AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

to the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and it is not intended to create any right, benefit, trust, or responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 15, 1994.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:37 p.m., January 18, 1994]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the office of the press secretary on January 18, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

Letter on the Withdrawal of Nomination of Admiral Bobby R. Inman to be Secretary of Defense

January 18, 1993

Dear Admiral Inman:

It is with regret that I accept your request that I not submit your nomination as Secretary of Defense. While I understand the personal considerations that have led you to this decision, I am nevertheless saddened that our Nation will be denied your service.

I wish you the very best as you continue to work on your many important endeavors as a private citizen.

Very truly yours,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: The White House also made available Adm. Inman's letter requesting that his nomination to be Secretary of Defense be withdrawn.

Interview With Larry King

January 20, 1994

First Year in Office

Larry King. And thank you very much for joining us. We'll, of course, be including your phone calls. The phones will flash on the screen.

What a year. Biggest surprise?

The President. It was a little tougher to change things than I thought it would be. There was in this city a culture that I knew existed that tended to sometimes major in the minor and minor in the major, as you know. But I still found that if we stayed after it we could make change. It just turned out to be harder than I thought it would be.

Mr. King. Adjustment tough? This is not Governor, right?

The President. No. It wasn't tough to adjust to the job. I like the job. But it's a very different life. And I was very concerned about how it would affect my family. Hillary and I wanted to—we had a good life before—a good family life, good work life. And we were very concerned about Chelsea, who loved her school, her activities, her friends at home. But I'm proud of the transition she's made. And over the holidays when we were sort of reminiscing, we were most proud, I think, that our daughter had adjusted to her new school, made worlds of good friends, and has her ballet and other things.

Mr. King. The saddest day had to be the loss of your mother——

The President. Yes.

Mr. King.——and no time to really grieve, right?

The President. She was real important to me. I loved her a lot. And the night she died she called me. We had a wonderful talk. And then I went home, and we put the funeral together. And then I went to Europe, and I came back, took a physical, and then went to California.

Mr. King. So you've had no time to grieve.

The President. No real time, no. You remember when she called on your show?

Mr. King. You were in Ocala.

The President. We were in Ocala, Florida, and you set me up.

Mr. King. And you said, where are you?

The President. My mother called me from Vegas.

Mr. King. Vegas, where else?

The President. Last trip she took, you know, which is what she should have done.

Mr. King. I saw some people who were with her the night before she died. You would have never known she was ill. She was all right. That had to be the worst. What was the best day of this year? And then we'll dis-

cuss a whole bunch of things and take calls. What was your best day?

The President. Well, I think my best personal day was Christmas because we had our families here. And it's a family holiday. It's always very important to me. Hillary loves it. Chelsea loves it. And we had mother here and her husband, Dick, and my brother and Hillary's family. It was good.

Mr. King. Best political day?

The President. Best political day, that's tough. Probably the passage of the economic plan, because it made possible all the other things, the victory of NAFTA, the GATT agreement, the passage of family leave, national service, all the other things. If the economic plan hadn't happened, we couldn't have turned the economy around, and we couldn't have had all those other successes in Congress.

Los Angeles Earthquake

Mr. King. Let's run down some things real current. You're just back from L.A. Apparently it's going to rain there this weekend. Are they going to have tents outside for those people?

The President. They're working on that. They're also working on whether we can get some more trailers in and other things.

Mr. King. What was that like to go there? I mean, we were there for it——

The President. You were there when it happened, so you know better even than I. But I must tell you, standing on those pieces of broken interstate highway and to realize that happened in a matter of seconds, that massive—tons and tons of concrete moved, and then, of course, seeing all the homes ruined and businesses cracked open. It was an amazing thing.

Mr. King. What's a President's role there?

The President. Well, I think the first and most important role is to assure that the federal emergency management program is working, that we're getting the emergency help to people they need, the food, the shelter, and the money in some cases, people have lost everything; secondly, that we put in motion the rebuilding process to get housing to people and to deal with the longer term needs; and thirdly, that in the case of Los Angeles, that we start rebuilding those highways as quickly as possible. You know, it's a highway-driven place, southern California. We're finally beginning to get the economy turned around out there finally, and then this happens. So we've got to do this in a way that doesn't upset the economy.

Mr. King. There are some, as you know, among us in America who will say, "Well, it's their problem. They chose to live in that area. That's an area where earthquakes occur. Why should Des Moines pay?"

The President. Well, because California paid for Des Moines when we had that awful flood. Americans are normally at their best in times of grave natural disaster. And I must say, after all the people in California have been through—they had the riots, and then they had the fires, and they've had all the losses of jobs because of the defense cutbacks and the national recession—to have this put on them. And yet I met so many brave people. I met a women who said, "You know, I lost my house, but I'd like to say I hope nobody will take advantage of the Federal Government. Don't apply for aid you don't deserve. Don't ask for something you don't need. Somebody else may need this later in the year." That's the kind of spirit you get.

And I would hope that the people of America would want to help those folks who through no fault of their own were really dislocated. I also would tell you when there is a severe economic disruption, whether it was the Middle West because of the horrible floods in the Mississippi River Valley and the adjoining rivers or now southern California in the case of this earthquake, it hurts the whole rest of the American economy. So we've got to be family in emergencies. And I think that's what America wants to do.

The Nomination Process

Mr. King. All right, switching gears. What do you make of the Bobby Inman story? What happened there—Safire, Dole, that explanation?

The President. I don't know. You may know as much about that as anybody. All I can tell you is that I accept his statement. He made a decision. I don't think we should lose sight of the fact that he was a four-star admiral. He gave 30 years of service to his

country. He was confirmed by the United States Senate four times. I just——

Mr. King. You think maybe he really didn't want the job?

The President. Down deep inside, I think maybe he wasn't sure he wanted to go back. There are a lot of people—I had a Cabinet member tell me the other day that if he had to do it all over again, he wasn't sure he would go into public service today because——

Mr. King. Because?

The President. ——it's just too brutal, what you're put through. That's what he said.

Mr. King. Are there days you think that?

The President. Not for me, no.

Mr. King. You like it too much?

The President. I like it. But the only thing I've ever cared about on that is my family. You know, when Hillary or Chelsea get hurt or when my mother was hurt by something that was said or done, that really bothered me, especially for Hillary and Chelsea. They really didn't sign on for all that. But for me, I figure, if you look around the Western world and you look at the recent history of the United States, if you sign on for a political career in the latter half of the 20th century, you just have to expect a level of that that didn't exist before.

Mr. King. Goes with the territory?

The President. Yes. And so I always say, if you want to get into this business, you need to know who are, what you believe in, and where you stand with what you believe because you can't let yourself be defined by what happens outside.

Mr. King. The reports today are that it was offered to Sam Nunn and he declined. True?

The President. Well, I can't discuss that, otherwise I would have to deal with all the other personalities I've considered, and so I don't want to discuss personalities.

Mr. King. Would you say he would be on the list?

The President. I will say this—that he would be a great Secretary of Defense, but he's got an awfully influential position now. We've been friends a long time. But let me just say this: I'm going to proceed in a deliberate but fairly quick way to name a Secretary of Defense, and then I'll talk about the process.

Mr. King. Is it a short list? Yes? Why in this year did we have so many appointment problems?

The President. First of all, I think most of it was because the rules changed on the household help issue. That had never been an issue before. And all of a sudden it was a big issue, and the press was pillorying people that had the problem. And it was a problem. And so we had to get that worked out. I don't think it will ever happen again now because now there are fairly clear rules: if you've had this problem but you pay your taxes and then now you won't be—so that was the first big problem.

The second thing was that people's writings became an issue for jobs other than the Supreme Court. That is, Judge Bork's writings were an issue but that's because the Supreme Court got to read, interpret the Constitution, and it was a lifetime job. The Senators and others decided this year that they'd make that an issue for everybody for confirmation, which I think is a questionable standard, but it did.

Mr. King. You're talking about Lani Guinier and——

The President. Yes. And one or two others that became an issue even though we got a couple through. So I think that these standards are always being raised and heightened. And I think, frankly, the process takes too long now. I talked to several Republicans and Democrats who have no particular axe to grind now who think maybe it's time to have a bipartisan look at this whole appointments process. It's entirely too—it takes too long to get somebody confirmed. It's too bureaucratic. You have two and three levels of investigation. I think it's excessive.

Civil Rights

Mr. King. In that area, are we going to get a Deputy Attorney General for Civil Rights?

The President. Well, I certainly expect one soon. The civil rights bar basically was heavily involved in the nomination of the last candidate who withdrew. And the Attorney General is working hard on it. And basically I've given her my proxy on the thing, "Just

work with them. Work with people who are committed to having a strong civil rights enforcement.''

Interestingly enough, last year just when the Attorney General herself was in office and we didn't have a full-time director of the division, civil rights enforcement was way up at record levels in many areas. So we've got a good record, but I think it's important to have somebody in there who's good.

Mr. King. So you're giving Janet Reno a proxy meeting—if she comes to you tomorrow and says it's ''Joe Jones''——

The President. This is the person I'd like to nominate, unless there's some reason that I shouldn't, something I know that she doesn't know, then I will be strongly inclined to go with her judgment.

Mr. King. Of course, in your popularity ratings, which, congratulations, keep going up—went up today—you scored the highest in the area of race relations. Does that surprise you?

The President. No. I think the American people know how much I care about it. It's been a part of me ever since I was a little child. It was a big part of my work as Governor. And I think the American people know that I'm committed to both equality and excellence, that I want people without regard to their race to have a shot at the brass ring in America. And I think also the American people know that we can't solve the other problems, the crime, the violence, the family breakdown, all these other things, unless we reach across the racial divides. We just can't do it. We're not going to make it if we don't.

Attorney General Janet Reno

Mr. King. About Ms. Reno—we keep reading—she goes up and down, and again these are pundits who say this. Where does Janet Reno stand tonight, one year in?

The President. I think she's terrific. I told her when she was hot as a firecracker, you know, with the public and with the press when she got here. And I was joking with her once, I said, ''You know, Janet, you go up and you go down in this business, and if you stay out there long enough, you'll take a few licks.'' And she's taken a few licks, but she has an enormous feel for simple justice, which is what I think people want in the Attorney General. She's got a steel backbone, and she understands what really works. She, like all the rest of us—none of us are perfect; we all make mistakes. But boy, she goes to work every day and really tries to do what's right for ordinary Americans.

Mr. King. So she's staying?

The President. If it's up to me, she is. I think she's done a fine job.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher

Mr. King. Rumors are part of this scheme. Warren Christopher, is he in strong?

The President. I think he's done a good job. And I think if you look at this last trip we took to Europe, and you look at the work that he has done, along with others in the national security and foreign policy team, the United States was very well received in Europe on this trip. They know that we're trying to unify Europe for the first time in history. Never in the whole history of Europe has it not been divided. The divisions of Europe caused these two awful World Wars in this century, caused the cold war. We've got a chance to unite it. We may not make it, but we've got a chance to unite it.

Mr. King. And he's the right man in——

The President. And he has worked hard on that, that's right. And I think he's really done a good job with the Middle East peace. He's managed this process. He's been to the Middle East a lot. And he's got good strong support at the State Department. So I think he's done a good job.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Mr. King. What do you make of Mr. Yeltsin's grip there—strong? On a scale of 10, where would you rate it?

The President. I think he's got a strong grip because he's got a 4-year term and a constitution which gives him more power, for example, than I have here, just pure legal power. I think that in the last election, a lot of people who are not friendly to some of his policies did very well, partly because the reformers didn't campaign as one group and didn't do a very good job in the mass media and all that sort of stuff, partly because the average Russian's having a tough time now. One of the things that I did when I was in

Russia, and you know, through that town meeting—kind of like we do—and let people ask me questions, and I tried to establish some link between them and these processes of reform that are sweeping the world. Because times are tough for them now. And I think anytime times are tough—and keep in mind, they've just been a democracy a little while. We've been at this 200 years. And we kind of feel haywire from time to time, and we've been working at it for two centuries. They just got started. And so they elected some pretty extremist people and some people that are calling them to a past that is romanticized. And I think he's going to have a challenging time. But I think if they—he's a very tough guy. He believes in democracy. He's on the right side of history. And I think he will continue to listen and learn and work, and I think he'll do——

Mr. King. On the first anniversary of his Presidency, a special addition of Larry King Live with President Bill Clinton. Some more talks and questions from me, and then he'll take your calls. Don't go away.

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

Natural Disasters

Mr. King. We're back to this talk with the President on this one-year anniversary. You will notice that the White House is not as brightly lit as it is normally lit. The lights are a little dim. That's because we are in a winter—terrible situation here in—you can't—you have a lot of power, but you can't do anything about ice storms. You can't do anything about zero degrees.

The President. That's right. We haven't been asked to do as much as we were for the earthquake or the flood for that matter.

Mr. King. More people have died in the Northeast——

The President. That's right. It's a 100-year cold in a lot of these places. We have, first of all, tried to cut down on the Federal Government's power usage. We shut it down yesterday, shut it down today, and we're going to open late tomorrow and try to keep our power usage down so that we can give the power to people in their homes. Secondly, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Cisneros anticipating this, gave out all of our homeless money early, so that all the State and local governments all around here have got as much money as we can possibly give them to take care of homelessness and to try——

Mr. King. Anticipating a tough winter?

The President. Yes, just try—on the event that it happened, we just wanted to get everybody off the streets as much as we can. And we're going to be looking for whatever else we can do now. There may be some other problems in the next couple of days. We're praying and hoping it will get warmer.

Mr. King. Nature humbles all of us. Humble you, too?

The President. Absolutely. I was looking at that interstate cracked open and those houses ruined in Los Angeles yesterday, and I just remind you that we're not in full control——

Mr. King. A President brings hope to that, doesn't he?

The President. I think so.

Mr. King. And there's a symbolic——

The President. Oh, absolutely. Yesterday I could see—thousands of people came out to see me yesterday, to see the President, not Bill Clinton, the President. And I could see their energy, their hope. And I have two jobs: One is to rally them by doing my job, and the other is doing my job. James Lee Witt, who runs the emergency management of this country is doing a wonderful job, and we work at that hard. And we owe that to those people.

Whitewater Development Corp.

Mr. King. More things current, special counsel Robert Fiske appointed today by Janet Reno, was that solely her appointment?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I didn't know anything about it.

Mr. King. Do you know Mr. Fiske?

The President. No.

Mr. King. Going to cooperate fully?

The President. Absolutely. Whatever they want to do, we'll be glad to do it.

Mr. King. He says he's going to probably take testimony from you and Hillary.

The President. Whatever he wants to do. The main thing I want to do is just have that turned over to him so we can go back to work. I just want to do my job. I don't want

to be distracted by this anymore. I didn't do anything wrong. Nobody's ever even suggested that I did. Everybody who's talked about it has suggested, as a matter of fact, to the contrary, that I didn't. But still, let them look into it. I just want to go back to work.

Mr. King. Was it unfair, the press, or was it fair? Was it a story? Is it a story?

The President. Well, let's wait until it's all over, and then maybe I'll have something to say then. The main thing is, it's important that I not be distracted from the job of being President. That's what I owe the American people. I've got to get up everyday, no matter what else is going on, and try to give everything I have to moving this country forward to changing this country for the better. And this will take the onus, if you will, off of that. People will know it's being handled in that way, and then I can just go back to work, which is what I want to happen.

Mr. King. In all candidness, a special counsel should have been appointed sooner, do you think?

The President. Well——

Mr. King. I mean, it would have certainly taken the story down.

The President. It would have. I was concerned in the beginning about agreeing to it when—for the first time ever, no one ever—people were saying, "We know you didn't do anything wrong, so appoint a special counsel." It wasn't, "There's this evidence of wrong doing. Were you involved in it or something like that." But it was a much bigger story here, and then eventually around the country, I think, than I had anticipated. So the important thing for me, again, was for people to feel comfortable about the way it's handled so I can go back to work. And I think now people will feel comfortable about the way it's handled, and I can go to work.

Mr. King. The one thing most people are asking is they'll learn more about this, because it is involved, obviously, is why you took a loss and didn't take a deduction since everybody who has a loss takes a deduction.

The President. Well, that will come out in the—I think we took some interest deductions along, which were part of our losses, but at the end I did basically what we thought was the bend-over-backwards right thing to do and what was appropriate at the time. But let's wait until the investigation is over. That'll all come out, and then if there are questions about it, when the report's made to the American people, I can answer questions about it then.

Gore-Perot Debate

Mr. King. The night of the NAFTA debate and the passage of NAFTA, were you at all surprised at how well Al Gore did?

The President. Oh, no.

Mr. King. Because he had, you know, this wooden image and——

The President. Yes, but I knew——

Mr. King. ——people were predicting that Perot would beat him——

The President. I thought he would be great here if he had a fair chance and an honest debate. You know, he's like all the rest of us, sometimes we pick up images that are on occasion right but not fully accurate. And this image of him as sort of wooden and stiff, anybody who really knows him will tell you he is very funny, he has a terrific sense of humor, he's got an incredibly flexible mind, and the reason I like this debate format that you provided is that no one could shout anyone else down. I mean, they were all sitting here real close, you know. You were sitting here. Everybody got to talk. Everybody got to answer questions. And I knew two things: I knew he knew a lot about it; I knew he believed very deeply in the position that we had taken. It wasn't just something he was saying, "Well, I'm the Vice President, and Bill Clinton is for NAFTA, and I've got to be." He believed it deep down in his bones. And I knew that he would feel comfortable and confident. So I liked it. You know, he and I were—we might have been in the minority in our administration when this whole thing was first—[*laughter*]——

Mr. King. To do that was his idea, and he asked you to okay——

The President. He said, "What do you think about it?" And I immediately said, "I think it's a terrific idea." And so we were sort of like salesmen in our own house.

Mr. King. But the handlers said no.

The President. Well, no, some of them did, not all of them but some of them. But

we were beginning to make progress. You know, we were beginning to pick up votes already. But we were doing it by basically saying to Members of Congress, ''You know this is right, and you know it's in the national interest, and you ought to do it even if it's unpopular in the short run.'' We felt, he and I both did, that this debate here, this discussion on your program, would be the only chance we'd ever have to kind of break through to ordinary Americans who watch you and listen to you and just want to know. And that's really what—that's what you did. You gave us a chance to talk to everyday Americans. And he was really—and I was so proud of him. I mean, he was really wonderful.

Mr. King. Do you think we might see someday a President debate?

The President. Well, it could be. Certainly if I run for reelection I'll expect——

Mr. King. No, I don't mean that. I mean major issues coming up for a vote—health care——

The President. It could be.

Mr. King. ——you and Senator Dole, or someone, someone of the leadership, where a President would sit down and say, ''Let's discuss it with the opposition.'' I don't think that's ever happened in this country.

The President. It might not—I wouldn't be afraid of doing it. I wouldn't want to commit in advance just because I would want to make sure it was the right thing to do at the time. But you know, I run a remarkably open Presidency. I ran for this job because I wanted to get the economy going, I wanted to get the country back together again and I wanted people to believe that their Government belonged to them again and that we could be more open and accessible to them. And I've tried to do that. The day after I was inaugurated we opened the White House to just folks to come in. And tonight in another way we're opening the White House again.

Mr. King. And we're going to do that right away. When we come back you can call in and talk to the President of the United States on this special edition of Larry King Live. Don't go away.

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

The President's Health

Mr. King. Welcome back to Larry King Live. By the way, the President was fully prepared to go 90 minutes tonight, but he is very tired. As you might imagine, this has been a back-breaking schedule with the death of his mother, the funeral, overseas, back home, full physical, and we mean full physical, right?—you had what they call top-to-toe—and then out to L.A. So we understand fully, and we'll get to as many calls as we can.

How was the physical, okay?

The President. Great.

Mr. King. Okay, Chevy Chase, Maryland, with President Clinton. Hello.

Somalia

Q. Yes, Mr. President, what do you say to those who say that you and your administration have not done a good job about Somalia? And given the fact that the Somalis don't trust the UNISOM, Somalia is bound to go back to where it was before the U.S. intervention.

Thank you.

Mr. King. Thank you.

The President. Well, I think we have done a good job in Somalia. We've saved a lot of lives there. But when we went there it was primarily for a humanitarian purpose to try to save the lives. I was told when I became President that we might be able to withdraw the American troops as early as one month, 2 months into my term. We've now been a full year, and as you know, we've got a few more months to go before we withdraw our troops. But the thing that caused the starvation in Somalia in the beginning was that a lot of people identified with their clans more than the country as a whole, and they were fighting each other. What we have done is to set in motion a process in which the clans can agree to a peaceable way of governing the country among themselves. And if they don't do that, we'd have to stay forever. And we can't do that. So in the end, the people of Somalia are going to have to take responsibility for themselves and their future. And in the meanwhile we'll keep working to try to keep as many of them alive as we can.

Mr. King. To Plantation, Florida, with President Clinton. Hello.

Trade

Q. Good evening, President Clinton. How would you like to lower the country's trade deficit and balance the payments by giving all Americans and all businesses tax deductions for buying American products, by definition 90 percent made in America with 90 percent parts made in America and 90 percent profits going to American companies?

Mr. King. Would that work?

The President. I wonder whether it would even be——

Mr. King. Legal?

The President. Yes. It would certainly, I think, violate some of our international trade agreements, and it might cause others to retaliate against us. I would like to lower our trade deficit, at least that which is structural and permanent. Our biggest problems are with Japan and now with China.

Mr. King. Are you going over there?

The President. Yes, we're working on both of them. I understand what he's saying, and we do have certain ''buy America'' preferences in our law, but we have to be very careful how far we go without violating the treaties and agreements we made with other countries who take our products freely.

Deputy Counsel Vincent Foster, Jr.

Mr. King. By the way, something just hit me, and it occurred in the last year. The last time we were here was the night Vince Foster died. It was 6 months——

The President. Six months ago, tonight.

Mr. King. Six months ago, tonight. Do we know a lot more than we did before?

The President. I don't think we know anymore than we did in the beginning because I just really don't believe there is anymore to know. You know, he left a note; he was profoundly depressed.

Mr. King. You didn't know it?

The President. No. And I talked to him——

Mr. King. The night before, right?

The President. No, I think 2 nights before and told him to come see me. Or maybe it was the night before, and I told him to come see me on Wednesday, which was the day after he shot himself. It broke my heart. We'd been friends for more than 40 years. We lived next to each other when we were little-bitty kids. He was a remarkable man. And I miss him.

Mr. King. This special counsel says he's going to look into that, too. Is that fair game?

The President. Well, I think because he had some files that were relevant to—I think he has to look into what was there, and he'll just—whatever he wants to do, you know, let him do that. That's not my business to comment on.

Mr. King. Detroit, Michigan, for President Clinton. Hello.

Q. Hello, President Clinton. Congratulations on your one year in office, and many more.

The President. Thank you.

Crime

Q. I live in Detroit where we have had 629 murders in our State, and I would like to know what can you do or help us about this issue? And I would just like to congratulate you. You've been a President that has said what you're going to do, and you have done it. And regardless of what the media bashing, I thank you for all that you have done.

The President. Thank you, ma'am.

First of all, let me say that you call from Detroit, which has had a lot of murders. And the Children's Defense Fund said today that a child is killed with a gun every other hour in this country now.

Mr. King. Unbelievable.

The President. Unbelievable, but it's true. But this lady could have called from many other cities in the country and small towns, too.

Let me tell you what I think we can do together. First of all, we've got to strengthen our law enforcement forces. You've got a great new Mayor in Detroit in Dennis Archer. He's a longtime friend of mine. I read his inaugural address the other day. It was a brilliant way of getting Detroit together and getting started. But we have to put more police officers on the street, well trained, and working with people in the communities, walking the blocks, working with the kids, preventing crime as well as catching criminals. Our crime bill will put 100,000 more police officers on the street. It's the first priority for Congress when they come back.

Secondly, we passed the Brady bill, but we need to do more on guns. Specifically, we need to limit these automatic, semiautomatic assault weapons that have no purpose other than to kill. And I hope we can reach an accord with the sportsmen and quit arguing about things that are false issues and get an agreement on what the problem is and how to attack it.

Thirdly, people who are repeated serious violent offenders shouldn't be paroled.

And fourthly, you've got to give these kids something to say "yes" to. That is, we have got to go into these really distressed areas and rebuild the bonds of family, community, and work. There's got to be education opportunities. There's got to be job opportunities. There's got to be alternatives to imprisonment, like boot camps. There needs to be drug treatment and drug education programs. We can't have it all on the punishment. These children have to have something to say "yes" to. If you look at a lot of these high crime areas where the gangs and the drugs and the guns are, they fill the vacuum. When family collapses, when work collapses, most of us organize our lives around work, family, community. And a lot of these young people that are in real trouble today and really vulnerable are living in places where there's not enough community, enough family, or enough work. So I think we have to do both things. And then next year or this year now, I'm going to ask the Congress to work with me and then work with the mayors, the Governors, and others to really get serious about this. We've got to do something about it, and we've got a program that will make a difference.

Mr. King. To Auckland, New Zealand, with President Clinton. Hello.

Q. Greetings from New Zealand, Mr. President.

The President. How are you, sir?

Lebanon

Q. I'm good; how are you? In your Geneva meeting with President Asad of Syria, did you ask him for a withdrawal of the Syrian forces from Lebanon, or a least at time schedule, or Lebanon's going to be the price for peace with Israel? Thank you.

The President. No, no. Lebanon was not the price for peace. He agreed that as part of a comprehensive peace agreement, we should implement the Taif Accord, which as you know, calls for an independent Lebanon, free of all foreign forces. And President Asad clearly said that if he could be satisfied from his point of view in having a comprehensive peace agreement with Israel, Israel would also have to have an agreement with Lebanon, an agreement with Jordan, and obviously the agreement with the PLO and that Lebanon in the end would be left a free and independent state, independent of all foreign forces. We talked about that quite explicitly, and he was quite clear in saying that he would support that.

President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria

Mr. King. Was it tough to sit with Asad who has been on a list of—as a terror leader for years? I mean, I know Presidents have to do things—was that hard?

The President. Well, it wasn't an easy meeting. I mean, I knew it would be a challenging and a difficult meeting. And I think the most important thing for me was to make it clear that I—my overriding agenda was to do whatever I could to make an honorable, decent, lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. King. Do you think he was sincere?

The President. Yes, I think he really wants to make peace. I think there are a lot of reasons why it's in the interests of the Syrian people and in his own interest to do it, and I think he does. I also made it clear that we still had real differences between us in our bilateral relations, and one of them was what we feel about terrorism. And we talked about it for an hour. And he gave his side, and I gave mine. But the American people are entitled to know that. We talked about it for an hour——

Mr. King. Did he deny that he——

The President. We didn't skirt it. He did in a way, and he defined it in a different way, and he made some arguments about what Syria has done and not done. But the point is, we got it out on the table. He said what he thought; I said what I thought. And maybe most important, we agreed that our Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and their Foreign Minister, Mr. Shara, would

meet and really try to get beyond the charges to very specific things, that we would come forward with specific instances of things that we believe have been done that are a violation of international law that cannot be tolerated, and we would try to work through them. So I think that it was an honorable meeting from my point of view and from the point of view of the United States because of that.

Mr. King. New York City for President Clinton. Hello.

Health Care Reform

Q. A lot of companies are hiring people on a part-time or temporary basis because they don't want to give them benefits. Under your health care plan, how will people who work part-time or freelance have their benefits paid for?

The President. That's a great question. Let me answer the question and make a general point. First of all, under our health care plan, part-time workers will be covered partly by their employers if they work more than 10 hours a week. They will pay a portion of their premiums. And then the rest of the premium will be paid for out of a Government fund set up for that purpose. But part-time workers will be covered, and their employers will have to pay something for their coverage, too. I think that's only fair. Also, if we can do something to slow the dramatic increase in the cost of health care and to make sure all workers are covered, that, I think, will help to stabilize this trend, and more and more employers will be willing to hire new workers on a full-time basis.

And let me say, we're beginning to see that now. Since I became President and we got serious about bringing the deficit down, bringing interest rates down, getting investment up, and employment started coming again, as confidence gets back into this economy, then employers will be able to hire more full-time workers. Then this year, what I have to be able to do is to show the business community that this health care plan of ours is going to stabilize health care costs while providing health care for all Americans through a guaranteed private insurance system, not a Government system but a private system. But we have to ask the employers to pay something for their part-time workers, too. I think that's only fair.

Mr. King. Back with more of this conversation with the President on his one-year in office on Larry King Live. He said he'd be with us every 6 months—holding right to it—he was with us July 20th, this is January 20th. We'll be right back.

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

Mr. King. We're back with the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. More phone calls—Hawaii. Hello.

Q. Yes, aloha, Larry, and Mr. President.

Mr. King. Aloha.

Q. This is the big island. Mr. President, in regards to sympathy for your mother, I had the opportunity to see your mother catch a fish when she was over here, and she's quite a fisherwoman. A great, great lady. I'm sorry to hear about that.

The President. She loved that tournament.

North Korea

Q. In regards to Korea, what's the possibility of the Koreans getting a nuclear weapon and maybe possibly striking Hawaii first since that's part of the United States now? What would the——

Mr. King. Yes, what is the current status of North Korea?

The President. Well, first let me say, thank you to the gentleman from Hawaii for the condolences for my mother, and mine to the mother of the Governor of Hawaii who passed away today. A wonderful woman.

The Korean—let me just tell you, if you follow the press you know that the intelligence reports are divided on the question of how far the North Koreans have gone in developing a nuclear weapon. But everybody knows they are trying to. Even if they develop one, then there's the question of their delivery capacity, which is in doubt.

I wouldn't say Hawaii is in serious danger right now. What I would say is that we need to keep working very hard and to be very firm about not wanting Korea to join the family of nuclear states. You know, I've been out here working to reduce the number of countries with nuclear weapons, with Ukraine and

Kazakhstan and Belarus committing to get rid of their weapons. We are now involved in intense negotiations, and the only thing I can tell you is we're working as hard as we can to be as firm as we can and then to be as also as firm as we can about the security of our people and the South Koreans in the event all does not go well. But we are working very hard, and I certainly have not given up yet on getting the North Koreans to go back into the NPT system and agreeing to let the International Atomic Energy inspectors in there to look at what they're doing. They ought to do it.

The country is so isolated. They're isolated economically. Even China used to be a big ally of theirs. China now does 8 or 10 times as much trade with South Korea as with North Korea. And I think they believe that somehow this gives them some handle on national prestige. I think their best way to be esteemed in the rest of the world is to be a good citizen and give the rest of us a chance to relate to them.

Mr. King. Birmingham, Alabama. Hello.

Criticism of the President

Q. President Clinton, I find your political opponents' relentless efforts to undermine the credibility of your administration absolutely appalling. How much does this cost the American citizen in terms of wasted time and money? And does it affect the U.S. in the international community?

The President. Well, first I thank you for your sentiments and your support. And the most important thing of all is that the American people be able to see through it. When they see the politics of personal destruction, when they see people who obviously don't want to talk about how we're going to get this economy going or how we're going to get health care to all Americans or how we're going to deal with the other problems, crime in the streets, that they see it for what it is.

I think that abroad, frankly, our administration and me, that I personally, that we're able to do what we need to do for the United States. I was very gratified at the reception that I received in Europe and in Russia and throughout our travels. It does take time and attention and distraction when you're dealing with all that stuff, but as I said to Larry earlier, I can deal with it. The only thing that really steams me is what it does to my wife and my daughter, to my family. As a person, that bothers me. But it is not undermining our ability to go forward. Does it take time and attention, is it distracting, is it costly in that sense? You bet it is. It apparently is a part of the price of being in public life in the late 20th century in the United States. So we deal with it. But I just want you to know that having you call just redoubles my determination. And I thank you for that.

Mr. King. Forth Worth, Texas. Hello.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, I was wondering what the progress on our situation with Bosnia-Herzegovina was? And what has happened to the sense of urgency we once had with that problem?

The President. Well, the United States had a position, as you know. When I took office I offered the Europeans my position, what I thought we ought to do, how I thought we ought to do it to get a quicker peace and if not get peace, at least to give the government of that country a chance to defend itself. The Europeans disagreed and stoutly resisted. I did not believe that we could unilaterally or should unilaterally send ground troops there. I still think that was the right decision.

So let me tell you where it is now. First of all, don't forget what we have done. We have led the longest airlift in history, now longer than the Berlin airlift, to give food and medicine to the people there. Secondly, we have enforced a ferocious embargo which has cost the Serbs, in particular, dearly. It has virtually wrecked the Serbian economy. They continue to fight, but they have paid a terrible price for it economically. And thirdly, we have tried to work with our allies at NATO to say that we would use air power if Sarajevo were subject to shelling and strangulation again. And finally, we're supporting the peace process. I hope the parties will agree. You see, the Serbs and the Croats have agreed now. The government had been losing on the ground. They'd been making some gains so they've not agreed to any peace—or they're going to have to give, I think, to Moslems, some access to the water in order

to get a peace agreement. They're a little closer than I think it looks, but eventually they're going to have to agree to that or the fighting will go on.

Mr. King. Are you optimistic?

The President. Oh, I've learned not to be optimistic there. I was optimistic a time or two and had my hopes dashed.

Mr. King. ——got to take a break.

The President. But the people are still killing each other because they're fighting over land. They're going to have to reach a territorial accommodation so that all three of those ethnic groups can live with a reasonable breathing room there.

Mr. King. We'll be back with our remaining moments with President Clinton right after this.

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

The Presidency

Mr. King. We're running out of time. Biggest hope as we enter the second year of the Presidency.

The President. That we can get health care for all Americans.

Mr. King. Biggest fear?

The President. That democracy will face reversal somewhere in the world and dash my hopes of having a more peaceful world that has more trade opportunities and less military dangers for the United States.

Mr. King. Are you happy?

The President. Oh yes, and grateful for the chance to serve and grateful that we're making progress. I know a lot of Americans are still in trouble, and their lives haven't been affected yet, but at least we're facing these tough issues that have been ignored for too long, and everybody here gets up and goes to work every day and works like crazy and I think in a spirit of genuine hopefulness.

Mr. King. Some said that you even like the bad days. I mean, you like this job, right?

The President. I like the job. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve. The bad days are part of it. I didn't run to have a pleasant time. I ran to have a chance to change the country. And if the bad days come with it, that's part of life. And it's humbling and educational. It keeps you in your place.

Mr. King. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 9 p.m. in the Library at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With King Hussein of Jordan

January 21, 1994

Russia

Q. Mr. President, with the key reformers out of the Russian Government, does that mean that radical reform is over in Russia?

The President. I wouldn't go that far. Already Russia has privatized more rapidly than any of the other former Communist countries. They have a much higher rate of privatization than any of the other countries. But what we're concerned about obviously is whether they will be able to manage their inflation problem. And I think the Secretary of the Treasury said it the best: We're going to support democracy, and we're going to support the fact that Russia respects its relationships with other nations, and those are fundamental to our interest. How much economic help they can get from the international community will be directly related to what kinds of reforms they decide to undertake. And that I think is the best connection. They'll have to make those decisions for themselves.

Q. Mr. President, the reformers who were pushed out were in favor of curbing inflation by cutting subsidies. The people who are staying on are the people who fear unemployment. Which is a bigger threat, and do you favor cutting subsidies or easing the cuts?

The President. As I said, that's a decision they'll have to make. But what we offered to do and what we still offer to do is to try to help set up the sort of job training and unemployment and other systems, support systems, that any market economy has to have. You can't blame them for being concerned about the consequences of going to a market economy if they're not able to cope with them. And they need it, and so do all the other countries. And we're prepared to help do what we can. But they'll have to chart