

Text 2

CLINTON: A family involves at least one parent, whether natural or adoptive or foster, and children. A good family is a place where love and discipline and good values are transmuted (sic) from the elders to the children, a place where people turn for refuge, and where they know they're the most important people in the world. America has a lot of families that are in trouble today. There's been a lot of talk about family values in this campaign. I know a lot about that. I was born to a widowed mother who gave me family values, and grandparents. I've seen the family values of my people in Arkansas. I've seen the family values of all these people in America who are out there killing themselves working harder for less in a country that's had the worst economic years in 50 years and the first decline in industrial production ever. I think the president owes it to family values to show that he values America's families, whether they're people on welfare you're trying to move from welfare to work, the working poor whom I think deserve a tax break to lift them above poverty if they've got a child in the house and working 40 hours a week, working families who deserve a fair tax system and the opportunity for constant retraining; they deserve a strong economy. And I think they deserve a family and medical leave act. Seventy two other nations have been able to do it. Mr. Bush vetoed it twice because he says we can't do something seventy two other countries do, even though there was a small business exemption. So with all the talk about family values, I know about family values – I wouldn't be here without them. The best expression of my family values is that tonight's my 17th wedding anniversary, and I'd like to close my question by just wishing my wife a happy anniversary, and thank you, my daughter, for being there.

LEHRER: President Bush, one minute.

BUSH: Well, I would say that one meeting that made a profound impression on me was when the mayors of the big cities, including the mayor of Los Angeles, a Democrat, came to see me, and they unanimously said the decline in urban America stems f So I do think we need to strengthen family. When Barbara holds an AIDS baby, she's showing a certain compassion for family; when she reads to children, the same thing. I believe that discipline and respect for the law – all of these things should be taught to children, not in our schools, but families have to do that. I'm appalled at the highest outrageous numbers of divorces – it happens in families, it's happened in ours. But it's gotten too much. And I just think that we ought to do everything we can to respect the American family. It can be a single-parent family. Those mothers need help. And one way to do it is to get these deadbeat fathers to pay their obligations to these mothers – that will help strengthen the American family. And there's a whole bunch of other things that I can't click off in this short period of time.

LEHRER: All right, Mr. Perot, you have one minute.

PEROT: If I had to solve all the problems that face this country and I could be granted one wish as we started down the trail to rebuild the job base, the schools and so on and so forth, I would say a strong family unit in every home, where every child is loved, nurtured, and encouraged. A little child before they're 18 months learns to think well of himself or herself or poorly. They develop a positive or negative self- image. At a very early age they learn how to learn. If we have children who are not surrounded with love and affection – you see, I look at my grandchildren and wonder if they'll ever learn to walk because they're always in someone's arms. And I think, my gosh, wouldn't it be wonderful if every child had that love

and support. But they don't. We will not be a great country unless we have a strong family unit in every home. And I think you can use the White House as a bully pulpit to stress the importance of these little children, particularly in their young and formative years, to mold these little precious pieces of clay so that they, too, can live rich full lives when they're grown.