

## Text 1

LEHRER: I have to – we have to talk about Ross Perot now or he'll get me, I'm sure. Mr. Perot, on this issue that I have raised at the very beginning and we've been talking about, which is leadership, as president of the US, it concerns – my reading of it, at least, my concerns about you, as expressed by folks in the polls an You had a problem with General Motors. You took your \$750 million and you left. You had a problem in the spring and summer about some personal hits that you took as a potential candidate for president of the US and you walked out. Does that say anything relevant to how you would function as president of the US?

PEROT: I think the General Motors thing is very relevant. I did everything I could to get General Motors to face its problems in the mid-'80s while it was still financially strong. They just wouldn't do it, and everybody now knows the terrible price they're paying by waiting until it's obvious to the brain-dead that they have problems. Now, hundreds, thousands of good, decent people, whole cities up here in this state are adversely impacted because they would not move in a timely way. Our government is that point now. The thing that I am in this race for is to tap the American people on the shoulder and to say to every single one of you, fix it while we're still relatively strong. If you have a heart problem, you don't wait till a heart attack to address it. So the General Motors experience is relevant. At the point when I could not get them to address those problems, I had created so much stress in the board, who wanted to just keep the Lawrence Welk music going, that they asked to buy my remaining shares. I sold them my remaining shares. They went their way. I went my way because it was obvious we had a complete disagreement about what should be done with the company. But let's take my life in perspective. Again and again, on complex, difficult tasks, I have stayed the course. When I was asked by our government to do the POW project, within a year the Vietnamese had sent people into Canada to make arrangements to have me and my family killed. And I had 5 small children, and my family and I decided we would stay the course, and we lived with that problem for 3 years. Then I got into the Texas War on Drugs program and the big-time drug dealers got all upset. Then when I had 2 people imprisoned in Iran, I could have left them there. I could have rationalized it. We went over, we got them out, we brought them back home. And since then, for years, I have lived with the burden of the Middle East, where it's eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth country, in terms of their unhappiness with the fact that I was successful in that effort. Again and again and again, in the middle of the night, at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, my government has called me to take extraordinary steps for Americans in distress, and again and again and again I have responded. And I didn't wilt and I didn't quit. Now, what happened in July we've covered again and again and again. But I think in terms of the American people's concern about my commitment, I'm here tonight, folks; I never quit supporting you as you put me on the ballot in the other 26 states; and when you asked me to come back in, I came back in. And talk about not quitting, I'm spending my money on this campaign; the 2 parties are spending your money, taxpayer money. I put my wallet on the table for you and your children. Over \$60 million at least will go into this campaign to lead the American dream to you and your children, to get this country straightened out, because if anybody owes it to you, I do. I've lived the American dream; I'd like for your children to be able to live it, too. (Laughter)

LEHRER: Governor, do you have a response to the staying- the-course question about

Mr. Perot?