

You know, I want to ask you to think about the atmosphere that they have tried to create in this election and measure it against our greatest national leaders of both parties. Franklin Roosevelt said, when one in four Americans was out of work, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." This crowd says, "Please vote your fears and give us power." Right? Teddy Roosevelt, a great Republican President, said the credit belongs to the person in the arena who is trying. These people say, "Punish the people who try; Government's bad." Abraham Lincoln said, "With malice toward none; with charity for all." He said, "Let us listen to the better angels of our nature." Sounds like he'd be a Democrat if he were around today, doesn't it? [Applause]

Folks, you've got a big chance on Tuesday to do something for yourselves, your children, and your future. You can say no to gridlock, no to cynicism, no to talking tough and acting weak. You can say yes to hope, yes to cooperation, yes to a builder, not a blamer. You can say yes to being strong. You can say, "We in Washington State are sending a message to Washington, DC: America is going forward, not turning back." Ron Sims, the Democratic Congressmen, help us to keep changing this country and moving forward.

God bless you all, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Pike Place Market. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Norman Rice of Seattle and Gary Locke, county executive, King County.

Interview With Larry King in Seattle, Washington

November 6, 1994

Mr. King. Welcome to a special Sunday night edition of "Larry King Live." Our special guest is the President of the United States. A beautiful day here in Seattle; it rained earlier this morning, but there's no city like this. You seemed revved up here today.

The President. It's a wonderful city. They've been very good to me. But it's just an exciting place. It's a real future-oriented place with a lot of different kinds of folks. They get together. They work together. It's a real upbeat, positive city.

Midterm Elections

Mr. King. Do you like campaigning again?

The President. I do.

Mr. King. It seemed like you were just campaigning.

The President. I know.

Mr. King. Do you like this?

The President. I do like it. In large measure I like it because it's one of the few times I get to really go out and put out our record, my message. And I also just like to see the American people. You know, I like to see them excited and energized again.

Mr. King. I remember when you were running. We were in Ocala, and you said to me, "God, I love this."

The President. It was wonderful. Remember that we were in that rodeo arena? Remember that?

Mr. King. Where Elvis Presley once sang.

The President. Yes, that's right.

Mr. King. You were revved up, and you seem the same way now. It would seem that after this time you've been President for 2 years that it's old hat by now.

The President. But these are the people I work for. And perhaps the most frustrating part of being President is how hard it is to stay in touch with them, to stay connected to them, for them to really know what you do on a daily basis. And so to be able to come back out here with someone like Ron Sims, whom I admire so much, that represents what's best in this country, that's cutting against all this cynicism and negativism that is blanketing the airwaves, it's really just a great thing to do.

Negativism in Politics

Mr. King. What do you make of that? We'll start there. And there's lots of bases we're going to cover, of these—lots of radio talk shows, other areas of negativism, that's more than just criticism. It's anger. What do you make of it?

The President. Well, it's almost like an institutionalized approach to life, you know, that every-

thing is given the most negative possible spin, information is presented in attack mode. The American people hate it, but they react to it.

Mr. King. But portions of them listen to it.

The President. Portions of them listen to it, of course. And even if they listen for entertainment, the surveys show in these elections that they react to it, which is, of course, why the politicians do it.

Mr. King. So what does it mean to you when you see it, hear it, about you, about people you like, about anyone?

The President. Well, it—what I think is it's not very good for America. It's not good for our people. It makes it harder for people to take a deep breath and face their problems and seize their opportunities and move forward.

I mean, this is a very, very great country. And as I have a chance, for example, to go to the Middle East to participate in that peace signing, other leaders are bewildered at the negative attitudes in America. They say, "Gosh, you know, your economy is coming back; your deficit's going down; things are happening in your country. You're leading the way to peace around the world. Why would the American people be in a negative frame of mind?" And I always say, well, first of all, a lot of Americans have personal insecurity in their lives. I mean, let's face it, there's some reality out there. There are a lot of people who are afraid they're going to lose their jobs. They haven't gotten a raise in a long time. They may lose their health care or their retirement. They're living in a neighborhood where they feel personally insecure. They see things like these children killing children. It violates their sense of—

Mr. King. So they have a right to that feeling?

The President. Well, no, there's some insecurity there. In other words, the picture is not all positive. But I think the direction is positive, and the future is more positive than negative. But I think the other thing is, the overwhelming way that most Americans get their information tends to be both negative and combative and assaultive, almost. And what I tried to do in the Presidential campaign in '92 with all those town meetings, starting way back in '91, where I listened to people and they talked to me, with insisting on three debates and having one debate with the public there asking questions of the candidates for President, with the bus tours we did was all designed to get people

involved, let them vent their frustrations, and then focus on what we were going to do.

And that's very important. And that's the thing that has been missing too much in this election. And of course, the Republicans like that because if people are mad, then they think the Democrats don't vote and the extremists on the right in their party do vote, they get a big advantage and it helps them get into power. But it doesn't do anything to help America solve their problems.

Mr. King. How do you deal with it personally, I mean, the carping, the anger, the up and down in the polls, personally?

The President. Well, on the up and down in the polls, I basically try to ignore it.

Mr. King. Ignore it?

The President. Not because—I care what people think about the issues, but I knew when I started this job that while everybody said they wanted us to change, if it were easy to do it, someone else would have done it. So to get the deficit down, we had to make some tough decisions.

If you're going to make college loans more affordable to Americans within the budgetary constraints we had, we had to make some tough decisions, take on some interest groups. If you want to pass the Brady bill and the crime bill, you've got to make some tough decisions. The NRA got real mad at us, and now they're trying to take it out on every candidate in the country that stood up for safer streets.

So anybody who ever fights for change is going to have to be willing to risk going down in the polls some. What bothers me more is the general atmosphere where people tend to believe the worst about people in public life, rather than the best, and tend to have a negative view, generally. Because the truth is that this country is in better shape than it was 21 months ago. Unemployment is down. Jobs are up. The deficit's down. The Government is smaller, but it's doing more for ordinary working people. The streets are going to be safer because of the crime bill. And we're a lot closer toward having a safer, more democratic, more free world. The Russian missiles aren't pointing at us. The North Korean nuclear agreement means they won't present a threat to us in terms of nuclear weapons, if we go through with that. We have the progress in Haiti and in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East and Northern Ireland. We are moving in the right direction at home and

abroad. We have a lot of problems, but we're moving in the right direction.

And for people to be kept in a constant turmoil all the time, where they don't listen to one another, they don't talk to one another, they just are bombarded by these negative ads on television, I think is not good for our democracy. And it is, frankly, not realistic. If you could see the way other people look at us, they know this is a very great country. And we should feel that way, too.

Mr. King. When there's extreme negativism, do you condemn it on both sides?

The President. Sure.

Mr. King. When Democrats do it and Republicans do it?

The President. Absolutely. Particularly if it is unrelated to the work of the job, you know. But let's be realistic, now. This whole thing started from the get-go with the determination of the congressional leadership in the Republican Party not to work with us on the economic program.

Mr. King. Deliberate?

The President. Oh, absolutely. They were very forthright about it: "You're not going to get any votes out of us no matter how you change this program." That's how it started.

[At this point, the stations took a commercial break.]

Death of Smith Children in Union, SC

The President. [Inaudible]—were abducted. And there was this little town in South Carolina where there apparently had been maybe some division or something in the past, but they were all coming together. You saw those gripping pictures of the schoolchildren praying. You saw blacks and whites going out together to look for the kids. People really were trying to do their best to do a good and noble thing.

And then they found out that the mother had done it. And unlike previous cases—we've had some other cases, horrible cases, where parents kill their children. But this was—it stood in such stark contrast to those people praying, working, desperately trying to find those children. I think they had a sense of betrayal, of outrage, of bewilderment, of pain. And I think the experience that the people in the community felt riveted all across our country, indeed, across the world. I think every parent was just sickened by it.

Racial Issues

Mr. King. The fact that—and remember the case in Boston with the call to 911—that she drew the picture of a black man tells us what about racism in America?

The President. I think it tells us that we have at least some assumptions about race that still color our thinking, our talking, sometimes our voting. The people in that community, without regard to race, were out there looking for those boys. And most African-Americans in this country get up every day and go to work, work their hearts out, pay their taxes, raise their kids, obey the law. And while the crime rate is higher among African-Americans, they're also more likely to be victims of crime. And it's all really—it's a complicated thing, but it's plainly related to the combined impact of the breakdown of family and community and the loss of economic opportunity working together.

I saw a poll in the Wall Street Journal the other day, a fascinating poll, which said that both African-Americans and white Americans agreed that this breakdown of social order in the family, the community, the rise of crime, violence, drugs and gangs and guns was the biggest problem in our country. They agreed with that. They all supported welfare reform—I mean, not all, 85 percent of both races. But there was a huge difference in attitude between blacks and the whites about what caused it, where the whites were more likely to say it's just all personal misconduct, and the blacks were more likely to say it was the breakdown of economic order and opportunity that holds families together and gives people—

Mr. King. The classic American clash.

The President. Yes. And the truth is, in my judgment, they're both right, and they're both wrong. That is, you need a combined approach to it. We have to rebuild these communities. It's hard to have an orderly society without work. It's hard to have a coherent family without work. It's hard for parents to have all the self-respect they want if they know they'll never have a chance to go to work.

But on the other hand, we simply cannot tolerate the behavior that has become all too commonplace. I mean, what is it that turns the heart of a 10-year-old to stone in Chicago and makes it possible for them to let go of a 5-year-old boy? These are big, deep questions. And again I say, the thing that is so wrong

about so much of the political dialog in this election or political ads, is there's no dialog. There's no honest talk. People aren't reaching out across racial lines and trying to figure out how to affirm what is best in this country, how to support the lives and the futures of these kids.

Mr. King. Are you saying they're playing to the worst in us, the racist in us?

The President. I think they're playing to the—they're playing to the lowest common denominator, to the fear, to the division, to the anxiety. I believe that it's better to play to the best in us, to address fear, to address anxiety, to admit it, to say it's legitimate, say, okay, what are you going to do about it?

Midterm Elections

Mr. King. Is this the ugliest off-year elections, politically, advertising-wise, you've seen?

The President. Well, certainly the most expensive and probably the most negative certainly in a very long time. And it's very troubling. You know, I tried to get this campaign finance bill passed. And it was delayed to death at the end of the session by our opponents, like a lot of other bills were. But we don't need that. We need to reform the campaign finance system.

In every one of these races of major importance, there ought to be two or three debates. There ought to be town hall meetings. There ought to be things that involve people, that let them express their anger and frustration and then say, "Okay, now, what are you going to do about it?" Because what we run the risk of doing in this election—which is why I've been out here working like crazy since I got home from the Middle East—is we run the risk of seeing people vote for candidates whose platforms and positions they absolutely disagree with just because they say, "I'm out; put me in. I'm mad, too."

Mr. King. "Throw the rascals out."

The President. "Government's bad; put me in." Yes.

O.J. Simpson Trial

Mr. King. I haven't seen you quoted on it, and every American has talked about it and they all want to know what their President thinks. You were an attorney general in your State, a prosecutor, so it's a twofold question: Can there

be a fair trial in the O.J. Simpson case? And two, should television cameras be allowed?

The President. Well, the answer to the first question is, I think there can be a fair trial, but it is much more difficult to empanel a jury that has no opinion.

Mr. King. There's never been anything like this.

The President. No, there has never been anything like it. Secondly, I'm not so troubled about the trial itself being televised. What bothers me is that all the previous proceedings have been televised, all the preliminary things, all the back-and-forth arguments. And I know there are arguments pro and con. But on balance, I think it would have been better if they hadn't been, because I think it would have been easier to empanel a jury that had no fixed views, no—at least predisposition to believe it. Now, what these folks have to say and what they had to convince the judge of was that whatever they had heard in the past, they could put aside and be fair.

But I just think all of us, we can't help being affected by the things we know. And the wrenching pretrial publicity I think is more damaging than whatever publicity might have come in the trial itself.

Mr. King. Are you impressed with Judge Ito?

The President. Very much.

Mr. King. And the prosecution and defense?

The President. They all strike me as competent and committed. And the judge strikes me as someone who has been firm and fair. He's trying very hard, and he has an enormously difficult task.

Mr. King. Is this the kind of case, when you were prosecuting, you would have liked to prosecute or not like to prosecute?

The President. Well, of course, any—I think most prosecutors would, at a kind of a personal, professional level, welcome the chance to be in a big case like this. But it's a very sad case. It's the sort of thing that brings great pain to a country.

Mr. King. No winners.

The President. No. I mean, there are—people are dead. The feelings that we all had about O.J. Simpson and everything—it's a very sad case. So it's not something I can say I would relish doing because the whole thing is enormously tragic.

[*The stations took a commercial break.*]

Midterm Elections

Mr. King. Beautiful downtown Seattle on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in the American-Pacific Northwest with President Bill Clinton, 2 days away from the election. Friday night on this program, Bob Dole said that on Tuesday night, when the Republicans take the Senate—if they take the Senate and the House, the first person he calls will be you. He will ask to meet with you Wednesday morning. Win or lose, whatever happens, they're ready to cooperate. Comment.

The President. I don't think they're going to win the House and the Senate. But whatever happens, I hope he'll call me Tuesday night, and I hope he'll be willing to cooperate.

Mr. King. Hope, but don't think?

The President. Well, I don't know yet. All I can tell you is that we had bipartisan support for that crime bill, and it turned into naked politics. And the Republicans that did stick with us were lacerated by their leadership.

I hope they don't really, seriously believe that we can go back and do what they did in the eighties and have all these massive tax cuts for upper income people and pay for big defense increases and bring back Star Wars and balance the budget in 5 years and not tell anybody how to do it. There is no way to do it without massive, massive cuts in Social Security, Medicare, college loans. If you take Social Security off, you have to cut everything else in the budget 30 percent.

So all I'm saying is, I want to cooperate. I always wanted to cooperate. My door has always been open. I tried to cooperate in the health care debate. When we started the health care debate—

Mr. King. They said you didn't. They said it was secretive.

The President. No, that's not true. We met with them in advance. We even offered to work with them on drafting a bill. We were told, "No, you go ahead and put your bill in; then we'll put our bill in and then we'll work." They announced an approach where more than half the Republican Senators supported universal coverage. The bill never came. By the time it came to talk about the bill, there were zero Senators from the Republican Party on that.

So—and by the way, then they released the memo of their strategist, Bill Kristol, who wasn't even ashamed to release the memo and say,

"You must not cooperate on health care because if the middle class ever gets security about health care, they'll probably support the Democrats again. Whereas, if we keep them all torn up and upset and angry, we can either keep them home or get them to vote for us."

So I want—let me just say this—I want more than anything to have a bipartisan effort. I want more than anything to move this country forward, not see it go back. But I have not obstructed that bipartisan effort. My door has been open. I have wanted to work together. And I have seen a level of intense obstructionism that I never thought I'd ever see.

So what the American people have to say is—first of all, I think we're going to do better than everybody thinks because jobs are up, unemployment is down, the deficit is down, the Government is smaller, all these things are different from the way it was before. We are doing things for ordinary Americans like middle class college loans, national service, tax cuts for low-income working people, the Family and Medical Leave Act. When people know this, I think we're going to do much better than the experts think, because I think people want to keep going forward, they don't want to go back.

But whatever happens, I hope we talk. I have always wanted to talk; I have always been willing to meet. And I hope we work together.

Mr. King. Worse-case scenario—they take the House. Could you work with Newt Gingrich?

The President. I can work with anybody who will work with me. But I do not believe the American people really want us to go back—

Mr. King. I meant worst-case scenario for you. I'm not taking a stand. For you, worst-case scenario.

The President. I can work—the American people are the bosses of this country. They run this country. They decide who's in the Congress, and they decide who's President.

Mr. King. You work for them.

The President. I work for them. And so does the Congress. So we will do what we are told to do by the American people. They are the bosses. But I will say again, I have worked very hard to get this economy going, to bring the deficit down, to get investment back in education and training, to pass that crime bill—and now we have to implement it so we make our streets safer—to make our country stronger. What I think is going to happen is the American people are going to think about, in the next

couple of days, do we want to keep going forward, or do we really want to go back to trickle-down economics? Do we want to go back to exploding the deficit, shipping the jobs overseas, causing the country trouble, or do we want to keep working forward?

A lot of Republicans did work with me. But without exception, when they work with me on anything tough—except for the trade bill, except for NAFTA, and except for some education legislation, in a lot of these other areas they were subject to withering, withering pressure and attack from the leaders of their own party. So I want to work with them, however these elections come out. I think we'll probably see the Democrats keep control of the Senate and the House because we are changing things for the better, and the American people now are seeing what the record is.

Mr. King. But you'll take that call, and you'll meet with whoever it is you have to meet with?

The President. Absolutely. That's right. You bet I would. I would have always taken it. I want it to be that way. When I ran for President, I ran as a former Governor—I was a Governor. I never shut the Republicans out of my office. I always thought my job was to work with anybody the people elected. That's the right thing to do.

[The stations took a commercial break.]

Mr. King. Sunday evening in Seattle with the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. A lot of bases to touch, and later we'll get some predictions on some individual races that the President is very aware of.

A couple of other things in the news. Johnny Apple today in the New York Times says that the administration is starting to take on a Truman-esque approach already: They're the bad guys. And that's the way Harry Truman won in '48, by knocking the no-good, do-nothing Congress. Are we adopting that mode?

The President. No. For one thing, I don't believe we're going to lose the Congress if the American people know what has been done.

Mr. King. So you'll have no Congress to knock in '96.

The President. There is—well, whether the Democrats or the Republicans are in the majority, a minority can frustrate the will of the majority just with the filibuster in the Senate, if for nothing else, which killed the campaign fi-

nance reform, lobby reform, environmental reform, and a number of other things last year.

My instinct is to get something done. But this Congress that we just finished was only the third one since World War II that cooperated with the President in over 80 percent of the President's initiatives in both years. That only happened three times since World War II, once for President Eisenhower, once for President Johnson, and then this one.

Mr. King. So there's no Truman plan.

The President. No. I'll say again, it depends on who the American people send to Congress and what their attitude is. I will work with anybody who will work with me to move the country forward. When I ran for President in '92, I said I thought the Democratic Party had to change. We had to do something about getting the economy going again, bringing the deficit down, shrinking the Government, being tougher on crime, all things the Republicans had previously said they were for, although the deficit went up, the economy was in trouble, and they just talked about crime for 6 years.

All right, now we have reduced the deficit, reduced the size of the Government, passed a good crime bill, which now will have to be implemented at the grassroots level. Even as we speak, we've got police officers being hired all over the country because of this crime bill.

What are we going to do? My door is open. My hand is outstretched. I am a builder, not a blamer. I'm not like that.

Mr. King. This ain't going to be a Truman "give 'em hell, Bill" campaign?

The President. It depends on what they do. It depends on what they do. If they want to work with me, then we will work together. I do believe that we're going to—that the people who gum up the works need to be held more accountable.

Mr. King. You're optimistic.

The President. I am optimistic.

Administration Accomplishments

Mr. King. Reports in recent books of disorganization in the Presidency, 2 years of unwieldiness, I'm sure you've heard about this, if you haven't read the books. Comment?

The President. Well, my comment is, if we were all that disorganized, how do we have the third most successful record in success with Congress, one of only three with over 80 percent of our initiatives passing, including major

advances in bringing the deficit down, education reform, trade expansion, crime, and a number of other things, first of all? Secondly, we've done pretty well in foreign policy: no Russian missiles pointed at the United States, North Korea, Haiti, Northern Ireland, the Persian Gulf, the Middle East.

Mr. King. Are you saying we're looking at the process, not the result?

The President. But I'm saying the process is more open than perhaps in previous administrations because we are going through a period of historic change. And when—for example, when I tried to get my economic program together, after I was elected, but before I took office, we all agreed we had to bring the deficit down; we still had to invest more in education and defense conversion and new technologies. And we had to do things that would expand the economy. We wanted to help low-income working families. And we wanted some other incentives to spur economic growth that cost money, some tax incentives. But there were all kinds of differences on the details.

So we got a lot of people in from different points of view, and we talked it through. And it was a lively process. Now some people wanted to have the image that somebody brings a President a little one-page memo with two options, and you just check off and say that's the way it is, and it's all neat. This is a complicated world with a lot of variables.

Mr. King. Is yours too open?

The President. I don't think so. It may be unsettling to people that we have honest debates in the White House. But you know, when I think about some of the major mistakes that my predecessors have made, I think the absence of honest debate may have caused some of that.

So, can we get the process better? Can we get better organized? I think so. I think that the White House today is much better organized than it was 30 days after I took office. I think it's more orderly; it's running more smoothly, decisions are made in a more disciplined fashion. I think a lot of people have learned to do their jobs better and better and better.

But again, I say the—a lot of the best companies I know of in America have very lively, open discussions on important issues. They take real time on important issues because then that shapes what the future is. And so far, I say, if you judge us on our results, we're making pretty good decisions.

Health Care Reform

Mr. King. Critics have said now that you fired your wife from health care. I haven't seen your comment. What caused this change, and who's running the health care battle?

The President. Oh, I didn't do that.

Mr. King. She has not been fired?

The President. No. But she was never hired. She was a volunteer.

Mr. King. I know, but critics are saying—what happened in that change?

The President. For one thing, there's no process to manage now. She never did—she never signed on to, agreed to, or was willing to manage the congressional process. What she did—

Mr. King. She took the ball, though.

The President. She took the ball, but what she did was to put hundreds and hundreds of people together to go out and consult all the Members of Congress, to run a 2-day seminar on health care for Republicans and Democrats in Congress, and to try to get the work product up and then be the spokesperson. Now whatever we wind up doing on health care, she will be still speaking out on that and doing a number of other things.

Mr. King. Then what was the announcement?

The President. But the—what we were saying is that she wouldn't have primary responsibility for actually deciding what move next to make in Congress and lobbying that. That's not a good thing for the First Lady to have to do and not anything she signed on to do the first time around.

Mr. King. Did she dislike doing it?

The President. No, I think she liked it, but she didn't want to be in a position where that's all she would do. And that's the only issue she could be involved in, and she didn't want to be in a position where—she got caught up—

Mr. King. She became the focus.

The President. It's where she got caught up in the process of—the lobbying of the Congress process. She wants to be a spokesperson for health care, for solving a problem, not the person who has to manage the process in Congress. And I don't think she should be.

Mr. King. So we will be hearing a lot from Hillary in the next 2 years.

The President. Yes, she—you know, she's invested a lot in this. She's done a wonderful job. And she's—what we think about the health care deal is that, first of all, keep in mind how

long it takes to get things done in Washington. Family leave took 7 years. The Brady bill took 7 years. The crime bill took 6 years. Banking reform took 7 years. I mean, we've gotten things done that took years that other people couldn't do. But it was probably unrealistic to think you could get health care reform in a year and a half, given the fact that it's bigger than all those other things.

[The stations took a commercial break.]

California Senatorial Campaign

Mr. King. [Inaudible]—on this beautiful Sunday in Seattle—[laughter]—a little off-the-cuff joke there, folks, best left unsaid—with the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. By the way, this is the President's seventh appearance, all together, running and as President, on this program. It's always great to have him with us. We're touching a lot of bases. Now some election bases. Going to win the Senate in California?

The President. I think Senator Feinstein will win. If there was a ever a case for campaign finance reform, it's this. The Republican candidate moves to California in '91 from Texas, essentially buys a Congress race, announces 8 months later for the Senate, loses his own congressional district in the Republican Senate campaign but spends, it looks like, \$35 million or something, some enormous amount of money, just to run negative ads against Feinstein.

She, by contrast, in only 2 years, passes the assault weapons ban, a law that requires zero tolerance for handgun possessions in schools by students, and the biggest protection act, natural protection act in history, the California desert bill.

Mr. King. It's his money, though.

The President. It's his money, but it shows you why we need some sort of campaign finance reform. No Senator in my lifetime has gotten as much done in as short a period of time as Dianne Feinstein. And those three things may not be popular everywhere, but they are supported by a majority of the people of California.

Washington Congressional Campaign

Mr. King. Three hundred miles from here, over the hills in Spokane—Mr. Foley, Speaker of the House—what's going to happen there?

The President. Well, you know, he was way behind. He's fought himself back to where he's even, some say a little ahead. I think the people

of every—every time there's a Speaker who comes from a rural district, there's always the problem of the people in the district thinking that the Speaker is more interested in the national job than the grassroots job.

All I can say is that of all the leaders of Congress I've ever known in both Houses and in both parties, Tom Foley is the one who speaks most often about his constituency and is most in contact with what he thinks they're thinking about. He's the one who talks to me all the time. It's amazing. And I think that if—my feeling is that the people have seen him back there working, defending his positions, defending his record, defending his service for the district. If it's just a question of who can do more for the people in that district to build their economic future and to meet their needs, I don't think there's much question. I think he wins in a walk, but it's a tough race.

Ross Perot and 1996 Presidential Campaign

Mr. King. Our old friend Ross Perot's entrance into the race, endorsing some Republicans, some Democrats, independents and calling for basically a Republican victory.

The President. Well, it's curious to me because if you look at what I've done as compared with what Ross Perot advocated, I disagree with him on GATT and on NAFTA, but so does the Republican congressional leadership. So both sides disagree with him on trade. So what else was his campaign about? It was about reducing the deficit, reducing regulation and the size of Government, and getting political reform, campaign finance reform, lobby reform, line-item veto. Okay.

We reduced the deficit without any Republican votes. We reduced the size of Government without any Republican support. We've deregulated in banking and trucking. We've deregulated a lot of the Federal rules on welfare reform, giving 20 States the right to move people from welfare to work. We've done things that he said he was for.

I supported and most Democrats supported, most Democrats supported, campaign finance reform, lobby reform, a bill to make Congress live under the same laws it imposes on private business. These are things we did. Their leadership opposed it. So what we are doing and where we stand and what we want to do in the future is much more consistent with what

Ross Perot said he wanted to do if he were President.

Mr. King. Then what do you make of this?

The President. I don't know. I'll leave that to you to make of it. All I can tell you is, we have really faithfully pursued the reform agenda that he and I shared in common when we both ran for President. So the truth is, he'd come a lot nearer getting what he said he wanted done in '92 in fact done in '95 if we kept the Democrats in the Congress who are committed to change.

Mr. King. Do you expect him to run again?

The President. I don't have any idea.

Mr. King. Do you expect Democrats to oppose you?

The President. I don't have any idea.

Mr. King. Do you have a Republican favorite you'd like to run against?

The President. No, I'm going to leave that up to them. I'll say this, sooner or later, we'll have a debate and a discussion in this country about what, in fact, has been done and what has not been done.

Mr. King. And it will have to be one person.

The President. We'll have to get over being mad and being negative and talk about what we're going to do to build this country. We cannot for long afford to give in to the blamers instead of the builders. I mean, this is a country—you look—we've got a lot of challenges we have to work through to get this country into the 21st century as the strongest country in the world, with the American dream alive and well.

Right now, we are strongest militarily. We're strongest again economically, according to the annual vote of international economists, for the first time in 9 years. We're outselling all other auto companies, Americans are, for the first time in 15 years. We are moving in the right direction.

At some point, people who tempt our anger and our frustration but promise to reverse the progress we have made and put us back in the economic trouble we were in just a couple of years ago, are going to have to be held accountable. That's what this election ought to be about. And if it is, the Democrats who represent hope, the future, and the progress that's been made in the last 21 months ought to have a chance. Why should we give up the progress of the last 21 months and not give me a chance to finish and go back to what failed us for 12 years?

Mr. King. But can we also say, therefore, can I trace in what you said in the beginning that if you do run for reelection, you will debate your opponent or opponents?

The President. Yes.

Mr. King. There will be no backing off debates.

The President. No, not once, but several times.

[The stations took a commercial break.]

President's Legal Defense Fund

Mr. King. We're back with President Bill Clinton, touching a lot of bases. The legal defense fund, are there any second thoughts about that, or was it necessary or—do you have second thoughts?

The President. No. I think with a strict limit on contributions, there's no possibility of any conflict of interest there. And, you know, I have the lowest net worth, I guess, of any person to be President in a very long time. And all these things are—like the Whitewater thing, it's—these things come up. If we're going to—

Mr. King. They have been embarrassing, though.

The President. If we're going to make Presidents a subject for the first time in history—this has never been done to anybody before—to things like special counsels looking into things that happened long before the President became President, that were fully aired in the Presidential campaign—I don't think Presidents should make money being President, but I don't think they should be bankrupt when they leave because of legal fees. Nor do I think that Presidents should expect lawyers to work for nothing.

So, once again, we're in a situation here where—do you really want to say that unless you're fabulously wealthy you shouldn't be able to be President? You shouldn't be able to run for an office because you can't buy enough negative television ads to trash your opponent? I think what we did was appropriate, legal, proper, and restrained.

Former President Ronald Reagan

Mr. King. A couple of other things. Ronald Reagan's announcement, and I know you commented that you'd—

The President. I did.

Mr. King. —spoken to him awhile back and that he, in the middle of a sentence, got angry

that he had forgotten what he had been talking about.

The President. Yes, he just said once, he said, "I forgot." He said, "I lost my memory on that, and it really makes me mad."

Mr. King. Did you then think that this might have been Alzheimer's, a common thing to think in people over 80? Did you think it?

The President. I didn't know. I don't know that I know the difference between the manifestations of Alzheimer's for someone who's 80 and just not remembering things as well. But he and I have always had a very cordial personal relationship. When I was a Governor, I supported and worked with the White House when we got the first big welfare reform legislation through back in '88. And even though we've had our differences, I always liked the fact that he was positive about America, that he was an upbeat person, that he—at moments he was capable of going beyond partisanship, as he has since he's left office. You know, he supported NAFTA and the Brady bill and the crime bill with the assault weapons ban in it, because, I think, of the experience he had with Jim Brady and the terrible scars it left on everyone.

So I just—I wanted to say that. I was probably in the most Democratic congressional district in America yesterday. And when I asked them, they all just applauded and they gave him a big cheer.

Mr. King. Do you think it will help focus emphasis on Alzheimer's? Do you think he was right to do it, to make the announcement?

The President. First of all, I think he was very right to do it. I think it was a brave thing to do. And he sat down and wrote the letter himself—

Mr. King. I know.

The President. —in his own words. And it was vintage Ronald Reagan. I think it will help to focus attention on Alzheimer's. I personally appreciated it, because I lost both an uncle and an aunt to Alzheimer's. And so I think it's one more thing that the American people have to be appreciative to him about.

[*The stations took a commercial break.*]

Secretary of State Warren Christopher

Mr. King. We're back with Bill Clinton. Our remaining moments, some other quick bases to cover—Senator Dole the other night said he likes Warren Christopher, thinks he's done a

great job. Is Warren Christopher staying at State?

The President. He's done a good job, and as far as I'm concerned, he's the Secretary of State.

Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers

Mr. King. Dee Dee Myers is sitting here, looks very strong, very active.

The President. She looks pretty good, doesn't she?

Mr. King. There was rumors that she was going to be leaving that post, and she seemed to have strengthened it. Is she here?

The President. She's doing a good job.

Mr. King. Will she be here through the next 2 years?

The President. She hasn't told me yet.

Mr. King. Do you want her to stay?

The President. She looks pretty good.

Mr. King. Yes, she does. Do you want her to stay?

The President. She's doing a good job, and she's going to stay as long as we decide she's going to stay, she and I together.

Mr. King. First time the whole night you've been a little—

The President. I've been a little evasive on all personnel questions.

Mr. King. You don't want to discuss personnel?

The President. I think Presidents should always be slightly evasive on personnel questions unless there's some great policy issue involved.

Heavyweight Boxing Champion

Mr. King. George Foreman. Comment.

The President. George Foreman I like, because I identify with him. He's not as young as he used to be, not as fast as he used to be, not as thin as he used to be. He's still got a terrific punch. I'd like to think that there are a lot of us who could identify with that.

And he doesn't quit. You know what he said yesterday? He said he was really grateful to America for giving him the chance to fight. That's the way I feel. I'm grateful to America for giving me the chance to fight.

Mr. King. So you felt an association with him. You're only a little older than he is.

The President. Yes, I know.

Mr. King. You have the same kind of midriff, and he eats like you, fast foods.

The President. He does. I don't really eat fast foods anymore. That's a big myth.

Mr. King. Well, you don't?

The President. No. It's part of Dee Dee's counseling to me. [Laughter] She won't let me do it—no, we don't do that much anymore.

Midterm Elections

Mr. King. We're under a minute. Virginia, Senate.

The President. Senator Robb's doing well there.

Mr. King. Cuomo in New York.

The President. He's come back; he's been heroic.

Mr. King. Senate in—governorship, Texas.

The President. Well, I haven't been there, but Ann Richards is supported in her job by over 60 percent of the people. So if they support the work she's done for Texas, you would think they would renew her contract.

Mr. King. Were you asked to go there at all?

The President. No.

Mr. King. And——

The President. Oh, I was at the beginning. I was asked to go, actually, to El Paso, but we couldn't do it.

Mr. King. We're out of time. Thanks.

The President. Thank you. You've been great.

Mr. King. Are you predicting victory in the Senate and the House? You will retain control of both?

The President. I think we're moving in the right direction, and I think we'll have them both on Wednesday morning when we wake up, because I think the American people want to keep going forward, not going back.

NOTE: The interview was recorded at 3:30 p.m. at the Columbia DuBrin Realty Advisors Building for broadcast at 9 p.m.

Remarks at the Minnesota Victory Rally in Minneapolis, Minnesota November 7, 1994

Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Pam Pearson. Sounds good, doesn't it, Madam President? Out of my own past I feel compelled to say someone ought to thank the band for being here to play with us today. Thank you for dressing up. Thank you, Senator Wellstone. Poor Senator Wellstone has no energy, no conviction. [Laughter] He's a walking fireplug for Minnesota. There are many public officials here. I don't want to introduce them all, but I would be remiss if I did not thank Congressman Martin Sabo, Congressman Bruce Vento, and the distinguished retiring Congressman from Minnesota, someone who knows the difference between talk and action on the deficit, the economy, and a lot of other things, Congressman Tim Penny. Thank you all for being here.

Most of what needs to be said about this race has already been said here today. But I want you to focus on what you could do between now and tomorrow to talk to other people—there's a high rate of undecided in all these surveys—to make sure that Ann Wynia wins. And I have given a great deal of thought to

this. This really is a contest between whether we will continue going into a future that is full of opportunity and challenge or go back to the easy answers of the past. It really is, as the First Lady said, a contest between the doers and the talkers, or the builders and the blamers.

You know, for all of our problems—and we do have profound problems, 30 years of accumulated social problems, 20 years of basically stagnant wages and working people being at greater and greater risk of losing their health care or not getting a raise or having to change jobs—for all of these problems, we had 12 years of their side's approach. They had 12 whole years of trickle-down economics. We've had 21 months, and this country is in better shape than it was 21 months ago. Jobs are up. The deficit is down. The Federal Government is smaller, but it's providing more opportunity for working families, for education, for family leave and in so many other ways. The country is getting stronger. I want America to be strong. What makes a country strong? Strong families, strong education systems, safe streets, good jobs, a strong foreign policy that promotes peace and