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Divider Title: ____________________________
MR. FORD: And welcome again to MEET THE PRESS. Our issues this morning: the Clinton-Yeltsin summit—just how did it really go? We'll ask a man who was there, the president's chief adviser on all national security matters, Sandy Berger.

Then, the controversy over U.S.-China policy. We'll hear two very different views from former GOP presidential contender Pat Buchanan and a chief architect of the Clinton policy, Dr. Laura Tyson.

And campaign finance reform, Washington's hottest argument. Are the scandals nowadays and the problems worse today than ever? Well, we'll ask three top insiders, who are looking
at the nation's capital from a distance today: former Vice President Walter Mondale, now co-chairman of the grass-roots committee to push campaign reform; the committee's chairwoman, former Senator Nancy Kassebaum, who just retired from the Senate and recently married our other guest, Howard Baker, Jr.

And in our MEET THE PRESS Minute, campaign reform was also a hot issue in the post-Watergate era.

(Videotape, December 15, 1974):

GOVERNOR JIMMY CARTER: I think the American people are very eager to see political candidates be very modest in their acceptance of large campaign contributions.

(End of videotape)

MR. FORD: Then presidential candidate, Governor Jimmy Carter, on fund-raising and loopholes from 22 years ago.

But first this morning, the president's national security adviser, Sandy Berger.

Mr. Berger, good morning, welcome.

MR. BERGER: Good morning, Jack.

MR. FORD: First of all, how did the president fare, physically, on this trip following his knee surgery?

MR. BERGER: I think he fared very well. Obviously, it restricts his mobility and makes it a little more difficult for him to move around, but he managed well. It was a very rigorous trip. We left late on Wednesday night. We got back very late on Saturday morning. And the president, physically, did very well.

MR. FORD: How about President Yeltsin? As you know, there had been a great deal concern over his health. How did he appear to you?

MR. BERGER: I was very impressed by President Yeltsin's recovery. Friday, which was the day of the summit, was a day that began at 9:00 in the morning, and ended with a press conference that ended at 7:00 at night and then a dinner that the two presidents had. It was an extremely rigorous, intense day. President Yeltsin operated through that day without notes. There were--this was not two leaders talking to each other through talking points. This was a very intense and lively discussion. President Yeltsin was extraordinarily vigorous, and even by the end of the day when he got to face both the Russian and the American press, he was in fine form.

So I think he's fully recovered, physically. Obviously, there's still a little stiffness in his movements, but he is absolutely 100 percent on his game.

MR. FORD: Let's talk about some of the issues that they focused on over there. The U.S. shows up at Helsinki with a plan to expand NATO. Not at all, surprisingly, Russia is saying, "We're not happy about that at all." The administration had downplayed any real prospects. Was there ever any realistic hope that we could walk out of these meetings with President Yeltsin saying, "All right, we're going to sign off on this expansion; it's OK with us"?

MR. BERGER: No. And that was not our expectation at all for Helsinki. What the two presidents--but Helsinki, nonetheless, I think, was a pivot point in terms of the process of building an undivided peaceful democratic Europe. President Yeltsin maintains his position that NATO should not enlarge. And so, in that sense, the two presidents agreed to disagree. But President Clinton made it absolutely clear that NATO enlargement will go forward
beginning in Madrid in July, and President Yeltsin, on his part, while he's not happy about that, has decided that he will seek—rather than to isolate himself from this new NATO—to develop a relationship between Russia and NATO. So NATO enlargement will move forward. NATO-Russia partnership will move forward—a very important step.

MR. FORD: Both sides walk away from this and essentially President Yeltsin is saying, "Well, we're going to have a voice here in NATO. We're going to try to form some sort of partnership," but, certainly, not a voting member at any of this. Is that just really window dressing? Giving him a chance to go back to Russia saying, "Here's what I walked away with here," when the reality is, he didn't really walk away with much at all?

MR. BERGER: Well, first of all, I think it's extremely important that NATO and Russia will be working together in partnership as, for example, we are today in Bosnia. NATO and Russia, alongside each other, in a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. It is a new Russia; it is a new NATO. It is no longer a NATO that is directed against Russia, and I think the Russians are beginning to appreciate that.

But President Yeltsin, I think, didn't walk away with nothing. I think the two leaders also made some other very significant accomplishments. Number one, in addition to the NATO issues we've been talking about, they decided to seek a new arms control agreement after ratification of START II by agreeing to guidelines for START III, which would bring strategic nuclear weapons down to the level of 2,000 or to 2,500. Jack, that means that within a decade, strategic nuclear weapons will be 80 percent lower than they were at the height of the Cold War, just five years ago. That's important for Russia. It's important for the United States. It's important for the world.

MR. FORD: But to get to that START III, these proposals, they have to sign off on START II...

MR. BERGER: That's correct.

MR. FORD: ...and that's been languishing there in the Parliament for four years now since it was signed. The question was posed, to both presidents, about the prospect of getting that done, getting SALT II signed so that they could move on to SALT III. And in a moment of sort of presidential humor at the press conference, President Yeltsin said, when he was asked can he get that through, he said, "As far as Russia's concerned, I expect that the state Duma will make a decision based on my advice." President Clinton responded to some laughter saying, "Boy, I wish I could give that answer."

But is that being really over optimistic here by President Yeltsin? The chairman of the Communist Party has characterized Helsinki as a crushing defeat. Why is there any reason now to believe after four years all of a sudden the Duma's going to say, "You know what? You're right. We'll sign off on this thing"?

MR. BERGER: I think President Yeltsin will get a strenuous effort to get START II ratified. And in doing so—what happened in Helsinki, in some ways, creates a strategic environment that makes that more possible. But one of the problems under START II is the cuts, because of the nature of the START II cuts, would have brought the Soviets down to—in destroying weapons, where in order for parody, they actually would have had to build new missiles. By agreeing to START III limits that are lower, they won't have to do that build-up. And so, in a sense, START II will bear less of the costs than it would have before the two leaders agreed on what the end will look like in START III. So he moves into this Duma ratification process with a vision of a world in 2007 where strategic nuclear weapons are much lower and the environment, the nuclear shadow that has hung over the world for all of our lifetime will have receded very dramatically.

MR. FORD: Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott has proposed a bipartisan Senate observation group here to keep an eye on this NATO expansion. Would the administration
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welcome somebody else watching this over?

MR. BERGER: I think it's a very constructive idea by Senator Lott. It's something we've been talking about, and I hope that we can work with Senator Lott and with other members of the Senate in a cooperative way as we move forward with NATO enlargement, as we move forward with START III. I think Senator Lott has put forward a very constructive proposal to do this in a bipartisan way. NATO enlargement is a bipartisan issue, both Democrats and Republicans believe that a new NATO ought not to be static and frozen in the Cold War lines, but ought to reflect a new, inclusive Democratic reality, and we look forward to working with Senator Lott in getting that done.

MR. FORD: Let's change our focus a little bit here. Let's take a look at the U.S.-Chinese relations. As you know, the vice president on his way over to China. It seems that he has quite a dilemma here, all of this against the backdrop of the allegations we've seen of the Chinese government attempting to funnel money into campaigns here to buy some sort of favored treatment. It seems that the vice president, if he goes over there and he joins in and he seems to be very friendly with the Chinese in pushing this, people are going to say, "See, he's been bought and paid for. That's why the administration is over there doing this." If he doesn't do that, if he backs off, then there are going to be people saying, "He's not doing his job. He's supposed to be over there trying to foster relations and business deals between the U.S. and China." Tough situation for him to be in.

MR. BERGER: What the vice president will do is pursue America's national interest. There are allegations that have been raised about potential Chinese efforts to influence campaigns. Those are serious allegations that are under investigation by the Department of Justice and others. But let's bear in mind that they are allegations, and let's not leap to conclusions before these investigations are over.

The fact of the matter is we have an enormously important interest as a country in the way in which China evolves. Either China over the next 10 years will evolve in a way that integrates it more and more into the international community, in terms of human rights, in terms of weapons regimes, in terms of trade, or it will evolve in a more nationalistic and a more isolated direction. By engaging with China, we can increase the areas of cooperation. We've done a number of things together, like agreeing to end nuclear testing, reaching an agreement to protect intellectual property, working together to diffuse the situation in the Korean peninsula. And by engaging with China, we can have a vehicle for raising directly with them the problems that we have, on human rights, on market access, on some of their weapon sales policy. So engaging with China is in America's national interests. Not something we do for China, but something we do for the American people.

MR. FORD: You talk about engaging with China and talking about these problems. The vice president just said yesterday that he does intend to bring up these allegations of Chinese attempts to buy favoritism here, to funnel money into campaigns. But he said he has to be very sensitive about it, and he can't do very much about it, because of the fact that it's the subject of a Justice Department investigation. It sounds, on the surface, as if he's just going to, sort of, mention it and then go on to something else.

MR. BERGER: Well, this was raised by Secretary Albright when she was recently in Beijing. Vice president has indicated that he will raise it with the Chinese. As I said before, these are allegations. They're not proven conclusive facts. They're serious allegations. I'm sure the vice president will raise them in a very sober way. But we, obviously, don't have any conclusions to draw, and I think there are-- it is important that he pursue the broad agenda that we have with China. There are areas where we can cooperate with China; there are areas where we disagree. The vice president has, for example, a very important environmental agenda to talk to the Chinese about. That's very much in their interest and our interest.

MR. FORD: Let's talk a little bit about the National Security Council. A comment was made
just very recently by Secretary of Defense Cohen about the withdrawal by Anthony Lake of his nomination to head the CIA. And, essentially, the Secretary of Defense said that he thought it was a good thing. He said he had to withdraw because this hearing was becoming so drawn out—the potential for being so drawn out and so divisive. Do you agree with that?

MR. BERGER: Well, I think that was a judgment that Tony made himself. He spelled out the reasons very clearly in his letter. I think the hearings had become very protracted, perhaps less an exercise in judgment than a test of endurance. There are enormously important issues about the future of the intelligence agencies and intelligence community. I wish the hearings—and I hope that the hearings with George Tenet going forward—will focus on issues of what are the proper role of the intelligence community in today's world? What are the proper priorities in a post-Cold War period?—internal organizational issues. Those issues really weren't focused in Tony's hearings. They tended to be far more personal, going through his FBI raw data and files. He made a judgment, I regret that judgment because I think he would have been a good director of the CIA, but I respect it.

MR. FORD: You mentioned George Tenet and his hearings, his nomination. Most think that he's rather confirmable, but we've seen that Senator Shelby has indicated that he would like to see his FBI file, apparently, including the raw data in the file. Should he get that?

MR. BERGER: Well, I think the tradition in that past has been that the chairman and the vice and the ranking minority member generally have had access, but there hasn't been a wide dissemination. Don't forget that one's raw FBI files contains, you know, every allegation, you know that your back-door neighbor made, that you didn't take out the garbage 34 years ago and that—all of this stuff winds up in a file. It ought not to be widely disseminated. I think that the chairman did have a chance to see Mr. Lake's file. I assume he'll have a chance to see Mr. Tenet's file. But I think it will be a bad precedent, quite honestly, Jack, for people to track good people into public service if, you know, everybody that they had a fight with in fourth grade in the schoolyard became a subject of the hearings.

MR. FORD: Last question for you. Amidst all these allegations of the politicizing in the NSC, have you taken active steps here to attempt to insulate that from any of the outreaching— from political factions?

MR. BERGER: Well, let me say, first of all, I'm very proud of the NSC and the contributions made to the president's foreign policy and the extraordinarily dedicated people that work there 14, 15, 16 hours a day. And Helsinki, for example—some our folks didn't sleep for three or four nights in preparation for this meeting. But I think that there have been some questions that have been raised that are fair questions that I intend to try to clarify. How do you avoid—how do you insulate the NSC from any kind of partisan political influence without isolating it from the outside world, from people who need—we need to talk to, explain our foreign policy, and who may have information or ideas that are important. Questions, for example, of, on the one hand, need to know up the line, versus not micromanaging, but are very senior and serious people in the NSC. What the proper relationship in between the NSC and the other aspects of the White House. I want to clarify that because I think I owe that to the NSC staff and I've talked to former NSC advisers, like Brent Scowcroft, and Zbigniew Brzezinski and I intend to reach out to them and get their best advice.

MR. FORD: I said last question. I'm going to ask you one more quick question, if I might. In the Middle East, there are some concerns now that the peace process is unraveling. We've seen, once again, violence exploding across the landscape there, and it all seems to be going back towards the Israel's government decision to start new construction in that one area. Has the American government reached out to the Israelis and expressed our concerns over this?

MR. BERGER: Well, first of all, the president spoke to Prime Minister Netanyahu from Helsinki to express our deep sympathy and outrage at the terrorist incident in Tel Aviv, and express our condolences to the families. We have said very clearly that we think the decision
to proceed on Har Hon, the construction there was unhelpful because it erodes confidence on
the part of both parties. But let me say that nothing justifies terrorism. Nothing justifies
blowing up innocent civilians sitting in a cafe in downtown Tel Aviv.

MR. FORD: All right. Well, Sandy Berger, I want to thank you for spending some time with
us this morning.

MR. BERGER: Thank you, jack.

MR. FORD: Take care.

And coming up next, Pat Buchanan and Laura Tyson square off on U.S.-China policy. Then
campaign finance reform with three former Washington insiders.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: Welcome back to MEET THE PRESS. And, Pat Buchanan and Laura Tyson,
welcoming to both of you. An also joining me in the questioning this morning is David Broder
from The Washington Post.

Mr. Buchanan, with a backdrop here of both the vice president and a high-level House
delegation led by Newt Gingrich on their way to China, you have been a very vocal critic of
the administration's approach here...

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...this concept of constructive engagement. You called it a complete failure.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: If you were making this journey to China, what would you be saying to the
Chinese?

MR. BUCHANAN: Well, I would say to the Chinese that, quite candidly, if I were Newt
Gingrich, that I'm going to oppose most-favored nation treatment. I'm going to impose on
China or support the imposition on China of tariffs on their products equal to what they
impose on us. I would say constructive engagement is a policy that was noble in purpose
that has failed. Because in 1989, we had a $3 billion trade deficit and the human rights
situation was bad. Now, we've got a $40 billion trade deficit and the human rights situation
is deplorable. And, frankly, the United States is not going to become, as it is right now, the
main supplier of hard currency to the greatest tyranny on earth and the greatest potential
threat to the United States in the 21st century.

MR. FORD: Why is there any reason to believe, though, that a policy of containment and,
in fact, of confrontation would have any impact on any of the things you mentioned? Let's
focus first on human rights. Why would you think that by saying that and getting in the face
of the Chinese government...

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...it would make get them to do anything to improve their human rights record?

MR. BUCHANAN: Jack, we take between 30 percent 40 percent of China's exports. Our
purchases of Chinese goods amount to 7 percent of their gross national product. They take 1
percent of our exports. If the United States simply imposed not confrontation or conflict, but
reciprocal tariffs, the Chinese would suffer a tremendous, traumatic economic experience.
And I would say to them, "We're not going to treat you as Great Britain if you don't behave
as Great Britain."
Jack, this is holy week. We are, right now, doing business as usual to the leading persecutor of Christians on the face of the earth, the Communist Chinese tyranny. I don't believe we can do business as usual with people like that and still retain our own self-respect.

MR. FORD: Dr. Tyson, there are an awful lot of folks out there that agree with what Mr. Buchanan is saying. Our own State Department's annual human rights report, just six weeks ago, highly critical of China and even said there is apparently not a single dissident to be found...

DR. TYSON: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...suggesting that they're either in jail or they've been silenced in some fashion. Why then are we over there? Why are we engaging with them?

DR. TYSON: Well, first of all, I think, certainly, the United States, recognizes that we have serious human rights issues with China. The question before us is: What is the appropriate means for achieving what is our goal? Our goal is the transition of China, a gradual and stable transition to a more market-oriented, more democratic society based on the rule of law. How can the U.S. achieve that outcome? We believe that engaging with the Chinese, in trade, for example, will, over the long run actually move China in a more open direction.

Think about what we import from China for a minute. We're importing toys; we're importing footwear; we're importing apparel. Much of those products are actually made by the reforming quasi private or private sector of the Chinese economy. So by engaging in trade with China, we are actually supporting the transition, the creation of a civil society. By engaging in trade negotiations with China, we are moving China towards enforcement of the rule of law. China has incorporated now in its anti-crime approach around China--has incorporated our new intellectual property rights agreement, and they really are enforcing that against pirates, against people who are breaking commercial law.

MR. FORD: When we look at our human rights approach to China, a lot of people who are critical of it will say, "Here's an analogy. It's sort of like the way you approach elective surgery. It's fine to do it, unless there's some risks out there." And all of a sudden, if there's some risks out there, then you sort of back off a little bit. And people are suggesting that's what we're doing with human rights. We're saying, "We're going to after you," but as soon as we perceive that there is some tension or some problems, we back off.

DR. TYSON: Well, I really don't agree with that. Again, I would say that we are trying to achieve an improvement in human rights, and we are trying to achieve a transition to a market economy. But to take in acts in which would be, essentially, a unilateral economic sanction against China, would clearly have an economic cost on us, as well as an economic cost on China, but would not promote the evolution of human rights in China.

MR. FORD: Isn't it real easy, Mr. Buchanan, for individuals to take absolutist approaches on human rights.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: And to say, "We shouldn't be dealing because of this." Much easier than a government--I mean, the government has a difficult time being absolutist about everything. There are a lot of other considerations the government has to look at--security, peace...

MR. BUCHANAN: You're exactly right. You're exactly right. For example, the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia isn't what we would like it to be. But the point here, Jack, is, it is not moving in the right direction. If it were--incidentally, I did not always oppose this policy. I was a member of Richard Nixon's 15-man delegation to China in 1972. I thought it should be tried. But right now, we've got this enormous trade deficit that's $40 billion,
David, in hard currency, much of which is going to the greatest military buildup in Asia, of Russian planes, submarines and ships being purchased by China, and anti-ship missiles which are being targeted on the 7th Fleet--our men and women out there in Asia.

So what I'm saying is, "Look, we've tried this, we've walked down this road. It has not worked. We don't go to confrontation, but what we do do is we stop feeding the tiger."

DR. TYSON: Can I say that to say that--it sounds like our trade with China is, basically, only in the interests of the Chinese, if you listen to Mr. Buchanan. First of all, it is in the interest, not just of the Chinese, but of the United States. China is in fact our most rapidly growing export market, and it is 20 percent of the world's consumers, and it is a market which, if we don't stay engaged in, we are going to lose, over time, to international competitors, first.

MR. BUCHANAN: But...

DR. TYSON: Second of all, what we are importing from China--I really want to go back and emphasize this--we are helping in the gradual evolution or transition of China by helping to create more prosperity and more decentralized power in China.

MR. FORD: But one quick thing here. One second.

MR. BUCHANAN: One quick point on this--sure.

MR. FORD: Recent statistics show, within the last year, a--What?--36 percent change, decrease--or increase in the deficit between the U.S. and China. That doesn't sound like we're doing a great deal.

DR. TYSON: Well, first of all, I think, you have to look at these things over a long period of time. If you look from 1992 to 1996, that period of the first Clinton administration, what you see is our exports to China growing at 13 percent or 14 percent, actually.

MR. FORD: Right.

DR. TYSON: Actually, that was our fastest-growing single export market.

MR. BUCHANAN: But, Laura, wait a minute now.

MR. FORD: Wait a second. Let me get David in on this, also.

MR. BUCHANAN: All right. Let's respond. Look, we export more to Singapore than we do to China. China is 15th on the list to exports. They take 1 percent of our exports. Our market last year went from $11.7 billion up to $11.9 billion. Their exports to us went from $45 billion to $52 billion. The trade deficit has gone from $3 billion, or a little more when Laura came in, to $40 billion. It is going to be the largest trade deficit component, of America's $200 billion merchandise trade deficit, we have this year. It is larger--it is getting larger than Japan's. We are building up the most monstrous tyranny on Earth and, potentially, the greatest threat to the United States.

MR. BRODER: OK. That...

MR. BUCHANAN: That's why I say, "Pause, take a look."

MR. BRODER: The essence of the Buchanan argument: The trade deficit is growing and it's being used by the Chinese to finance arms purchases which, potentially, represent a security threat. He's right about them--both those facts, isn't he?

DR. TYSON: The trade deficit in--is growing. It, actually--in 1996, we had, basically, a
slowdown in our rate of growth of exports because 1995 we had a very big boom in our exports to China.

MR. BRODER: Right.

DR. TYSON: So the trade deficit has grown, but it has been growing over the last four years at a decreasing rate and imports have been growing at a decreasing rate. I guess I want to get back to...

MR. BRODER: But--excuse me...

DR. TYSON: ...a trade--OK.

MR. BRODER: What about the point that this money, this hard cash, is being used by them to purchase arms, many of them from the Soviet Union, which could represent a security threat to our country?

DR. TYSON: Yeah, but I could also say that our trade with China is being used by them to support the continued movement of their economy towards a market-oriented system. The Chinese have, in the last six months, been enforcing an intellectual property agreement with us, closing down pirated factories, adhering to international law and intellectual property. They have just signed a textile agreement with us, and they have indicated that they're now willing to move in a very serious way towards giving trading rights to American and foreign companies working in China.

MR. BUCHANAN: Please, please...

DR. TYSON: Yeah, but I could also say that our trade with China is being used by them to support the continued movement of their economy towards a market-oriented system. The Chinese have, in the last six months, been enforcing an intellectual property agreement with us, closing down pirated factories, adhering to international law and intellectual property. They have just signed a textile agreement with us, and they have indicated that they're now willing to move in a very serious way towards giving trading rights to American and foreign companies working in China.

MR. BUCHANAN: What China is running, David, is a classic mercantilist system just like the United States ran from 1865 to 1914.

DR. TYSON: Gradually. Very gradually.

MR. BUCHANAN: What China is running, David, is a classic mercantilist system just like the United States ran from 1865 to 1914.

DR. TYSON: It's not...

MR. BUCHANAN: In other words, "Bring in your capital, bring in your technology, but keep your consumer goods out of our country because we're protecting our market. Now, open your market and we'll invade it." What is happening right now is exactly what happened to Great Britain when the United States and Germany practiced mercantilism and invaded free trade in Great Britain.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Buchanan...

MR. BUCHANAN: And you saw them decline by World War I to the point even Germany was larger than Great Britain. That's what's happening, David.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Buchanan, the argument that you've made this morning is one that you've been making to your fellow Republicans as a presidential candidate and as an advocate for many years now.
MR. BUCHANAN: Right.

MR. BRODER: You haven't persuaded the last Republican nominees of this point. You haven't persuaded the leaders of the Republican Party in Congress.

MR. BUCHANAN: David...

MR. BRODER: Do you want us to believe that everybody is out of step in the Republican Party but Pat Buchanan?

MR. BUCHANAN: No. If you followed the primaries closely last year, you saw that even free traders like Phil Gramm went silent on NAFTA, went silent on GATT. At the grass roots, we have won the argument in the Republican Party. Check the Fabrizio poll. Every single one of the five components in the Republican Party now believes that trade deals are not good for the party or the country. David, we're winning the argument. It is not won. Gephardt is moving in our direction on MFN. More Republicans are moving in our direction, the paratistas are. Do we have the establishment of either party? No. But this question is going to answer a question whether the Republican Party has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the business roundtable.

MR. FORD: Mr. Buchanan, you talk about the danger here of the military expansion of the Chinese, but isn't the argument that by embracing them, trying to bring them in the world community and by changing the vitality of this regime by saying, "The U.S. is no longer your enemy," by taking away an enemy for them to focus on, isn't the argument if you do those two things, that you at least increase the prospect?

MR. BUCHANAN: Jack, I entertain that argument. I did not oppose the administration in '94 on the MFN. I thought it was worth trying. But what have we seen? We have seen the enormous growth of this trade deficit. The surplus is gone for weapons. The human rights record is worse. They fire missile at Taiwan. They're belligerent toward their neighbors where they're grabbing these islands. They're sending missiles to Iran, nuclear technology to Pakistan. They slapped the secretary of state of the United States virtually across the face. It is simply time to say, "Listen, our policy hasn't worked. We've treated you as a friend; we tried to. It's not working. Therefore, we're going to change it. We're going to treat you as a great power rival, which is what you hope to be."

MR. FORD: Dr. Tyson.

DR. TYSON: Can I just get a couple of facts out here on the table? In terms of the trade deficit, which Pat Buchanan keeps referring to, just a couple of points. Number one, the products we are now importing from China were not products that we were making at home before. What's happened here is that products we used to buy from Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and other parts of Asia have essentially moved now to China. So the increase in our trade deficit with China should be understood, essentially, to be reflected in a decrease in our trade deficit with other countries in the region. That's number one.

Number two, most experts think that our trade numbers with China vastly overstated our deficit with China and think that it's something like 30 percent to 40 percent less than that. Finally, just let me say again, that I think that this issue of we tried a policy and it didn't work is simply ill-informed. You have to have a long-term, consistent approach towards what's happening here. We have China on the rise as a major power in the global, economic and political system. That is going to happen. We have to have a consistent, long-term approach to them. Our approach is based on the notion of engaging them on issues and moving them into the multilateral system. We want to get them in the World Trade Organization.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.
DR. TYSON: We want to get our trading partners to work with us to set up a schedule and a timetable and a review mechanism for moving China along year by year towards a market system, and that's what the WTO will do. We shouldn't do unilateral economic sanctions. They won't work. We are not powerful enough to make China behave.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm. Well, it—wait a minute.

DR. TYSON: We are powerful enough to continue to trade with China and to work with our international partners to get China in the international forum.

MR. FORD: Mr. Buchanan, let me ask you a question. You have said about Speaker Gingrich and our relations with China...

MR. BUCHANAN: Right.

MR. FORD: ...that he should either lead, follow or is he getting out of the way.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: He is now on the way over to China here. What is he doing in this trip? Is he leading, is he following or is he getting out of the way?

MR. BUCHANAN: I think he's traveling on vacation right now, Jack. But look, my point here was quite simple. This, to me, had become one of foremost issues of national security for this country of human rights and of self-respect. I want my party to stand up and represent something higher in the hierarchy of values than the bottom line on the balance sheet. Now, enough evidence is in, I think, that we need leadership. I would like Newt to lead it. I would like Senator Lott to lead it. They're the ones who can lead it. We could win. We could get rid of MFN, or suspend it for a year. But, if the speaker's not going to lead this, and if he's going mush around and talk with everyone, and try to work out some deal with Mr. Clinton, then I'd like to see some younger congressman or some other congressman step forward and lead this battle, someone in the Senate. If Mr. Gephardt wants to lead it, that's fine. The important thing is what's good for our country here.

And to—let me correct Laura one on point. The United States—the merchandise trade deficit we ran last year is $186 billion, merchandise trade deficit. It is the largest in history of any country. It represents almost 30 percent of the manufactured goods we consume. This country is selling out to future of working men and women by these gigantic trade deficits that are sending our factories overseas.

MR. FORD: That I'm afraid is going have to be our last word. Much to talk about, never quite enough time. Happy Purim, Laura Tyson. Thank you very much...

DR. TYSON: Thank you.

MR. FORD: ...for joining us this morning.

And next up, Washington scandals and problems through the eyes of three former political heavyweights.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: We're back on MEET THE PRESS. Joined now by former Vice President Walter Mondale and former Senator Howard Baker, Jr., and former Senator Nancy Kassebaum, now Nancy Kassebaum Baker. And Senator Kassebaum, if you don't mind, I'm going to refer to you as Senator Kassebaum
so that my director doesn't experience some sort of vertigo as he jumps back and forth between Senator Baker and Senator Baker, if you will. But thank you all for joining us this morning. Mr. Mondale, although you recently retired from public service, you agreed to take on this assignment to try to mobilize the American public push for campaign finance reform here. How realistic are the prospects of getting anything done?

MR. MONDALE: Well, I think we have a good chance. I know it's difficult, but there are several things. We've got strong sponsors in both the Senate and the House for campaign finance reform. A few days ago, Senator Lott, the majority leader, said that he expects some form of campaign finance legislation to be acted on this year in the Senate. We have the support of the president of the United States, and I believe as this discussion goes forward, the American people are going to begin to demand change. And I think that Senator Kassebaum's co-chairmanship of this, also, is a big help, because this shows this is a bipartisan concern. So I have long felt that we needed reform. This gives me a chance to do my part.

MR. FORD: Senator Kassebaum, one of the ironies here is that with all this talk about the need for reform, it doesn't seem to be reflected in the public's opinion. If we accept what we see in the polls, many members of the public are saying, "What's the big deal? This seems to be the business of politics as usual."

MRS. BAKER: Well, that's true. A poll I saw showed it at the bottom of the list. And yet, as I visited around and visited around on college campuses, there isn't much till you start talking about it. And then I think the response tends to be, "Well, nothing much has ever happened, so why get upset about it?" I mean, we've not enacted reform; it's been talked about. But as you walk through it, I think people do want to see something change. We've had a hard time finding, in past Congresses, the right approach. But I think that what has concerned all of us who've been interested in this for a long time is that through each campaign cycle, the amounts of money just keep ratcheting up, the amount of time spent raising money just keeps ratcheting up. And it is, I think, very debilitating to the constructive work of the political parties.

MR. FORD: Senator Baker, you have been both in the Senate, also inside of the White House. There are many observers here that are taking a look at the allegations that have been directed against this administration and have been saying, "Hey, what's new about all of this? All of this has been taking place throughout the course of our presidential history. Perhaps the only difference here is the dollar amount and perhaps that's attributable to inflation." Is this different from what has happened in the past?

MR. BAKER: Well, I think it is different. I don't think it's a question of--I think that the principal difference is that this administration probably has pushed the envelope. I think they have extended further in fund-raising techniques than previous administrations. Whether or not there's a difference in kind, I guess we'll find out as the investigations go forward. But the bottom line is that, as Senator Kassebaum said a moment ago, it's been an evolutionary process, and it's getting more expensive and more time consuming to finance campaigns, and it's time something happened.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Mondale, 11 years ago when the big scandal in Washington was Iran Contra, you called for a special prosecutor in that case and you said at that point, "This idea of self-investigating is a non-starter." Would you apply that same standard now to this finance scandal?

MR. MONDALE: You know, I don't know what the answer is to that. I have not looked into that as a serious question. I don't know. But it will be answered by others. And what I'm working on is the campaign reform issue, and that's where I think I should be.

MR. BRODER: Well, let me turn to Senator Baker on that. Is there a parallel between this need for a special prosecutor now and the special prosecutor in the Iran-Contra affair when
you were in the White House, I believe?

MR. BAKER: Yeah, probably. It's still unfolding, and, frankly, if I were Janet Reno, I'd want a special counsel, special prosecutor mighty fast to remove any indication of partiality and get it off my desk. But in all candor, I must say that the American public will know more about this sooner through the congressional route and the House and the Senate, than they're likely to with an independent counsel, who will have to go through a grand jury and have to abide by rules of confidentiality that will withhold it from the public for months, maybe years. So I have mixed emotions about it. I guess there is a parallel, but I think that the American people are likely to find out what really happened more quickly and maybe more efficiently through the congressional route than the independent counsel route.

MR. BRODER: Senator Baker, your protege and former White--excuse me--Watergate special counsel, Fred Thompson, is running the Senate investigation of campaign finance. On Friday, Senator John Glenn of Ohio, the ranking Democrat on that committee, called me and said that while 94 subpoenas have gone out from Senator Thompson, the 11 that he has requested as the ranking Democrat on that committee have been held up because Senator Thompson needs to get them approved by the Republican Caucus. When you were on the Watergate Committee, did Senator Ervin subject your subpoena request decisions by the Democratic Caucus?

MR. BAKER: Well, Sam Ervin and I got along great, but, to tell you the truth, I can't remember a single case where he ever consulted with Republicans about the subpoenas that were going to be issued. The only one I distinctly remember is the one to subpoena the tapes and to file suit to try to get them. And that was my suggestion. It was not suggested to me by anybody.

But, it is traditional that the majority runs the process. I have not seen the provisions in this resolution for how subpoenas are issued. But I'm not surprised at that. I would like to see it go forward on a full bipartisan basis with a willing minority and a determined majority and in full cooperation. And I think it will work that way because I think both Senator Glenn and Senator Thompson are that sort of person. But I'm not surprised that the majority is making the first cut at issuing subpoenas.

MR. BRODER: Let me turn to this legislation pending campaign finance reform legislation. Mr. Mondale, have you had a chance to look at this McCain-Feingold bill which you and the president are supporting?

MR. MONDALE: Yes, I have looked at it.

MR. BRODER: Are you aware that the American Civil Liberties Union says that that bill is "fatally and fundamentally flawed when measured against First Amendment values"?

MR. MONDALE: I disagree with the Civil Liberties Union on this. I think the ability of the U.S. Congress to somehow pass legislation that heads off this growing crisis of too much money in American politics is something that the Congress should be able to do. The Civil Liberties Union is taking the position that any restraints on the spending side is the same as trying to restrain free speech. What this bill does is seek to put in place incentives that would encourage people running for federal office to accept ceilings and other restraints on how they campaign. And I think the country desperately needs it. I think it's a sensible bill. It is a beginning. New ideas, new suggestions will undoubtedly be considered as they go along. But it is the approach that holds the most hope now because it has strong bipartisan support, and so I disagree with the Civil Liberties Union. I think there is room for decent restraint, voluntary restraint, which is what the McCain-Feingold bill does.

MR. BRODER: Senator Kassebaum, as you know, having been there very recently, the leadership of your party in the Senate--Senator Lott, Senator McConnell and others--are dead set against this kind of reform legislation. How do you intend to try to change their
minds?

MRS. BAKER: Well, this is the legislation that's on the table, and has been. I was a co-sponsor in the last Congress. But Senator McCain and Senator Feingold and I--the leadership in the House with the companion bill, have all said negotiations will take place. I think there is room for and needs to be, probably, adjustments made. But this is major reform. It's probably the most major effort that's been put forward since 1974 when the now-laws were enacted after the Watergate period.

I know that we always get into any limitation being a matter of equating money and capping money with free speech. It may be that what's going to be necessary is to draft the best legislation possible and it would be tested again in the courts. I think it's inevitable whatever is passed will be addressed that way. But we found so many loopholes that with soft money and independent expenditures, particularly, there needs to be a full accounting, a full disclosure, I would say, first and foremost, of all contributions made and who made them and how the money was spent. That's a first step forward that would be of some value.

MR. FORD: Senator Baker, we've got about a minute or so left here. Let me ask you this. Anthony Lake, when he stepped aside as the president's nominee to head the CIA, said that, quote, "Washington has gone haywire." He charged that his hearing was nasty and mean, as being unfairly dragged out. The president talked about this being, quote, "political revenge." From your perspective, having been there and now looking in from the outside, has Washington indeed gone haywire?

MR. BAKER: No. No, Jack, it hasn't gone haywire. It's very much the same Washington I knew when I was there and that I knew when my father was there. Washington is--being in Congress and in national politics is tough business, and Tony Lake's a good man, I think. And I feel sorry for him for the drubbing he took. But I can think back on half a dozen other cases that were at least as tough as that. In a lot of ways, it's an unfair process, but it's been there a long time. It works pretty well, and I don't agree that Washington has gone haywire.

MR. FORD: All right. Howard Baker, Nancy Kassebaum, Walter Mondale, thank you all for joining us this morning. I'm sure we'll be talking about this a great deal in the future. And we'll be right back with our MEET THE PRESS MINUTE with Jimmy Carter on--What else?--campaign fund-raising, but this time from 1974.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: In the post-Watergate days, campaign reform was also on the minds of American voters. Twenty-two years ago, then presidential candidate Jimmy Carter spoke about fund-raising, loopholes and violations of the spirit of the law. Let's take a look.

(Videotape, December 15, 1974):

Unidentified Man: Governor, it cost a lot of money to run for president these days. Where are you going to get yours?

GOV. CARTER: I think the American people are very eager to see political candidates be very modest in their acceptance of large campaign contributions. I think it's a travesty, for instance, of the new law which will go into effect the 1st of January in which limits contributions to see some of the authors and supporters of that law trying to circumvent it by raising very large sums of money before the law goes into effect. So I'll be very open, very modest in my request for a lot of small campaign contributions and I think I'll be successful.

MR. BRODER: Governor, first a quick follow-up on something you said to Mr. Kiker about, as I understood it, some of your rivals in this situation, I believe you said, are trying to circumvent the intent of the law by raising large sums of money in advance of it going into effect. Who are you speaking of?
GOV. CARTER: I read an article in The New York Times this morning that pointed out that two senatorial prospective candidates, Senator Jackson and Senator Benson, were attempting to raise large sums of money before the 1st of January when the law goes into effect. Both of these gentlemen supported the limitation of a $1,000 contribution limit on any particular person to a candidate. I personally believe that this is typical of the Washington bureaucracy where they deliberately made the law effective long months after it was signed by the president and passed by them. I think this is equivalent to the same thing that President Nixon did back in April of 1972 when he rapidly accumulated large sums of money to finance his campaign without revealing the identity of the contributors. So I think just the spirit of the law is being violated, although I hasten to say that these two gentlemen are not doing anything that's illegal.

(End of videotape)

MR. FORD: Governor Carter and his running mate, Walter Mondale, of course, made it to the White House in 1976 and served one term. Today former President Carter continues to be deeply involved in world affairs and social causes as head of the Carter Center in Atlanta. We'll be right back.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: And coming up on "Dateline" tonight...

MR. STONE PHILLIPS ("Dateline"): Thanks, Jack.

What can the ransom note tell us about the JonBenet Ramsey murder? We'll look at how document analysts examine paper, ink and handwriting in the search for a killer. That's tonight on "Dateline" at 7, 6 Central time. Jack.

MR. FORD: Stone, thank you. We want to remind you, start your day with Katie and Matt tomorrow on "Today," then the "NBC Nightly News" with Tom Brokaw. And I'll be back with you-all next weekend on "Today." That's it for now. Tim Russert will be back next week. And it's Sunday, it's MEET THE PRESS.

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GOP chairman calls Mondale a campaign-reform 'hypocrite'

Conrad deFiebre / Star Tribune

Walter Mondale's recent appointment by President Clinton to lead a national commission for campaign-finance changes doesn't square with the former vice president's fund-raising for his son's Minnesota political campaigns, state Republican Party Chairman Chris Georgacas said Wednesday.

Ted Mondale, in his 1990 run for state Senate and in his current campaign for governor, has rejected the same kind of voluntary campaign spending limits that his father now endorses, Georgacas said.

"Fritz Mondale is actively campaigning and raising enormous amounts of money for his son's gubernatorial campaign in defiance of state voluntary expenditure limits," he said.

With more than $92,000 collected, the younger Mondale is the leading fund-raiser in the 1998 race for governor, according to the most recent state Ethical Practices Board reports. He still holds the Minnesota record for money raised in a legislative campaign -- more than $173,000 in 1990, four times the voluntary limit.

Meanwhile, Walter Mondale last week was appointed cochairman of Clinton's drive to build public support for changing the federal campaign-finance system. Mondale has said he supports legislation to ban "soft money" contributions to parties and provide free broadcast time to candidates who agree to voluntary spending limits.

Georgacas said that makes him an "incredible hypocrite" on the issue.

"On the national stage, Mondale plays the role of elder statesman... to clean up 'this growing crisis,'" he said. "Meanwhile, among us provincial rubes back in Minnesota, he cynically serves his son's fund-raising machine as collaborator-in-chief of the very practices he claims to despise in Washington."
The Mondales, both Democrats, did not return telephone calls Wednesday.

Ted Mondale, who retired from the state Senate last year, and millionaire Mark Dayton are the only 1998 gubernatorial candidates who have not signed pledges to limit their campaign spending in exchange for public financing.

In 1990, Ted Mondale said he needed to spend heavily on his campaign in order to unseat Republican Sen. Phyllis McQuaid. But he did abide by the limit in his 1992 Senate reelection campaign.

Georgacas, an avowed opponent of campaign spending limits, said Ted Mondale's actions only show that such curbs protect incumbents at the expense of less-known challengers.

"I don't want to suggest that Ted Mondale should not be raising campaign money as he is," Georgacas said. "I'm not even arguing he's doing anything unseemly. My concern is with the personal credibility of Fritz Mondale as a national advocate for campaign reform."

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In reform we trust

By Globe Staff, 03/18/97

Among the many arguments for campaign finance reform, the strongest yet was cited yesterday by Walter Mondale at the White House.

The former vice president said that the current system is "an assault on public trust." Then, borrowing from Lincoln, Mondale added: "With public trust, everything is possible; without it, nothing is possible."

It will be crucial for Congress to incorporate that perspective today - when Senators John Kerry and Paul Wellstone introduce a new reform proposal that emphasizes public financing - and for the next 78 days, running up to President Clinton's July 4 deadline for campaign reform.

If that is to be truly a day of independence from the moneyed interests that have so tarnished American politics, Congress must start right away to approach consensus. For that reason, some true reformers are excessively apprehensive about the Kerry-Wellstone plan. Under their plan, about $500 million a year would be raised by the government - through taxes or fees on broadcasters or lobbyists - to support federal candidates.

Common Cause, the leading advocacy group on the subject, supports the McCain-Feingold bill, which would use free or cut-rate television time to entice candidates into agreeing on voluntary spending limits. McCain-Feingold would also ban "soft money" contributions to parties and sharply curtail PAC contributions.

Common Cause says it likes public financing but thinks the McCain-Feingold approach has a better chance of passing this year. But while the perfect should not be the enemy of the good, the good should not be the enemy of the better.

Public financing is a fundamentally stronger approach; its supporters should be able to make their best case. And while devious members may seek to block any progress by shifting their votes among competing reforms, the reform movement may find strength in numbers. It takes more than one wave to make a tide, and a sea change is needed to restore public trust.

This story ran on page a14 of the Boston Globe on 03/18/97.
2 Political Elders Tapped for Campaign Reform Push

- Financing: White House says Democrat Walter Mondale and Republican Nancy Kassebaum-Baker agree to lead public-education project on financing of campaigns.

By EDWIN CHEN, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON--Escalating the Clinton administration's pressure on Congress to enact campaign finance reform, Vice President Al Gore on Monday announced the appointment of two party elders, one from each party, to lead a public-education project on the need to change the way elections are bankrolled.

"If we don't act quickly, and if we don't act in a truly bipartisan fashion, reform will fail this year," Gore said at the White House as he introduced former vice president and former Sen. Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) and former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum-Baker (R-Kan.).

Gore, who has come under fire for questionable fund-raising tactics—including making solicitation calls from the White House—said that the current system is awash in special-interest money. "Something must be done, and now is the time," he said.

Filling in for President Clinton, who is recovering from knee surgery, Gore reiterated the administration's support for a reform proposal sponsored by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Russell D. Feingold (D-Wis.). Their bill, considered a longshot, would ban "soft-money" contributions, reduce the influence of political action committees and provide free or discounted television time and postal rates for congressional candidates who agree to restrain campaign spending.

Noting that "organized interests in Washington are mobilizing to block reform," Gore said the key to change will rest on the ability of reformers to "engage the broad American public."

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The appointments of Mondale and Kassebaum-Baker came just days after a broad anti-reform coalition--made up of liberal and conservative special-interest groups--held a press conference on Capitol Hill to denounce any attempt to limit campaign spending as a violation of the free-speech doctrine.

The stepped-up jockeying to influence public opinion on campaign finance reform comes as McCain, Feingold and their allies, including former Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) and Common Cause, are preparing to attend
public rallies next week at Boston's Fanueil Hall and Philadelphia's Liberty Bell designed to energize grass-roots support for reform.

"What you're seeing is a growing momentum. It's no longer just about pointing out what the problems are, but people saying how do we move toward a solution," said Common Cause president Ann McBride.

* * *

The naming of Mondale and Kassebaum-Baker also was hailed by McCain, Feingold and their chief House allies, Reps. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) and Martin T. Meehan (D-Mass.), who called it "cause for great celebration and encouragement."

But Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) dismissed the White House announcement as a diversion from the fund-raising scandals dogging the Clinton White House and the Democratic National Committee.

"I assume it's just another effort to distract attention from all the problems that they're having to deal with," Lott told reporters.

Copyright Los Angeles Times
Mondale to press for campaign-finance legislation

Tom Hamburger / Star Tribune Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Just three months after declaring himself retired from public life, former Vice President Walter Mondale was back Monday standing before the cameras in Washington, committing himself to one more campaign.

This time the campaign is not for a candidate, but for a cause: campaign finance reform.

Mondale, who came forward reluctantly, at the president's request, said it was better to "light a candle than to curse the darkness."

Standing with Vice President Al Gore, Mondale said the campaign-finance situation is "a crisis that calls us to action."

Action in the next few weeks will feature Mondale and former Kansas Republican Sen. Nancy Kassebaum Baker encouraging public support for legislation that would ban "soft money" contributions and provide free broadcast time to candidates.

The legislation, sponsored by Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Russell Feingold, D-Wis., is blocked in the Senate by Republican leaders and has not drawn enthusiasm from an increasingly cynical public.

Concern about that growing cynicism drew Mondale, who stepped down as ambassador to Japan in December, back into the public arena.

'Assault on public trust'

"The spectacle of rivers of money flowing into campaigns is an assault on public trust," Mondale told the White House gathering Monday. "... Lincoln once said that with public trust everything is possible. Without it, nothing is possible."

In an interview later, Mondale said that "we hope to tap what we think is substantial public concern and unrest about the current mess we are in." He compared the campaign he plans to undertake to the effort in 1995 to pass lobbying and gift-ban legislation.

That legislation was first deemed difficult to pass, but, thanks in part to pressure from Sens. Carl Levin, D-Mich., and Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., both were enacted with strong grass-roots support.
To build public backing, Mondale and Kassebaum Baker plan to establish a private organization with a small staff, funded by foundation grants. Mondale said much of his work -- writing articles for newspaper opinion pages, appearing on talk shows, contacting former officials for help -- can and will be done from Minneapolis.

"I'm not going to hit the campaign trail again," he said. Neither he nor Kassebaum Baker will lobby Congress. Instead, they will concentrate on building public pressure using their personal prestige, contacts and media appearances.

Kassebaum Baker -- who recently married former Republican Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker -- was an independent Republican voice on campaign finance and other issues during her 18 years in the Senate. She agreed to join Mondale only when she was convinced that the effort was not designed to distract public attention from the growing controversy over Clinton's fund-raising practices.

Clinton has used the pulpit of the presidency to urge passage of the McCain-Feingold legislation, but he has done so against the background of a seemingly endless flow of news stories disclosing aggressive White House fund-raising efforts in 1996.

After the brief ceremony Monday morning, Mondale and Kassebaum Baker met with the Clinton -- seated in a wheelchair and recovering from recent knee surgery -- for 20 minutes in the president's study in the White House residence. "He seemed to be in good spirits," Mondale said.

Afterward, Mondale and Kassebaum Baker met at the White House with leaders of 14 campaign-finance reform groups in Washington, including Fred Wertheimer of Common Cause and Joan Claybrook of Public Citizen. Together, they began to plot efforts to rouse the public and involve major corporate leaders.

Spending limits

McCain-Feingold would provide free air time for candidates who agree to voluntary spending limits and would ban soft-money donations to the political parties. It has drawn support from many Democrats, including Wellstone, who has made clear he would prefer a more comprehensive approach. Wellstone attended Monday's White House ceremony and today joins two other Democratic senators -- John Kerry of Massachusetts and John Glenn of Ohio -- to propose a publicly financed solution.

Minnesota's junior senator, Republican Rod Grams, has said he has reservations about the McCain-Feingold bill.

Mondale ended his remarks at the White House by saying that the plea for change "is not intended to silence the debate over what has been occurring in recent campaigns. But as we've all been taught, it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. Today, this year, we have an opportunity to light that candle."
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Inside Politics

Interview With Heads Of Bipartisan Campaign Reform Project

Aired March 18, 1997 - 4:12 p.m. ET

JUDY WOODRUFF, CNN ANCHOR: President Clinton picked a pair of political heavy hitters to head his bipartisan campaign reform project. Former Vice President Walter Mondale, of course, served under Jimmy Carter and in that capacity he served on the National Security Council. He also spent 12 years in the U.S. Senate, and more recently, was ambassador from the United States to Japan. He joins us from Minneapolis. And Nancy Kassebaum-Baker is with me here in Washington. She served three terms in the U.S. Senate and was a member of the foreign relations committee among others. Thank you both for being with us.


WOODRUFF: To you first, Senator Kassebaum. We just heard Trent Lott say in that clip just a moment ago, well, this is just a diversion. It's an attempt on the part of the White House to distract attention from all the problems the White House is having. Is that what this is?

KASSEBAUM-BAKER: I don't think so. I -- In fact, I think it's important to keep it separate from the investigations that are ongoing, and that should not take away from the importance of dealing with campaign finance reform. And it seems to me now is an opportunity. But I think they are two separate tracks and should be viewed that way.

WOODRUFF: Do you have the same opinion, Mr. Mondale?

WALTER MONDALE, (D) FORMER VICE PRESIDENT: Yes. This isn't an attempt to change the subject. This is an attempt on our part to add a subject. In other words, both of us in our separate statements said that the question of what happened in this past election will continue to be explored by congressional committees and the rest. But our attempt is to try to get campaign finance reform in place to fundamentally change the system and help protect it from these kinds of profound embarrassments.
So I don't see anything inconsistent. As a matter of fact if out of all of this pain and embarrassment we can get some reform, I think there could be some good news in it as well.

WOODRUFF: Senator Kassebaum-Baker, what do you say to those who've said that you've just signed on here to a very uphill battle? Is this a fight that's winnable do you think?

KASSEBAUM-BAKER: I hope so. It is uphill. We've tried. I was a co-sponsor of McCain-Feingold in the last Congress. It's very difficult really to get the House and Senate's attention and you have to wonder how many people do care in the country. I think they do, and I think it is possible. I think there are activities that have grown out of the reform laws that were passed some 25 years ago, almost now, that we need to address.

And it isn't just through more paperwork, but there is a significant reform bill on the table, which is McCain-Feingold or Shays-Mien (ph) in the House -- same bill, and it is that, that we're addressing. And Ambassador Mondale and myself are setting up on our initiative, sort of a public education and awareness effort so we can broaden the base of support for this.

WOODRUFF: And to you, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Ambassador Mondale, how do you keep from getting just enormously discouraged when there's so much opposition in the Congress and there doesn't really seem to be much of a ground swell on the part of the public?

MONDALE: Well, I have seen a lot of things in my political lifetime pass that weren't supposed to pass. When the public gets aroused, this system works. And our attempt -- that we're starting this week -- is to try to encourage the American public to look at this issue of campaign reform, see that the system is getting worse and worse, is threatening the vitality and integrity of the public process and democracy itself, and ask them to help press Congress to do something about it. It's tough, but I think it's possible.

WOODRUFF: Do you think there should be an independent counsel, Mr. Mondale, to look into the allegation that's are out there?

MONDALE: I don't know. That's not why I joined this committee.

WOODRUFF: Let me ask you about one of the -- one of the story -- one of the allegations that, in fact, Vice President Gore has acknowledged making phone calls at his office next to the White House, fund-raising phone calls. Was that the right thing to do?

MONDALE: I didn't do it. He has said he wouldn't do it again and I hope that will be the end of it. But it's another reason why we should also have campaign finance reform to make all these issues as clear as we possibly can and set a boundary around permissible fund- raising activities and the ways in
which funds can be spent. This is desperately needed now.

WOODRUFF: Did either one of you make fund-raising calls from your offices in the Senate? Senator Kassebaum-Baker?

KASSEBAUM-BAKER: No, no.

MONDALE: I didn't and I...

KASSEBAUM-BAKER: Excuse me. I was just going to say, I always limited what I took. I mean, unilaterally one can do it and put a limit even beyond what was there for political action committee contributions. I think the important thing is, that what's happened in each campaign cycle, is it just ratchets up, and then the envelope is pushed further and further. And, as -- as I think Ambassador Mondale put it so well, what's drained off is an energy and vitality, in that, we've all become fund-raisers instead of really the time to legislate.

WOODRUFF: Ambassador Mondale, you said you never made such calls from your office when you were in the Senate?

MONDALE: Right, right. And I'd also like to underscore what Senator Kassebaum-Baker just said. And that is, that this situation is getting worse and worse. This past campaign, two billion dollars was spent clear beyond anything that's needed, and I think it's now discouraging many of the best people from running or stay in public -- staying in public office and it's assaulting public trust at the same time. This -- this is simply got to be changed, and I think that's why both of us are in this.

WOODRUFF: All right. Well, vice president and former ambassador Walter Mondale, former United States Senator Nancy Kassebaum-Baker, we want to thank you both for being with us.

KASSEBAUM-BAKER: Thank you, Judy.

MONDALE: Thank you.
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March 21, 1997

Dear Editor:

In the President's 1997 State of the Union Address, he called on Congress to pass campaign finance reform legislation by July 4. This past Monday, the President asked former Vice President Walter Mondale and former Senator Nancy Kassebaum-Baker to co-chair a campaign finance reform education and awareness project to help educate the public on the real need for reform this year.

As Vice President Gore said in his remarks introducing Vice President Mondale and Senator Kassebaum-Baker, "Americans are beginning to understand why reform is so desperately needed. With every election cycle now, money piles higher and corrodes our politics further. The campaign laws we operate under today were passed more than two full decades ago, and they've been overwhelmed by the flood of money that washed into our election campaigns....The bipartisan legislation now before Congress, introduced in the Senate by John McCain and Russ Feingold, and in the House by Chris Shays and Marty Meehan, is the best chance in years to change this system."

In addition to the remarks from Monday's announcement, please find enclosed the following information on the campaign finance reform initiatives proposed by the President:

- Remarks by the President to the Conference on Free TV and Political Reform
- Fact sheet on the President's Free TV proposal
- Fact sheet detailing the President's campaign finance record
- Letter from Senators McCain and Feingold and Representatives Shays and Meehan in support of the President's leadership on bipartisan campaign finance reform

Please contact the White House Office of Media Affairs at 202/456-7150 should you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Lorrie McHugh
Deputy Press Secretary for Media Affairs and Operations
THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release March 11, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN ADDRESS TO THE CONFERENCE ON FREE TV AND POLITICAL REFORM

The National Press Club

11:12 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. What a gift. (Laughter.) Thank you, Walter Cronkite. Thank you, Paul Taylor, for your passion and your commitment. Thank you, Senator McCain, Chairman Hundt, Ann McBride, Becky Cain. And thank you, Barry Diller, for what you have said about this important issue.

I am delighted to have the chance to come here today, and I thank the sponsors of this event.

Again, let me say that I participated in the last election in the free television offered by the networks, thanks to the efforts of Paul Taylor and Walter Cronkite and the members of the Straight Talk Coalition. Senator Dole and I were given a unique opportunity to talk directly to the voters -- no gimmicks, no flashy graphics, a full minute or two at a time. And I really enjoyed it. I put a lot of effort into those opportunities, and I'm sure that Senator Dole did as well. I felt that they were a great gift.

And Walter and I had a talk backstage before we came out about how it might even be done better in the next round of elections. Maybe my opinions will carry more weight on such matters since I never expect to run again for anything. And I do believe that the free television was a very important thing. I think if it could be done, as we were discussing, at the same time every evening on a given network, and back to back so that the candidates can be seen in a comparative context, I think it would be even more valuable.

We have to do some things to improve the way our political system works at election time and the way it communicates, or its leaders communicate, to people all year round. This should not be surprising to anyone. The Founding Fathers understood that we were an experiment. We're still around after all of these years because we have relished the idea that we are an experiment, that America is a work in progress, that we're constantly in the making. We always have to change.
A lot of good things have happened to expand participation in the political system from the time we were a new nation, when only white male property owners could vote, and we have to make some more changes now. But if you look at the changes which have been made in the last 200 years, we should be hopeful.

Television has the power to expand the franchise or to shrink the franchise. Indeed, that is true of all means of communications and all media. We know that television is a profound and powerful force; we know that we don't fully understand all of its implications -- even what you said, Walter, we don't really know what the connection is between television and a diminished voter turnout. It could be because there is a poll on television every night that tells people about the election, so some people think that there's no point in their voting, because the person they're for is going to win anyway, or the person they're for can't win anyway.

We need to think about that, and that's not the subject of this meeting, but we need to -- we really need -- all of us need more information, more research, about why people vote and why they don't vote. There was a very -- I've only seen one survey, done I believe for the Democratic Leadership Council, of the nonvoters. It's a poll that doesn't pay off. You know, it was done, after the election, of the nonvoters. But it was very interesting, and some of the findings were quite counterintuitive about why people did or didn't vote. But I would urge those of you who are interested in it to get that, look at it, and think about what new work could be done to look into that.

Today, we want to talk about whether the medium of free television could be used to diminish the impact of excessive money in politics and about whether it could still be used, therefore, to reform our system in a way that makes it better, and ultimately that leads to better decisions for the American people. It is now commonplace -- everybody will tell you -- that campaigns cost too much and it takes too much time to raise the money, and the more money you raise from a larger number of people, the more questions will be raised about that.

Major party committees spent over three times as much in this last election cycle as four years before. And that doesn't count the third party expenditures, both the genuinely independent third party committees and those that weren't really independent although they claim to be. Spending in Congressional campaigns has risen six-fold in the last two decades. That's over three times the rate of inflation.

The biggest reason for this is the rise in the cost of television. But, of course, there is also now more money being spent on mail, on telephoning, on radio and other print advertising as well.

In 1972, candidates spent $25 million for political ads; in 1996, $400 million. Presidential campaigns now routinely spend two-thirds or more of their money on paid ads; Senate candidates, 42 percent of their money on television; House races, about a third.
Interestingly enough, that's often because there is no single television market which just overlaps a House district and often the cost is prohibitive, particularly in the urban districts. But you get the drift, it's the same everywhere.

We are the only major democracy in the world where candidates have to raise larger and larger sums of money simply to communicate with voters through the medium that matters most. Every other major democracy offers candidates or parties free air time to speak to voters, and we can plainly do better, building on the big first step urged by this group in 1996. We have an obligation to restore our campaign finance system to a system that has the broad confidence of the American people but also of the American press that comments on it. In order to do that, television has to be part of the solution. I have said before and I will say again, everybody who has been involved in this system has to take responsibility for it and for changing it.

Those of us in public life know better than anybody else what the demands of prevailing in the present system are, and those who control the airwaves understand it well also. First and most fundamentally, I came here to support Senator McCain. We have to take advantage of this year to pass campaign finance reform. The campaign finance laws are two decades out of date. They have been overtaken by events, by dramatic changes in the nature and cost of campaigns and the flood of money that has followed them. The money has been raised and spent in ways that simply could not have been imagined when the people who fashioned the last campaign finance law in Congress did it.

They did the best they could, and I will say again, I believe that they did a good thing and that that law did improve the financing of our campaigns and restored a level of confidence to our politics and made things better. It is simply that time has changed and we need new changes to reflect the things that have happened in the last 20 years.

It will not be easy to do this, but the situation is far from hopeless. After all, the first thing I want to say is, the American people do care about this, and our politics, I think, in terms of traditional honesty, is getting better, not worse. I have asked over a dozen people just in the last two years who have been living in Washington for the last 30 years, who have been in politics -- the most recent person I asked was Senator Dole -- whether politics was more or less honest today than it was 30 years ago, and all 12 or 15 -- however many I asked -- all gave the same answer. They said it's more honest today than it was 30 years ago. I think that's where we have to start.

It is important to put this in the proper perspective if you want people in Congress to vote to change it. They cannot be asked to admit that they are doing something that they're not, or that they are participating in dragging the country down the drain, because anybody who knows what went on 30 years ago and what goes on today would have to say that the system is still better than it was then.

On the other hand, anybody who denied that, at an exponential pace, changes are
occurring which imperil the integrity of the electoral process and the financing of campaigns would also be badly amiss.

The second thing I'd like to say is, we should be hopeful because we have seen over the last four years in other contexts real bipartisan processes to improve the way politics works -- not in campaign finance reform, but there was bipartisan support for the motor voter law, for the lobby disclosure overhaul that was the first one in 50 years, in which Congress banned meals and gifts from lobbyists to lawmakers but also required much more disclosure. And that's the most important thing. When you get 100 percent disclosure of an area where there hasn't been any before, then that offers all of you in the press the opportunity to communicate to the American people what the activities of lobbyists are and to let them and you draw your own conclusions in terms of the results produced by decision-makers. We've required Congress to live under the same that they impose upon the private sector.

Every single one of these things has happened in the last four years with broad, bipartisan support. So I think it is very, very important that we recognize this will not happen unless there is bipartisan support. But there is evidence that if the environment is right, if the support is deep enough, if the calls are strong enough and positive enough, we can get this kind of change.

Now, let me also say that I think it's important to make this point, because I see all these surveys that say that campaign finance reform is important to people, but if you rank it on a list of 10 things, it will always rank 10th behind balancing the budget, education and all this. That can be used by politicians as an excuse, if you will, not to deal with it. They say, well, look at all these surveys. Campaign finance reform -- sure, people like it -- but it's not as important to them as whether we'll have national standards for reading and math, for example -- one of my passions.

What we have to do is to make a connection between the two for the American people. What we have to argue is, yes, we really need to be up here doing the public's business. We need to be balancing the budget, improving education, reforming welfare, expanding health care coverage to children who don't have it, passing a juvenile justice reform -- the kinds of things that I'm passionately interested in.

But having the right kind of campaign finance reform system and having the right kind of straight talk on television and having issues be more -- elections be more issue-oriented and having the debates of both sides heard clearly by all people and increasing voter interest and voter turnout -- all these things will increase the likelihood that this laundry list of good things will be done and will be done in better fashion than would otherwise be the case. I think it is very important that those of you who care about this make this connection because that's how to build broad and deep support for this endeavor.

It seems to me that we do have an historic opportunity to pass campaign finance reform.
And I think the public owes a lot of gratitude to Senator McCain and Senator Feingold and Congressman Shays and Congressman Meehan and all of their supporters for the legislation they have offered. It is real and tough. It would level the playing field and reduce the role of big money in politics. It would set voluntary limits on campaign spending and ban soft money, all corporate contributions, and the very large individual ones. It would restrict the role of political action committees and lobbyists and make needed reforms within the confines of the constitution as defined by existing Supreme Court case law.

In all these ways, it would set ceilings on money in politics and, just as important, it would also provide a floor. And I think that is very important -- it would also provide a floor. You actually have some members in Congress who come from districts where there's a very low per capita income, for example, who are very afraid of campaign finance reform because they're afraid, among their own constituents, they'll never be able to raise enough money in their district to compete the first time a multi-millionaire runs against them.

So the law has to give a floor. And McCain-Feingold does that by giving candidates free air time to talk directly to the voters if they observe the spending limits of the law. And we need to emphasize that any ceiling law should have a floor to guarantee that people have their say and are heard. It gives candidates deeply discounted rates for the purchase of time if they observe the limits of the law.

In all these ways, it will level the playing field, giving new voices a chance to be heard and being fair to both parties.

I have supported the idea of free TV time for many years. When the Vice President was in Congress, he actually introduced legislation to require it. It was first proposed by President Kennedy in 1962. It has been around long enough. We now tried it in the last election more than ever before, and we know that it advances the public interest.

In my State of the Union address, I asked Congress to pass the McCain-Feingold bill by July the 4th, the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy. I pledge to you that I will continue to work with members of both parties to do this. I will be mustering more support out in the country, and that will be announced over the next few weeks, for this endeavor.

We have to use the present intense interest in this, as well as the controversy over fundraising in the last election and all the publicity on it, as a spur to action. We cannot let it become what it is in danger of becoming, which is an excuse for inaction.

And that again is something that I challenge all of you on. Do not let the controversies become an excuse to do nothing and to wallow around in it. Use it as a spur to changing the system, because until you change the system, you will continue to have controversies over the amount -- the sheer amount -- of money that is raised in these elections.
The second thing I'd like to discuss is what Walter talked about in some detail, and that is how broadcasters can meet their public interest obligations in this era. Ever since the FCC was created, broadcasters have had a compact with the public: in return for the public airwaves, they must meet public interest obligations. The bargain has been good for the industry and good for the public.

Now, startling new technologies are shaking and remaking the world of telecommunications. They've opened wider opportunities for broadcasters than ever before, but they also offer us the chance to open wider vistas for our democracy as well.

The move from analog signals to digital ones will give each broadcaster much more signal capacity than they have today. The broadcasters asked Congress to be given this new access to the public airwaves without charge. I believe, therefore, it is time to update the broadcasters' public interest obligations to meet the demands of the new times and the new technological realities. I believe broadcasters who receive digital licenses should provide free air time for candidates, and I believe the FCC should act to require free air time for candidates.

The telecommunications revolution can help to transform our system so that once again voters have the loudest voice in our democracy. Free time for candidates can help free our democracy from the grip of big money. I hope all of you will support that. There are many ways that this could be done. Many of you here have put forward innovative plans. I believe the free time should be available to all qualified federal candidates. I believe it should give candidates a chance to talk directly to the voters without gimmicks or intermediaries. Because campaign finance reform is so important, I believe it should be available especially to candidates who limit their own spending. It is clear under the Supreme Court decision that this can be done, and I believe that is how it should be done.

Candidates should be able to talk to voters based on the strength of their ideas, not the size of their pocketbooks, and all voters should know that no candidate is kept from running simply because he or she cannot raise enormous amounts of funds.

Last month, the Vice President announced that we would create an independent advisory committee of experts, industry representatives, public interest advocates, and others to recommend what steps to take. Before I came over here today, I signed an executive order creating that committee. The balanced panel I will appoint will advise me on ways we can move forward and make a judgment as to what the new public interest obligations of broadcasters might be. But today, let us simply agree on the basic premise. In 1997, for broadcasters, serving the public should mean enhancing our democracy.

Finally, let me challenge the broadcasters as well. Broadcasters are not the problem, but broadcasting must be the solution. The step the broadcasters took in this last election, as I have said over and over again in other forums, with the encouragement of Straight Talk for TV, was a real breakthrough. Now I ask broadcasters to follow up on this experiment in democracy, and
I'm especially pleased that a leader in the industry, Barry Diller, has challenged his colleagues to open up the airwaves to candidates. He has made clear -- forcefully and very publicly -- that he and all of his colleagues have an obligation to society. And his presence here today makes it clear that he is willing to assume the mantle of leadership. But surely there are others -- I know there are -- who will gladly join in and take up this cause as well.

There are many questions about political reform. Many skeptics will look at all proposed reform measures and ask whether they'll work and whether there will be unintended consequences. The truth is that they will work and there will be unintended consequences.

But if we use that for an excuse not to change, no good change in this country would ever have come about. There will always be something we cannot foresee -- that's what makes life interesting and keeps us all humble -- but that must not be an excuse for our refusing to act in this area. We know -- we know -- when we work to expand our democracy, when you give people a greater voice and advocates of all political views a firm platform upon which to stand, we are moving forward as a nation. By passing campaign finance reform, by renewing the compact between broadcasters and the public to better serve in this new era, we can do that again.

And I will say again, I will do all I can on both these fronts -- on campaign finance reform legislation and on requiring free availability of the airwaves to public candidates. We need your support for both, and we need broader and more intense public support. And again I say, that has to be built by demonstrating to the public that this is not an inside-the-beltway exercise and both parties trying to find ways to undermine each other, but a necessary way of opening our democracy so that we can better, more quickly, and more profoundly address the real challenges facing the American people in their everyday lives.

These two steps will help, and together I hope we can make them this year. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, Sarah.

Q I want to know -- you said that you would not have been reelected --

THE PRESIDENT: -- I think -- probably I might have been, because I'm the President and a President has unusual access to the public. And you have the presidential debates, which are unique in terms of their viewership and their potential impact. But I believe that if you just look at the races for Congress and the number of votes that changed just in the last five days, and how the votes were counted when the votes changed and the movement changed, there is no question that the amount of money deployed in an intelligent way can have a profound impact on the outcome of these elections. And what you want to do is to make sure that everybody has the
same fair chance at the voters and nobody has an excessive chance. And given the Supreme Court cases, the way the McCain-Feingold bill is drawn up, plus the effort to get more free air time, are the best responses to overcome the undue influence of excessive money.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 11:35 A.M.
FACT SHEET

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PROPOSAL
TO PROVIDE FREE TELEVISION TIME TO CANDIDATES
Free TV for Straight Talk Coalition
National Press Club
March 11, 1997

Today, President Clinton will speak to the Free TV for Straight Talk Coalition, the group founded by journalist Paul Taylor to urge free TV time for candidates. The President will:

- Renew his call for comprehensive campaign finance reform. He will again urge passage of the bipartisan reform legislation that provides free TV time for candidates.
- Propose that digital television broadcasters be required to provide free time to candidates.
- Sign an executive order establishing a panel to propose the elements of new public interest obligations for digital television broadcasters.
- Challenge broadcasters to provide free time without delay.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND FREE BROADCAST TIME

President Clinton has strongly supported providing free broadcast time to candidates as part of comprehensive campaign finance reform. In Putting People First, he wrote, “We will push for and sign strong campaign finance legislation to ... lower the cost of airtime so that television becomes an instrument of education, not a weapon of political assassination.” In 1993, the President proposed a campaign finance plan that gave candidates who agreed to limit their spending broadcast vouchers, as well as reduced broadcast rates.

As a Member of Congress, Vice President Gore proposed legislation that would require broadcasters to provide broadcasting time to candidates (S. 2923, 1988).

1. COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM LEGISLATION
(McCAIN-FEINGOLD/SHAYS-MEEHAN)

In the State-of-the-Union Address, President Clinton called on Congress to pass comprehensive bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation by July 4. The legislation was introduced by Sens. John McCain (R-AZ) and Russ Feingold (D-WI), and Reps. Chris Shays (R-CT) and Marty Meehan (D-MA). Its provisions include:

- **Spending limits.** Candidates would voluntarily limit their spending (to $600,000 per cycle, adjusted for inflation, in House races; at a rate based on state voting age population, in Senate races).

- **Free and discounted broadcast time.** Candidates who agree to the spending limits would be eligible to receive free broadcast time.
Senate candidate would receive 30 minutes of free time.
Senate and House candidates would be eligible for a deep discount on broadcast advertising rates -- 50% of the “lowest unit rate” (the lowest rate customarily charged to advertisers) for time purchased within 60 days of the general election and 30 days of the primary election.

PACs. The legislation would restrict PAC contributions (House version) or ban them altogether (Senate version), and impose aggregate PAC limits.

Bans soft money.

2. PRESIDENT CLINTON PROPOSES NEW PUBLIC INTEREST OBLIGATION FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION BROADCASTERS

Background: For decades, broadcasters have been required to meet public interest obligations as a condition of their licenses. Today, for example, broadcasters are required to air children’s programming under this public interest obligation. In coming years, broadcasters will make the transition from analog signals to digital signals, giving them the ability to transmit more channels, sharper pictures, or other commercial services once they are licensed. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is now debating what the public interest obligation of digital television broadcasters ought to be.

Proposal: Today, the President called on the FCC to make free airtime for candidates a public interest obligation required of digital television broadcasters who receive digital licenses.

The President set forth broad conceptual guidelines for such time: He urged that it be made available to all qualified federal candidates; it should give candidates a chance to talk directly to voters, without gimmicks and without intermediaries; and it should be made available especially to those candidates who limit their own spending. He did not take a position on the amount of time that should be made available, or on any of the specific plans that should be considered. Such plans include a “broadcast bank” proposed by FCC Chair Reed Hundt, and free TV plans proposed by Straight Talk director Paul Taylor and political scientists Norman Ornstein and Thomas Mann.

3. EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHES NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Background: To advance the debate on digital TV broadcasters’ public interest obligations, on February 5, the Vice President announced that the President would form a special group to study what the obligations ought to be and report back within one year. The announcement emphasized that, in the meantime, the President wished the FCC to move expeditiously on the other steps needed to make the transition to digital television broadcasting.

The Executive Order: The President is signing an executive order that establishes an
independent "Advisory Committee on Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters." It will have fifteen members appointed by the President from the private sector, representing the commercial and noncommercial broadcasters, computer industries, producers, academic institutions, public interest organizations and the advertising community.

Its charge is to report to the Vice President by June 1, 1998 on the public interest obligations that digital TV broadcasters should assume.

4. CHALLENGES BROADCASTERS TO PROVIDE FREE TV TIME TO FEDERAL CANDIDATES

Background: Last year, the Straight Talk Coalition fostered a breakthrough when it persuaded broadcasters to provide free time for candidates to talk directly to the voters. Leaders in the broadcast industry are trying to capitalize on that successful experiment. Barry Diller recently challenged broadcasters to provide free air time for candidates in the next election.

The President’s Challenge: The President today challenged broadcasters to provide candidates, free of charge, the time they need to reach voters directly and talk to them about the issues.
REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
AT ANNOUNCEMENT ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Good morning and Happy St. Patrick's Day to everyone. Thank you for joining us to mark an important milestone on our nation's drive toward campaign finance reform.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging so many of the leaders for reform who have gathered here today. Of course, in just a moment I'm going to be asking Vice President Mondale and Senator Kassebaum Baker to make their statements. I want to acknowledge the presence of Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, Congressman Jim Moran of Virginia, Congressman Steve Horn of California, former Senator Gaylord Nelson. And I may have missed some members of Congress -- I hope not, it's not intentional. And there are leaders of groups that have fought tirelessly for campaign finance reform, and I want to acknowledge all of you as a group with an expression of thanks for all that you do.

There's a broad cross-section of the civic, religious, and business leaders who have joined this fight and helped to lead it to make the American political process worthy of the American people. Today, we push our crusade still further. We are enlisting two of America's leading public citizens, one a Republican and one a Democrat, as spokes people for the cause of renewing our democracy.

As you know, President Clinton very much wanted to be here, but his surgery on Friday has prevented it. Even though he is having a little trouble walking today, he is committed to taking all the strides we need to reform our campaign finance system. And in fact, just as soon as we finish these remarks, Vice President Mondale and Senator Kassebaum Baker and I will meet with the President upstairs, in his residence to discuss this project. I think it's fitting that his first official business after his surgery is going to be campaign finance reform.

We're at a critical moment in the drive toward reform. We have unprecedented public focus. I can bear personal testimony to that. (Laughter.) And we ought to see that as an asset to focus on the need for reform. Our second asset is that we have in Congress a genuinely bipartisan bill. And now today we add a third ingredient. With the help of the two distinguished citizens standing with me here, we can help mount the kind of public education drive that, throughout our nation's history, has always preceded reform.

Americans are beginning to understand why reform is so desperately needed. With every election cycle now, money piles higher and corrodes our politics further. The campaign laws we operate under today were passed more than two full decades ago, and they've now been overwhelmed by the flood of money that has washed into our election campaigns. This money,
raised in ever greater sums by both political parties, has awarded special interest too prominent a
place in our political system, too powerful a voice in America's democratic dialogue.

It is clear to all citizens, regardless of party or philosophy, that something must be done
and now is the time. The bipartisan legislation now before the Congress, introduced in the
Senate by John McCain and Russ Feingold, and in the House by Chris Shays and Marty Meehan,
is the best chance in years to change this system. It will curb the role of money in elections,
reduce the role of special interests, level the playing field between incumbents and challengers by
offering free TV time to candidates who limit their spending, and it will end the so-called soft
money system. It is the right solution at the right time.

We know that if we don't act quickly, and if we don't act in a truly bipartisan fashion,
reform will fail this year, just as it has failed year in and year out. We can't let that happen. The
organized interests in Washington are mobilizing to block reform. Many of them find that the
status quo works to their advantage, even as it cheapens our democracy.

So the key to passing reform is to reach out beyond Washington to engage the broad
American public. We need to tap the view, widely held and deeply felt, if too often unexpressed,
that this system must change.

To help educate the public, rally public opinion, and expand the circle of reform,
President Clinton has asked two of America's most distinguished public citizens to serve as his
emissaries to this effort. He has asked former Senator Nancy Kassebaum-Baker, a Republican,
and former Vice President, Senator, and Ambassador, Walter Mondale, a Democrat, to serve as
co-chairs of a campaign reform education and awareness project. These two American heroes
will work with us and with supporters of this legislation to spread the word and speak for reform
wherever they can. We will, with their help, make this the year that we pass campaign finance
reform.

No two individuals better exemplify the best in American public life than Nancy
Kassebaum-Baker and Fritz Mondale. In the 18 years that Senator Kassebaum Baker represented
the people of Kansas in the Senate, her common sense and independence were respected
throughout her party and through the Senate. I had the privilege and honor of serving with
Senator Kassebaum Baker and, like all of her colleagues, looked up to her. She served as chair
of the Labor and Human Resources Committee and authored many laws to benefit American
families, including the bipartisan health reform legislation that bears her name and capped her
career.

Vice President Walter Mondale is one of our nation's leading public figures. Serving as
Attorney General of his state, U.S. Senator, Vice President, and a standard bearer for the
Democratic Party; also as our ambassador to Japan at a pivotal time in America's effort to open
trade for America's goods and services. For four decades, he has been a prominent fighter for the
interests of ordinary Americans.
In recent months, both of these distinguished Americans returned to private life. We are very pleased and grateful that, as private citizens, they are willing to take on a leadership role in the bipartisan citizen movement America needs to force change in the way we finance elections.

In his State of the Union address, the President challenged the Congress to pass bipartisan campaign finance reform by July 4th, the day we celebrate the birth of our independence, the birth of our democracy. Let us make the next four months a time of education and action to redeem the promise of self-government.

I'm going to ask Senator Kassebaum Baker to speak first, and then Vice President Mondale.

Senator Kassebaum Baker. (Applause.)
ENDING BUSINESS AS USUAL
IN WASHINGTON

"The fact is, organized interests have too much power in the halls of government. These influence groups too often promote their own interest at the expense of the public interest. Too often they operate in secret. Too often they have special privileges ordinary Americans don't even know exist...We have an historic opportunity to renew our democracy and strengthen our country. If we truly believe in a government that puts ordinary Americans ahead of the powerful and privileged, then we must act and act now."

President Bill Clinton
February 17, 1996

A Record of Accomplishment:

Over the past four years, working with both parties in Congress, President Clinton achieved a significant number of reforms to make our government respond to ordinary citizens.

- The President made voting easier for more than 11 million Americans by creating more accessible voter registration locations by enacting the National Voter Registration Act ("Motor-Voter"). The Motor-Voter law has already created the greatest expansion in the voter registration rolls since the 19th century.

- The President fought for and signed into law the Lobbying Disclosure Act. The Act is the first overhaul of lobbying rules in 50 years and requires lobbyists to disclose whom they work for and eliminates loopholes that allow lobbying organizations to avoid.

- In the 1995 State of the Union Address, President Clinton challenged the Congress to ban gifts, meals, travel and entertainment from lobbyists. The Congress subsequently passed the gift ban on November 16th, 1995.

- The President supported and signed the Congressional Accountability Act to ensure that the same laws apply to Congress as to the rest of America.

- In 1993, President Clinton proposed, and Congress passed, legislation ending the tax-deductibility of lobbying expenses, the "lobbyist loophole" which had allowed corporations and others to deduct the cost of their lobbying.

- The President imposed the strictest Administration ethics guidelines ever, including a five-year ban on top officials lobbying their former agencies and a lifetime ban against
lobbying for foreign governments.

- The President pushed for and signed the line-item veto legislation, which significantly enhances the presidential authority to eliminate wasteful spending by allowing the President to cancel wasteful special interest projects that benefit narrow interests. The line-item veto can help the President close the door on business as usual in Washington by cutting pet projects that sneak into the budget year after year. With this line-item veto, the President will have a valuable new tool to ensure that our public resources are being put to the best possible uses.

- The President enacted the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act to restrict Congress from passing on new mandates to state and local governments without paying for them.

- President Clinton has stood up to special interests, such as the National Riffle Association and the tobacco industry, loosening their tight hold on our legislative process. The President broke six years of congressional gridlock on anti-crime legislation and defeated the gun lobby by enacting a ban on assault weapons and the Brady Law.

- The President signed the Presidential Executive Office Accountability Act (PEOAA), which ensures that the Executive Office of the President lives under the same laws as the rest of the country -- this is the White House analog to the Congressional Accountability Act.

A History Of Fighting For Real Campaign Finance Reform

There is one major reform that still must be enacted: campaign finance reform.

1992 Campaign Finance Reform Proposal. In the 1992 campaign, Governor Clinton proposed spending limits, free TV time, PAC limits and a ban on soft money. The current McCain-Feingold and Shays-Meehan legislation mirrors this proposal.

1993-1994 Campaign Finance Reform Plan. The President and the congressional Democratic leadership proposed a reform plan that also included partial public funding for congressional candidates.

1995 Bipartisan CFR Commission. In June of 1995, the President agreed with Speaker Gingrich to create a bipartisan political reform commission. The President named John Gardner and Doris Kearns Goodwin to launch the commission, but the proposed commission was rebuffed by the Speaker.

Free Television Time to Candidates. In an address to the Free TV for Straight Talk Coalition, the President proposes to provide free broadcast time to candidates.

Campaign Finance Reform Education and Awareness Project. The President named Vice President Walter Mondale and Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker to co-chair this effort.
March 14, 1997

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Clinton:

We write to offer our thanks for your continuing leadership on behalf of bipartisan campaign reform, and our congratulations upon the formation of the Kassebaum-Baker/Mondale committee.

The campaign reform efforts ongoing around the nation are about more than dollars, and about more than just those of us who currently serve in the Congress and the White House.

Rather, these efforts are fundamentally about American democracy, and the American people's stake in what our democracy is to become in the 21st century.

The efforts are also about whether Americans care enough about our democracy to bridge our partisan, regional, and other differences to restore the integrity of our political process.

That Vice President Mondale and Senator Kassebaum-Baker, two of our most distinguished senior statespeople, would offer their leadership to the bipartisan campaign reform effort is cause for great celebration and encouragement.

We are deeply appreciative of your efforts, and look forward to working with you and the Kassebaum-Baker/Mondale committee to advance the cause of campaign reform in the months ahead.

John McCain  
Senator  

Russ Feingold  
Senator  

Christopher Shays  
Representative  

Marty Meehan  
Representative
This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

Divider Title: ____________________________
MR. FORD: And welcome again to MEET THE PRESS. Our issues this morning: the Clinton-Yeltsin summit--just how did it really go? We'll ask a man who was there, the president's chief adviser on all national security matters, Sandy Berger.

Then, the controversy over U.S.-China policy. We'll hear two very different views from former GOP presidential contender Pat Buchanan and a chief architect of the Clinton policy, Dr. Laura Tyson.

And campaign finance reform, Washington's hottest argument. Are the scandals nowadays and the problems worse today than ever? Well, we'll ask three top insiders, who are looking
at the nation's capital from a distance today: former Vice President Walter Mondale, now
co-chairman of the grass-roots committee to push campaign reform; the committee's
chairwoman, former Senator Nancy Kassebaum, who just retired from the Senate and
recently married our other guest, Howard Baker, Jr.

And in our MEET THE PRESS Minute, campaign reform was also a hot issue in the
post-Watergate era.

(Videotape, December 15, 1974):

GOVERNOR JIMMY CARTER: I think the American people are very eager to see political
candidates be very modest in their acceptance of large campaign contributions.

(End of videotape)

MR. FORD: Then presidential candidate, Governor Jimmy Carter, on fund-raising and
loopholes from 22 years ago.

But first this morning, the president's national security adviser, Sandy Berger.

Mr. Berger, good morning, welcome.

MR. BERGER: Good morning, Jack.

MR. FORD: First of all, how did the president fare, physically, on this trip following his
knee surgery?

MR. BERGER: I think he fared very well. Obviously, it restricts his mobility and makes it a
little more difficult for him to move around, but he managed well. It was a very rigorous
trip. We left late on Wednesday night. We got back very late on Saturday morning. And the
president, physically, did very well.

MR. FORD: How about President Yeltsin? As you know, there had been a great deal
concern over his health. How did he appear to you?

MR. BERGER: I was very impressed by President Yeltsin's recovery. Friday, which was the
day of the summit, was a day that began at 9:00 in the morning, and ended with a press
conference that ended at 7:00 at night and then a dinner that the two presidents had. It was
an extremely rigorous, intense day. President Yeltsin operated through that day without
notes. There were--this was not two leaders talking to each other through talking points.
This was a very intense and lively discussion. President Yeltsin was extraordinarily
vigorous, and even by the end of the day when he got to face both the Russian and the
American press, he was in fine form.

So I think he's fully recovered, physically. Obviously, there's still a little stiffness in his
movements, but he is absolutely 100 percent on his game.

MR. FORD: Let's talk about some of the issues that they focused on over there. The U.S.
shows up at Helsinki with a plan to expand NATO. Not at all, surprisingly, Russia is saying,
"We're not happy about that at all." The administration had downplayed any real prospects.
Was there ever any realistic hope that we could walk out of these meetings with President
Yeltsin saying, "All right, we're going to sign off on this expansion; it's OK with us"?

MR. BERGER: No. And that was not our expectation at all for Helsinki. What the two
presidents--but Helsinki, nonetheless, I think, was a pivot point in terms of the process of
building an undivided peaceful democratic Europe. President Yeltsin maintains his position
that NATO should not enlarge. And so, in that sense, the two presidents agreed to disagree.
But President Clinton made it absolutely clear that NATO enlargement will go forward
beginning in Madrid in July, and President Yeltsin, on his part, while he's not happy about that, has decided that he will seek--rather than to isolate himself from this new NATO--to develop a relationship between Russia and NATO. So NATO enlargement will move forward. NATO-Russia partnership will move forward--a very important step.

MR. FORD: Both sides walk away from this and essentially President Yeltsin is saying, "Well, we're going to have a voice here in NATO. We're going to try to form some sort of partnership," but, certainly, not a voting member at any of this. Is that just really window dressing? Giving him a chance to go back to Russia saying, "Here's what I walked away with here," when the reality is, he didn't really walk away with much at all?

MR. BERGER: Well, first of all, I think it's extremely important that NATO and Russia will be working together in partnership as, for example, we are today in Bosnia. NATO and Russia, alongside each other, in a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. It is a new Russia; it is a new NATO. It is no longer a NATO that is directed against Russia, and I think the Russians are beginning to appreciate that.

But President Yeltsin, I think, didn't walk away with nothing. I think the two leaders also made some other very significant accomplishments. Number one, in addition to the NATO issues we've been talking about, they decided to seek a new arms control agreement after ratification of START II by agreeing to guidelines for START III, which would bring strategic nuclear weapons down to the level of 2,000 or to 2,500. Jack, that means that within a decade, strategic nuclear weapons will be 80 percent lower than they were at the height of the Cold War, just five years ago. That's important for Russia. It's important for the United States. It's important for the world.

MR. FORD: But to get to that START III, these proposals, they have to sign off on START II...

MR. BERGER: That's correct.

MR. FORD: ...and that's been languishing there in the Parliament for four years now since it was signed. The question was posed, to both presidents, about the prospect of getting that done, getting SALT II signed so that they could move on to SALT III. And in a moment of sort of presidential humor at the press conference, President Yeltsin said, when he was asked can he get that through, he said, "As far as Russia's concerned, I expect that the state Duma will make a decision based on my advice." President Clinton responded to some laughter saying, "Boy, I wish I could give that answer."

But is that being really over optimistic here by President Yeltsin? The chairman of the Communist Party has characterized Helsinki as a crushing defeat. Why is there any reason now to believe after four years all of a sudden the Duma's going to say, "You know what? You're right. We'll sign off on this thing"?

MR. BERGER: I think President Yeltsin will get a strenuous effort to get START II ratified. And in doing do--what happened in Helsinki, in some ways, creates a strategic environment that makes that more possible. But one of the problems under START II is the cuts, because of the nature of the START II cuts, would have brought the Soviets down to--in destroying weapons, where in order for parody, they actually would have had to build new missiles. By agreeing to START III limits that are lower, they won't have to do that build-up. And so, in a sense, START II will bear less of the costs than it would have before the two leaders agreed on what the end will look like in START III. So he moves into this Duma ratification process with a vision of a world in 2007 where strategic nuclear weapons are much lower and the environment, the nuclear shadow that has hung over the world for all of our lifetime will have receded very dramatically.

MR. FORD: Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott has proposed a bipartisan Senate observation group here to keep an eye on this NATO expansion. Would the administration
welcome somebody else watching this over?

MR. BERGER: I think it's a very constructive idea by Senator Lott. It's something we've been talking about, and I hope that we can work with Senator Lott and with other members of the Senate in a cooperative way as we move forward with NATO enlargement, as we move forward with START III. I think Senator Lott has put forward a very constructive proposal to do this in a bipartisan way. NATO enlargement is a bipartisan issue, both Democrats and Republicans believe that a new NATO ought not to be static and frozen in the Cold War lines, but ought to reflect a new, inclusive Democratic reality, and we look forward to working with Senator Lott in getting that done.

MR. FORD: Let's change our focus a little bit here. Let's take a look at the U.S.-Chinese relations. As you know, the vice president on his way over to China. It seems that he has quite a dilemma here, all of this against the backdrop of the allegations we've seen of the Chinese government attempting to funnel money into campaigns here to buy some sort of favored treatment. It seems that the vice president, if he goes over there and he joins in and he seems to be very friendly with the Chinese in pushing this, people are going to say, "See, he's been bought and paid for. That's why the administration is over there doing this." If he doesn't do that, if he backs off, then there are going to be people saying, "He's not doing his job. He's supposed to be over there trying to foster relations and business deals between the U.S. and China." Tough situation for him to be in.

MR. BERGER: What the vice president will do is pursue America's national interest. There are allegations that have been raised about potential Chinese efforts to influence campaigns. Those are serious allegations that are under investigation by the Department of Justice and others. But let's bear in mind that they are allegations, and let's not leap to conclusions before these investigations are over.

The fact of the matter is we have an enormously important interest as a country in the way in which China evolves. Either China over the next 10 years will evolve in a way that integrates it more and more into the international community, in terms of human rights, in terms of weapons regimes, in terms of trade, or it will evolve in a more nationalistic and a more isolated direction. By engaging with China, we can increase the areas of cooperation. We've done a number of things together, like agreeing to end nuclear testing, reaching an agreement to protect intellectual property, working together to diffuse the situation in the Korean peninsula. And by engaging with China, we can have a vehicle for raising directly with them the problems that we have, on human rights, on market access, on some of their weapon sales policy. So engaging with China is in America's national interests. Not something we do for China, but something we do for the American people.

MR. FORD: You talk about engaging with China and talking about these problems. The vice president just said yesterday that he does intend to bring up these allegations of Chinese attempts to buy favoritism here, to funnel money into campaigns. But he said he has to be very sensitive about it, and he can't do very much about it, because of the fact that it's the subject of a Justice Department investigation. It sounds, on the surface, as if he's just going to, sort of, mention it and then go on to something else.

MR. BERGER: Well, this was raised by Secretary Albright when she was recently in Beijing. Vice president has indicated that he will raise it with the Chinese. As I said before, these are allegations. They're not proven conclusive facts. They're serious allegations. I'm sure the vice president will raise them in a very sober way. But we, obviously, don't have any conclusions to draw, and I think there are-- it is important that he pursue the broad agenda that we have with China. There are areas where we can cooperate with China; there are areas where we disagree. The vice president has, for example, a very important environmental agenda to talk to the Chinese about. That's very much in their interest and our interest.

MR. FORD: Let's talk a little bit about the National Security Council. A comment was made
just very recently by Secretary of Defense Cohen about the withdrawal by Anthony Lake of his nomination to head the CIA. And, essentially, the Secretary of Defense said that he thought it was a good thing. He said he had to withdraw because this hearing was becoming so drawn out--the potential for being so drawn out and so divisive. Do you agree with that?

MR. BERGER: Well, I think that was a judgment that Tony made himself. He spelled out the reasons very clearly in his letter. I think the hearings had become very protracted, perhaps less an exercise in judgment than a test of endurance. There are enormously important issues about the future of the intelligence agencies and intelligence community. I wish the hearings--and I hope that the hearings with George Tenet going forward--will focus on issues of what are the proper role of the intelligence community in today's world? What are the proper priorities in a post-Cold War period?--internal organizational issues. Those issues really weren't focused in Tony's hearings. They tended to be far more personal, going through his FBI raw data and files. He made a judgment, I regret that judgment because I think he would have been a good director of the CIA, but I respect it.

MR. FORD: You mentioned George Tenet and his hearings, his nomination. Most think that he's rather confirmable, but we've seen that Senator Shelby has indicated that he would like to see his FBI file, apparently, including the raw data in the file. Should he get that?

MR. BERGER: Well, I think the tradition in that past has been that the chairman and the vice and the ranking minority member generally have had access, but there hasn't been a wide dissemination. Don't forget that one's raw FBI files contains, you know, every allegation, you know that your back-door neighbor made, that you didn't take out the garbage 34 years ago and that--all of this stuff winds up in a file. It ought not to be widely disseminated. I think that the chairman did have a chance to see Mr. Lake's file. I assume he'll have a chance to see Mr. Tenet's file. But I think it will be a bad precedent, quite honestly, Jack, for people to track good people into public service if, you know, everybody that they had a fight with in fourth grade in the schoolyard became a subject of the hearings.

MR. FORD: Last question for you. Amidst all these allegations of the politicizing in the NSC, have you taken active steps here to attempt to insulate that from any of the outreaching--from political factions?

MR. BERGER: Well, let me say, first of all, I'm very proud of the NSC and the contributions made to the president's foreign policy and the extraordinarily dedicated people that work there 14, 15, 16 hours a day. And Helsinki, for example--some our folks didn't sleep for three or four nights in preparation for this meeting. But I think that there have been some questions that have been raised that are fair questions that I intend to try to clarify. How do you avoid--how do you insulate the NSC from any kind of partisan political influence without isolating it from the outside world, from people who need--we need to talk to, explain our foreign policy, and who may have information or ideas that are important. Questions, for example, of, on the one hand, need to know up the line, versus not micromanaging, but are very senior and serious people in the NSC. What the proper relationship in between the NSC and the other aspects of the White House. I want to clarify that because I think I owe that to the NSC staff and I've talked to former NSC advisers, like Brent Scrowcroft, and Zbigniew Brzezinski and I intend to reach out to them and get their best advice.

MR. FORD: I said last question. I'm going to ask you one more quick question, if I might. In the Middle East, there are some concerns now that the peace process is unraveling. We've seen, once again, violence exploding across the landscape there, and it all seems to be going back towards the Israel's government decision to start new construction in that one area. Has the American government reached out to the Israelis and expressed our concerns over this?

MR. BERGER: Well, first of all, the president spoke to Prime Minister Netanyahu from Helsinki to express our deep sympathy and outrage at the terrorist incident in Tel Aviv, and express our condolences to the families. We have said very clearly that we think the decision
to proceed on Har Hon, the construction there was unhelpful because it erodes confidence on the part of both parties. But let me say that nothing justifies terrorism. Nothing justifies blowing up innocent civilians sitting in a cafe in downtown Tel Aviv.

MR. FORD: All right. Well, Sandy Berger, I want to thank you for spending some time with us this morning.

MR. BERGER: Thank you, jack.

MR. FORD: Take care.

And coming up next, Pat Buchanan and Laura Tyson square off on U.S.-China policy. Then campaign finance reform with three former Washington insiders.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: Welcome back to MEET THE PRESS. And, Pat Buchanan and Laura Tyson, welcome to both of you. An also joining me in the questioning this morning is David Broder from The Washington Post.

Mr. Buchanan, with a backdrop here of both the vice president and a high-level House delegation led by Newt Gingrich on their way to China, you have been a very vocal critic of the administration's approach here...

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...this concept of constructive engagement. You called it a complete failure.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: If you were making this journey to China, what would you be saying to the Chinese?

MR. BUCHANAN: Well, I would say to the Chinese that, quite candidly, if I were Newt Gingrich, that I'm going to oppose most-favored nation treatment. I'm going to impose on China or support the imposition on China of tariffs on their products equal to what they impose on us. I would say constructive engagement is a policy that was noble in purpose that has failed. Because in 1989, we had a $3 billion trade deficit and the human rights situation was bad. Now, we've got a $40 billion trade deficit and the human rights situation is deplorable. And, frankly, the United States is not going to become, as it is right now, the main supplier of hard currency to the greatest tyranny on earth and the greatest potential threat to the United States in the 21st century.

MR. FORD: Why is there any reason to believe, though, that a policy of containment and, in fact, of confrontation would have any impact on any of the things you mentioned? Let's focus first on human rights. Why would you think that by saying that and getting in the face of the Chinese government...

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...it would make get them to do anything to improve their human rights record?

MR. BUCHANAN: Jack, we take between 30 percent 40 percent of China's exports. Our purchases of Chinese goods amount to 7 percent of their gross national product. They take 1 percent of our exports. If the United States simply imposed not confrontation or conflict, but reciprocal tariffs, the Chinese would suffer a tremendous, traumatic economic experience. And I would say to them, "We're not going to treat you as Great Britain if you don't behave as Great Britain."
Jack, this is holy week. We are, right now, doing business as usual to the leading persecutor of Christians on the face of the earth, the Communist Chinese tyranny. I don't believe we can do business as usual with people like that and still retain our own self-respect.

MR. FORD: Dr. Tyson, there are an awful lot of folks out there that agree with what Mr. Buchanan is saying. Our own State Department's annual human rights report, just six weeks ago, highly critical of China and even said there is apparently not a single dissident to be found...

DR. TYSON: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: ...suggesting that they're either in jail or they've been silenced in some fashion. Why then are we over there? Why are we engaging with them?

DR. TYSON: Well, first of all, I think, certainly, the United States, recognizes that we have serious human rights issues with China. The question before us is: What is the appropriate means for achieving what is our goal? Our goal is the transition of China, a gradual and stable transition to a more market-oriented, more democratic society based on the rule of law. How can the U.S. achieve that outcome? We believe that engaging with the Chinese, in trade, for example, will, over the long run actually move China in a more open direction.

Think about what we import from China for a minute. We're importing toys; we're importing footwear; we're importing apparel. Much of those products are actually made by the reforming quasi private or private sector of the Chinese economy. So by engaging in trade with China, we are actually supporting the transition, the creation of a civil society. By engaging in trade negotiations with China, we are moving China towards enforcement of the rule of law. China has incorporated now in its anti-crime approach around China--has incorporated our new intellectual property rights agreement, and they really are enforcing that against pirates, against people who are breaking commercial law.

MR. FORD: When we look at our human rights approach to China, a lot of people who are critical of it will say, "Here's an analogy. It's sort of like the way you approach elective surgery. It's fine to do it, unless there's some risks out there." And all of a sudden, if there's some risks out there, then you sort of back off a little bit. And people are suggesting that's what we're doing with human rights. We're saying, "We're going to after you," but as soon as we perceive that there is some tension or some problems, we back off.

DR. TYSON: Well, I really don't agree with that. Again, I would say that we are trying to achieve an improvement in human rights, and we are trying to achieve a transition to a market economy. But to take in acts in which would be, essentially, a unilateral economic sanction against China, would clearly have an economic cost on us, as well as an economic cost on China, but would not promote the evolution of human rights in China.

MR. FORD: Isn't it real easy, Mr. Buchanan, for individuals to take absolutist approaches on human rights.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: And to say, "We shouldn't be dealing because of this." Much easier than a government--I mean, the government has a difficult time being absolutist about everything. There are a lot of other considerations the government has to look at--security, peace...

MR. BUCHANAN: You're exactly right. You're exactly right. For example, the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia isn't what we would like it to be. But the point here, Jack, is, it is not moving in the right direction. If it were--incidentally, I did not always oppose this policy. I was a member of Richard Nixon's 15-man delegation to China in 1972. I thought it should be tried. But right now, we've got this enormous trade deficit that's $40 billion,
David, in hard currency, much of which is going to the greatest military buildup in Asia, of Russian planes, submarines and ships being purchased by China, and anti-ship missiles which are being targeted on the 7th Fleet--our men and women out there in Asia.

So what I'm saying is, "Look, we've tried this, we've walked down this road. It has not worked. We don't go to confrontation, but what we do do is we stop feeding the tiger."

DR. TYSON: Can I say that to say that--it sounds like our trade with China is, basically, only in the interests of the Chinese, if you listen to Mr. Buchanan. First of all, it is in the interest, not just of the Chinese, but of the United States. China is in fact our most rapidly growing export market, and it is 20 percent of the world's consumers, and it is a market which, if we don't stay engaged in, we are going to lose, over time, to international competitors, first.

MR. BUCHANAN: But...

DR. TYSON: Second of all, what we are importing from China--I really want to go back and emphasize this--we are helping in the gradual evolution or transition of China by helping to create more prosperity and more decentralized power in China.

MR. FORD: But one quick thing here. One second.

MR. BUCHANAN: One quick point on this--sure.

MR. FORD: Recent statistics show, within the last year, a--What?--36 percent change, decrease--or increase in the deficit between the U.S. and China. That doesn't sound like we're doing a great deal.

DR. TYSON: Well, first of all, I think, you have to look at these things over a long period of time. If you look from 1992 to 1996, that period of the first Clinton administration, what you see is our exports to China growing at 13 percent or 14 percent, actually.

MR. FORD: Right.

DR. TYSON: Actually, that was our fastest-growing single export market.

MR. BUCHANAN: But, Laura, wait a minute now.

MR. FORD: Wait a second. Let me get David in on this, also.

MR. BUCHANAN: All right. Let's respond. Look, we export more to Singapore than we do to China. China is 15th on the list to exports. They take 1 percent of our exports. Our market last year went from $11.7 billion up to $11.9 billion. Their exports to us went from $45 billion to $52 billion. The trade deficit has gone from $3 billion, or a little more when Laura came in, to $40 billion. It is going to be the largest trade deficit component, of America's $200 billion merchandise trade deficit, we have this year. It is larger--it is getting larger than Japan's. We are building up the most monstrous tyranny on Earth and, potentially, the greatest threat to the United States.

MR. BRODER: OK. That...

MR. BUCHANAN: That's why I say, "Pause, take a look."

MR. BRODER: The essence of the Buchanan argument: The trade deficit is growing and it's being used by the Chinese to finance arms purchases which, potentially, represent a security threat. He's right about them--both those facts, isn't he?

DR. TYSON: The trade deficit in--is growing. It, actually--in 1996, we had, basically, a
slowdown in our rate of growth of exports because 1995 we had a very big boom in our exports to China.

MR. BRODER: Right.

DR. TYSON: So the trade deficit has grown, but it has been growing over the last four years at a decreasing rate and imports have been growing at a decreasing rate. I guess I want to get back to...

MR. BRODER: But--excuse me...

DR. TYSON: ...a trade--OK.

MR. BRODER: What about the point that this money, this hard cash, is being used by them to purchase arms, many of them from the Soviet Union, which could represent a security threat to our country?

DR. TYSON: Yeah, but I could also say that our trade with China is being used by them to support the continued movement of their economy towards a market-oriented system. The Chinese have, in the last six months, been enforcing an intellectual property agreement with us, closing down pirated factories, adhering to international law and intellectual property. They have just signed a textile agreement with us, and they have indicated that they're now willing to move in a very serious way towards giving trading rights to American and foreign companies working in China.

MR. BUCHANAN: Please, please...

DR. TYSON: So China is indicating that it's moving towards a market system.

MR. BRODER: Yeah.

MR. BUCHANAN: China is...

MR. BRODER: Moving toward a market system?

MR. BUCHANAN: It is not...

DR. TYSON: Gradually. Very gradually.

MR. BUCHANAN: What China is running, David, is a classic mercantilist system just like the United States ran from 1865 to 1914.

DR. TYSON: It's not...

MR. BUCHANAN: In other words, "Bring in your capital, bring in your technology, but keep your consumer goods out of our country because we're protecting our market. Now, open your market and we'll invade it." What is happening right now is exactly what happened to Great Britain when the United States and Germany practiced mercantilism and invaded free trade in Great Britain.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Buchanan...

MR. BUCHANAN: And you saw them decline by World War I to the point even Germany was larger than Great Britain. That's what's happening, David.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Buchanan, the argument that you've made this morning is one that you've been making to your fellow Republicans as a presidential candidate and as an advocate for many years now.
MR. BUCHANAN: Right.

MR. BRODER: You haven't persuaded the last Republican nominees of this point. You haven't persuaded the leaders of the Republican Party in Congress.

MR. BUCHANAN: David...

MR. BRODER: Do you want us to believe that everybody is out of step in the Republican Party but Pat Buchanan?

MR. BUCHANAN: No. If you followed the primaries closely last year, you saw that even free traders like Phil Gramm went silent on NAFTA, went silent on GATT. At the grass roots, we have won the argument in the Republican Party. Check the Fabrizio poll. Every single one of the five components in the Republican Party now believes that trade deals are not good for the party or the country. David, we're winning the argument. It is not won. Gephardt is moving in our direction on MFN. More Republicans are moving in our direction, the paratistas are. Do we have the establishment of either party? No. But this question is going to answer a question whether the Republican Party has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the business roundtable.

MR. FORD: Mr. Buchanan, you talk about the danger here of the military expansion of the Chinese, but isn't the argument that by embracing them, trying to bring them in the world community and by changing the vitality of this regime by saying, "The U.S. is no longer your enemy," by taking away an enemy for them to focus on, isn't the argument if you do those two things, that you at least increase the prospect?

MR. BUCHANAN: Jack, I entertain that argument. I did not oppose the administration in '94 on the MFN. I thought it was worth trying. But what have we seen? We have seen the enormous growth of this trade deficit. The surplus is gone for weapons. The human rights record is worse. They fire missile at Taiwan. They're belligerent toward their neighbors where they're grabbing these islands. They're sending missiles to Iran, nuclear technology to Pakistan. They slapped the secretary of state of the United States virtually across the face. It is simply time to say, "Listen, our policy hasn't worked. We've treated you as a friend; we tried to. It's not working. Therefore, we're going to change it. We're going to treat you as a great power rival, which is what you hope to be."

MR. FORD: Dr. Tyson.

DR. TYSON: Can I just get a couple of facts out here on the table? In terms of the trade deficit, which Pat Buchanan keeps referring to, just a couple of points. Number one, the products we are now importing from China were not products that we were making at home before. What's happened here is that products we used to buy from Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and other parts of Asia have essentially moved now to China. So the increase in our trade deficit with China should be understood, essentially, to be reflected in a decrease in our trade deficit with other countries in the region. That's number one.

Number two, most experts think that our trade numbers with China vastly overstate our deficit with China and think that it's something like 30 percent to 40 percent less than that. Finally, just let me say again, that I think that this issue of we tried a policy and it didn't work is simply ill-informed. You have to have a long-term, consistent approach towards what's happening here. We have China on the rise as a major power in the global, economic and political system. That is going to happen. We have to have a consistent, long-term approach to them. Our approach is based on the notion of engaging them on issues and moving them into the multilateral system. We want to get them in the World Trade Organization.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.
DR. TYSON: We want to get our trading partners to work with us to set up a schedule and a timetable and a review mechanism for moving China along year by year towards a market system, and that's what the WTO will do. We shouldn't do unilateral economic sanctions. They won't work. We are not powerful enough to make China behave.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm. Well, it--wait a minute.

DR. TYSON: We are powerful enough to continue to trade with China and to work with our international partners to get China in the international forum.

MR. FORD: Mr. Buchanan, let me ask you a question. You have said about Speaker Gingrich and our relations with China...

MR. BUCHANAN: Right.

MR. FORD: ...that he should either lead, follow our get out of the way.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mm-hmm.

MR. FORD: He is now on the way over to China here. What is he doing in this trip? Is he leading, is he following or is he getting out of the way?

MR. BUCHANAN: I think he's traveling on vacation right now, Jack. But look, my point here was quite simple. This, to me, had become one of foremost issues of national security for this country of human rights and of self-respect. I want my party to stand up and represent something higher in the hierarchy of values than the bottom line on the balance sheet. Now, enough evidence is in, I think, that we need leadership. I would like Newt to lead it. I would like Senator Lott to lead it. They're the ones who can lead it. We could win. We could get rid of MFN, or suspend it for a year. But, if the speaker's not going to lead this, and if he's going mush around and talk with everyone, and try to work out some deal with Mr. Clinton, then I'd like to see some younger congressman or some other congressman step forward and lead this battle, someone in the Senate. If Mr. Gephardt wants to lead it, that's fine. The important thing is what's good for our country here.

And to--let me correct Laura one on point. The United States--the merchandise trade deficit we ran last year is $186 billion, merchandise trade deficit. It is the largest in history of any country. It represents almost 30 percent of the manufactured goods we consume. This country is selling out to future of working men and women by these gigantic trade deficits that are sending our factories overseas.

MR. FORD: That I'm afraid is going have to be our last word. Much to talk about, never quite enough time. Happy Purim, Laura Tyson. Thank you very much...

DR. TYSON: Thank you.

MR. FORD: ...for joining us this morning.

And next up, Washington scandals and problems through the eyes of three former political heavyweights.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: We're back on MEET THE PRESS. Joined now by former Vice President Walter Mondale and former Senator Howard Baker, Jr., and former Senator Nancy Kassebaum, now Nancy Kassebaum Baker.

And Senator Kassebaum, if you don't mind, I'm going to refer to you as Senator Kassebaum
so that my director doesn't experience some sort of vertigo as he jumps back and forth between Senator Baker and Senator Baker, if you will. But thank you all for joining us this morning. Mr. Mondale, although you recently retired from public service, you agreed to take on this assignment to try to mobilize the American public push for campaign finance reform here. How realistic are the prospects of getting anything done?

MR. MONDALE: Well, I think we have a good chance. I know it's difficult, but there are several things. We've got strong sponsors in both the Senate and the House for campaign finance reform. A few days ago, Senator Lott, the majority leader, said that he expects some form of campaign finance legislation to be acted on this year in the Senate. We have the support of the president of the United States, and I believe as this discussion goes forward, the American people are going to begin to demand change. And I think that Senator Kassebaum's co-chairmanship of this, also, is a big help, because this shows this is a bipartisan concern. So I have long felt that we needed reform. This gives me a chance to do my part.

MR. FORD: Senator Kassebaum, one of the ironies here is that with all this talk about the need for reform, it doesn't seem to be reflected in the public's opinion. If we accept what we see in the polls, many members of the public are saying, "What's the big deal? This seems to be the business of politics as usual."

MRS. BAKER: Well, that's true. A poll I saw showed it at the bottom of the list. And yet, as I visited around and visited around on college campuses, there isn't much till you start talking about it. And then I think the response tends to be, "Well, nothing much has ever happened, so why get upset about it?" I mean, we've not enacted reform; it's been talked about. But as you walk through it, I think people do want to see something change. We've had a hard time finding, in past Congresses, the right approach. But I think that what has concerned all of us who've been interested in this for a long time is that through each campaign cycle, the amounts of money just keep ratcheting up, the amount of time spent raising money just keeps ratcheting up. And it is, I think, very debilitating to the constructive work of the political parties.

MR. FORD: Senator Baker, you have been both in the Senate, also inside of the White House. There are many observers here that are taking a look at the allegations that have been directed against this administration and have been saying, "Hey, what's new about all of this? All of this has been taking place throughout the course of our presidential history. Perhaps the only difference here is the dollar amount and perhaps that's attributable to inflation." Is this different from what has happened in the past?

MR. BAKER: Well, I think it is different. I don't think it's a question of--I think that the principal difference is that this administration probably has pushed the envelope. I think they have extended further in fund-raising techniques than previous administrations. Whether or not there's a difference in kind, I guess we'll find out as the investigations go forward. But the bottom line is that, as Senator Kassebaum said a moment ago, it's been an evolutionary process, and it's getting more expensive and more time consuming to finance campaigns, and it's time something happened.

MR. BRODER: Mr. Mondale, 11 years ago when the big scandal in Washington was Iran Contra, you called for a special prosecutor in that case and you said at that point, "This idea of self-investigating is a non-starter." Would you apply that same standard now to this finance scandal?

MR. MONDALE: You know, I don't know what the answer is to that. I have not looked into that as a serious question. I don't know. But it will be answered by others. And what I'm working on is the campaign reform issue, and that's where I think I should be.

MR. BRODER: Well, let me turn to Senator Baker on that. Is there a parallel between this need for a special prosecutor now and the special prosecutor in the Iran-Contra affair when
you were in the White House, I believe?

MR. BAKER: Yeah, probably. It's still unfolding, and, frankly, if I were Janet Reno, I'd want a special counsel, special prosecutor mighty fast to remove any indication of partiality and get it off my desk. But in all candor, I must say that the American public will know more about this sooner through the congressional route and the House and the Senate, than they're likely to with an independent counsel, who will have to go through a grand jury and have to abide by rules of confidentiality that will withhold it from the public for months, maybe years. So I have mixed emotions about it. I guess there is a parallel, but I think that the American people are likely to find out what really happened more quickly and maybe more efficiently through the congressional route than the independent counsel route.

MR. BRODER: Senator Baker, your protege and former White--excuse me--Watergate special counsel, Fred Thompson, is running the Senate investigation of campaign finance. On Friday, Senator John Glenn of Ohio, the ranking Democrat on that committee, called me and said that while 94 subpoenas have gone out from Senator Thompson, the 11 that he has requested as the ranking Democrat on that committee have been held up because Senator Thompson needs to get them approved by the Republican Caucus. When you were on the Watergate Committee, did Senator Ervin subject your subpoena request decisions by the Democratic Caucus?

MR. BAKER: Well, Sam Ervin and I got along great, but, to tell you the truth, I can't remember a single case where he ever consulted with Republicans about the subpoenas that were going to be issued. The only one I distinctly remember is the one to subpoena the tapes and to file suit to try to get them. And that was my suggestion. It was not suggested to me by anybody.

But, it is traditional that the majority runs the process. I have not seen the provisions in this resolution for how subpoenas are issued. But I'm not surprised at that. I would like to see it go forward on a full bipartisan basis with a willing minority and a determined majority and in full cooperation. And I think it will work that way because I think both Senator Glenn and Senator Thompson are that sort of person. But I'm not surprised that the majority is making the first cut at issuing subpoenas.

MR. BRODER: Let me turn to this legislation pending campaign finance reform legislation. Mr. Mondale, have you had a chance to look at this McCain-Feingold bill which you and the president are supporting?

MR. MONDALE: Yes, I have looked at it.

MR. BRODER: Are you aware that the American Civil Liberties Union says that that bill is "fatally and fundamentally flawed when measured against First Amendment values"?

MR. MONDALE: I disagree with the Civil Liberties Union on this. I think the ability of the U.S. Congress to somehow pass legislation that heads off this growing crisis of too much money in American politics is something that the Congress should be able to do. The Civil Liberties Union is taking the position that any restraints on the spending side is the same as trying to restrain free speech. What this bill does is seek to put in place incentives that would encourage people running for federal office to accept ceilings and other restraints on how they campaign. And I think the country desperately needs it. I think it's a sensible bill. It is a beginning. New ideas, new suggestions will undoubtedly be considered as they go along. But it is the approach that holds the most hope now because it has strong bipartisan support, and so I disagree with the Civil Liberties Union. I think there is room for decent restraint, voluntary restraint, which is what the McCain-Feingold bill does.

MR. BRODER: Senator Kassebaum, as you know, having been there very recently, the leadership of your party in the Senate--Senator Lott, Senator McConnell and others--are dead set against this kind of reform legislation. How do you intend to try to change their
MRS. BAKER: Well, this is the legislation that's on the table, and has been. I was a co-sponsor in the last Congress. But Senator McCain and Senator Feingold and I--the leadership in the House with the companion bill, have all said negotiations will take place. I think there is room for and needs to be, probably, adjustments made. But this is major reform. It's probably the most major effort that's been put forward since 1974 when the now-laws were enacted after the Watergate period.

I know that we always get into any limitation being a matter of equating money and capping money with free speech. It may be that what's going to be necessary is to draft the best legislation possible and it would be tested again in the courts. I think it's inevitable whatever is passed will be addressed that way. But we found so many loopholes that with soft money and independent expenditures, particularly, there needs to be a full accounting, a full disclosure, I would say, first and foremost, of all contributions made and who made them and how the money was spent. That's a first step forward that would be of some value.

MR. FORD: Senator Baker, we've got about a minute or so left here. Let me ask you this. Anthony Lake, when he stepped aside as the president's nominee to head the CIA, said that, quote, "Washington has gone haywire." He charged that his hearing was nasty and mean, as being unfairly dragged out. The president talked about this being, quote, "political revenge." From your perspective, having been there and now looking in from the outside, has Washington indeed gone haywire?

MR. BAKER: No. No, Jack, it hasn't gone haywire. It's very much the same Washington I knew when I was there and that I knew when my father was there. Washington is--being in Congress and in national politics is tough business, and Tony Lake's a good man, I think. And I feel sorry for him for the drubbing he took. But I can think back on half a dozen other cases that were at least as tough as that. In a lot of ways, it's an unfair process, but it's been there a long time. It works pretty well, and I don't agree that Washington has gone haywire.

MR. FORD: All right. Howard Baker, Nancy Kassebaum, Walter Mondale, thank you all for joining us this morning. I'm sure we'll be talking about this a great deal in the future. And we'll be right back with our MEET THE PRESS MINUTE with Jimmy Carter on--What else?--campaign fund-raising, but this time from 1974.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: In the post-Watergate days, campaign reform was also on the minds of American voters. Twenty-two years ago, then presidential candidate Jimmy Carter spoke about fund-raising, loopholes and violations of the spirit of the law. Let's take a look.

(Videotape, December 15, 1974):

Unidentified Man: Governor, it cost a lot of money to run for president these days. Where are you going to get yours?

GOV. CARTER: I think the American people are very eager to see political candidates be very modest in their acceptance of large campaign contributions. I think it's a travesty, for instance, of the new law which will go into effect the 1st of January in which limits contributions to see some of the authors and supporters of that law trying to circumvent it by raising very large sums of money before the law goes into effect. So I'll be very open, very modest in my request for a lot of small campaign contributions and I think I'll be successful.

MR. BRODER: Governor, first a quick follow-up on something you said to Mr. Kiker about, as I understood it, some of your rivals in this situation, I believe you said, are trying to circumvent the intent of the law by raising large sums of money in advance of it going into effect. Who are you speaking of?
GOV. CARTER: I read an article in The New York Times this morning that pointed out that two senatorial prospective candidates, Senator Jackson and Senator Benson, were attempting to raise large sums of money before the 1st of January when the law goes into effect. Both of these gentlemen supported the limitation of a $1,000 contribution limit on any particular person to a candidate. I personally believe that this is typical of the Washington bureaucracy where they deliberately made the law effective long months after it was signed by the president and passed by them. I think this is equivalent to the same thing that President Nixon did back in April of 1972 when he rapidly accumulated large sums of money to finance his campaign without revealing the identity of the contributors. So I think just the spirit of the law is being violated, although I hasten to say that these two gentlemen are not doing anything that's illegal.

(End of videotape)

MR. FORD: Governor Carter and his running mate, Walter Mondale, of course, made it to the White House in 1976 and served one term. Today former President Carter continues to be deeply involved in world affairs and social causes as head of the Carter Center in Atlanta. We'll be right back.

(Announcements)

MR. FORD: And coming up on "Dateline" tonight...

MR. STONE PHILLIPS ("Dateline"): Thanks, Jack.

What can the ransom note tell us about the JonBenet Ramsey murder? We'll look at how document analysts examine paper, ink and handwriting in the search for a killer. That's tonight on "Dateline" at 7, 6 Central time. Jack.

MR. FORD: Stone, thank you. We want to remind you, start your day with Katie and Matt tomorrow on "Today," then the "NBC Nightly News" with Tom Brokaw. And I'll be back with you-all next weekend on "Today." That's it for now. Tim Russert will be back next week. And it's Sunday, it's MEET THE PRESS.

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

In my State-of-the Union Address, I challenged Congress to pass bipartisan campaign finance reform by July 4th -- the date we celebrate the birth of our democracy. The only way that political reform will become law is if citizens raise their voices to demand change. I strongly support the bipartisan legislation introduced by Senators John McCain and Russ Feingold, and Reps. Chris Shays and Marty Meehan. It is real, it is fair, it is tough, and it will curb the role of big money in our politics.

We know the pressing need for reform; the campaign finance laws are two decades out of date, and have been overwhelmed by a flood of money that rises with every election. Above all, campaign finance reform will help us to meet our nation's fundamental challenges. It will help us balance the budget, fight crime, extend health care to our children, protect our young people from the dangers of tobacco. Reform will help make sure that our political system stands for ordinary Americans and helps them in their daily lives.

At Faneuil Hall, the "Cradle of Liberty," and at Independence Hall, our Founders forged our democracy. Now it is up to all of us, in a new time, to renew that democracy, and to make sure that our government represents the national interest, not just narrow interests. I thank those who are fighting for reform and who are gathered at Faneuil Hall for their leadership, and urge all citizens to join in this effort. This year can be the year that we finally pass campaign finance reform.

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