower and as a country suffering from terrorism in government?

MRS. CLINTON: That's a very important question also. My husband has spoken out forcefully against terrorism and about the need for new laws here in our own country in order to combat terrorism.

And I think it's important that governments all around the world treat terrorism as the threat that it is. It is a threat to every government. Every government can be destabilized by

MORE

terrorists. And certainly, given the opportunities that are now, unfortunately, available to people who wish to perform such criminal acts, it will have to be all governments working together in order to prevent and minimize the effects of such international terrorism.

I think your question, also though, goes to what we are teaching our children and what kind of vision we have for the world. It is my hope that in this time where we are relieved from some of the burdens of the Cold War, countries and individuals will look to a more positive future. And that means often times, putting aside ancient hatreds and prejudices, as difficult as that is. Recognizing the common feelings that join us together as human beings.

And for mothers who often have the primary caretaking role for their children, trying to convey to their children that sense of human possibility that exists for them, if they are able to see their lives as productive ones. I think there is a great opportunity for women, and certainly for mothers, to speak out against terrorism. To do their primary tasks of child rearing and the kind of nurturing necessary to help children grow to be the sort of people who themselves turn from terrorism.

But also perhaps collectively, speaking out against terrorism. It is often the pictures of the crying mothers. It is the pictures of the consoling mothers. It is the pictures of the weeping women that strike all of us in our hearts. When we see that, we know how wrong it is. And we must do everything we can. Not only just to react in the moment when the disaster strikes. But to carry that feeling in our hearts and to speak out about it. And to say to our men, to say to our boys: there is a better way.

Violence and terror has never given any child a brighter future, has never given anyone the chance to feel good about themselves, except in the moment. And we have to live for a future that gives us the possibility of becoming people who live in peace and pursue prosperity together.

So I hope, that out of all of these tragedies that strike around the world, and that most certainly struck here in our own country, all of us, men and women, will do everything we can, in our own families, and our own communities to stand against terrorism.

Q: Mrs. Clinton, you were a recent participant at the US Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark. And at that time do you think about the things you saw in Denmark. Are

MORE

there anything from the summit, or your visiting in Denmark you could say that you carry through here to us?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, I had a very wonderful time in Denmark. And it was for two reasons. I very much appreciated the Social Summit because through that forum, important issues that are often considered secondary were brought to the public's attention. And I believe that we must look at the results of that summit, and try to do what we can to implement those recommendations, in so far that it is possible.

But I also enjoyed my visit to Denmark for several reasons. I had the opportunity to visit an after school program and I met the parents who comprised the board of that program. I met the teachers. There were as many men as there were women, all devoted to making sure that the children had a safe and productive place to be after school.

I brought that image home with me because I know how hard it is, certainly in my country and I imagine in others, for parents to feel good about their working, when they know their children are no longer at school but perhaps at home, behind locked doors, or perhaps on the streets, not being given the supervision they need. So I was impressed that Denmark has made a commitment to children.

And the final image that stays in my mind, is as I was driving through the streets, I saw numerous women with baby carriages, which they had parked outside the stores so that they could go in and do their shopping while they left their babies in the sunshine. And I thought, oh, if we all could live in cities where we could leave our babies in baby carriages, outdoors, while we went in to shop, without any fear that anything would happen to them.

And it was that kind of scene that reinforced my own belief that we have to do all that we can, both to nurture people who are willing to take responsibility for themselves, and to combat those forces that are as old as human nature. That would destroy and do violence to those among us. And that is our great combined challenge.

And I will keep that image of those baby carriages in my mind, as an encouragement to try to continue to do what I can.

Q: Mrs. Clinton, the fighting in Chechnya, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and other places [inaudible] continues. There are many stories about [inaudible], mostly children. They are looking for assistance, from the leaders of the world[inaudible].

MORE

MRS. CLINTON: [inaudible] which you have covered, certainly in most [inaudible] among all of us. Because although we are living in a time, as I said, where there is hope, and where there is an opportunity for peace breaking out in places that seemed unlikely in the past, we have certainly seen an upsurge in violent conflict that has left many orphans and much blood shed.

I think that part of what we have to do at every level of society, not only at the governmental, is not only speak out against those who would resolve their conflicts, some of them centuries old, by killing those among us now who were not even there, or part of such conflicts.

But in addition to speaking out, we do need a better response internationally. I think the UN's efforts at peacekeeping, which have really only had a chance to get started since the end of the Cold War, are an important move in the right direction, despite all of the difficulties that they have confronted.

But each of us, religious leaders, business leaders, civic leaders, mothers and fathers, we all must speak out against the tragedies that you refer to, wherever they occur. Someone always believes it is to his or her profit for violence to occur. We have to what we can, to mediate conflicts peacefully. We have to do what we can, to prevent those who would divide us by violence.

And I think that begins with all of us speaking out against it, and having the courage to do so. And I admire those in the areas that you have described who have attempted to do so, and I hope that all of us will give them more support in their courageous efforts to try to bring peace.

###