

Bush and Clinton offer views on arts, showbiz

THE LONG ELECTION SEASON is finally drawing to a close. Yet even after a year of campaigning, conventions, televised debates and stump speeches, we still had questions about the views of George Bush, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot on a number of specific issues relevant to the entertainment community.

So two weeks ago, we asked the three candidates for their opinions on such topics as Hollywood's role in promoting family values, foreign ownership of media companies, funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, the North American Free Trade Agreement's impact on intellectual property rights and television programs, and antitrust laws as they relate to Hollywood.

As has been the case so often in the campaign, the three candidates responded in distinctly different ways. After expressing some initial interest in participating in our survey, the Perot campaign chose not to respond. The Bush campaign, citing time constraints, submitted a series of position papers that answered the questions in general terms. And the Clinton campaign, noting some of those same end-of-the-campaign time limitations, supplied a general statement of the Arkansas governor's views on the arts.

Here, then, are summaries of Clinton's statement and Bush's position papers. Election day is Tuesday, Nov. 3.

FROM PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH:

Although he does not favor censorship, President Bush "will not allow hard-earned taxpayer dollars to fund obscenity."

In March 1990, he said, "I am deeply offended by some of the filth that I see and to which federal money has gone, and some of the sacrilegious, blasphemous depictions that are portrayed by some as art."

President Bush said he is reforming the National Endowment for the Arts, making sure that it becomes a more conscientious steward of taxpayer funds. "Making ordinary Americans active participants in the NEA will bring new accountability, and will ensure committed advocacy of taxpayer interests and long-neglected standards of decency."

THE CANDIDATES

BACKTALK

Included among the reforms is a provision that each grant application must be reviewed by as many as 20 Americans who are not professional artists.

In addition, the president forecasts a \$7 million cut in the NEA's budget for arts promotion by 1993, while the NEA's overall budget will grow by less than the rate of inflation.

Without specifically addressing regulation problems

associated with the film industry, President Bush said that he believes "the reduction of burdensome regulation" is a priority "in spurring economic growth."

"The extent of federal regulation is striking: Federal regulations filled over 33,000 pages last year, with over 7,000 regulations issued. All told, the cost of complying with federal regulations is estimated to be between \$300 billion and \$500 billion each year."

At his direction, the administration is attempting to reduce unnecessary regulation, initiating a number of regulatory relief measures.

"The regulators must be sensitive to how their regulations affect economic growth and job creation. Despite pressure from affected businesses and consumers, the Democratic Congress refuses to ease burdensome regulation by passing the president's proposals."

The president believes that the removal of unnecessary regulations, reducing the payroll tax system, simplifying reporting and payment procedures and increasing the maximum size for public stock offerings all promote economic growth.

It is his belief that the North American Free Trade Agreement will mean more exports and more jobs for Americans.

He states, "The United States will become the centerpiece of a \$6 trillion market with 360 million consumers. ... Increased trade will help Canadians and Mexicans spend more on American goods while American consumers will enjoy cheaper Canadian and Mexican goods."

"NAFTA provides a higher level of protection for intellectual property rights than that in any other bilateral or multilateral agreement. U.S. high technology, entertainment and consumer-goods producers that rely on protection for their patents, copyrights and trademarks will all realize substantial gains under NAFTA."

FROM GOV. BILL CLINTON:

"As a professor of constitutional law at the University of Arkansas, I emphasized to my students the centrality of the First Amendment to all our other freedoms as Americans. And while I believe that publicly funded projects should strive to reflect the values that

most Americans share, I strongly support and will defend freedom of speech and artistic expression.

"The National Endowment for the Arts has brought access to the arts to Americans everywhere, and thereby enriched us all. I certainly do not foresee lessening federal funding for the arts in a Clinton-Gore administration and, if elected, I will have as strong a commitment and interest in promoting the arts as I did in Arkansas."

"The clearest example of my interest and encouragement of the arts in Arkansas lies within the sweeping educational reforms in Arkansas in the 1980s. The arts were part of the governor's education reform package and Arkansas is one of only a few states that have included the arts in the basic high school curriculum. The Arkansas Arts Council and the Dept. of Arkansas Heritage are working closely with the Arkansas Dept. of Education to plan and implement curriculum-based arts education from kindergarten through the 12th grade."

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"In 1991-92, in the face of shifting priorities and falling grant awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, I continued to support the state's commitment to touring arts programs, arts education and local arts agencies. My budget for the Arts Council included a \$9,000 increase for arts programs, while many states' art agency budget reduced their funding.

"The state appropriation for the Arkansas Arts Council in fiscal year 1991 was \$1,028,140 and \$1,052,963 in 1992. In 1992 grants from Arkansas' State Arts Council have supported 3,939 performances, exhibitions and arts classes in 138 cities and communities in Arkansas.

"Curricular guidelines have been developed for elementary and secondary public school art, survey of fine arts, elementary music, general music, instrumental and vocal music.

"There has been an increase of teaching positions in the public schools for music and art teachers of about 35% since the Arkansas Education Standards, adopted by the state in 1984, require all schools to have arts programs. There has been a 30% increase in students' participation in arts programs since 1983.

"Arkansas is also the home of a regional repertory theater, the Arkansas Repertory Theatre, and a nationally recognized professional Children's Theatre housed in the Arkansas Arts Center. Arkansas also is home to the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Ballet Arkansas, as well as several local theater and performing arts programs throughout the state. My family and I have always shown, over the years, a great interest in the work of Arkansas' craft artists and the performing arts."