

Text 1

BUSH: Well, in the first place, I believe that character is a part of being president. I think you have to look at it. I think that has to be a part of a candidate for president or being president. In terms of programs, I've submitted, what, 4 different budgets to the US Congress in great detail. It's so heavy they'd give you a broken back. And everything in there says what I am for. Now I've come out with a new agenda for America's renewal, a plan that I believe really will help stimulate the growth of this economy. My record on world affairs is pretty well known because I've been president for 4 years, so I feel I've been talking issues. You know, nobody likes who shot John, but I think the first negative campaign run in this election was by Governor Clinton, and I'm not going to sit there and be a punching bag; I'm going to stand up and say, hey, listen, here's my side of it. But character is an important part of the equation. The other night Governor Clinton raised my – I don't know if you saw the debate the other night. You did – suffered through that? Well, he raised the question of my father – it was a good line, well rehearsed and well delivered. But he raised the question of my father and said, well, your father, Prescott Bush, was against McCarthy, you should be ashamed of yourself, McCarthyism. I remember something my dad told me – I was 18 years old going to Penn Station to go on into the Navy, and he said write your mother – which I faithfully did; he said serve your country – my father was an honor, duty and country man; and he said tell the truth. And I've tried to do that in public life, all through it. That says something about character. My argument with Governor Clinton – you can call it mud wrestling, but I think it's fair to put in focus is – I am deeply troubled by someone who demonstrates and organizes demonstration in a foreign land when his country's at war. Probably a lot of kids here disagree with me. But that's what I feel. That's what I feel passionately about. I'm thinking of Ross Perot's running mate sitting in the jail. How would he feel about it? But maybe that's generational. I don't know. But the big argument I have with the governor on this is this taking different positions on different issues – trying to be one thing to one person here that's opposing the NAFTA agreement and then for it – what we call waffling. And I do think that you can't turn the White House into the Waffle House. You've got to say what you're for and you've got to –

SIMPSON: Mr. President, I'm getting time cues and with all due respect –

BUSH: Excuse me. I don't want to –

SIMPSON: I'm sorry.

BUSH: I don't want to –

SIMPSON: Governor Clinton.

BUSH: I get wound up because I feel strongly –

SIMPSON: Yes, you do. (Laughter)