

## Text 1

LEHRER: All right, Mr. Perot, the next question – we’re going into a new round here on a category just called differences, and the question goes to you, Mr. Perot, and Gene will ask it. Gene? GIBBONS: Mr. Perot, aside from the deficit, what government policy or policies do you really want to do something about? What really sticks in your craw about conditions in this country – beside the deficit – that you would want to fix as president?

PEROT: The debt and the deficit. Well, if you watched my television show the other night, you saw it. And if you watch it Thursday, Friday, Saturday this week, you’ll get more. A shameless plug there, Mr. President. But in a nutshell we’ve got to reform our government or we won’t get anything done. We have a government that doesn’t work. All these specific examples I’m giving tonight – if you had a business like that, they’d be leading you away and boarding up the doors. We have a government that doesn’t work. It’s supposed to come from the people, it comes at the people. The people need to take their government back. You’ve got to reform Congress, they’ve got to be servants of the people again; you’ve got to reform the White House. We’ve got to turn this thing around. And it’s a long list of specific items. And I’ve covered it again and again in print and on television. But very specifically the key thing is to turn the government back to the people and take it away from the special interests and have people go to Washington to serve. Who can give themselves a 23% pay raise anywhere in the world except Congress? Who would have 1200 airplanes worth 2 billion a year just to fly around in? I don’t have a free reserved parking place at Natl Airport, why should my servants? I don’t have an indoor gymnasium and an indoor tennis and an indoor every other thing they can think of; I don’t have a place where I can go make free TV to send to my constituents to try to brainwash them to elect me the next time. And I’m paying for all that for those guys. I’m going to be running an ad pretty soon that shows they promised us they were going to hold the line on spending at the tax and budget summit, and I’m going to show how much they’ve increased this little stuff they do for themselves. And it is silly putty, folks, and the American people have had enough of it. Step one, if I get up there, we’re going to clean that up. You say, how can I get Congress to do that? I’ll have millions of people at my shoulder, shoulder to shoulder with me, and we will see it done work speed – because it’s wrong. We’ve turned the country upside down.

LEHRER: Governor Clinton, you have one minute. Governor?

CLINTON: I would just point out, on the point Mr. Perot made, I agree that we need to cut spending in Congress. I’ve called for a 25% reduction in congressional staffs and expenditures. But the White House staff increased its expenditures by considerably more than Congress has in the last 4 years under the Bush administration, and Congress has actually spent a billion dollars less than President Bush asked them to spend. Now, when you out-spend Congress you’re really swinging. That, however, is not my only passion. The real problem in this country is that most people are working hard and falling farther behind. My passion is to pass a jobs program and get incomes up with an investment incentive program to grow jobs in the private sector, to waste less public money and invest more, to control health care costs and provide for affordable health care for all Americans and to make sure we’ve got the best trained workforce in the world. That is my passion. We’ve gotta get this country growing again and this economy strong again or we can’t bring down the deficit. Economic growth is the key to the future of this country.

LEHRER: President Bush, one minute.

BUSH: On government reform?

LEHRER: Sir?

BUSH: Government reform?

LEHRER: Yes, exactly. Well, to respond to the subject that Mr. Perot mentioned.

BUSH: Well, how about this for a government reform policy? Reduce the White House staff by a 3rd after or at the same time the Congress does the same thing for their staff. Term limits for members of the US Congress. Give the government back to the people. Let's do it that way. The president has term limits. Let's limit some of these guys sitting out there tonight. (APPLAUSE) Term limits. And then how about a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution? Forty-3 – more than that – states have it, I believe. Let's try that. And you want to do something about all this extra spending that concerns Mr. Perot and me? Okay. How about a line item veto? Forty-three governors have that. And give it to the president, and if the Congress isn't big enough to do it, let the president have a shot at this excess spending. A line item veto. That means you can take a line and cut out some of the pork out of a meaningful bill. Governor Clinton keeps hitting me on vetoing legislation. Well, that's the only protection the taxpayer has against some of these reckless pork programs up there, and I'd rather be able to just line it right out of there and get on about passing some good stuff but leave out the garbage. Line item veto – there's a good reform program for you.