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The first question is from Andrea Wilson of Norwalk. Andrea wants to know, Mr. President, what you're going to do to make deadbeat moms and dads accountable and responsible for supporting their children.

The President. I sent in the springtime, a welfare reform bill to Congress, which among other things, has a much tougher mechanism of child support enforcement. I think we have to have more automatic requirements, more wage withholding, more respect for these child support orders across State lines. It has simply got to be easy to get the child support payments out there. We've got billions and billions of dollars of unpaid child support. And if we had it paid by people who can afford to pay it, the welfare problem would be much smaller, and it would be a lot easier for people who are struggling to raise their children in dignity, to do it.

Unemployment

Mr. Crane. Now for our second viewer question, Mr. President. It comes from a woman named Eva Nay, who wants to know why, if you made jobs one of your administration's top priorities, there are still lay-offs and little in the way of job creation in Connecticut?

The President. Well, let me see. I've got some figures right here; I'll check it. The national economy, since I became President, has produced 4.6 million new jobs. Now the Government didn't do all that; most of these jobs are in the private sector. But we created the environment in which the jobs could be created by bringing the deficit down, by expanding trade, by investing more in new technologies. Not every American who wants a job has one, and of course, there's nothing the National Government can do to stop some companies from laying-off. What our job is to create more jobs than are lost, and we're doing that.

But just a moment, let me check here. In Connecticut——

Mr. Crane. Take your time.

The President. Well, I'm looking here.

The unemployment rate in Connecticut has dropped more than one percentage point. We've had several hundred new jobs added since I became President. In the previous 4 years—listen to this—Connecticut lost 150,000 new jobs. So, we've got job gain now, where we had job loss before. We need to create more jobs. We have to keep working on it. The first thing I had to do was to try to stop the job loss. And I think we have done that. We're moving forward.

Ms. Nyberg. And our viewers will be happy to hear that.

President Clinton, thank you very much for taking time out of your busy schedule to be with us tonight.

The President. Nice to do it. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:02 p.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, RI. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Janet Peckinpaugh of WFSB Television, Hartford, Connecticut

November 2, 1994

Ms. Peckinpaugh. Mr. President, good evening. Thanks for joining us tonight.

The President. Good evening, Janet.

White House Attack

Ms. Peckinpaugh. The first thing I want to ask you is, how can you feel so secure about your security right now? Does this have you shaken up at all?

The President. No, not at all. In fact, when the incident occurred, within a matter of seconds a Secret Service agent was upstairs at the White House there with me. They have worked very hard to increase their ability to protect the President every year. And they get better at it every year. I have a high level of confidence in them.

This incident could have happened at any time, I suppose. I regret it, but I don't think the American people should worry about it. We live in a democracy. People can move around freely. The one thing I do hope people will draw from this incident is that the congressional Members who were brave enough to vote for the crime bill, to stand up to the brutal pressure the NRA put on them and the threats they leveled against them, to try to get these assault weapons off

the street were right. That man had a modified assault weapon with a magazine with at least 20 bullets. And I think it's a good thing that we're trying to move against that.

But in a free society where people have free movement and where there are lots of guns, this kind of thing can occur. I can't stop being President. This is a democracy. We have to get out here and—all of us—and be with one another and talk to one another. So I'm just going about my job and doing it with a very high level of confidence in the people whose job it is to protect the President.

Ms. Peckinpaugh. President Clinton, hearing that from you makes us feel a lot better. Thanks for telling us that.

The President. Thank you.

Midterm Elections

Ms. Peckinpaugh. We asked our viewers to call into us, to write into us, to E-mail us with their questions for you tonight, so I'd like to take some time and talk about some of their questions. Linda Parker from Hartford wants to know how you feel about colleagues who have distanced themselves from you lately. We have an example right here in Connecticut: Congressman Sam Gejdenson and Jim Maloney, who is running for Gary Franks' seat, did not show up when you appeared here a couple of weeks ago. How do you feel when your colleagues do this?

The President. Well, first of all, I can say for Sam Gejdenson that's just not an accurate characterization. I went to his district at his invitation and campaigned for him at a time when nationally I wasn't in nearly as good a shape in the polls as I am now, so I just think that's a bum rap. And Mr. Maloney, my wife has been to Connecticut campaigning for him. I took no offense at that.

I think that it was a very successful trip to Connecticut. Afterward, surveys show that the support rose for Mr. Curry, our candidate for Governor up there. And I feel very good about the State of Connecticut and the relationship I've had with the Democrats.

I also think, however, that every Member of Congress and every Senator should seek to run, to some extent, a campaign that is tied not to the President but to their constituents. What I like to hear a Member say is, ''When I voted with the President, I didn't do it for him, I did it for you.'' That's the proper message.

Social Security

Ms. Peckinpaugh. Okay. Quickly, Mr. President, what about this very controversial Social Security issue? John Francis from Stratford wants to know your thinking on that.

The President. Well, here's what happened, and I think it's very important for the voters to listen to this. The Republicans put out this contract, and they said, ''If you'll give us control of the Congress, we will take you back to what we did in the 1980's, trickle-down Reaganomics. We'll give massive tax cuts, mostly to upper income people.'' That must be appealing in Connecticut; you have a lot of upper income people. ''We'll give massive tax cuts. We'll increase defense. We'll increase Star Wars, and we'll balance the budget in 5 years.''

That costs a trillion dollars. The only way to do that is to cut everything, including Social Security, across the board 20 percent. That's $2,000 a Social Security recipient. You say, we don't want to do that. Then you have to cut everything else in the Government across the board 30 percent. That bankrupts Medicare. If you don't do that, you're right back to where they were before, massive deficits, shipping jobs overseas. Connecticut lost 150,000 jobs in the last 4 years because of that kind of economic policy.

We need to invest and grow with discipline. We don't need a lot of easy promises. We need to embrace the challenges of the global economy, invest, and grow. That's my approach.

This Social Security threat is very real. If they carry through on their promises, they cannot keep their promise to cut the taxes and increase the spending and balance the budget without going after it.

Ms. Peckinpaugh. President Clinton, thanks for answering our viewer questions.

The President. Thank you.

Ms. Peckinpaugh. And thanks so much for taking the time to be with us.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:13 p.m. The President spoke via satellite from the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, RI. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Van Harden, Bonnie Lucas, and Bob Quinn of WHO Radio, Des Moines, Iowa

November 2, 1994

Mr. Harden. Well, we're very fortunate to have a very special guest on the phone with us here today, here on "Van and Bonnie in the Morning," President Bill Clinton. Mr. President, welcome to WHO Radio.

The President. Thanks, it's nice to be back with you. I was there once before, remember?

1993 Flood

Mr. Harden. Yes, I was just going to say, the last time we talked we—well, you were here filing up sand bags, helping us with water jugs, and all that.

The President. Yes, we had a lot of water the last time I was there. I'll never forget that.

Mr. Harden. Times are a lot better now, we're happy to report. And we want to thank you, too, for especially the moral support you lended us during that time because, as you found out, it was not very good back then.

The President. It was difficult but, you know, I was honored to be able to do it, and I'm proud of the response that we had from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Secretary Espy and all the others. We worked very hard with the people of Iowa on that flood, and I was honored to do it.

Mr. Harden. Well, you got a chance to see from the airplane a lot of the agricultural—our crops and things that were going on. And we have Bob Quinn, our farm director, here that would like to ask you a few questions in that regard.

The President. Hello, Bob.

Ethanol

Mr. Quinn. Mr. President, when we talked in April of '93, the first time we met in New York City, we talked about your support of ethanol and the clean air bill. Well, the clean air bill, as you well know, has kind of stalled out; it's blocked in court. What's your stance on ethanol? Still supporting ethanol?

The President. I'm still strongly for it. As you know, we stayed with our commitment, and we went forward with the ethanol policy, which was strongly supported by the farmers in the Middle West. And we've been sued in court; I think we'll win that lawsuit. I think that it is within the policy discretion of our Government to support ethanol. I think it's good for agriculture, good for the environment, and I still have the same position.

Farm Bill

Mr. Quinn. You know, we're talking about the farm bill right now, and we've heard some talk over the weekend from the Republican side that there may be some cutting of farm programs. Now, in your farm bill plan, do you hope to reduce spending or cut farm programs at all?

The President. Well, I think we need to make a distinction between what the two alternatives are here, because they are dramatic.

We've already figured into the budget and all the farm groups have supported the fact that the subsidy programs themselves will be somewhat less costly in the years ahead because of the trade agreements and especially the GATT agreement. But the reason for that is that we've got agreement from our competitors, especially in Europe, to cut their subsidies. And our products are so much more competitive, we're going to sell more on the markets around the world, and that's going to increase farm income. That's a good thing and, I think everyone would admit, an appropriate thing to do.

What they're talking about is something very different from that. They have made all these promises. They've promised to cut taxes—mostly for the rich, but they just want to throw tax cuts around; they've promised to spend more on defense and on Star Wars; and they promised to balance the budget in 5 years.

Now, the House Budget Committee did an analysis and basically says if they do that, they'll just have to cut everything across the board: $2,000 a Social Security recipient a