

Excerpts From Interview With Mrs. Clinton on NBC

By The New York Times

Following are excerpts from an interview with Hillary Rodham Clinton by Matt Lauer on the NBC program "Today," as recorded by The New York Times:

MR. LAUER. There has been one question on the minds of a lot of people in this country, Mrs. Clinton, lately, and that is, What is the exact nature of the relationship between your husband and Monica Lewinsky? Has he described that relationship in detail to you?

MRS. CLINTON. Well, we've talked at great length. And I think that as this matter unfolds, the entire country will have more information. But we're right in the middle of a rather vigorous feeding frenzy right now. And people are saying all kinds of things and putting out rumor and innuendo. . . .

Q. But he has described to the American people what this relationship was not. . . . Has he described what it was?

A. Yes. And we'll find that out as time goes by, Matt. But I think the important thing now is to stand as firmly as I can and say that, you know, the President has denied these allegations on all counts, unequivocally. And we'll see how this plays out. . . .

Q. I want to talk about Kenneth Starr in a second. Before I get to him, let me just ask you: Do you know Monica Lewinsky?

A. No, uh-uh.

Q. You've never met her?

A. I may have. You know, there are hundreds and hundreds of young people who serve as interns. . . .

Q. So these charges came as big a shock to you as anyone?

A. And to my husband. I mean, you know, he woke me up Wednesday morning and said, 'You're not going to believe this, but' — and I said, 'What is this?' And so, yeah, it came as a very big surprise. . . .

Q. Does it not appear though that this intern had more clout in Washington than most others do?

A. I don't know the circumstances of any of that, Matt. I think that, you know, I just can't describe to you how outgoing and friendly Vernon Jordan is. I mean, when he stood up and said what I believe to be the absolute truth — that he has helped literally hundreds of people — and it doesn't matter who they are. And if he were asked to help somebody, he would help that person. . . .

Q. So if what you have heard is something you can believe, and if what the President has told the nation is the whole truth and nothing but the truth —

A. Right.

Q. Then you'd have to agree that this is the worst and most damaging smear of the 20th century.

A. Well I don't know. There have been a lot of smears in the 20th century. But it's a pretty bad one.

Q. This is pretty devastating.

A. Well, just think about it. And this is what concerns me. This started out as an investigation of a failed land deal. I told everybody in 1992 we lost money. People said, 'It's not true. You know, they made money. They have money in a Swiss bank account.' Well, it was true. It's taken years but it was true. We get a politically motivated prosecutor, who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband, who has literally spent four years looking at every telephone —

Q. Spent \$30 million.

A. More than that now. But looking at every telephone call we've made, every check we've ever written, scratching for dirt, intimidating witnesses, doing everything possible to try to make some accusation against my husband. And —

Q. We're talking about Kenneth Starr so let's use his name because he is the independent counsel.

A. We're talking, well, we're talking about, but it's the whole operation. It's not just one person. It's an entire operation.

Q. Did he go outside of his rights, in your opinion, to expand this investigation? After all, he got permission to expand the investigation from a three-judge panel.

A. The same three-judge panel that removed Robert Fiske and appointed him. The same three-judge panel that is headed by someone who was appointed by Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth. I —

Q. Also Janet Reno approved

A. Well, of course.

Q. This expansion of an investigation.

A. Well, you're —. Of course she is. Because she doesn't want to appear as though she's interfering with an investigation. I don't —. Look, I'm not going to take all that on because I've learned that we just have to ride this out.

It's just a very unfortunate turn of events that we are using the criminal justice system to try to achieve political ends in this country.

And, you know, when I'm here today, I'm not only here because I love and believe my husband. I'm also here because I love and believe in my country.

And if I were just a citizen out there, maybe because I know about the law and I have some idea of some of the motivations here, I would be very disturbed by this turn of events.

Q. James Carville, who you know —

A. Great human being.

Q. I'm sure you like him, especially at this time. He has said that this is war between the President and Kenneth Starr. You have said, I understand, to some close friends, that this is the last great battle and that one side or the other is going down here.

A. Well I don't know if I've been that dramatic. That would sound like a good line from a movie. But I do believe that this is a battle.

I mean, look at the very people who are involved in this. They have popped up in other settings. This is — The great story here for anybody willing to find it and write about it and explain it, is this vast right-wing conspiracy that has been conspiring against my husband.

Report Finds No Wrongdoing in Burial Waivers

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27 (AP) — Congressional investigators have found no evidence that political contributions played any role in selecting people to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, according to a study to be released on Wednesday.

The General Accounting Office, the investigating arm of Congress, says in a study that it has uncovered no examples of men or women who made generous campaign contributions and then received waivers of normal rules governing burial at the cemetery.

While Presidents and members of Congress have occasionally asked for waivers, the requests were used only to help constituents or because they believed that the person mer-

ited an Arlington burial, the accounting office said.

Senior Democrats on the House Veterans Affairs Committee asked the accounting office to investigate whether political contributions led to waivers, after accusations that big donors to the Democratic Party were being buried at the Arlington cemetery.

Representative Terry Everett, the Alabama Republican who is the chairman of the panel's oversight subcommittee, has submitted a separate request for a General Accounting Office inquiry into the entire process of issuing waivers of the normal qualifications for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

The subcommittee plans a hearing

on the issue on Wednesday.

When Army Secretary Togo West released a list in November of those who had received waivers, the only big donor was M. Larry Lawrence, who was Ambassador to Switzerland at the time of his death in 1996.

Mr. Lawrence, the owner of the landmark Hotel del Coronado near San Diego, received a waiver because he said he had served in the United States merchant marine in 1945 and that he was wounded in action.

After Congressional Republicans said they could find no evidence to prove that he had served in the merchant marine, Mr. Lawrence's widow had his body exhumed and buried in San Diego.

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1998

Ripple Becomes Media Tidal Wave

By JANNY SCOTT

MEDIA NOTEBOOK

Within a couple of hours of Hillary Rodham Clinton's televised interview yesterday morning, her remarks had been reported, analyzed, reacted to, recycled and boiled down to a single sound bite in the dizzying frenzy that has become the hallmark of the news coverage of the White House sex scandal.

That single sound bite, the one that included "this vast right-wing conspiracy that has been conspiring against my husband," then became grist for a rollicking day of punditry and talk that became a bizarre, day-long prelude to President Clinton's State of the Union Message.

There was Dick Morris, the former Presidential adviser who resigned because of a sex scandal of his own, on a Los Angeles radio talk show rumormongering about the First Couple's sex lives, and G. Gordon Liddy, the Watergate conspirator, talking on CNN about how tough it is to mount a good conspiracy.

Meanwhile, The Dallas Morning News was busy on its Web site retracting an article it posted there just hours before, which stated that a Secret Service agent was prepared to testify that he had seen President Clinton and Monica S. Lewinsky in what the newspaper called "a compromising situation."

The day started early, when Mrs. Clinton appeared on the "Today" program for her first interview since the sex scandal surfaced last week and insisted the accusations against Mr. Clinton were untrue (after which her interviewer, Matt Lauer, thanked her for her candor).

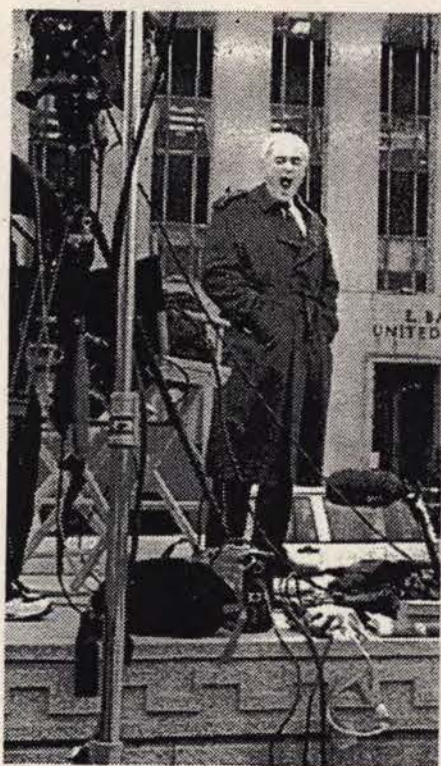
By mid-morning, Peter Flaherty, the co-author of a forthcoming biography of Mrs. Clinton, was on MSNBC calling her "a tragic figure" and Mr. Clinton "a sexual predator" and comparing her composure to Michael S. Dukakis's cold, legalistic answer to the question of a hypothetical rape and murder of his wife.

There was Barbara Walters on "The View" on ABC: "She is handling this just the way I think every man would want his wife to," Ms. Walters enthused.

The White House, too, was reported to be cheery about the interview. "You hear such words as 'masterful' and 'wonderful,'" John Palmer of NBC dutifully reported.

Next came William H. Ginsburg, a lawyer for Ms. Lewinsky, rating the performance of the wife of the man with whom his 24-year-old client supposedly had an affair.

"Her performance was dignified," Mr. Ginsburg said, lost in the now fa-



By Molly Bingham for The New York Times

FEDERAL COURT The White House sex scandal has led to a frenzy of news coverage from many outlets.

miliar forest of shotgun microphones. "It was well put."

All morning and afternoon, the all-news networks recycled the interview in part or in full — every hour on the hour, every half-hour and often in between.

"I mean, Bill and I have been accused of everything, including murder," Mrs. Clinton could be heard saying over and over and over. "I mean, Bill and I..."

By late morning, the analysts were out in full force. Lisa Schifferin, a former Republican speechwriter appearing on one program, "CNN & Company," as the representative from the right, confessed that she was offended not to have been asked to join the right-wing conspiracy.

But Mrs. Clinton was in a tight spot, Ms. Schifferin went on to say. The First Lady could not blame Ms. Lewinsky "for being a bimbo."

"This is a nice girl from a nice home and the daughter of a contributor," Ms. Schifferin said. "So she has to blame a right-wing conspiracy."

In Los Angeles, where The Los Angeles Times was reporting that the White House had re-enlisted the shamed Mr. Morris, along with others, to help the President out in this pinch, Mr. Morris himself surfaced on a popular drive-time talk show on KABC-AM thinking aloud about the First Couple's sex life.

"Let's assume, O.K., that his sexual relationship with Hillary is not all it's supposed to be," Mr. Morris said,

going on into a flight of speculation about the First Lady's sexual habits.

There were the men-on-the-street (and women-in-the-gym) interviews. At the World Gym in Burbank, Calif., an NBC reporter wended his way among the Stairmasters, analyzing the reaction to Mrs. Clinton's interview, which was being rebroadcast and rebroadcast on a television mounted on a wall above his head.

There was, of course, some counterprogramming. C-Span could be found broadcasting a Congressional tribute to the late Representative Sonny Bono. There were soap operas and home shows and others. On one cooking show, a man in a baby blue apron was making spinach in Béchamel: "Nutmeg is so wonderful in spinach."

But the news networks were doing their best to keep their audiences from reaching for the clicker. The promos came fast and furious.

"Hillary has handled her husband's damage control before," said "Inside Edition." "Will Hillary be able to do it again?"

Every show seemed to come accompanied by sinister, percussive music and stentorian voices to leave the viewer in a heightened state of agitation. Every report came with some subtitle: "Scandal in the White House," "The President in Crisis," "Investigating the President."

Editors were showing signs of creative or desperate assigning. "Your Kids and Clinton's Crisis" was said to be upcoming on one network. "Inside Edition" tackled a segment titled "How's Chelsea Coping?" In it, a psychologist could be heard saying, "They need to let Chelsea know that she is loved."

By early afternoon, lawyers were analyzing the effect of Mrs. Clinton's interview on her "spousal privilege." Her marital communications privilege remains intact, viewers were told. Newsweek correspondents were energetically dissecting Mrs. Clinton's conspiracy theory.

"She believes it with all her heart," said Jonathan Alter of Newsweek and MSNBC.

Mr. Alter said Mrs. Clinton had even discussed it with him in the past. Then along came Michael Isikoff, also of Newsweek, suggesting it would be difficult to fit Ms. Lewinsky into the vast right-wing conspiracy.

The CNN program "Burden of Proof" featured Richard Ben-Veniste, a former Watergate prosecutor, who opined: "The press is in full-throated blood lust for this issue. There is no question that this is not only a distraction. It has totally, totally taken over and distracted from the business of government."

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1998

Surreal Air Envelops Capital As Some Change the Subject

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By R. W. APPLE Jr. and ADAM NAGOURNEY

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25 — It was Saturday night at the White House, and Hillary Rodham Clinton rose in the Family Quarters to welcome the guests joining her and the President for dinner and a movie.

"Thank you for coming out," she said. "It's been such an uneventful week at the White House." Mrs. Clinton's audience — a mix of entertainment figures, political leaders and friends of the Clintons — responded with a warm laugh and some obvious relief, one guest recalled. They then sat back to watch "The Apostle," which dealt with the subject of adultery.

Across town, at almost the same moment, an equally surreal scene played out at the British Embassy. This was a black tie dinner-dance, where Vernon E. Jordan Jr. and Madeleine K. Albright were among the most prominent guests for an evening studded with some of the best-known figures in Washington society.

Whenever Mr. Jordan or Ms. Albright was on hand, the talk was of worried concern about the future of the President and the nation. Other guests urged them to fight on, despite the uproar over accusations that the President had an affair with an intern.

But the moment the President's adviser or his Secretary of State moved on, the tone changed: "Do you think he can survive?" asked one guest.

"How long do you give him?" asked another.

At any other time, this would have been a weekend in which Washington could have gladly indulged in its two favorite sports, politics and football, the preparation of the State of the Union address and the Super Bowl.

But instead, this past 48 hours have been as unsettled and strained as many people here could recall. Each time Washington sought to conduct business as usual, it was pulled back by the allegations of sexual misconduct swirling around Mr.

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Clinton.

At the White House, Mr. Clinton, dressed in the suit he had worn to church this morning, painstakingly practiced his State of the Union speech for nearly four hours, rewriting passage by passage. But each time Mr. Clinton disappeared, the gallows humor resurfaced (one aide emerged from the practice session to announce that Mr. Clinton would use his speech to propose abolishing the 22d Amendment, so he could seek a third term).

The British Ambassador, Sir Christopher Meyer, was host of a dinner at his residence, an elegant, 70-year-old Washington home designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, whose goal was to design a grand English country house, nestled along the stretch of Massachusetts Avenue known as Embassy Row. Many of the 120 people who turned out to welcome the new ambassador were animated as, between dinner and dancing, they shared the latest gossip on Mr. Clinton's case. But at one table — that of Melanne Verveer, the chief of staff for the First Lady — incredibly, not a word was spoken about the affair the entire evening, according to someone who was there.

The mood was different in another part of the city, where a few of the young staff aides from the White House gathered to celebrate the birthday of one of their members. It was hard on this cold and rainy night not to recall the intoxicating days of 1992, when some of them helped the Governor of Arkansas to his improbable victory. Now, amidst the celebration, the talk was despondent, about whether the man so many of them had admired would survive at all.

"My world is completely shattered," one of them said.

Nowhere, though, was the mood more surreal than on the grounds of the White House itself.

Mr. Clinton has experienced this kind of storm before during his life in public office and, by all accounts, he exhibited this weekend a level of serenity and focus that his aides had difficulty matching. As he learned to do during times like these, Mr. Clinton sought to pretend that nothing was amiss, keeping to what would have been his regular schedule in the fourth weekend of January.

He went to church this morning, and watched the Super Bowl this evening with the Rev. Jesse Jackson. He ran through his State of the Union speech, and Saturday night joined Mrs. Clinton as hosts of 100 people for a buffet dinner and a movie; among the guests were the actors Robert Duvall and Farah Fawcett. He shuttled effortlessly from a meeting with foreign policy advisers on Iraq to a session with lawyers about his legal difficulties.

"A person who hasn't read the papers — a visitor from Mars, say — would never, ever guess there's anything extraordinary going on in his life," said a long-time friend and adviser who spent much of the weekend with Mr. Clinton.

Meanwhile, his staff was torn between gamely offering the usual pre-speech buildup to reporters ("We have a terrific speech!" a senior aide confided) to dealing with an unending stream of questions about Mr. Clinton's purported infidelities from the unusually large flock of television reporters that had descended on the muddy White House lawn.

In this unsettled atmosphere, it became hard for even Mr. Clinton's disciplined supporters to keep to the script. This morning, a White House spokesman, Joe Lockhart, was chastised because reporters were somehow left behind when Mr. Clinton went to church.

"We were slow gathering the pool and the President left early," Mr. Lockhart said evenly. "And Ken Starr is investigating."

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The New York Times

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1998

POPE ASKS CUBANS TO SEEK NEW PATH TOWARD FREEDOM

THRONGS AT HAVANA MASS

John Paul Emphasizes Human Rights and Also Criticizes the American Embargo

By LARRY ROHTER

HAVANA, Jan. 25 — With the images of both Jesus and Che Guevara looking down on him and a visibly moved throng, Pope John Paul II today stepped into Fidel Castro's favorite pulpit, the huge Plaza of the Revolution here, and urged Cubans to seek "the new paths called for by these times of renewal" and to avoid "exclusion, isolation and conflict."

With Mr. Castro and other senior Cuban officials in the front row at a mid-morning Mass, the Pope delivered a ringing call for pluralism here. He rejected the materialistic, one-party ideology of the Cuban state. And he said true liberation "cannot be reduced to its social and political aspects," but must also include "the exercise of freedom of conscience — the basis and foundation of all other human rights."

Later in the day, though, the Pope also made his most critical reference yet to the American economic embargo of Cuba. At a departure ceremony at José Martí Airport this evening, he said Cuba's "material and moral poverty" arose not only from "limitations to fundamental freedoms" and "discouragement of the individual," but also from "restrictive economic measures — unjust and ethically unacceptable — imposed from outside the country."

With Mr. Castro at his side, he said: "In our day, no nation can live in isolation. The Cuban people, therefore, cannot be denied the contacts with other peoples necessary for economic, social and cultural development, especially when the imposed isolation strikes the population indiscriminately, making it ever more difficult for the weakest to enjoy the

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bare essentials of decent living — things such as food, health and education."

The Pope spoke after Mr. Castro had compared Cuba's relationship with the United States to that of David and Goliath, complaining that Cuba has been "blockaded and subjected to a veritable economic war" for nearly 40 years. "For all your words, even those with which there may be some disagreement, I offer my thanks," the Cuban leader said.

For the morning Mass, groups organized on the basis of church parish or family began arriving at the square well before dawn on foot and by bus, ignoring the unseasonably cool, overcast and windy weather.

TV Rebelde, the state controlled television network, which broadcast the Mass live, said "hundreds of thousands" of people were there, but

made a point of specifying that the multitude was composed of both "believers and nonbelievers."

Since he came to power in 1959, Mr. Castro has delivered many of his best-known speeches, on May Day and other political occasions, at the Plaza of the Revolution, and so there was considerable speculation here about the size of the crowd that John Paul would draw. In his remarks, the Pope referred to the location by an alternate name, the Plaza José Martí, in honor of the father of Cuban independence, whose statue overlooks the square.

The Pope made no mention of Che Guevara, the martyr of the Cuban revolution who is the object of an almost religious veneration here. Instead, he quoted passages from the writings of Martí that are unfamiliar to most people here. "Every people needs to be religious," the Pope read, further quoting, "An irreligious people will die, because nothing in it encourages virtue."

During a televised speech to the nation nine days ago, Mr. Castro encouraged his supporters to turn out for today's Mass as "a sign of courtesy and consideration," but warned that "nobody should shout 'vivas' for any leader of the revolution." That did not prove to be much of a problem: from start to finish, the crowd belonged to the Pope and the Pope alone.

Indeed, his first words were interrupted by an enthusiastic chant of "You can hear it, you can feel it, the Pope is here!" Later, his comments were greeted with occasional shouts of "Freedom! Freedom!" or sustained and spirited applause anytime he mentioned the concepts central to his 40-minute homily: justice, truth, hope and liberation.

"I am not opposed to applause," the Pope quipped during one such interruption, drawing a smile from Mr. Castro. "Because when you applaud, the Pope can rest a bit."

Later, after another spontaneous outburst, he remarked, "You are an active audience," and then playfully added, "There's still a page to go."

From deep within the crowd, it was impossible to discern whether Mr. Castro joined the faithful in recitation of the liturgy and prayers during the Mass. State television showed Mr. Castro and his retinue arriving at the Mass and talking with the Pope afterward, but did not show him at moments when a response from the congregation was due.

Mr. Castro, wearing a dark blue business suit, was accompanied by the author Gabriel García Márquez, who is a longtime friend of Mr. Castro's, and by several of his closest associates, including Minister of Foreign Relations Roberto Robaina and Ricardo Alarcón, the leader of Cuba's legislative assembly.

The officials remained to the end of the two-and-a-half-hour Mass, following Mr. Castro's advice that party militants "not express the slightest manifestation of disgust at any phrase that displeases us or seems unjust," but they did not take communion.

Ordinary Cubans, some of whom said they were attending a Mass for the first time, declared that they found the Pope's message inspiring. "His words penetrated and stimulat-

ed me," Ana Pérez, a teacher, said. "I feel very emotional right now."

"I liked everything he said, but especially the part where he said Cuba must open up to the world and the world must open up to Cuba," said Luis Soteras, a graphic designer at a publishing house who attended with his wife, Mirta López, who runs a small private restaurant. "We can all of us learn a lot from the words of this man."

The measured tone of today's pronouncements came after three days of sermons that sounded increasingly critical of Mr. Castro's policies. At a meeting with lepers and AIDS patients on Saturday night, after a Mass in Santiago de Cuba at which a senior Cuban prelate warned against those "who have confused the fatherland with a single party," the Pope called on the Government to release political prisoners.

In private, Government and party officials had expressed dissatisfaction with such appeals and disappointment that the Pope had not given Mr. Castro what he was seeking: an explicit condemnation of 37 years of American economic sanctions directed against Cuba. Instead, John Paul had limited himself to generic criticisms of "economic embargoes, which are always deplorable because they damage the most needy," as he put it in Camagüey on Friday.

The Pope's schedule on his fifth and final day in Cuba was the busiest and most taxing of his trip to the only Latin American country he had not visited previously. An "ecumenical encounter" with Protestant and Jewish leaders preceded the morning Mass, while separate meetings with the Cuban Conference of Bishops and with clergy, seminarians and lay leaders followed.

Meeting with the bishops, John Paul urged Jaime Cardinal Ortega and a dozen other prelates to continue their efforts to insure that the Catholic Church "occupies her rightful place in the midst of the people and has the possibility of adequately serving the brethren." To do so, he added, restrictions on the church's activities here must be lifted.

"When the church demands religious freedom, she is not asking for a gift, a privilege or a permission dependent on contingent situations, political strategies or the will of the authorities," he said. "Rather, she demands the effective recognition of an inalienable human right."

But at the Mass, the Pope also sounded themes that are familiar to Cubans from Mr. Castro's speeches, and in a similar language. "Various places," he said, "are witnessing the resurgence of a certain capitalist neo-liberalism, which subordinates the human person to blind market forces and conditions, the development of people on those forces."

Without mentioning the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank by name, the Pope also criticized the austerity programs those organizations have devised for Latin American countries and, most recently, for Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand.

"At times," he said, "unsustainable economic programs are imposed on nations as a condition for further assistance."

The New York Times

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1998

First Lady Launches Counterattack

Prosecutor Called 'Politically Motivated' Ally of 'Right-Wing Conspiracy'

By David Maraniss
Washington Post Staff Writer

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton yesterday launched a vigorous counterattack on behalf of her husband's beleaguered presidency, declaring that the president is the victim of a "politically motivated" prosecutor allied with a "vast right-wing conspiracy."

Using a nationally televised interview as her forum, she assumed a familiar and crucial role as Bill Clinton's first defender. She said she knew him better than anyone in the world, still loved him, and fully believed his denial of allegations that he had entered into a sexual relationship with a White House intern and had urged the young woman to lie about it.

The first lady's determined performance on NBC's "Today" dramatically reshaped the debate over the sex scandal that erupted last week and now threatens President Clinton's political survival. Her words at once established a clear line of counterattack for Clinton's loyalists, whose defense strategy until yesterday had seemed confused if not half-hearted, boosted morale at the White House, and drew a swift rebuttal from her main target, independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr, who labeled the conspiracy claims "nonsense."

While Hillary Clinton had nothing new to add to the president's sketchy explanations of his relationship with the White House intern, Monica Lewinsky, she said that she had talked to her husband at great length about the subject and was satisfied with his answers.

"I think as this matter unfolds, the entire country will have more information, but we're right in the middle of a feeding frenzy right now, and people are putting out rumor and innuendo," she said. She urged the press and public "just to be patient, take a deep breath, and the truth will come out."

Throughout the interview with Matt Lauer, the "Today" host, Hillary
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HILLARY, From A1

Clinton displayed the cool and unruffled style that has become her trademark in times of trouble. She easily and quickly diverted the toughest questions about her husband's behavior, suggesting that his difficulties are either the "mean-spirited" imaginings of people out to get him or the unwitting misinterpretations of his garrulous and friendly personality.

When Lauer began a sentence by saying, "So where there's smoke..." she quickly punctuated it with the negating variation of that turn of phrase: "There's no fire." In her version of events, even the first conversation that she and Clinton had about Lewinsky's allegations seemed almost routine. She said the president had woken her up last Wednesday morning and said with a tone of bewilderment, "You're not going to believe this, but..."

The decision to transform Clinton's public defense into a rhetorical war with Starr and the political right wing was made at the White House in a series of meetings over the past four days, according to several administration sources. In every discussion in which she participated, the first lady was a leading advocate of an aggressive strategy attacking Starr, but it was not until her remarks yesterday morning that they realized that counterattacking was their most effective choice, and that she was their most effective weapon.

In the days after Lewinsky's allegations—made in conversations tape-recorded by a friend—first surfaced, the White House seemed virtually paralyzed by an intense struggle between Clinton's lawyers and political aides. The lawyers urged a cautious response because of the immense legal stakes, which included possible felony convictions or impeachment if it could be proved that Clinton asked the intern to lie about their relationship. His political advisers urged some sort of strong denial and counterattack in response to the relentless news stories.

With Hillary Clinton leading the way, the political side eventually won. After a series of carefully worded denials that in their vagueness only prompted more questions, the president changed course on Monday. At a routine White House function on education, with his wife and Vice President Gore standing on either side of him, Clinton ended a short speech by gritting his teeth, tightening his face, squinching his eyes into an angry glare, and stating, "I want you to listen to me! I'm going to say this again, I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time. Never."

White House aides said that the president had offered denials of similar intensity in several private meetings, and from that point, the mood of his loyalists began to change, and they began to consider more determinedly a full-bore plan of attack.

At a meeting in the Old Executive Office Building on Monday afternoon, Ann Lewis, the White House communications director, led a strategy session with several political consultants and advisers. The discussion was ostensibly about the State of the Union address, but it also focused, inevitably, on the sex scandal. According to several consultants in attendance, the central question was: "How do we finally turn the corner where we can get people raising legitimate questions about Starr."

Hillary Clinton, as she has been at every point in his career, was at the center of that strategy. It was no accident that she would take it to Starr when she reached the "Today" set in New York yesterday morning. She awoke at 5 a.m. at her suite in the Waldorf Astoria, and spent a brief time preparing for the interview before heading into her limousine for the short ride over to Rockefeller Plaza.

"She was very relaxed on the ride over," said Melanne Vermeer, her chief of staff, who was in the limousine with her. "Not uptight. Not apprehensive. She was not overwhelmingly natural. We talked about how odd it was that her speech the night before at the UNICEF dinner had so many press people covering it, and how large the press was at the events in Harlem." The press was expecting her to say something a day too soon. She was holding her fire until the morning television show.

Even before Lauer's questioning had turned to Starr, the first lady said that she was "very concerned about the tactics that are being used and the kind of intense political agenda at work here"—and she returned to that topic at every opportunity.

She said she was calm in the midst of the "firestorm" because she and her husband had become accustomed to spurious conspiracies concocted against them. "So having seen so many of these accusations come and go, having seen people profit, you know, like Jerry Falwell, with videos accusing my husband of murder, of drug-running, seeing some of the things that are written and said about him, my attitude is,

you know, we've been there before. We have seen this before."

She portrayed Starr as an obsessed prosecutor in league with Falwell and others on the far political right whose only mission has been to "undo" the results of the last two elections. She called Starr a "politically motivated prosecutor who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband, who has literally spent four years looking at every telephone... call we've made, every check we've ever written, scratching for dirt, intimidating witnesses, doing everything possible to try to make some kind of accusation against my husband."

Starr, she said, was just part of what she called "an entire operation."

In a written statement that his office released hours after the interview, Starr said: "The First Lady today accused this Office of being part of a 'vast right-wing conspiracy.' That is nonsense. Our current investigation began when we received credible evidence of serious federal crimes. We promptly informed Attorney General [Janet] Reno, and she determined that the allegations merited further investigation."

The Washington Post

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During the interview, Lauer noted that Reno had approved the expansion of the investigation. "Well, of course . . .," Hillary Clinton responded. "Because she doesn't want to appear as though she's interfering with the investigation. . . . Look, I'm not going to take all that on, because I've learned that we just have to ride this out. It's just a very unfortunate turn of events that we are using the criminal justice system to try to achieve political ends in this country."

Members of Congress, for the most part, stayed out of the fight, except Republican Sen. Arlen Specter (Pa.), who urged the Democrats to give Starr "the same benefit of the doubt" they are seeking for Clinton.

When the first lady's aides were asked later who was involved in this conspiracy, they said Hillary Clinton's statements would stand on their own, with no additional details. "I really can't" add any details, said Verveer. "I think she said all she was going to say."

The argument that most of Bill Clinton's troubles arise from the conspiracies of his enemies is one that Hillary Clinton has been making for several years. In "The Agenda," Bob Woodward's book on the first two years of the Clinton presidency, she claimed that the Whitewater investigation had its roots in a longstanding Republican plan to diminish his power.

"She connected the current troubles to a call that she remembered Bill telling her about in the summer of 1991, just as he was deciding to run for president," Woodward wrote. "She recalled that he reported a direct threat from someone in the Bush White House, warning that if he ran, the Republicans would go after him. 'We will do everything we can to destroy you personally,' she recalled that the Bush White House man had said."

The validity of that threat could never be established, but it served as the rallying point within the Clinton camp throughout the 1992 campaign. Many of Clinton's longtime advisers were aware of the Arkansas roots of that strategy. Since his first political campaign, when he was running for Congress in northwest Arkansas in 1974, Clinton had been dealing with rumors about his sex life, and also with conservative adversaries who acknowledged that they were intent on cutting short his political career.

In several of his races for governor, especially his final one, in 1990, against Republican Sheffield Nelson, Clinton had effectively been able to dismiss all sexual allegations against him by claiming they were part of a reckless conspiracy launched by desperate opponents.

At a meeting the other day when several Clinton political aides were discussing how they have dealt with this problem for the past five years, two of his advisers who go back to the Arkansas days with him looked at each other, smiled wistfully. "Five, hell, how about 10!" one said.

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the Rutherford Institute, which is paying the legal bills of Clinton accuser Paula Jones, disputed Mrs. Clinton's contention of a conspiracy.

"I've had no contact with Kenneth Starr except to get a subpoena," he said. "When you hear that kind of stuff, I think you should say, 'Show us the facts. Who conspired and when?'"

The first lady did not name names, but Miss Lewinsky was friends with Linda Tripp, the source of allegations of a sexual advance by Mr. Clinton to aide Kathleen Willey. Mrs. Tripp in turn has been linked to literary agent Lucianne Goldberg, a Clinton opponent, and former FBI agent Gary Aldrich, who wrote a book critical of the way the Clinton White House is run.

At another point yesterday, Mrs. Clinton said: "I think that when all of this is put into context and we really look at the people involved here, look at their motivations, look at their backgrounds, look at their past behavior, some folks are going to have a lot to answer for."

Mrs. Clinton also addressed the delicate subject of how her daughter, Chelsea, a freshman at Stanford University, is handling the crisis.

"We've talked a lot. Both Bill and I have talked to her a lot," she said.

"Any time accusations of any kind, but especially like this, with such publicity around the world, are made, it really does affect your whole family," Mrs. Clinton said.

Starr disputes Hillary's charges

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Text of independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr's statement yesterday on comments by Hillary Rodham Clinton:

The First Lady today accused this Office of being part of "a vast right-wing conspiracy." That is nonsense. Our current investigation began when we received credible evidence of serious federal crimes. We promptly informed Attorney General Reno, and she determined that the allegations merited further investigation. The Attorney General and the Special Division of the D.C. Circuit then authorized us to conduct the investigation. Our investigation is being carried out by highly experienced federal prosecutors, FBI agents, and other law-enforcement professionals, with major decisions made through a deliberative process. We are working to complete the inquiry as quickly and thoroughly as possible.

The Washington Times
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Hillary gripes about 'right-wing conspiracy'

FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE

Excerpts from yesterday's interview with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton by Matt Lauer on NBC's "Today" show.

Mr. Lauer: There has been one question on the minds of a lot of people in this country, Mrs. Clinton, lately. And that is, what is the exact nature of the relationship between your husband and Monica Lewinsky? Has he described that relationship in detail to you?

Mrs. Clinton: Well, we've talked at great length. And I think as this matter unfolds, the entire country will have more information. But we're right in the middle of a rather vigorous feeding frenzy right now, and people are saying all kinds of things and putting out rumor and innuendo.

And I have learned over the last many years, being involved in politics, and especially since my husband first started running for president, that the best thing to do in these cases is just to be patient, take a deep breath, and the truth will come out. But there's nothing we can do to fight this firestorm of allegations that are out there.

Q: But he has described to the American people what this relationship was not... in his words. Has he described to you what it was?

Mrs. Clinton: Yes. And we'll find that out as time goes by, Matt. But I think the important thing now is to stand as firmly as I can and say that the president has denied these allegations on all counts, unequivocally. And we'll see how this plays out.

I guess — everybody says to me, "How can you be so calm, or how can you just, you know, look like you're not upset?" And I guess I've just been through it so many times. I mean, Bill and I have been accused of everything, including murder, by some of the very same people who are behind these allegations. So from my perspective, this is part of a continuing political campaign against my husband.

Q: To the best of your knowledge, Mrs. Clinton, has your husband ever given or received gifts from or to Monica Lewinsky?

Mrs. Clinton: I'm not going to comment on any specific allegation, because I've learned we need to put all of this into context. And it will be put into context. And anyone who knows my husband knows that he is an extremely generous person to people he knows, to strangers, to anybody who's around him. And I think that his behavior, his treatment of people, will certainly explain all

of this.

Q: When you say he's a generous person, so it is possible that he has given gifts to Monica Lewinsky?

Mrs. Clinton: I think it's possible, of course, because if you know my husband, you know that he is somebody who will say, "How would you like this?" I mean, I've seen him take his tie off and hand it to somebody.

Q: So that wouldn't be a behavior that would be unusual for him dealing with an intern at the White House.

Mrs. Clinton: Dealing with anybody, Matt. I mean, seriously, I've known my husband for more than 25 years and we've been married for 22 years. And the one thing I always kid him about is that he never meets a stranger. He is kind. He is friendly. He tries to help people who need help, who ask for help.

So I think that everybody ought to just stop a minute here and think about what we're doing. And it's not just what we're doing in terms of making these accusations against my husband, but I'm very concerned about the tactics that are being used and the kind of intense political agenda at work here.

Q: I want to talk about Kenneth Starr in a second. Before I get to him, let me just ask you, do you know Monica Lewinsky?

Mrs. Clinton: No.

Q: You've never met her?

Mrs. Clinton: I may have. There are hundreds and hundreds of young people who serve as interns. And, we have big events for them. We take pictures with them. But unless they work directly in my office, I'm not likely to meet them.

Q: Did Evelyn Lieberman, the former deputy chief of staff, or any other White House staffers, Mrs. Clinton, ever come to you and say, "We may have a problem with one of the interns at the White House" and mention Monica Lewinsky by name?

Mrs. Clinton: No. No, that never happened.

Q: So these charges came as big a shock to you as anyone.

Mrs. Clinton: And to my husband. I mean, he woke me up Wednesday morning and said, "You're not going to believe this, but" — and I said, "What is this?" And so, yeah, it came as a very big

surprise.

Q: When he said "but," he said but what?

Mrs. Clinton: "But I want to tell you what's in the newspapers." Yeah.

Q: I think the part of this that makes certain people across the country uneasy is that we have a 21-year-old intern at the White House who moves to the Pentagon, who then gets a job interview at the U.N. with Bill Richardson himself.

And then a very dear friend of your husband's, Vernon Jordan, recommends her for two jobs in this city, here in New York, and then drives her personally to a lawyer's office when she's subpoenaed by Kenneth Starr. Does it not appear, though, that this intern had more clout in Washington than most others do?

Mrs. Clinton: I don't know the circumstances of any of that, Matt. I think that, I just can't describe to you how outgoing and friendly Vernon Jordan is. I mean, when he stood up and said what I believe to be the absolute truth, that he has helped literally hundreds of people, and it doesn't matter who they are, and if he were asked to help somebody, he would help that person. I've seen him do it countless times. So I guess I know the people involved. I know them personally. I know them well. I've known Vernon longer than I've known my husband.

Q: So when people say there's a lot of smoke here, your message is, where there's smoke —

Mrs. Clinton: There isn't any fire, because think of what we've been through for the last six years and think of everything we've been accused of.

Q: Are you saying, though, that you're no longer — that this doesn't upset you anymore? You're almost numb to it?

Mrs. Clinton: It's not being numb so much as just being very experienced in the unfortunate mean-spirited give-and-take of American politics right now. So having seen so many of these accusations come and go, having seen people profit, like Jerry Falwell with videos accusing my husband of murder, of drug-running, seeing some of the things that are written and said about him, my attitude is, we've been there before. We have seen this before.

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And I am just going to wait patiently until the truth comes out.

Q: So if what you have heard is something you can believe, and if what the president has told the nation is the whole truth and nothing but the truth — then you'd have to agree that this is the worst and most damaging smear of the 20th century.

Mrs. Clinton: Well, I don't know. There have been a lot of smears in the 20th century. But it's a pretty bad one.

Q: This is pretty devastating.

Mrs. Clinton: Well, just think about it. And this is what concerns me. This started out as an investigation of a failed land deal. I told everybody in 1992 we lost money. People said, "It's not true. You know, they made money. They have money in a Swiss bank account." Well, it was true. It's taken years, but it was true.

We get a politically motivated prosecutor who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband, who has literally spent four years looking at every telephone

Q: Spent \$40 million.

Mrs. Clinton: More than that now, but looking at every telephone call we've made, every check we've ever written, scratching for dirt, intimidating witnesses, doing everything possible to try to make some accusation against my husband.

Q: We're talking about Kenneth Starr, so let's use his name, because he is the independent counsel.

Mrs. Clinton: Well, we're talking about — but it's the whole operation. It's not just one person. It's an entire operation.

Q: Did he go outside of his rights, in your opinion, to expand this investigation? After all, he got permission to expand the investigation from a three-judge panel.

Mrs. Clinton: The same three-judge panel that removed Robert Fiske and appointed him; the same three-judge panel that is headed by someone who was appointed by Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth.

Q: The last time we visited a subject like this involving your family was 1992, and the name Gennifer Flowers was in the news. And you said at that time, in an interview, a very famous quote, "I'm not some Tammy Wynette standing by my man." In the same



First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton waits for the next question from interviewer Matt Lauer on NBC's "Today" show yesterday morning.

interview, your husband admitted that he had, quote, "caused pain" in your marriage.

Six years later, you are still standing by this man, your husband, through some difficult charges. If he were to be asked today, Mrs. Clinton, do you think he would admit that he again has caused pain in this marriage?

Mrs. Clinton: No, absolutely not. And he shouldn't. We've been married for 22 years, Matt, and I have learned a long time ago that the only people who count in any marriage are the two that are in it. We know everything there is to know about each other and we understand and accept and love each other.

And I just think that a lot of this is deliberately designed to sensationalize charges against my husband because everything else they've tried has failed. And I also believe it is part of an effort, very frankly, to undo the results of two elections.

Q: Let me talk about your role. There have been reports that you've taken charge at the White House and decided to be the chief defender of your husband, of the

president, and deflect these charges. How much of a role are you taking in this, do you think you should take?

Mrs. Clinton: Well, I certainly am going to defend my husband and I'm certainly going to offer advice. But I am by no means running any kind of strategy or being his chief defender. He's got very capable lawyers and very capable people inside the White House and a lot of very good friends outside the White House.

Q: But you're probably the most credible defender of the president at this time.

Mrs. Clinton: Well, I probably know him better than anybody alive in the world. So I would hope that I'd be the most credible defender.

Q: James Carville ... has said that this is war between the president and Kenneth Starr. You have said, I understand, to some close friends, that this is the last great battle and that one side or the other is going down here.

Mrs. Clinton: Well, I don't know if I've been that dramatic. That would sound like a good line from a movie. But I do believe that this is a battle. Look at the very people who are involved in this. They have popped up in other settings.

The great story here for anybody willing to find it and write about it and explain it is this vast right-wing conspiracy that has been conspiring against my husband since the day he announced for president. A few journalists have kind of caught onto it and explained it, but it has not yet been fully revealed to the American public. And actually, in a bizarre sort of way, this may do it.

Q: Let me take you and your husband out of this for a second. Bill and Hillary Clinton aren't involved in this story. If an American president had an adulterous liaison in the White House and lied to cover it up, should the American people ask for his resignation?

Mrs. Clinton: Well, they should certainly be concerned about it.

Q: Should they ask for his resignation?

Mrs. Clinton: Well, I think if all that were proven true, I think that would be a very serious offense. That is not going to be proven true. I think we're going to find some other things. And I think that when all of this is put into context and we really look at the people involved here, look at their motivations, look at their backgrounds, look at their past behavior, some folks are going to have a lot to answer for.

The Washington Times
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Hillary slams 'vast right-wing conspiracy'

By Warren P. Strobel
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

AT

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said yesterday that reports of wrongdoing by President Clinton are the creation of a "vast right-wing conspiracy" that aims to destroy his achievements and neutralize the results of two presidential elections.

Rising to the defense of her husband but betraying little emotion, Mrs. Clinton directly took on independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr, accusing him of a vendetta against the president.

"We get a politically motivated prosecutor," she said, "who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband, who has literally spent four years ... looking at every telephone call we've made, every check we've ever written, scratching for dirt, intimidating witnesses, doing everything possible to try to make some accusation against my husband."

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HILLARY

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Mr. Starr released a highly unusual statement later in the day directly rejecting the first lady's accusations.

"The first lady today accused this office of being part of 'a vast right-wing conspiracy,'" the statement said. "That is nonsense."

"Our current investigation began when we received credible evidence of serious federal crimes," Mr. Starr said. "Our investigation is being carried out by highly experienced federal prosecutors, FBI agents and other law enforcement professionals, with major decisions made through a deliberative process. We are working to complete the inquiry as quickly and thoroughly as possible."

Mrs. Clinton's comments, in an interview on NBC's "Today" program yesterday morning, were by far the sharpest counterattack on the president's accusers in the week since allegations surfaced that Mr. Clinton had an affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky and urged her to deny it under oath.

The counterattack repeats a familiar pattern for the Clintons, who, when faced with challenges to their ethics, often blame their woes on the political right.

In July 1995, the White House counsel's office produced a report describing a right-wing conspiracy to peddle anti-Clinton stories through sympathetic outlets, up to Capitol Hill committees and on to "mainstream" media.

A senior administration official said the first lady's volley was not the beginning of a formal new White House campaign to discredit Mr. Starr. But that still leaves Mr. Clinton's advocates outside the administration.

Clinton consultant James Carville, Mr. Starr's most vociferous critic, "will do what he wants to do," the official said. Mr. Carville was traveling outside the country and could not be reached for comment.

As part of their political strategy, administration officials and Clinton advocates also have begun to turn their rhetorical guns on the news media, accusing reporters of abandoning usual journalistic procedure in the rush to air or print the latest salacious tidbits.

Yesterday, they immediately seized on the Dallas Morning

News' decision to withdraw a report quoting an unidentified lawyer as saying a Secret Service agent had witnessed an intimate encounter between the president and Miss Lewinsky.

"The press is aware they've got to be more careful," a senior official said. "Hopefully, the hysteria of the moment will settle down a little bit."

But referring to the small army carrying cameras and microphones now encamped on the White House lawn, the official acknowledged that news interest in the scandal is unlikely to fade away any time soon.

Internal White House polls show that the scandal has taken a toll on the public's view of Mr. Clinton personally but that most Americans still approve of his job performance.

Mrs. Clinton's defense of her husband, in an interview with host Matt Lauer that had been scheduled as a preface to Mr. Clinton's State of the Union address, was more political than personal.

The first lady did not provide any new details about Mr. Clinton's relationship with Miss Lewinsky but said he had explained it to her.

"We know everything there is to know about each other and we understand and accept and love each other," she said.

In sketching out her view of the anti-Clinton conspiracy, the first lady named several people, including the Rev. Jerry Falwell. She cited a videotape the evangelist produced accusing the president of murder in the case of Deputy White House Counsel Vincent W. Foster — whose death was deemed

a suicide — and drug running.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Falwell, Beth Bragg, said he had no comment on the remarks and referred reporters to a statement he made last week that Americans should pray for their leaders.

As for Mr. Starr's investigation, Mrs. Clinton said, "It's not just one person. It's an entire operation."

The panel that appointed the independent counsel is "the same three-judge panel that is headed by someone who was appointed by Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth," she said, referring to North Carolina's two U.S. senators, both Republicans.

In fact, the chief judge on the panel, David B. Sentelle, was recommended by Mr. Helms and formally nominated by President Reagan in 1985 to the federal court in North Carolina and to the appeals court in Washington in 1987. Mr. Faircloth was not in Congress at the time. Judge Sentelle became the panel's chief judge in 1992.

A spokesman for Mr. Helms did not return several phone calls yesterday seeking comment.

A common theme running through Mrs. Clinton's answers yesterday was that the individuals behind the Lewinsky scandal are the same ones who have attacked the Clintons again and again over the years.

"I do believe that this is a battle," she said. "I mean, look at the very people who are involved in this. They have popped up in other settings."

The first lady's comments helped prompt Senate debate over Mr. Starr's role yesterday between Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, Vermont Democrat, and Sen. Arlen Specter, Pennsylvania Republican, who said he had spoken to the independent counsel.

Conservative groups and Republican lawmakers, presumably seeing an attack by Mrs. Clinton as a badge of honor, rushed out faxes decrying her statement.

John Whitehead, president of

The Washington Times
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1998

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Clintons Appear to Find Solace And Support at Church Service

By Hamif R. Harris
Washington Post Staff Writer

Assailed by allegations about his personal life, President Clinton yesterday left the White House for the first time in days to attend morning services several blocks away at Foundry United Methodist Church. Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton were seeking solace from the unrelenting barrage of special counsels, spin doctors and television talking heads, they appeared to find it as they were swept into a warm tide of smiles and hugs from some of the church's youngest members.

"What's up, Mr. President? Give me a high five," Erin Dall-Silver, 12, of Arlington, said with a grin. She said she respected the president 100 percent. "I will stand by my president for days to come," she added.

Michael Khan, 12, of Silver Spring, walked up to Clinton and said, "Mr. President, I think you are doing a good job."

Approached as he sat in a pew by a small, crying child, Clinton looked around saying "Where's his mom?" and told the 6-year-old, "You can sit with me until you find your mother."

The child, named Jared, stayed put until his aunt showed up.

"What he did was inspirational to the congregation," said Lystra Khan of Silver Spring.

The Rev. J. Philip Wogaman's sermon was titled "Taking the Bible Seriously," but the church's senior minister couldn't resist comparing the events of the past week to "The Caine Mutiny" ... "with people running in circles screaming and shouting."

"If I could speak to everyone in the United States today, I would turn to I Corinthians Chapter 13," said Wogaman as he read the entire chapter that deals with love and forgiveness.

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal," Wogaman read. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ... Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

More than 700 people attended yesterday's service, which was picketed by antiabortion demonstrators yelling insults and holding up graph-

ic posters outside the church in the 1500 block of 16th Street NW.

"I am glad the president has a place where he can worship in peace," said church member Henry Pilgrim of Mitchellville. "He always comes to the service right before the choir marches in, but he was here early today."

Following the sermon, the church choir sang a song with words "my God is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in the time of storm." Clinton, whose face looked worn, smiled and nodded his head.

"My hope was that the spiritual 'My God Is a Rock' provided solace and comfort to the Clintons after what was undoubtedly a difficult week for both of them," said church member Beth Norcross of Arlington.

Wogaman said after the service that the Clintons are just "part of the congregation" and people would be better off if they embrace the lesson of I Corinthians 13, which is "not to look for all the flaws" in the life of another.

"People need healing," Wogaman said, referring to Clinton. "This is man and a family of great love and caring."

Spacesuit Delays Astronaut's Move to Mir *Custom Fit Is Too Tight, Jeopardizing Thomas's Tour of Duty*

Associated Press

HOUSTON, Jan. 25—Shuttle astronaut Andrew Thomas's long-awaited move into the Mir space station was delayed today by at least one day, and possibly for good, because of an ill-fitting spacesuit.

His custom-made Russian suit, intended for use on the Soyuz, Mir's lifeboat, was so tight he could not squeeze into it. And the only spare, the suit belonging to David Wolf, a Mir resident for the past four months, was too big. "It's basically unusable," Thomas reported.

The problem threatened to cancel Thomas's 4½-month Mir mission.

Without a spacesuit to wear in the attached Soyuz spacecraft, Thomas cannot move from shuttle Endeavour into the adjoining Mir. Even though he is not supposed to ride in the Soyuz during his 4½-month mission, that is his only way back to Earth in the event of an emergency following Endeavour's departure.

After hours of fiddling with the two suits, Thomas asked Mission Control: Should he spend the night on Endeavour or Mir? Wolf had the same question.

Mission Control, in turn, asked Thomas whether he would feel safe using Wolf's oversize suit in an emergency. He said he could get by and would feel comfortable about the situation, at least for one night. Mir commander Anatoly Solovyov favored moving Thomas into Mir.

After conferring with their counterparts in Moscow, however, NASA flight controllers opted to have Thomas

sleep aboard Endeavour tonight. And Wolf was instructed to sleep on Mir.

NASA held out hope that perhaps one of the suits could be adjusted or that parts from the two could be combined.

The problem with Wolf's suit is that the sleeves are 6 inches too long for Thomas. Thomas is 5-foot-8 and weighs 160 pounds; Wolf is 5-10 and weighs 185 pounds.

Thomas said he believes his spine stretched and he became taller in space, a common occurrence in weightlessness. It also could be that his suit was not sized correctly before the flight, he said.

Wolf's Soyuz seat liner, which had been transferred to the shuttle following Endeavour's arrival, was moved back into the station and reinstalled in the Soyuz. Each seat liner is molded to fit a particular spacesuit. Ground controllers figured that if Thomas wound up using Wolf's suit, then the appropriate seat liner would be in place.

It is the first time an American has encountered such a problem in the two years shuttles have been dropping off astronauts at Mir.

Once Thomas is formally declared a Mir crew member—if he is—the 46-year-old Australian-born engineer will be the seventh and final NASA astronaut to live on the Russian space station.

"You think you're psychologically prepared, but things often turn around and surprise you," Thomas said amid all the trouble. "I think it's going to be tough."

The Washington Post

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1998

sized American flag behind him, before him the assemblage of the elite of the three branches of American Government and the diplomatic corps.

But the hum of the evening was not of greatness, but of the proximity of tragedy to triumph, a reminder that such offices are occupied by mere men who can be stripped of their majesty overnight by their own human frailty.

In yet another sign that history looks upon humanity with a gimlet eye, Mr. Clinton delivered his State of the Union address on the same day that his personal secretary, Betty Currie, was called before a Federal grand jury investigating charges of perjury and obstruction of justice involving the President.

Also today, Hillary Rodham Clinton, who has taken charge of her husband's defense against the accusations of adultery and perjury, said on national television that she and her husband were the targets of a "vast right-wing conspiracy."

Mrs. Clinton, who gazed down on

The delivery of a political manifesto for the midterm election.

her husband from the House balcony with assent and apparent admiration as he spoke, has been Mr. Clinton's most stalwart defender in the most personally punishing week the President has endured.

In Oslo, three conservative members of the Norwegian Parliament nominated Mr. Clinton for the Nobel Peace Prize, citing his foreign policy accomplishments.

In a day filled with such incongruities, all those in the chamber and the tens of millions of Americans watching on television were looking for a glimmer of guilt, listening for a whisper of weakness. But what they heard was a forceful statement of policy and philosophy from a politician who always seems to function best when the stakes are highest.

The speech was well-received, interrupted at least 90 times by applause, frequently only by Democrats. That was the highest number of applause interruptions in Mr. Clinton's State of the Union address in the past four. In 1995, there were 96.

Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi, the majority leader, delivered the Republican response to Mr. Clinton's address. He argued that the President offered a vision of more Government, while the Republicans promised smaller Government and lower taxes.

And he said that the Republican-led Congress intended to hold Government accountable: "From the classrooms to the courts. From the clerks to the President's cabinet. From the post office to the Presidency."

Mr. Clinton sailed forward into the stiff wind of adversity, taking political comfort from what he called the healthiest domestic economy in a generation and the first balanced budget in 30 years.

"Turning a sea of red ink into black is no miracle," Mr. Clinton said. "It is the product of hard work by the American people and of two visionary actions in Congress — the courageous vote in 1993 that led to a cut in the deficit of 90 percent and the truly historic bipartisan balanced budget agreement passed by this Congress."

"Here's the really good news: if we maintain our resolve, we will produce balanced budgets as far as the eye can see."

He promised more spending for food safety and biomedical research, renewed his call for a war on smoking by teen-agers, advocated an increase in the minimum wage and proposed new programs to help workers displaced by foreign competition.

On foreign policy, he urged Congress to support his call for shoring up the International Monetary Fund so that it could deal with the economic crisis sweeping Asia. He said that the fate of the economies of Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea have a direct impact on American jobs and prosperity.

"Preparing for a far-off storm that may reach our shores is far wiser

than ignoring the thunder until the clouds are just overhead," he said.

To Iraq, he issued a threat of military action if Baghdad did not quickly come into compliance with the United Nations weapons inspection program.

"I know I speak for everyone in this chamber, Republicans and Democrats, when I say to Saddam Hussein: You cannot defy the will of the world. And when I say to him: you have used weapons of mass destruction before and we are determined to deny you the capacity to use them again."

He threatened military action against Iraq and chided his own party for denying him authority to negotiate free-trade deals.

Many of the specific proposals in the speech had been foreshadowed over the past several weeks. The President's desire tonight was to describe the philosophical threads that weave the programs into a coherent vision of governance.

"We are moving steadily toward an even stronger America in the 21st century," Mr. Clinton said. "An economy that offers opportunity. A society rooted in responsibility. And a nation that lives as a community."

Mr. Clinton, who only a day earlier angrily pronounced the humiliating words, "I never had sexual relations with that woman," tonight spoke of using his office to strengthen the American family.

He repeated his proposal for a \$1.50-a-package tax on cigarettes to discourage smoking by young people. He proposed scholarships and background checks for child care workers. He asked Congress to increase the tax deduction for day care for middle-income families.

He called for the hiring of 100,000 new teachers, to reduce the size of classes in grades 1 to 3 to 18 students nationwide, but did not specify the means to pay for the costly plan. He renewed his proposal for expanding Medicare to cover Americans as young as 55 who had lost their health insurance because of corporate layoffs, which officials said would be financed by reductions in "fraud and abuse" in the Medicare program.

The New York Times

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CLINTON, WITH CRISIS SWIRLING, PUTS FOCUS ON SOCIAL SECURITY IN UPBEAT STATE OF UNION TALK

GREETED WARMLY

**He Proposes Billions in
Spending for Variety
of Social Programs**

A1

By JOHN M. BRODER

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27 — Facing the gravest personal and political peril in a crisis-prone career, President Clinton emerged from the darkness shrouding his Presidency for more than an hour tonight to proclaim the state of the union sound and to propose a plan to rescue Social Security.

Swathed in bright television lights and enveloped in the grandeur of the House chamber, the President was met by a thunderous ovation from both sides of the aisle as he arrived at 9:09 P.M. to deliver his annual State of the Union address. On a rainy night in a scandal-fevered capital, the political world suspended its speculation on Mr. Clinton's personal and legal future and focused, if distractedly, on his political program.

Mr. Clinton decided several days ago to make no reference in his speech to the accusations against him and he did not. He hewed more closely than usual to his prepared text, which was released late in the afternoon — hours earlier than for any previous State of the Union speech.

The President delivered what amounted to a political manifesto for the midterm election, proposing billions of dollars in new spending on social programs that have proved popular with the public, paid for through closing unspecified tax loopholes and billions of dollars in tobacco taxes that may never be enacted.

As the soaring economy generates surplus revenue beyond what is needed to balance the budget and pay for the President's spending priorities, Mr. Clinton hopes to use the excess money to begin to address the largest fiscal problem confronting the nation — the future of Social Security.

In the centerpiece of his speech, Mr. Clinton said that the surpluses bequeathed by six years of robust economic growth should be set aside until a solution is found to the looming insolvency of Social Security, the politically sacred core of the Government's contract with the American people. His message to both Democrats and Republicans salivating to spend the bounty on new programs or tax cuts was the same: Wait.

"What should we do with this projected surplus?" Mr. Clinton asked rhetorically. "I have a simple four-word answer: Save Social Security first." The chamber erupted in applause.

"Tonight I propose that we reserve 100 percent of the surplus — that's every penny of any surplus — until we have taken all the necessary measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the 21st century," Mr. Clinton said.

Two years after he declared the end of the era of big Government, Mr. Clinton painted a sweeping land-

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scape of Federal activism, from subsidies for care of babies to expansion of the health-care program for the elderly.

He presented a Democratic plan to distribute the spoils of a strong economy to schoolteachers, working parents, laid-off workers and Medicare recipients, a distinct contrast to Republican desires to cut taxes, bolster military spending and devote billions of dollars to traditional public works projects.

"We have moved past the sterile debate between those who say Government is the enemy and those who say Government is the answer," Mr. Clinton said in a succinct statement of his animating philosophy. "My fellow Americans, we have found a third way. We have the smallest Government in 35 years, but a more progressive one. We have a smaller Government, but a stronger nation."

But the unanswered question that hung over the Capitol was whether Mr. Clinton would remain in office or have the political clout to carry out his ambitious plan to use Government as a lever to carry the nation into the next century.

And even if he manages to survive the current crisis over his reported sexual misconduct with a former White House intern, it remains uncertain whether he will command the political and moral authority to govern.

The only sign of the strain Mr. Clinton is under were the deep bags beneath his eyes.

Once the decision was made to avoid mentioning the scandal, aides said that they combed the wording for any word or phrase that could be interpreted as an oblique reference to the accusations.

Few other politicians of his generation — or any other — could have pulled off a performance like that of Mr. Clinton tonight. For 74 minutes, the President bestrode the national stage enveloped in the trappings of great office — the Speaker's throne and the vibrant colors of the over-

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who tried to sell a fictionalized account of an alleged romantic relationship with Clinton, as well as the Arkansas troopers who wanted to write a book about their womanizing charges against Clinton.

■ Paula Jones and her attorneys, whose case is being financed by the conservative Rutherford Institute, are locked in a bitter battle with Clinton. By asking him at his deposition this month whether he had had sex with Lewinsky (as well as other women), the attorneys elicited the denial that is now a key issue in Starr's probe. Jones first unveiled her charges in 1994 at a conservative political conference.

■ Starr is seen by the White House as a partisan Republican who latched on to the sexual allegations after his three-year, \$30-million Whitewater investigation failed to produce charges against the Clintons. Before he became independent counsel in 1994, Starr was hired by a conservative women's group to write a legal brief opposing Clinton's claim of immunity in the Jones case.

In her interview on the "Today" show, the first lady named Starr and the two Republican senators from North Carolina, Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth. In 1994, shortly before a federal three-judge panel appointed Starr, one of the judges had lunch with Helms and Faircloth. Faircloth had been pushing for removal of the previous special counsel.

Hillary Clinton also named Falwell, who has promoted \$40 videotapes on television that charge the president was once "hooked on cocaine" and link him to the mysterious deaths of several Arkansans. The video says, without proof, that the first lady had a sexual relationship with Foster.

One of the earliest and harshest Clinton critics was Tyrrell's American Spectator, which in 1993 reported that some Arkansas troopers had arranged

liaisons with women. Tyrrell has also written a column titled "Is Clinton on Coke?"

The Spectator has received more than \$2 million since 1990 from foundations controlled by conservative financier Richard Mellon Scaife. But he recently cut off the Spectator for publishing an article criticizing those who do not accept the finding of two prosecutors that Foster committed suicide.

Scaife owns the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, which has published numerous articles questioning Foster's death and the death of Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown. Scaife also helps fund such conservative groups as Accuracy in Media, the Heritage Foundation, GOPAC and the Western Journalism Center, which markets a videotape called "Unanswered—The Death of Vincent Foster."

Another prominent Clinton critic is Ambrose Evans-Pritchard of London's Sunday Telegraph, whose charges have been picked up by such conservative media outlets as the Washington Times, New York Post and Wall Street Journal editorial page. Evans-Pritchard has written of alleged affairs involving the president and has said that Whitewater "will lead to criminal indictments and bring down the whole administration."

In his new book, "The Secret Life of Bill Clinton," Evans-Pritchard writes about Jerry Parks, who did security work for the 1992 Clinton campaign before he was slain. Evans-Pritchard says Parks's son is "accusing the president of the United States of using a death squad to eliminate enemies," and concludes that Parks's death is "somehow intertwined with the death of Vincent Foster."

Staff writer Rene Sanchez contributed to this report.

The Washington Post

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FINAL

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Clintons Long Under Siege By Conservative Detractors

By Howard Kurtz
Washington Post Staff Writer

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CRITICS, From A1

When Hillary Rodham Clinton charged yesterday that there is a "vast right-wing conspiracy" working against her husband, she had no shortage of enemies in mind.

From the American Spectator to the British tabloids, from Vince Foster conspiracy theorists to television evangelist Jerry Falwell, the Clintons have been under siege by their conservative critics and a phalanx of ideological allies in the press.

The virulence of their animosity toward the Clintons is suggested by radio host G. Gordon Liddy's disclosure that he used pictures of the president and first lady for target practice. The conservative Spectator has depicted Hillary Clinton as a broomstick-riding witch. Other critics have denounced the first couple as immoral and corrupt and predicted their eventual indictment.

At times, the charges have grown so wild that mainstream conservatives have tried to distance themselves from the most extreme accusers. Some of the allegations, such as the Foster-was-murdered scenario and the supposed presidential scheme to sell Arlington National Cemetery grave sites to donors, have been widely discredited.

But the high decibel level of these Clinton detractors does not necessarily mean they're working in tandem as part of an orchestrated "conspiracy." Nor does it provide an explanation for every charge against the White House, from Whitewater to campaign fund-raising abuses, that has been investigated by prosecutors and the press.

The case involving Monica Lewinsky includes several people who are considered hostile to President Clinton. It brings together the long-running Whitewater investigation of independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr, who was called "politically motivated" by Hillary Clinton on NBC's "Today," and the bitter sexual harassment suit by Paula Jones.

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ANALYSIS

But the Lewinsky matter also differs from many of the past episodes in important respects. The news that Starr is investigating allegations that Clinton had a sexual relationship with the former White House intern and lied under oath about it was broken by mainstream news organizations—The Washington Post, ABC, Los Angeles Times and Newsweek—not by the conservative press.

"Blaming a conspiracy seems to be in American politics the last refuge of the intellectually lazy or timorous," said R. Emmett Tyrrell, editor of the conservative American Spectator and author of "The Impeachment of William Jefferson Clinton." "Instead of calling me names, let Bill Clinton and the first lady go out and disprove what I've said and what the [Arkansas] troopers have said."

The White House drew some ridicule last year for compiling a 332-page report about an alleged "conspiracy commerce" of news stories making their way from ideological or fringe publications to talk radio to the mainstream media. Indeed, there are numerous examples of such a pattern, although the White House backed off from calling it a "conspiracy."

William Kristol, editor of the conservative Weekly Standard, has criticized what he calls an ideological "attack machine" against Clinton. But he says it was not a factor in the Lewinsky case. Kristol, a former Bush White House staff member, and Internet gossip columnist Matt Drudge, a self-described conservative, were the first to publicly mention the allegations. But several major news organizations were pursuing the story before Drudge and Kristol went public.

Still, the role of four key players in the Lewinsky case has fueled the ad-

ministration's view that partisans and opponents are helping to orchestrate the allegations:

■ Linda Tripp, the Pentagon aide who secretly taped conversations in which Lewinsky alleged an affair with Clinton, grew angry working in the Clinton White House. She was also said to be furious with Robert S. Bennett, the president's lawyer, for saying she was "not to be believed" after Tripp told Newsweek that another former White House aide, Kathleen Willey, appeared to have had a sexual encounter with Clinton.

Tripp, who began work in the Bush White House, had considered writing a book about Foster, the White House lawyer who committed suicide in 1993, and she tried to sell it to the conservative Regnery publishing house. Tripp is also a friend of Gary Aldrich, the former FBI agent whose book "Unlimited Access" (published by Regnery) accused Clinton of sneaking out for late-night hotel trysts and ridiculed the conduct of his aides. Aldrich has said that Tripp was "shocked" by the atmosphere of the Clinton White House.

Tripp has hired attorney James Moody, who has done work for several conservative groups, including the Landmark Legal Foundation, which has been a harsh critic of Clinton.

Moody said yesterday: "I can say categorically that I have no connection at all to the Paula Jones case and am in no way part of a 'right-wing conspiracy.' These are just McCarthyist tactics. This is just like the old blacklist days when they wanted to know the name of your friends."

■ Lucianne Goldberg, Tripp's book agent and the woman who suggested that Tripp tape Lewinsky, said she is "glad" that Clinton got "caught" and that she would consider herself a "hero" if he is forced from office.

Goldberg has represented a woman

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A week earlier, as the latest allegations of the president's misdeeds broke into the open, Hillary Clinton simply declared them "absolutely" false. Then Monday she made two public appearances in New York

without referring to the subject on everyone's mind.

Tuesday, by contrast, she calmly observed, "this is a battle." And then she lobbed a verbal Molotov cocktail into the camp of her husband's most immediate adversary, independent counsel Kenneth Starr.

"We get a politically motivated prosecutor who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband who has literally spent four years looking at every telephone call ... we've made, every check we've ever written, scratching for dirt, intimidating witnesses, doing everything possible to try to make some accusation against my husband," she said.

Her words were incendiary. But her demeanor—lounging in an armchair looking reflective and sounding calm as she fielded an interviewer's questions—was anything but. She smiled. She nodded encouragingly. She was taking the long view, she insisted.

A day after President Clinton thumped the podium and jabbed the air as he angrily denied the charges, his wife betrayed no hurt, no anger and little urgency to defuse the crisis that has rocked her husband's presidency.

"I have learned over the last many years, being involved in politics, and especially since my husband first started running for president, that the best thing to do in these cases is just to be patient, take a deep breath, and the truth will come out," said Clinton.

The president, she added placidly, owes her no apologies.

"You know, we've been married for 22 years ... and I have learned a long time ago that the only people who count in any marriage are the two that are in it. We know everything there is to know about each other and we understand and accept and love each other."

In the White House, where beleaguered aides have withstood withering fire and had virtually no ammunition to return, Hillary Clinton's appearance was, quite simply, the cavalry.

On Monday, said Paul Begala, many White House staffers were walking wounded. But Hillary Clinton's confident defense, he added, worked magic rallying the troops.

"She walks in looking like a million bucks," he said. "And to show that much grace under pressure is extraordinary."

Begala, who worked with the Clintons throughout the first campaign, has also seen it before. When Clinton's 1992 campaign was nearly sunk by charges of an adulterous affair with Gennifer Flowers, Hillary Clinton's memorable television appearance—calm, confident and warm—had the same effect on his troops.

But the tension was still evident between the lawyer and the wife. At one moment, she let viewers into the first couple's bedroom on the morning the story broke, saying the president woke her and said, "You're not going to believe this." Nowhere in the lengthy interview did Hillary Clinton volunteer that she believed her husband innocent of the allegations against him.

Her wit and composure in mounting past defenses of the administration have drawn reluctant praise from critics no less ardent than Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., and Rep. Dick Armey, R-Texas. But Starr was having none of it.

He dismissed the first lady's comments as "nonsense." Using the kind of bland, lawyerly language Hillary Clinton abandoned Tuesday, Starr characterized his investigative team as pursuing the case "through a deliberative process."

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott added: "I don't want to get into an argument with the wife of the president. But that kind of allegation is really unfair, though, and it's a continuation of a pattern we've seen over the years anytime something like this comes up. Who's she talking about?"

In neutral quarters, Hillary Clinton's performance drew rave reviews.

"She is President Clinton's most powerful weapon," said Stephen Hess, a political analyst at the Brookings Institution in Washington. "People are terribly interested in what she must think or feel. We look for a smile, a grimace, is she showing pain? And she isn't. She was terrific."

Even Monica Lewinsky's attorney, William Ginsburg, praised the first lady's appearance as dignified, adding, "I thought her insightful analysis was ethical."

Clinton Crisis May Pose Dilemma for Secret S. (Washn) By David G. Savage and Ronald J. Ostr (c) 1998, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON The U.S. Secret Service may be about to get a less secret.

For the first time in its history, the agents who guard the privacy and security of the president with their lives may be called upon as key witnesses in a criminal case against the president.

Independent Counsel Kenneth W. Starr is said to be checking reports that agents may have seen intern Monica Lewinsky with President Clinton. Several agents may be ordered to tell what they have seen.

Within the "family" of agents whose code of honor includes a vow of silence, it is not a happy prospect.

"I have a hell of a problem with it. It's going to make the job tremendously difficult in the future," said Hamilton Brown, a 20-year Secret Service veteran who is the executive secretary of the 1,400-member Association of Former Agents of U.S. Secret Service.

"The relationship (between the president and his agents) is based on trust and confidence," Brown said. "He has to know he can talk in their presence and have total trust the agents will not pass on anything."

In an age of tell-all books and public confessionals, the secrets of Secret Service agents are rarely, if ever heard.

"It's remarkable and I think laudable that generations of Secret Service agents have kept their mouths shut about what they've observed," said Peter K. Nunez, a San Diego lawyer who supervised the service during the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Many former agents were angered to learn recently that three of their colleagues had told tales of John F. Kennedy sexual escapades for Seymour Hersh's book, "The Dark Side of Camelot." The ex-agents defended themselves by noting that Kennedy was long dead, and that his wife, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, also had passed away.

But that explanation did not sit well with most agents.

In December, Secret Service Director Lewis Merletti sent a letter to the more than 3,000 agents saying the revelations were "counterproductive to the mission" of the service. The agent's duty of confidentiality does not end when the president dies, he said, but is "a confidence that should continue forever."

The code of silence goes far beyond good feelings between the president and his agents. It has practical, everyday significance for security, they say.

"Suppose you are on the road with a candidate. The most secure place may be the car," one former official explained. To maintain security, "you would always have an agent in the car. But if the candidate can't trust that a conversation will be held in confidence, he is likely to tell the agent to get out and step away. Those kind of situations happen all the time," he said.

However, when faced with a criminal inquiry, the rules may have to change, agents concede.

"In a criminal investigation or possibly even a civil lawsuit, if you're subpoenaed, it's valid," said Nunez. "You're under court order to appear and testify."

Under the law, there is no privilege or rule that would automatically allow agents to refuse to testify against a president.

The issue has not arisen before for two reasons. Rarely are presidents drawn into criminal inquiries. And until the advent of the independent counsel, a president as the nation's chief law enforcement officer had the ultimate power to block a subpoena involving personnel in the White House.

Starr has shown himself ready and willing to move aggressively to seek information from inside the White House. Some agents say they would not be bothered about a subpoena targeted at a single agent.

"If he has a specific name—agent John Doe saw something—then I think that would be legitimate," said Brown. "But if it is a scatter-gun approach where you subpoena everyone on the White House detail, I would be very upset by that."

In past inquiries that touched on the White House, Secret Service agents and technicians provided testimony to Congress or the courts on key points, but they were not asked to disclose what they had seen or heard.

During the Watergate affair, agents explained the working of President Nixon's taping system. In the end, those recordings brought down the president, but agents themselves did not have to say what they had seen or heard.

It was that kind of evening, surreal, movie-like, bizarre

By Bill Nichols
and William M. Welch
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — There may have been stranger nights in the nation's capital. It's just that it was hard to remember one.

Amid the pomp and circumstance of State of the Union night, when presidents traditionally have the nation's attention to report on the country's overall health, Bill Clinton stood at the center of a very different drama.

Like an elephant in the middle of the living room, allegations that Clinton had an affair with a former intern and then told her to deny it under oath were central in the minds of all the major players as they gathered in the House of Representatives chamber for Tuesday night's speech.

Most everyone went through the motions of pretending this was just another State of the Union.

"It's like Kabuki theater, where everybody's playing a role," said political analyst Charles Cook. "You clap, but not too hard. You show respect, but not too much respect."

Clinton has had difficult State of the Union addresses before. Last year, he shared the spotlight with the verdict in the O.J. Simpson civil trial. In 1995, he stood humiliated under the shadow of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., after Democrats lost both houses of Congress in 1994.

But Clinton had never experienced anything quite like this. House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, R-Texas, the No. 3 House leader, used words like "bizarre" and "surreal" to describe the scene beforehand.

"We've never had a State of the Union where the goal was to get through the evening and no more," said Democratic consultant Brian Lunde. "It's like watching a play rather than real life. It's kind of like you know it's not real. It's only a movie."

One Democrat, Rep. Eliot Engel of New York, arrived in the chamber shortly after noon to reserve one of the aisle seats likely to be panned by TV cameras. Engel said he's "proud to stand with the president."

At least one Republican, Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho, who heads the Republican Policy Committee and thus is a member of the GOP leadership, didn't go to the speech. Craig said he would watch from his office.

It was that kind of evening, one few in Washington would ever forget.

► Presidents always deliver their State of the Union addresses to what appear to be capacity crowds.

In a normal year, House officials round up staffers to jam the aisles.

But there was no trouble filling the House this night. A capacity crowd of 1,500 was on hand, counting visitors in the gallery, guests on the House floor and the lawmakers, Cabinet members and Supreme Court justices.

► First ladies, on the day of the State of the Union, usually attract attention only as they beam with pride when introduced during the speech.

Not this year. Hillary Rodham



Ovation: Space shuttle commander Robert Cabana and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton applaud President Clinton's entrance before his address.

Clinton began the day with a morning interview with NBC's *Today* show in which she blamed the accusations against her husband on a "vast right-wing conspiracy."

► On State of the Union day, White House aides barrage reporters with policy details from the speech and delight in the one day of the year when substance, not personalities, takes center stage.

Not this year. Aides such as National Economic Council director Gene Sperling and White House budget director Franklin Raines sat down with groups of reporters and columnists, most of whom politely asked about Clinton's policy initiatives, not his sex habits. But aides knew that by the end of the night, what really happened between Clinton and former intern Monica Lewinsky would remain the big story.

Many staffers will remember Tuesday as the day they cringed watching footage of Clinton's personal secretary Betty Currie, a mentor to many young Clinton aides, look fragile and bewildered as she left a meeting of the Whitewater grand jury amid a media crush.

► On Capitol Hill on State of the Union day, the president's party normally boasts about his agenda while the opposing party plots insurrection.

Not this year. As Congress, just returned from its holiday recess, spent the day awaiting Clinton's arrival for his 9 p.m. ET address, Republicans continued their strategy of largely avoiding direct reference to Clinton's crisis. But Democratic leaders were willing to talk about it.

Early in the day, as the Senate convened for the first time this year, Democratic Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota vowed Congress would proceed with its business despite "very difficult circumstances."

"The legal process continues, flawed as it may be, and while the circumstances may be extraordinary, the work of this government

must go on," Daschle said.

House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., said Congress would try to proceed with its business and ignore "innuendo and half-truths." He said he was willing to withhold judgment about Clinton for now: "I think he deserves the benefit of the doubt. I think we should not be jumping to conclusions."

Republicans wanted to talk about their agenda, not Clinton's problems.

"There are so many good legislative things that we can accomplish this year," said House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas. "I understand that this episode is going on around us, but quite frankly I don't think it's had a big impact on the focus of our attention."

There was also a sense, however, on this rainy, chilly Washington evening of the reassurance conveyed by one of the nation's most hallowed democratic institutions going forward despite the furor surrounding Clinton.

Gingrich pointedly called Clinton "an honored guest" of Congress.

Part of the attraction of the evening is that it is a uniquely American spectacle, borne of the country's constitutional government. In other democracies, a parliamentary system can make for a more fragile leader, and a sex scandal could cause coalitions to shift and resulting political turmoil to topple governments.

Clinton performed his constitutional duty and was treated with respect. "It's remarkable, because it reflects the fact that we do have a constitutional form of government and we are a nation of laws," said Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H.

"The president, no matter who he is as an individual, represents an office that far exceeds any individual," Gregg said. "It just reflects that we as a nation will survive anybody — can survive anybody, and have. And who knows what will happen?"

Contributing: Jessica Lee

Despite 'surreal' atmosphere, president doesn't stumble

By Mike Feinsilber
ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCENE

From page A1

The Bill Clinton who addressed the nation last night seemed unaware of the charges of sexual misconduct and possible obstruction of justice that have swirled around him for the past week.

Instead, an assured and confident Mr. Clinton gave a State of the Union address likely watched by more Americans than any such speech in history.

And congressional Democrats, virtually invisible in media ac-

counts up till now, loudly cheered their president, giving him a boost of support the moment he entered the House chamber. They interrupted his speech with applause more than 100 times.

While the length and volume of the applause seemed pale by comparison with years past, an animated Mr. Clinton seemed comfortable with his audience and they with him. Republicans responded positively to a number of his points but clearly were at odds with most of the president's pronouncements during the evening.

The tension that marked the walk-up to the speech, evident in the tense look on Mr. Clinton's face as he entered the chamber, quickly evaporated.

Even his detractors were amazed at his poise after a week in which he was under constant media glare for allegations that he had an affair with a 21-year-old White House intern and then encouraged her to lie under oath about it.

In her front-row seat in the House gallery, Hillary Rodham Clinton was warmly saluted by her husband as "America's first lady" and cheered as a heroine by women in the chamber.

Before the speech got under way, Mr. Clinton's critics were expressing wonder at his derring-do, in the midst of a scandal, to make a lengthy appearance before the nation and try to change the subject.

"I don't know if I could do it if I was in the same situation," marveled House Republican Whip Tom DeLay of Texas. "The entire

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world is watching."

But the annual State of the Union address is Mr. Clinton's forte, even when it is to show that his presidency has not been overwhelmed by the allegations that he had a sexual relationship with a former White House intern.

The stage last night was set to perfection, as it always is on these state occasions.

In walks the Cabinet, to take front-row seats. In comes the diplomatic corps, some ambassadors in colorful native garb. In march the black-robed justices of the Supreme Court. In the balcony sit the first lady and presidential guests.

In advance, loyal congressmen who wanted to be seen shaking hands with the president tape their names to seats on the aisles. From appearances, few shied away from the embattled president.

The State of the Union is the only affair of state that brings the leaders of the three branches of government together, to hear a stock-taking and look to the nation's future.

Political rivals acknowledged Mr. Clinton's skill at laying out a political agenda persuasively — even if the TelePrompter fails, as it did in a health care speech to Congress in 1993, or even if he waves so enthusiastically that he knocks over a glass of water, as he did in the State of the Union address of 1994.

Mr. DeLay said he wished Mr. Clinton would "look the American people in the eye" and address the sexual allegations squarely. But White House aides insisted that was not in the works. Mr. Clinton forcefully denied allegations in a brief statement Monday that he ever had "sexual relations" with former intern Monica Lewinsky or had urged anyone to lie about it, they noted.

With that willful silence on topic A, "surreal" was the word of the day. The State of the Union was on the agenda, but the state of Mr. Clinton's presidency was on everyone's mind. He wanted to talk about anything but that, hoping to carry off a business-as-usual, let's-get-on-with-it speech.

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Photo by Kenneth Lambert/The Washington Times

The president is applauded by (from left) Col. Robert Cabana, space shuttle commander; first lady Hillary Clinton; Dr. Harold Varmus, director of the National Institutes of Health; and Tipper Gore, wife of the vice president.

budget for fiscal 1999.

As he delivered a laundry list of programs and achievements, he scoffed at GOP calls for tax cuts.

"We must not go back to unwise spending, or untargeted tax cuts that risk reopening the deficit," he said in demanding that any GOP plan to cut taxes pay for itself in reciprocal program cuts.

He also took a shot at the Senate's hold on many of his judicial nominees. Earlier in the day he nominated 13 more judges.

Mr. Clinton's sixth State of the Union address presented a broad program with heavy Democratic initiatives.

"It helped position the Democrats skillfully for the elections. It positions him with Democrats and labor," said Democratic analyst Ted Van Dyk.

Virtually all the 50 new programs touched on by Mr. Clinton

have been announced before, including his pledge to turn the District into "a great city for all who live here."

The only new elements were his call for a yearlong "dialogue" on how to fix Social Security and his explanation of the "White House Millennium Project," which includes a call to ban human cloning, a \$150 million program to save American treasures like the Bill of Rights and two Internet initiatives.

"Let that be our gift to the 21st century," he said of the project.

The highlights:

On education: \$12.4 billion over seven years to add 100,000 teachers to public school rooms; \$22 billion in tax credits to pay for interest on school building programs; \$200 million to create "education opportunity zones" in poor areas; and a long-term after-care program for young school children.

On smoking: Mr. Clinton proposes a \$1.50 per pack tax over the next 10 years to help curb smoking by teen-agers.

On trade: He calls for "fast-track" trading authority, which Congress snuffed out last year, and announced a new Africa trade initiative.

On international policy: He announced plans to send to the Senate this winter the plan to let Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic join NATO; urged Congress to pay U.S. dues at the United Nations; called for a longer troop deployment in Bosnia and called for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Other programs included his \$21 billion child care initiative, demands for political campaign finance reform, environmental protection and minor reform of the Internal Revenue Service.

The Washington Times
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1998

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Clinton pushes new spending

Ignores scandal,
urges Americans
to act responsibly

By Paul Bedard
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A1

President Clinton last night laid out a vague and costly plan to save Social Security and issued a blunt warning to Iraq in a 50-point State of the Union agenda that aides called the kickoff of the "Age of Clintonism."

To cheers, Mr. Clinton said, "These are good times for America," but he ignored the simmering White House sex scandal when he urged Americans to act responsibly and to be accountable for their affairs as they prepare for the next century.

"With barely 700 days left in the 20th century, this is not a time to rest; it is a time to build, to build the America within reach," Mr. Clinton said of his spending blueprint that the White House hopes Democrats will follow in the fall congressional elections.

Replying to the president's address, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Mississippi Republican, countered that the best thing Washington can do is to "cut the tax burdens on the American family. . . . After all, it is your money."

Greeted with a huge televised audience anxious to see if he would mention the Monica Lewinsky scandal, Mr. Clinton stayed focused on his \$135 billion spending plan over five years and call to

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The Washington Times
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CLINTON

From page A1

Congress not to spend any budget surplus on GOP programs or a tax cut until Social Security is secured from bankruptcy.

Despite his troubles, the president was interrupted more than 100 times by enthusiastic applause from both sides of the aisle. In particular, Republicans heartily applauded when Mr. Clinton said, "We must also demand accountability."

In his warning to Iraq's president, the president said: "I speak for everyone in this chamber, Republicans and Democrats, when I say to Saddam Hussein: 'You cannot defy the will of the world. You have used weapons of mass destruction before.' And when I say to him, 'We are determined to deny you the capacity to use them again.'"

Earlier in the day, the president went over his plan on Iraq, which reportedly could lead to bombing of suspected weapons caches within two weeks.

Mr. Clinton gave Republicans credit for helping to pass the historic legislation to balance the budget, which is leading to a budget surplus of \$200 billion by 2004, but he added, "What should we do with this projected surplus? I have a simple four-word answer: Save Social Security first."

Mr. Clinton called for a yearlong national "conversation" on reforming the retirement system and for congressional leaders to meet in a year to decide how to save it.

"Let us say to all Americans watching tonight, . . . Social Security will be there when you need it. Let us make this commitment: Social Security first."

Under the Clinton plan, the conservative Concord Coalition and the American Association of Retired Persons will hold four regional conferences on Social Security, which will feature Mr. Clinton or Vice President Al Gore.

Republican leaders welcomed the president but cast doubt on his agenda, accusing him of using the surplus to fund his own programs while collecting tax dollars in a kitty to be used to cover the anticipated shortfall in Social Security, which will run dry in 2029 if the retirement program is not reformed.

Mr. Clinton presented a confident tone, and his makeup combined with the bright TV lights to hide the bags under his eyes that were evident Monday when he denied having "sexual relations" with Miss Lewinsky, a former White House intern.

He looked fondly into the bal-

cony at first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who sat with a diverse group of White House guests who back the president's programs. They included John Hope Franklin, the head of his race initiative; Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles; a child care advocate; and Frankie Gomez, a 19-year-old paid volunteer in AmeriCorps.

Mrs. Clinton yesterday led the defense of her husband, while the White House went out of its way not to get tangled in the affair, even making the rare move of canceling the normal pre-State of the Union press briefing by the chief of staff and other top aides.

And today, Mr. Clinton travels to Champaign-Urbana, Ill., and La Crosse, Wis., to deliver an abbreviated version of last night's address. He is not expected to cross paths with reporters, who are waiting to ask him detailed questions about the scandal.

Mr. Clinton never considered not giving the State of the Union address, aides said. They also said he refused to strip out his references to accountability and responsibility.

He also never considered mentioning the Lewinsky scandal, thus not following the example of Presidents Reagan and Nixon, who mentioned their own scandals — Iran-Contra and Watergate — in their annual speeches to Congress.

Economic adviser Gene Sperling said the scandal did not overshadow the State of the Union.

"I would be surprised if there is much that makes people stop caring about Social Security, that makes people stop caring whether they have health care, education of their kids, or whether there is a threat from Iraq, or about crime or about the environment. These are things people care about. These are things the president was elected to deal with," he said.

Aide Paul Begala said the speech was aimed at "answering the question: Is there Clintonism or what is Clintonism?"

Answering his own question, Mr. Begala said Clintonism "sets a dynamic for the issue terrain going into this new century that is much more old-new than left-right. That's one of the personal innovations of Clintonism."

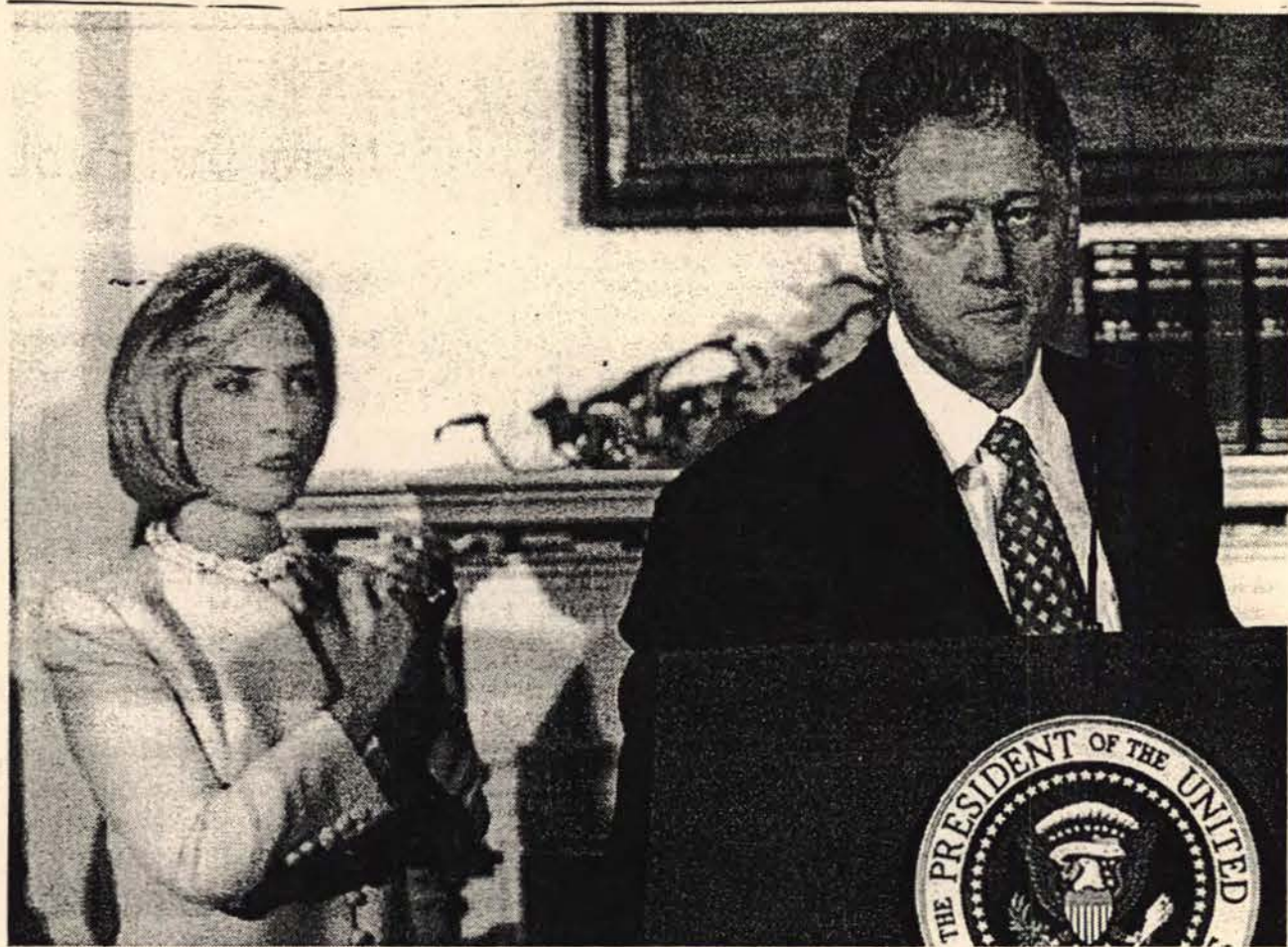
In a speech, well over an hour long, that was meant to unify and invigorate Democrats in advance of the fall congressional elections, Mr. Clinton called for enactment of dozens of social programs that would help the poor, build unions and provide tax breaks for child care and education.

Mr. Clinton also proposed a boost in the minimum wage, although he will not spell out the size of the increase until next week, when he presents his \$1.7 trillion

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White House in the firing line: Bill Clinton (left) sheafing through his State of the Union address, and on a magazine cover with Monica Lewinsky; the First Lady defends her husband; White House spokesman Mike McCurry takes reporters' questions



Reuters

Hillary Rodham Clinton showed her support for her husband yesterday at a White House event in which the President announced new education initiatives and denied accusations that he had an affair.

Clinton's Comments Denying an Affair

By The New York Times

Following are comments over the last few days by President Clinton denying accusations that he had a sexual relationship with a White House intern, Monica S. Lewinsky, including comments in interviews with "The News Hour" on PBS, National Public Radio and Roll Call, a newspaper that covers Capitol Hill:

Yesterday

But I want to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time. Never. These allegations are false. And I need to go back to work for the American people.

Thursday

Let me say, first of all, I want to reiterate what I said yesterday. The allegations are false, and I would never ask anybody to do anything other than tell the truth. Let's get to the big issues there — about the nature of the relationship and whether I suggested anybody not tell the truth. That is false.

Now there are a lot of other questions that are, I think, very legitimate. You have a right to ask them. You and the American people have a right to get answers. We are working very hard to comply, get all the requests for information up here. And we will give you as many answers as we can, as soon as we can, at the appropriate time, consistent with our obligation to also cooperate with the investigations.

And that's not a dodge; that's really what I've — what I've — I've talked with our people. I want to do that. I'd like for you have more rather than less, sooner rather than later. So we will work through it as

quickly as we can and get all those questions out there to you.

Wednesday

"The News Hour" with Jim Lehrer

MR. LEHRER The news of this day is that Kenneth Starr, independent counsel, is investigating allegations that you suborned perjury by encouraging a 24-year-old woman, former White House intern, to lie under oath in a civil deposition about her having had an affair with you. Mr. President, is that true?

MR. CLINTON That is not true. That is not true. I did not ask anyone to tell anything other than the truth. There is no improper relationship. And I intend to cooperate with this inquiry. But that is not true.

National Public Radio

MARA LIASSON Mr. President, where do you think this comes from? Did you have any kind of relationship with her that could have been misconstrued?

MR. CLINTON Mara, I'm going to do my best to cooperate with the investigation. I want to know what they want to know from me. I think it's more important for me to tell the American people that there wasn't improper relations, I didn't ask anybody to lie, and I intend to cooperate. And I think that's all I should say right now so I can get back to the work of the country.

Roll Call

It is not an improper relationship, and I know that the word means. . . . The relationship was not sexual, and I know what you mean, and the answer is no.

The New York Times

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 1998

Clinton denies cover-up claims

US president maintains he is innocent of all perjury accusations **A1**

By Mark Suzman in Washington

President Bill Clinton yesterday issued his most emphatic denial yet of allegations that he covered up an affair with a White House worker, insisting he had done nothing wrong.

Flanked by Hillary Clinton, the first lady, and Vice-President Al Gore, an emotional and angry Mr Clinton said he was innocent of charges that he perjured himself in denying a relationship with Monica Lewinsky and that he tried to persuade her to lie about it.

"I did not have sexual relations with that woman," he said. "I never told anybody to lie, not a single time, never. These allegations are false."

Mr Clinton's emergence, following days of silence, was the latest indication that the White House is prepared to go on the offensive over the growing scandal which has paralysed Washington and prompted talk of impeachment or resignation.

At the urging of his lawyers, the president has declined to



President Clinton, watched by the first lady, at yesterday's White House press conference

Reuters

make a fuller statement. However his aides are openly attacking the credibility of Kenneth Starr, the special prosecutor investigating the charges.

The first lady has begun rallying loyalists across the country. Yesterday Mr Gore and other White House officials went to Capitol Hill to bolster support among key Democrats. The campaign is part of a White House

strategy to try to refocus public attention on Mr Clinton's ambitious policy agenda for the coming year, which he will set out in tonight's closely watched State of the Union address. Mr Clinton's latest statement came at an event to promote new childcare programmes, expected to feature in the address.

A series of polls suggests the president's public support is slipping

as the scandal drags on, although a large majority of Americans think he should stay in office unless found guilty of perjury or obstruction of justice.

Ms Lewinsky's lawyers have so far failed to come to an agreement with Mr Starr's office whereby she could be granted immunity in exchange for her story. Last night they said they had submitted an outline of the

information Ms Lewinsky would give prosecutors. She is due to appear today before a grand jury, where she is expected to exercise her constitutional right not to testify for fear of self-incrimination.

Those expected to testify include Vernon Jordan, the president's friend and adviser, who is alleged to have told Ms Lewinsky to lie about the alleged affair.

Mr Starr is also said to be investigating reports that Mr Clinton and Ms Lewinsky were witnessed engaging in "intimate acts" in the White House in early 1996, helping prompt her transfer to the Pentagon soon afterwards. However, Leon Panetta, White House chief of staff at the time, and Evelyn Lieberman, his deputy, issued a statement denying any such incident.

Ms Lewinsky has already denied having a sexual relationship with Mr Clinton in an affidavit to lawyers for Paula Jones, the former Arkansas state employee suing the president for sexual harassment.

Mr Clinton's lawyers have formally requested that the date of that trial be brought forward to allow for "speedy resolution" of the case because of the disruption it was causing to the country. Ms Jones's lawyers said they would oppose such a request.

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None of our business

OPPOSING VIEW If the president had an affair, why inflict public pain on the families involved?

By Patrick Cox

I am completely baffled by the firestorm provoked by the president's alleged affair. Adultery is a tasteless, self-destructive high-way to unhappiness. But government has absolutely no business enforcing any particular sexual standard on anybody as long as the participants are consenting adults.

And, of course, if he had an affair he would lie about it. If anybody deserves to be publicly humiliated, it is he or she who compounds the tastelessness of dalliance with the tactlessness of honesty.

And we all lie. There are times when lies are appropriate — especially when dealing with a government that keeps antiquated victimless-crime laws on the books just so police and prosecutors with grudges can haul virtually anybody they want before a judge and the public to be jeered and tortured by the ever-ready mob.

Does anybody truly believe that, if some "special prosecutor" started asking all of us if we have ever broken a speed limit, stretched a deduction or, so to speak, inhaled, that the majority of Americans would tell the truth? There have been nu-

merous times, historically, when lies have saved the very lives of virtuous, moral people from inquisitors of various stripes.

In Clinton's case, he may have done in the alleged circumstances what any man with a trace of the gentleman remaining in him would do — he has tried to spare his family and the woman involved from public humiliation.

Let us be clear. If Clinton has had affairs, Hillary Rodham Clinton certainly knows. If she hasn't left him yet, though, no reporter or prosecutor has any business inflicting the details of his sex life on the public, causing untold pain to his and the intern's loved ones in the process. My reading of history leads me to believe that, if the adultery police were active in the past, very few of our most noted leaders, including Franklin Delano Roosevelt, George Washington and Samuel Adams, would have served out their terms.

Make no mistake, however. I am no fan of Bill Clinton's. I believe, in fact, that he has committed serious offenses against the Constitution, and I would like to see him held accountable. But if he is brought down by this throwback to Puritan tyranny, the level of intellectual discourse in this country will be seriously and perhaps permanently degraded.

Patrick Cox is a writer and economist in Menlo Park, Calif.

Irresistible forces

Presidents, be they in Washington or Havana, have a tendency to think they can manipulate any situation to their liking. But like Bill Clinton, Fidel Castro spent the weekend learning that control is not always so easy.

By the time Pope John Paul II ended his five-day visit to Cuba Sunday, Cuban citizens' yearning for freedom appeared to have spilled beyond the careful parameters designated by the visit's government planners in Havana.

In the lead-up to the papal visit, the situation all seemed to be under control. Workers time off and for the Mass, granted on a religious banner of tolerance to Cuba, brought back Christianity to the island for decades.

The mini-glasnost and domestic steam that had been building since the communist government's opening to the underground and into exile in the 1960s.

The early returns were good for Castro's vision of a secular Cuba in which Catholics would remain under his thumb. Through the pope's Day 2 Mass in Santa Clara, Cubans were reportedly as bewildered as they were stirred by the call to renewed spiritual-

ity. The crowds were on a leash, and the fervor was not at its highest imaginable pitch.

But so much for the best-laid plans of presidents. In subsequent days, the crowds grew bigger and more enthusiastic. What's more, the pope made a surprising call for the release of Cuba's political prisoners. And Pedro Maurice Etu, a Cuban archbishop who serves at the mercy of his political overlords, drew cheers of surprise by breaking out against the one-party state.

Of course, Cuba is not the United States. The parallel with the American public's calls for President Clinton to level with them is, sadly, a rather clear one. The ability of presidents to control

Like other communist leaders the pope has visited, Castro may find it's difficult to get the genie of religious and political openness back in the bottle. He already has learned it's awfully hard to let that genie out only part of the way.

It seems that whether a president faces a powerful, public clamor for openness or for truth, he cannot override it. Nor should any president want to.

Hedging on Rubin Rumor

By Al Kamen

Washington Post Staff Writer

Trust the financial markets to tell you who's important in this town. When the bombshells fell last week of allegations involving President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, the former White House intern, Wall Street seemed to yawn and the Dow shrugged it off.

But when a market rumor spread Friday that Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin was quitting—no, Deputy Secretary Lawrence H. Summers, skiing in Vermont, did not start the rumor—the dollar and gold exchanges went wild.

The dollar dropped against the German mark and the yen, sparking a whopping \$9-an-ounce jump in gold, with most of the increase coming in a 45-minute period when the rumor was at fever pitch. Things calmed down and leveled off when the rumor was quashed, an observer noted.

CNBC reported the Dow down 40 to 50 points on the rumor but said it must be false because, if true, the Dow would have plummeted between 400 and 500 points.

Lewinsky Watch Flusters Watergate Neighbors

■ The latest Clinton sex scandal has even rattled the Saudis. A Washington Post colleague who covers Mideast matters called the embassy, located next to the Watergate complex, to talk to a Saudi diplomat.

When he identified himself as a reporter, a frazzled secretary in the ambassador's office said: "He doesn't know anything about Monica Lewinsky."

Reporters had staked out the area because Lewinsky's mother has an apartment in the Watergate and Lewinsky was said to be holed up there.

What's Brewing With College Democrats

■ There's talk that Tuesday's State of the Union speech, if it isn't canceled, will be one of the most memorable ever. So don't miss the "1998 State of the Union Watch Party," put on by the College Democrats of America at the Capitol City Brewery on Capitol Hill.

You can watch "Washington's Young Activists Rally for the President's 1998 Agenda," or watch them, perhaps, drown their sorrows. Our invitation says that "hundreds of young activists from a coalition of organizations will come together to watch" the speech.

The sponsors also include groups such as the Human Rights Campaign, the United States Student Association and the Saxophone Club.

Molly Morrison, head of the College Democrats, said, "We are gathering to hear and support President Clinton's progressive agenda for our common future." The agenda and not the man? Distancing already?

The First Lady, 'Today,' the Millennium

■ And don't miss the "Today" show that morning. Here's the press release: "First Lady Hillary Rodham

Clinton will" appear "for a one-on-one live in-studio interview on NBC News' 'Today' on Tuesday, Jan. 27, the morning of her husband's State of the Union address. . . . Among the topics to be discussed are the president's recent child care initiative and the administration's millennium project."

Rod Serling never did anything this good.

A Car That Brakes for Starr

■ Bumper sticker on bright red BMW convertible driving about 10:30 a.m. Tuesday around Dupont Circle: "Don't blame me—I cooperated with Ken Starr."



Presidential aide Paul Begala said people will think that the 10-point buck "died of a heart attack from seeing that a liberal knew how to wield a weapon."

Begala's Big Shot

■ Clinton political aide Paul Begala was back in Texas recently and took time to do a little deer hunting. The 10-point buck's head is being mounted and will soon grace Begala's office in the Old Executive Office Building.

Begala said it took one shot, but people will think the "deer died of a heart attack from seeing that a liberal knew how to wield a weapon."

"How will his colleagues react? 'Paul killed Bambi's dad,' one said.

Lani Guinier to Harvard; Gore Aide to NHTSA

■ Blast from the past. University of Pennsylvania Law School professor Lani Guinier, once Clinton's candidate to be assistant attorney general for civil rights, has moved to a tenured professorship at Harvard Law School, specializing in voting rights and other matters.

Another aide to Vice President Gore is on the move: Mike Russell, the vice president's press secretary at his "reinventing government" project for three years, has been appointed director of public and consumer affairs at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Both Sides Rally to Mark Abortion Ruling

By ALISON MITCHELL

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22 — Twenty-five years after the Supreme Court recognized a constitutional right to abortion, tens of thousands of abortion opponents marched to the Court today in somber protest, while abortion rights advocates pledged to fight any rollback.

The competing commemorations of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision displayed the sharp public schism on the emotional issue.

Vice President Al Gore, appearing before the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, appealed almost wistfully for the two sides to make common cause on sex education, abstinence education and family planning to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies.

But Mr. Gore acknowledged that "the passions that surround this issue are such that the efforts to find common ground are not going to immediately bear fruit." And he spoke out firmly in support of "a woman's right to make what for many feels like the most important decision of their lives in freedom, in safety and without the coercion of

Government."

On the National Mall, opponents of abortion far outnumbered those who had turned out at events in support of abortion rights.

Men, women and children assembled by the thousands carrying placards proclaiming, "Stop All Abortions" and "Emancipate the Unborn," or pronouncing Roe v. Wade "not a solution then, still a tragedy today." Some marched under banners with the names of Catholic schools and churches. One group huddled under a sign that read, "Lutherans for Life."

As the throngs marched, Representative Christopher H. Smith, Republican of New Jersey, called the number of abortions "a holocaust of staggering proportions."

Across the city, at a luncheon celebrating the Roe decision, Kate Michelman, president of the abortion and reproductive rights group, called a woman's freedom to make choices about reproduction and abortion "the very essence of womanhood."

"Who we are is our freedom to choose what we believe is right," Ms. Michelman said. "How can we women ever hope to take an equal place in

this great nation if we aren't given that respect?"

The day's events came at a time when the public attitude toward abortion has been shifting away from general acceptance of legal abortion and toward a more nuanced conditional attitude. A recent New York Times/CBS News Poll found the American public still largely supporting legalized abortion but saying it should be harder to get and less readily chosen.

The issue is expected to be fought on several fronts in Congress this year. Republicans are seeking to override President Clinton's veto of a bill that would outlaw the type of abortion that involves partially extracting a fetus and collapsing the skull. The abortion foes have the two-thirds vote necessary in the House but are three votes short in the Senate.

Conservatives are also mounting a campaign against the nomination of Dr. David Satcher as Surgeon General partly because of his support for the President's veto.

The National Right to Life Committee also announced today that it would be supporting a new bill in Congress that would make it a Federal offense to transport a minor across a state line for an abortion if the transport circumvents a state law requiring notification or consent by a parent.

In spite of the political storm over accusations that Mr. Clinton had an affair with a White House intern, Mr. Gore spoke as previously planned to about 1,000 abortion rights supporters who are a core constituency group of the Democrats.

Ms. Michelman drew laughter with an oblique reference to the troubles, when she thanked Mr. Gore for coming despite the presence in Washington of the Israeli and Pales-



Competing demonstrations on the Supreme Court steps yesterday on the 25th anniversary of the Court's Roe v. Wade decision underscored the sharp public schism on the constitutional right to an abortion.

Bono's Widow to Run for His Seat in House

PALM SPRINGS, Calif., Jan. 22 (AP) — Mary Bono, the widow of Representative Sonny Bono, said today that she would run for his seat in a special election on April 7.

Mrs. Bono, 36, said she had been urged to run by Speaker Newt Gingrich, former Vice President Dan Quayle and other Republican leaders. Her announcement did not address whether she planned to run for a full term in November.

The Bonos were married in 1986. Mr. Bono, a Republican who represented California's 44th District, was killed on Jan. 5 in a skiing accident in South Lake Tahoe, on the California-Nevada border. The former singer and television star was 62 and midway through his second term.

Mrs. Bono said she was in the middle of planning for her husband's memorial service in Washington on Wednesday.

tinian leaders and despite "a few other things." Mr. Gore made no reference to the controversy and reporters were out of questioning distance in the back of the ballroom.

Mr. Gore lauded Mr. Clinton by noting that the Supreme Court majority in favor of abortion rights had shrunk to 5 before he and Mr. Clinton won the White House, and that former Justice Harry Blackmun had

warned he was 83 and could not stay on the Court forever.

"I think we ought to be grateful, those of us who believe in a woman's right to privacy," Mr. Gore said, "that five months later Bill Clinton was elected President of the United States and appointed the next two Justices."

Mr. Gore announced that the President would propose a \$15 million

increase in Federal family planning money in his new budget package to make abortion less necessary.

"Let us appeal to the common sense of the American people from all political persuasions," he said. "Let us pound home the point that the single most effective way to reduce the number of abortions is to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies."

The New York Times

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1998

Days of grand plan are over

"Americans," says Donna Shalala, the US health and human services secretary, "expect the best healthcare system in the world. But they don't want to pay for it".

The comment comes as health insurance premiums are rising again after a period which has seen their slowest increase in decades.

It also comes as managed care - the approach which limits treatments to those which insurers believe to be both effective, least costly, and based on good evidence - is causing mounting angst among America's mighty middle class.

President Bill Clinton is once again edging crab-wise into gradual extensions of cover for the 41m Americans who either do not have it or have too little.

It comes, too, three years after the president's ambitious healthcare reform - aimed to deliver "affordable, quality healthcare for all Americans" - collapsed in ruins.

It was this that triggered the Republican revival and saw Republicans take Congress, reducing Mr Clinton to a gradualist centrist - a man of meaningful but small initiatives, pitched to the centre ground, rather than a great reformer.

The days of the grand plan in health are gone, Ms Shalala says. But the target of making progress in reforming a US health system changing at the speed of light has not.

"For me to tell you where healthcare reform is going," she said, "I have to be able to tell you where healthcare is going." She doesn't, she says, know - and neither does anyone else.

"Back in 1993-94, no one would have predicted that 80 per cent of the people in employer-based healthcare would by now be in managed care," she says.

Financial pressure on health maintenance organisations, of whom only 30 per

cent are believed to have been profitable last year, plus mounting unease over managed care, mean continuing change, she says.

The need now is "for government to be nimble and flexible and shrewd about where we intervene".

She adds: "Everyone thinks that we are moving towards government taking over healthcare. Not a chance. What we are trying to do is get the private and public sectors to work more closely together."

The lesson of 1993-94, she says, is that grand plans don't work. "I would describe us less as having a grand plan for reform and more as having a strategy for progress - so that every year we see more progress."

Hence the incremental changes in cover that Mr Clinton has made and is seeking - \$24bn over five years last year to cover an extra 5m children and this year's proposal to extend Medicare to some approaching retirement.

'This is not just about health. It is about our economic future'

That last has been bitterly attacked for its potential cost. But Ms Shalala says it is "a very narrow, targeted programme for a group of people for whom the private sector doesn't work. It's not a camel's nose underneath the tent. We are not substituting for the private market because there's no private market out there for that



group of people".

Mr Clinton would like to go further, she concedes: ensuring cover for people between jobs, ensuring that those in their 20s who often drop cover keep it, and reaching another 5m children who remain outside the present programme.

But there are no proposals for that yet, and the justification has changed. It is no longer just about equity and healthcare.

"It's the best investment we can make in our economy," she says. "This isn't just about health, it's about our economic future. We need to be skilled and healthy if we are to compete in the world." Health is "one of the most important investments that we make, to keep our economy strong".

Coverage, however, is only one corner of the issue. Quality is the other. Managed care, she concedes, is "very unpopular". The health insurers "may have cut back a little too hard". But, she warns, "we have to be careful". Some form of organised, managed, care is here to stay, she says - needed to achieve both quality and efficiency. A distinction must be drawn between genuine and excessive cuts and the switch to a new way of running care which inevitably means less time with doctors and less choice. The anger, she says, may simply be transitional, "a generational change" as Americans

get used to a new way of receiving care. The industry may have gone too far in ordering "drive-by mastectomies" or no overnight stays for childbirth. But business must take some responsibility for demanding the huge insurance discounts which have led to ever tighter cover. She asks rhetorically: "Do I think managed care has got a bad rap? In part, I am not overly critical of the managed care industry."

The "consumer bill of rights" which Mr Clinton is promoting will address many of the problems, she says. And she warns the industry that "if they chose to take us on, it's going to be us and the doctors and the public versus the industry: they're making a big mistake".

Government's other role, she says, is to use its purchasing power. Medicare and Medicaid plus Department of Defence, Veterans Administration and other government programmes account for nearly half of all US health spending. That spending, she says, will be co-ordinated to buy quality, evidence-based care. "We are the biggest purchaser of healthcare in the world. So when we set our rules it affects everybody. We shape the private sector."

This may be a long way from 1993-94, but it is still an agenda that will shape the future.

Nicholas Timmins

David S. Broder

Shadow on the White House

The White House is filled with ghosts. Many presidents have written and spoken of the palpable sense that the rooms in which they work and live are filled with the spirits of their predecessors. Madison and Jackson and Lincoln and both Roosevelts are not just portraits but presences.

If President Clinton has the sense of history I think he does, he has to be feeling the ghosts of two of those past presidents hovering nearby this week: John F. Kennedy, the man we belatedly learned carried on a variety of reckless assignments inside and outside the White House. And Richard M. Nixon, who was driven from office for covering up his guilty knowledge of crimes.

The news of the latest—and still unproved—allegations against Clinton broke suddenly but not entirely unexpectedly. As in Watergate, each event is just the most recent episode in an unfolding saga. Still, it has shocked the capital and the world.

Once again, a nation that deserves better of its leaders is dealing with tales of incriminating tapes, of reports that gifted lawyers countenanced or counseled lawbreaking. It is listening to a president give clipped, strained non-answer answers, all the while insisting that he is cooperating fully with the investigation of his actions. Once again, the president's defenders are asserting this is an effort by partisan enemies to divert him from the serious work of governing that the voters entrusted to him.

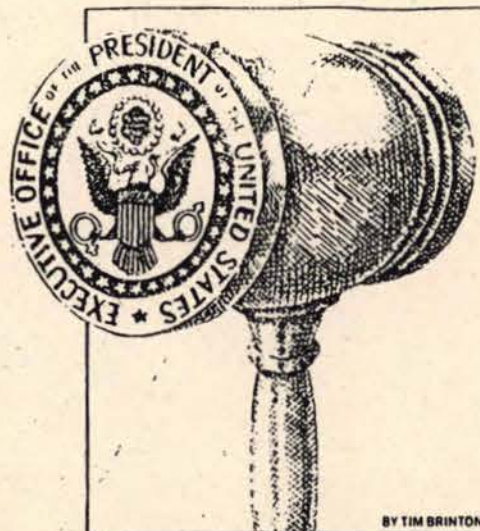
A journalist must suspend judgment until all the facts are known. But to believe Clinton's denials, one must once again presume that a succession of women over a period of two decades have concocted tales of his sexual prowling and invented charges that he told them how to camouflage the truth.

The public is properly skeptical of these tales when they first appear. They seem so implausible—so jarringly out of sync with the public picture these presidents present. Jack and Jackie Kennedy were the idealized, romantic young couple in a Camelot White House. Why would he have been trafficking with hookers and gangsters' molls? Why would Nixon, the master of subtle diplomacy, have been making foulmouthed, half-drunk plots to bug his enemies and break into their files?

The public Clinton has been so deft, so charming and increasingly so successful a president that the stories of his tomcatting have been relegated to a separate compartment of the national consciousness. The gap in his poll ratings between job performance and personal character has been wide and persistent. But it has not hampered his work.

As long as the bright side of Clinton was currently on view and the dark side was distant in time and place, the separation was relatively easy to maintain. But this latest investigation by independent counsel Kenneth Starr has brought the ugliness into the 1990s and into the White House itself.

Clinton is steadied now, not just by his lifelong history of talking his way out of jams that would have sunk most others but by the readiness of close associates, starting with his wife, to step forward in his defense. Hillary Rodham Clinton has done that often, but so have others, both men and women. David Maraniss of *The Post*, in his superb political biography, "First in His Class," tells how Betsey Wright, Clinton's longtime top staffer in Arkansas, who had made it her business to calculate the risks of some of Clinton's girlfriends going public with their stories, "hated that part of him, but felt that the other sides of him overshadowed his personal weaknesses."



She was not alone. From boyhood on, people who met Clinton even casually recognized his exceptional intelligence, personal empathy and persuasiveness—and saw how far those gifts could carry him in his ambition for public service.

They were not wrong. Those qualities have made him the first Democrat since FDR to win two terms in the White House and have brought him to a moment when his greatest achievements seemed to beckon. In part because of the courageous battle he fought to attack the inherited deficits in his first year in office, he is about to present the nation the prospect of an era of balanced budgets.

In his State of the Union address scheduled for Tuesday night, he plans to launch an effort to use possible budget surpluses to avoid the long-term threat of bankruptcy in the Social Security system—perhaps the greatest achievement of his party in this century—and ensure its survival for future generations.

All that is threatened, and it makes what is happening more than a personal drama. It is a dark day for the nation.

The mood in one small town: Leave matters of the heart alone

By Dennis Cauchon
USA TODAY

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — This town of 40,000 is located just 120 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. But when it comes to assessing allegations that President Clinton had an affair with a White House intern, it might as well be on another planet.

In contrast to the hysteria that has filled the political capital, the response here is informed indifference. Clinton supporters and opponents alike have remarkably similar reactions: They believe the president has affairs and covers them up, and they do not care.

"He's done it before and he'll do it again," says Robin Booth, 36, a photographer. "But it has nothing whatsoever to do with the country or the policies of the United States."

Booth and several others say the latest controversy over Clinton's sex life only adds to their cynicism that politicians care nothing about the country's important issues. USA TODAY interviewed 21 people who came for breakfast Thursday morning at The Tavern, a 44-year-old local institution.

Surrounded by mountains and farms, Charlottesville is home to the University of Virginia and the Rutherford Institute, the conservative Christian legal organization representing Paula Jones, who has filed a sexual harassment suit against Clinton. Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, overlooks the town and draws more than 500,000 visitors a year.

The result is a diverse mix of liberals and conservatives, country folks and urban sophisticates, blacks and



By Steve Barrett for USA TODAY

Shepherd: 'He should have kept his pants zipped.'

whites. All of them come together at The Tavern.

The 21 people interviewed Thursday come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of political views. For the most part, they consider Clinton's private life a personal matter that should be handled (forcefully) by Hillary Rodham Clinton, not independent counsel Kenneth Starr.

"I hate Clinton as much as the next guy, but the voters have already made their decision," says Ralph Traymark, 58, a part-time minister and retired mechanic. "We've known for years that he's a lying, cheating two-timer, and we don't need Ken Starr wasting taxpayer money to prove it. It's Hillary's job to kick his ass."

"He looks like a playboy, so a new

affair doesn't surprise me," says Lenny Massie, 39, a cook at The Tavern. "I've been caught in the same situation myself. My woman went crazy, yelling and crying for two days. I apologized 1,000 times. I can tell the president: It's not pleasant."

People here express concern for how the revelations might hurt Hillary and Chelsea Clinton. But nobody offers sympathy for the president or those investigating him, or for 24-year-old Monica Lewinsky, the intern who is reported to have had the affair with Clinton.

"Once you're 21 years old, almost everyone has been around enough to make their own decisions," says Sarah Deigl, 23, a caterer.

Amanda French, 28, a graduate student and feminist, says the power imbalance between a president and intern complicates the sexual relationship. But the woman is not always an innocent victim, she says: "Some people think they can get ahead by sleeping with people of power."

Few people say lying about the affair, or even encouraging Lewinsky to lie, makes the situation worse.

But even most who say an affair shouldn't matter acknowledge it will have an effect. That's the state of politics today, they say.

"My first thought was, 'So what? He hasn't had any more affairs than most people,'" says Sarah Shepherd, 42, a former nurse who is disabled. "My second thought was, 'It has to be a vendetta against him.'"

"Then," she adds, "I woke up today and thought, 'He should have kept his pants zipped because his goose is cooked!'"

THE REACTION

A Mood of Dismay and Concern in a Democratic Stronghold

By PAM BELLUCK

CHICAGO, Jan. 22 — Bettina Tahsin considers herself "a pretty strong Democrat" who twice voted for Bill Clinton for President, and when she first heard about the accusations that Mr. Clinton had had an affair with a White House intern, Ms. Tahsin said she was unperturbed.

"I thought, 'Oh my goodness, just another one,'" Ms. Tahsin, 33, said today as she sat reading a magazine on one of the curved wooden benches in the majestic Union Station here. "But after a while, you almost begin to believe it. I could see him doing something like this. It's basically part of his character."

Ms. Tahsin's reaction was not unique in this heavily Democratic city, based on random interviews with people going about their business while working their way through the fast-breaking bits of news. People mostly seemed to take word of the latest imbroglio more seriously than the accusations of Gennifer Flowers or Paula Corbin Jones. And several of those who were withholding judgment, or who believed that the reported affair did not happen, were still dismayed and concerned about the effect on the President's image and effectiveness.

"Whether or not it's true, it's become part of his baggage," said Andrew Thomas, 28, who described himself as a starving painter earning a living as a database consultant. "One or two, you know, you accept. After a while, you

go from just dismissing it to it becomes part of the way you identify him. I don't think it ought to be part of what you think about the President."

Ms. Tahsin, who produces training materials for the restaurant industry, said that although she believed that Mr. Clinton was a good President, she found the latest accusations so troubling that she thought she might vote Republican next time. So far, she said, she has not found Mr. Clinton's denials persuasive in describing his relationship with the former intern, Monica S. Lewinsky. And if the accusation that Mr. Clinton asked Ms. Lewinsky to lie about their relationship is true, Ms. Tahsin said, "that would move toward an impeachable act."

At least until more is known, some people here were inclined to believe that the President would not engage in something they saw as so tawdry or, at minimum, so self-destructively risky.

"I can't believe he'd be so stupid," said Sally Jahn, 60, a Republican who voted for Mr. Clinton in 1996 and who believed that he had done a good job as President. "With a 21-year-old! I don't want to believe it because it's so embarrassing."

Others were more assertive in their defense of Mr. Clinton.

"My take on the whole thing is that she is lying," said Bob Boston, a security guard at the Water Tower Place shopping mall. "I've

just got to back the President's opinion. He's in a very high position, and he knows what would happen if in fact it were true. He's not hiding from any questions. He's got the support of his wife. I believe him."

Still, to many of those interviewed on this misty day in downtown Chicago, there were several things that made the latest accusations more upsetting.

Some said it was the specifics — that the woman was only a few years older than the President's daughter, that she was an employee of the Administration, that the reported affair took place in the White House.

"This is the worst of the scandals because it was done in the White House," said Jesse Davis, 24, a Republican, as he waited for his girlfriend outside a fabric store in Water Tower Place. "You don't use the White House as a bed and breakfast, and you certainly don't use it as a cheap motel."

And most agreed that the suggestions that the President had asked Ms. Lewinsky to lie were more grievous than simply having an affair.

Several people felt that the reported tape-recorded conversations in which Ms. Lewinsky indicated that she and Mr. Clinton were having an affair gave the accusations more weight.

And several said they felt that Mr. Clinton had not yet made the best case for himself.

"He's acting like he's guilty to me because

he's trying too hard to say that he's not," said Juan Gayden, a 41-year-old photographer from the suburbs.

Mr. Gayden said he had always supported Mr. Clinton and did not believe the previous accusations of sexual misconduct because they "were just too outrageous." He said he hoped that the latest accusations were false, but "I think there's an air of truth to it."

Still, many of those who believed the accusations were not at all convinced that they should be part of the Whitewater special prosecutor's investigation. Ms. Tahsin said the special prosecutor, Kenneth W. Starr, appeared to be "trying to go with anything that cast doubt on Clinton."

And several people here did not believe that the accusations, if true, would warrant impeachment proceedings. Even those most dismayed by the accusations said they had nothing to do with the business of government and had not appeared to affect Mr. Clinton's ability to do his job.

But despite thoughtful comments about the uproar, people were not immune from the buzz of details, the prurient value of it all.

Beth Doran, 27, eating macaroni and cheese at a table outside Biff's Headhouse Diner in the train station, said she had left a message today for a friend who had worked on Mr. Clinton's first Presidential campaign.

"I wanted to see what she thinks," Ms. Doran said, "and see if she knew this girl."

Washington Wire

A Special Weekly Report From
The Wall Street Journal's
Capital Bureau

SEX ALLEGATIONS about Clinton still turnmoll among Democrats.

White House political advisers want Clinton giving more forceful denials and being more open. But Clinton lawyer David Kendall fights to keep his client under wraps. Congressional Democrats are outraged, figuring Clinton's new troubles stop their momentum. They fear he will worry about saving himself and not helping them retake the House.

Pentagon staffers say Monica Lewinsky, the former intern at the center of the allegations, pleaded to go back to the White House after being moved to the Defense Department, but resisted returning to posts outside the West Wing. Co-workers recall her saying, "I don't feel like I can serve the president if I'm not in the West Wing."

Amid GOP talk of impeachment, Democratic strategist Robert Beckel warns: "The political landscape is littered with the bodies of people who predicted Bill Clinton's demise."

CLINTON'S AGENDA wins public support as he prepares more proposals.

In a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll, 79% of Americans approve of recent Clinton proposals on such issues as expanding child care, Medicare and the Peace Corps. Backing for the initiatives "is so broad that even two-thirds of Republicans and conservatives can live with them," say Republican Robert Teeter and Democrat Peter Hart, who conducted the poll.

Clinton plans crime and drugs proposals that would boost the budgets of the Justice Department and the drug czar. Other gainers: Health and Human Services, the EPA and Education. If there is a budget surplus, 41% of Americans say it should go to reducing the national debt; 34% prefer an across-the-board tax cut.

REPUBLICANS MAP ways to counter Clinton when Congress returns next week.

House GOP leaders will meet Monday to firm up responses to Clinton's State of the Union talk Tuesday. They mull an expansion of the dependent-care tax credit to answer Clinton's plan to expand support for child care. Taxes — including IRS overhaul and tax cuts — education and antidrug initiatives are three themes.

More than 75% of Americans say a balanced budget and revamping Social Security and Medicare should be among Congress's absolute priorities this year. And 72% say expanding federal support for education should be, while 58% say cutting taxes. Passing "fast track" trade authority, the tobacco deal and campaign-finance reform can wait, the public says.

With Congress away, the share of Americans who disapprove of the job Gingrich is doing falls to 37% from 53% last fall; those unsure either way rises to 29% from 16%.

JOKESTERS JUMP on the sex scandal. The Gross National Product comedy group decides to name its new show next month satirizing Clinton, "Sex, Lies and Paulagate." Mark Russell says, "The next thing you know we'll find out that Al Gore had multiple partners on the Internet."

TALKING TO TEHRAN: Americans by 66% to 27% think the U.S. should open discussions with Iran in light of conciliatory remarks by its president. U.S. officials worry that if they appear to be responding too positively, it will be used by Khatami's enemies to depict him as a U.S. stooge.

KEEP OUT the clones: The public by 58% to 36% favors an outright ban on cloning humans. The biotechnology industry fears a ban would stifle legitimate research and prefers regulation. The FDA, says the industry's Carl Feldbaum, "has the scientific expertise to sort through all the issues."

MULLING MEDICARE: The White House considers but drops a proposal to raise Medicare premiums for the well-to-do. In the poll, 46% back allowing people 55 and over to buy Medicare coverage, as Clinton has proposed, and raising to 67 the age for full benefits. Another 43% say keep Medicare unchanged.

CLINTONITES STEP UP efforts to win more U.S. funds for the IMF in Congress.

Rubin offers more sound bites in a speech this week than in his previous three years as Treasury secretary: "Over the past 50 years, our contribution to the IMF has not cost the taxpayers one dime." A Clinton pitch for the IMF is likely in the State of the Union. Some Republicans want a revised "East Asia" package with a broader approach to that region's troubles.

The poll shows Americans, 48% to 38%, don't think the U.S. should participate in IMF rescues. And by 57% to 27%, they think the effect of Asia's woes on the U.S. economy will be minor, not major. Fed officials are more pessimistic; some see Asia slicing one percentage point off growth this year.

The sinking sun? Americans by 66% to 24% say the U.S. is a stronger economic power than Japan. In March 1991, the numbers were almost exactly reversed.

MINOR MEMOS: Buddy by a cold nose: Asked which presidential pet deserves the run of the Rose Garden, 34% favor Clinton's new dog, while 30% say first cat Socks. . . . In the poll, 39% think the Dow Jones Industrial Average will rise to 9000 by year end, and 33% think it will fall to 6500; last July on the same question, bulls outnumbered bears 45% to 34%.

—RONALD G. SHAFER

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1998

Damage control in latest scandal has aides at loss

By Bill Nichols
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — For six years, through two presidential campaigns and innumerable moments of impending political doom, Bill Clinton's response to scandal has always been the same.

Hit back hard, accuse your accuser and above all, use your best weapon — Clinton's limitless energy and political skill.

But as Clinton faces what is unquestionably the most serious threat to his presidency in allegations that he had an affair with a White House intern and later asked her to lie about it, veteran White House aides are adrift and frantically looking for a way out.

For a variety of reasons, the old formula won't work. One of their potential accusers is 24 years old — and was just 21 when she began the internship. Public opinion could plummet.

Clinton's lawyers, rather than his less-cautious political aides, have become his principal advisers. And Clinton's base of support — in Congress, in the country and within his own administration — has never seemed so fragile.

"They're trapped like a rat," says Democratic consultant Brian Lunde. "There is no strategy for this ... and there is no spin."

Senior aides say Clinton, first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, their lawyers and a tiny group of aides are figuring out how to bounce back.

This controversy is not only potentially more deadly for Clinton, it's very different from anything he's faced before. Some reasons why:

► Perhaps the most glaring difference between this feeding frenzy and others Clinton has faced is the anger and disappointment voiced privately by White House staffers, some of whom have worked for Clinton since 1991.

Aides were somewhat buoyed by Thursday's unequivocal denial of any wrongdoing by Clinton confidant Vernon Jordan.

But in the past 48 hours, more than 10 current and former White House aides have told USA TODAY that if the charges against Clinton are true, he is unfit to be president and should resign.

And staffers are wondering when senior Clinton aides, particularly press secretary Mike McCurry, might consid-

er leaving to preserve their own reputations.

► In the past, Clinton or his surrogates have immediately attacked the source of allegations against him — GOP opponents, conservative media organs or Whitewater special counsel Kenneth Starr.

This time, Clinton is faced with destroying the reputation of Monica Lewinsky, the 24-year-old former White House intern only six years older than his daughter Chelsea.

Aides say he can't take that risk, although some have at least begun to defend Clinton with hints that Lewinsky dressed provocatively and neglected her duties to flirt with Clinton.

But White House surrogates

will be attacking Starr or former White House aide Linda Tripp, whose tape recordings of talks with Lewinsky led to this crisis.

► In the past, Clinton has been sent out on the road to make his own case and to demonstrate that he is doing the country's business.

But Clinton's three interviews on Wednesday each contained what appeared to be artfully worded answers that raised questions. That has made some in the White House suggest Clinton should be kept away from the press.

Rumors abounded that Clinton might do a dramatic speech to the nation this weekend. But senior aides denied any such plan.

While aides continue to do their daily work at the White House, Clinton has reached the point that anything he tries to do — such as Thursday's meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat — will be overwhelmed.

Meetings go on to draft Clinton's State of the Union message, which he's scheduled to give Tuesday night. But aides describe them as surreal and uncomfortable. Speech writers are teased that, if nothing else, they'll have a huge audience.

► In the past, Hillary Clinton has been a chief advocate for her husband. And on Wednesday, she was again, saying she "absolutely" didn't believe the charges against the president.

But aides say the first lady will have no public schedule to speak of until Monday, when she will go to New York City for previously scheduled events. And there are no plans, as of now, for her to speak to the press again.



By Gar Burton, AP
Clinton: No plans to speak to press

USA TODAY • FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1998

The Reliable Source

By Annie Groer and Ann Gerhart

The Gifted Press Secretary

■ "Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to theater of the absurd. We do this five days a week, believe it or not, and we often talk about interesting things."

That's this week's Man of C-SPAN, White House press secretary Mike McCurry, opening yesterday's briefing. Our Mike worked hard yesterday under the hot lights to maintain his sense of humor and ensure that no process servers knock on his very own door:

Q: Mike, this question on the Flowers case, start with the question yes or no. . . . Can you answer it? And if you can't, can you explain why not?

A: This question has been posed apparently to the president in the deposition that was taken on Saturday. I am forbidden by the court from getting into that. And since substantively this may very well have been something that was covered by the deposition, I just decline to do it for my own personal reasons.

I, frankly, do not want to go down and have to visit with the judge down at Little Rock.

McCurry did provide precious insight into President Clinton's practice of distributing tokens of his esteem, an issue of much interest since Clinton is alleged to have given Monica Lewinsky a dress.

Q: Have you heard of people generally getting gifts from the president?

A: From my own personal experience, yes, he is a gift-giver. And he gives nice gifts and—

Q: That's it?

A:—you know, he'd give parkas. I mean, that's what I got. And you know—so—

Q: A parka?

A: Ties. The only good ties I have are the ones that Bill Clinton gave me. And he always tells me that they're nice ties—funny.

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1998



FILE PHOTO/PAUL J. RICHARDS—AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

For \$5,000 a week, this could be you: The Clintons in the Virgin Islands.

A Jolly Good Villa: Big Bucks for the Sand Dollar

Twice Joe Graber took his family from frigid Wisconsin to the sunny U.S. Virgin Islands for a Christmas-New Year holiday. Twice he was bumped from the luxurious Sand Dollar villa to make way for the Clintons.

And so Graber, who spent those two vacations in a hotel, did what any successful businessman would do—he bought the place. The \$925,000 sale becomes final in April, and Graber said he'll keep the Sand Dollar as a rental property, charging more than \$5,000 a week in the winter high season.

The Clintons stayed free, said current

owner Dolly Greblick. "We comped it at the request of our governor. The publicity has done a great deal of good."

Graber said he wasn't at all miffed at having to change his plans two years running because the Clintons wanted to use the luxury home recommended by Vice President Gore, who vacationed there with his family in 1994.

"I am happy to have the president visit again next year at that time," said Graber. "If he wants to use the villa, I will just have to move into a hotel. . . . If this guy wants to escape, I have the perfect place for it."

■ Joe "Anonymous" Klein, who wrote "Primary Colors" about an allegedly fictitious Southern presidential candidate with a major weakness for women, is zipping his lip about his latest work-in-progress.

"I had a fair amount of success not talking about the last novel," he told The Source.

He says he hopes to finish the book—which he pointedly does not call a sequel to "Primary Colors"—by summer.

Presumably, the ending could change at any time.

■ Yesterday was Stephen Joel Trachtenberg Day in the District. And you thought it was Monica Lewinsky Day, didn't you?

"Hey, I didn't pick the day," the George Washington University president said. "I didn't even know about it. I worked like a dog, and I didn't even play a good racquetball game."

The D.C. Council decided to honor Trachtenberg for his commitment to minority students, scholarship programs, public school partnerships and community service.



FILE PHOTO

Klein, quiet.

A quest for proper meaning of 'improper'

By Steve Marshall
USA TODAY

In bits and pieces of classic Washington-speak all day, the White House tried dousing the wildfire over accusations that President Clinton had a personal relationship with a former White House intern.

A terse Associated Press news alert, transmitted at 9:58 a.m. ET, said, "White House says President Clinton outraged by new charges and 'never had any improper relationship' with a former intern."

Before the day was out, first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton would join the presidential press secretary as well as her husband in the defense.

In true Washington style, a drawn-out debate continued between Clinton spokesman Mike McCurry and the press corps over the meaning of the word "improper."

At an early afternoon briefing, McCurry was asked whether "it would be improper for the president of the United States to have had a sexual relationship with this woman." McCurry responded, "The president has made a statement that has expressed his outrage at allegations.

"I've made it very clear I'm not going to go beyond that statement, and you can stand here and ask a lot of questions over and over again, to which you will elicit the exact same answer."

Then the reporter asked, "Are you trying to leave us with the impression that a presi-

dent could have a proper sexual relationship with this woman?"

McCurry's response: "Of course not. ... The question flies in the face of the statement you've gotten from the president."

Interviewed later in the afternoon by PBS' Jim Lehrer, Clinton said, "I did not ask anyone to tell anything other than the truth. There is no improper relationship."

When pressed to say what he meant by "improper relationship," Clinton replied: "Well, I think you know what it means. It means that there is not a sexual relationship, an improper sexual relationship, or any other kind of improper relationship."

Next came a telephone interview with the Capitol Hill newspaper *Roll Call*. Clinton said, "It is not an improper relationship, and I know what the word means."

Asked "was it in any way sexual?" the president said, "The relationship was not sexual."

Earlier, McCurry was asked "how in the world could the president be matter-of-fact about anything he is doing today when this is blowing up around him?"

Said McCurry: "He is matter of fact about, you know, getting the business done of addressing this question given the outrageousness he feels about the allegation."

In Baltimore, where she spoke at Goucher College, Hillary Clinton said, "It's difficult and painful anytime someone you care about, you love, you admire, is attacked and subjected to such relentless accusations as my husband has been."

USA TODAY • THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1998

Presidential first: Clinton testifies as defendant

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Saturday's White House schedule for President Clinton listed only one official event, his regular Saturday morning radio address.

Few will remember the president's radio remarks about tobacco. But history is not likely to forget what occurred during the 10:30 a.m. appointment that didn't appear on the official schedule.

For almost six hours, Clinton was questioned about his sexual history and whether he had made a crude advance toward Paula Corbin Jones in his suite in a Little Rock hotel in 1991.

It was the first time a president testified as a defendant in a legal proceeding.

The deposition was held in a conference room at the office of Clinton's lawyer, Robert Bennett, two blocks from the White House. Jones arrived first, by taxi, shortly after 10 a.m. "I thought, 'Wow, this is history,'" said Abdul Kamara, the cabbie who drove Jones. He did not accept money for the fare.

Clinton, in a dark business suit, made his short ride to the office building at 10:20. He was in the second car in the motorcade, sitting stone-faced and looking away from the crowd.

In a last-minute decision, U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright flew from Little Rock to attend and settle any disputes over the nature of the questioning. She first had planned to stay in contact only by telephone.

About 4:20 p.m., after about six hours of questioning interrupted by a brief lunch break, Clinton returned to the White House and picked up a draft of his upcoming State of the Union speech. He also discussed the Asian economic crisis with chief of staff Erskine Bowles, the White House said.

Clinton canceled plans for a dinner out and shared a private dinner in the residence with Hillary Rodham Clinton. The first lady did not attend the deposition.

Jones left the deposition through the garage, without

comment to the assembled media mob. Later, during dinner at the Old Ebbitt Grill, one block from the White House, Jones joined 10 others and was smiling, drinking champagne and signing autographs. Several times, she invited reporters over to her table.

"If we can read into how people eat, and he canceled his (plans) and we went out and had champagne, do with that what you want," Jones' spokeswoman, Susan Carpenter-McMillan, said Sunday on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

Clinton aides, meanwhile, spread the word that the president was ecstatic about the way the deposition had gone.

On the morning after, the Clintons attended church services and left holding hands about noon. They returned to the White House, where the president stayed for the rest of the day.

Jones, accompanied to Washington by her husband, Stephen, left the capital Sunday afternoon, slipping quietly out of the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

In the aftermath of the weekend drama, lawyers on both sides will begin reviewing the depositions and start reinterviewing witnesses.

Bennett is expected to ask Wright to dismiss Jones' lawsuit, a step usually taken when all depositions have been completed. Wright is expected to reject that motion.

On Sunday, neither side seemed ready to settle out of court.

Clinton's lawyers have already rejected a settlement offer requesting \$2 million and an apology from the president. With the embarrassing deposition finished and polls showing a drop in public support for Jones, the president has little reason to settle, people familiar with Clinton's legal strategy said.

They said they believe Clinton will win the trial and be vindicated.

Jones' attorneys were equally confident.

"We don't have anything to negotiate for," David Pyke, one of Jones' lawyers, said Sunday.

► Tough questioning, 1A



All smiles: President Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton leave church the day after his deposition in the Paula Jones suit.

USA TODAY • MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 1998

Jones Case Tests Political Paradox

By John F. Harris
Washington Post Staff Writer

A1

Once again, Bill Clinton's past has come galloping into the present, once again carrying the same question: What is the link between the president's private life and his public reputation?

Several times a week the humor of late-night talk show hosts hinges on the assumption that Clinton is a shameless adulterer or a sexual harasser. And yet a recent Gallup poll for CNN and USA Today showed him topping the public's list of men they "most admired."

During the 1996 presidential campaign, a Washington Post poll found a solid majority saying Clinton does not have "high personal moral and ethical standards," even as he was coasting to reelection. A more recent Post poll showed that 52 percent were uncertain whether they believed Paula Jones's sexual harassment charges—the other half was split between those who believe Jones and those who think she's lying—but that 78 percent said the allegations had not affected their opinion of Clinton.

For years, these paradoxes in Clinton's reputation have given solace to his political team. And yet, for all their public bravado, some past and present Clinton advisers privately confess that the Jones case has given their fears new urgency: Will Clinton's celebrated ability to prosper amid sexual and financial controversies someday falter?

The difference now is that the Jones case, as it heads toward trial, promises to put much of his Arkansas past in a forum where it may not be possible for most Americans to ignore.

On matters of sexual ethics, Clinton has

See CLINTON, A9, Col. 1

CLINTON, From A1

benefited from public ambivalence about the relevance of such questions—and from the artful ambiguity of his answers.

It was six years ago next week that most of the nation got its introduction to the future president and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, on the CBS show "60 Minutes." Then, like now, the topic was Clinton's alleged sexual indiscretions. Clinton said he had "acknowledged causing pain in my marriage." But what exactly did that mean? "I think the American people . . . know what it means and know the whole range of things it can mean," he said.

George Stephanopoulos, a former senior adviser to Clinton, thinks the president's best strategy for his long-term reputation is to go to court, where Stephanopoulos believes Jones's harassment allegations will be disproved. But he acknowledged that the risk of the trial is to raise questions about an aspect of Clinton's past that makes many people uncomfortable.

"The public accepts imperfections in a president," Stephanopoulos said, "but they don't like to have their noses rubbed in it."

While most Clinton political aides believe a trial, with its possibility of exoneration, is preferable to an out-of-court settlement, some think Clinton may want to avoid the spectacle of a Little Rock trial. The reason, one said, was the damage a public parade of witnesses alleging infidelity would have on his relationship with his wife. This observer believes the Clintons have strengthened their marriage in his second term.

Some of the president's intimates note his remarkable ability to compartmentalize his life: The policy wonk who genuinely admires his wife resides in one space; the rogue who risks political standing through personal indiscretion occupies another.

One person who has worked closely with Clinton said he has heard Clinton discuss his reputation as a womanizer as though it were pure and malicious fiction—even as the president steered clear of the specific rumors and allegations that have left some of the people on his own staff with doubts.

In some ways, the public has similarly compartmentalized the allegations about Clinton. They are fair

game for David Letterman, who this month had audiences chortling salaciously with a Top 10 list of Clinton New Year's resolutions: "Limit extramarital affairs to women named Connie."

Stephanopoulos said people can hear such jokes and still admire Clinton because "people basically accept his definition of character: Are you doing your best? Are you fighting for me?"

Larry Sabato, a University of Virginia political scientist who studied the politics of personal scandal in his book "Feeding Frenzy," said the public had a somewhat similar relationship with Ronald Reagan. Especially in the waning years of his presidency, many people assumed that he was inattentive and ill-informed about critical issues but chose not to dwell on the implications of this. "You avert your gaze and change the subject," Sabato said, especially when the overall direction of the country is good.

Even so, he believes the allegations have hindered Clinton, who did not command a majority in his two presidential election victories, in part, because of lingering doubts about his character. And at a time when Clinton regularly stresses issues of personal responsibility and family values before audiences from students to corporate executives, some aides worry the Jones case mocks that message.

In six years of public controversy over Clinton's personal life, what is striking in some ways is how little the debate changes. As in the beginning, many conservatives nurture the hope that the past will be Clinton's undoing. Jones's adviser, Susan Carpenter-McMillan, acknowledged on NBC's "Meet the Press" yesterday that her first reaction when she first heard Jones's claims about Clinton was, "Good, we're going to get that little slime ball."

And Clinton adviser James Carville, appearing on the same program, displayed the same response that Clinton's team has made to such allegations since 1992: He accused Jones and her supporters of greed and ideological malice.

And he acknowledged that for him the case is essentially a political campaign. Clinton, he said, now enjoys a 65 percent approval rating.

"Do you know what Paula Jones's favorable is?" Carville asked. "Eleven percent."

FINAL

The Washington Post

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 1998

■ Poll Readings ■

National Journal
1-14-98

VIEWS ON PRESIDENTIAL PERFORMANCE

The First Couple

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? (Gallup Organization Inc. for CNN-USA Today)

	12/97
APPROVE	56%
DISAPPROVE	36
NO OPINION	8

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	12/97
FAVORABLE	56%
UNFAVORABLE	38
NO OPINION	6

The Veep

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Vice President Al Gore? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	12/97
FAVORABLE	50%
UNFAVORABLE	37
NEVER HEARD OF HIM	3
NO OPINION	10

Do you think Gore is qualified to serve as President, or not? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	1/94	12/97
YES, QUALIFIED	58%	37%
NO, NOT QUALIFIED	35	52
NO OPINION	7	11

The Budget

Clinton just announced that his proposed budget for 1999 will be balanced. Do you personally think ...? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	1/98
THE FEDERAL BUDGET WILL BE BALANCED IN 1999	23%
POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC FACTORS WILL PREVENT THE BUDGET FROM BEING BALANCED IN 1999	69
NO OPINION	8

Who would you say deserves more credit for reducing the deficit: Clinton or the Republicans in Congress? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	1/98
CLINTON	42%
THE REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS	39
BOTH EQUALLY	9
NEITHER	5
NO OPINION	5

Looking to 2000

Thinking ahead to the year 2000, which of the following candidates would you most like to see elected President? (Opinion Dynamics Inc. for the Fox News Channel)

	12/97
TEXAS GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH	32%
GORE	28
FORMER VICE PRESIDENT DAN QUAYLE	8
HOUSE MINORITY LEADER RICHARD A. GEPHARDT	7
NOT SURE	25

If the candidates for President were Sen. Fred D. Thompson, R-Tenn., and Gore, for whom would you vote? (Opinion Dynamics for Fox)

	12/97
GORE	42%
THOMPSON	34
NOT SURE	24

Currently, Gore and Gephardt are considered to be two of the main candidates to become the Democratic presidential nominee in the year 2000. Of these two, who do you think is more charismatic? (Opinion Dynamics for Fox)

	12/97
GORE	38%
GEPHARDT	29
NEITHER	12
BOTH EQUALLY	3
NOT SURE	18



Foreign Affairs

Do you think the Clinton Administration has a clear and well thought out policy on the Bosnian situation, or don't you think so? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	12/97
CLEAR AND WELL THOUGHT OUT POLICY	28%
DON'T THINK SO	60
NO OPINION	12

Do you understand, or don't you understand, the Clinton Administration's policy on Bosnia? (Gallup for CNN-USA Today)

	12/97
YES, UNDERSTAND	40%
NO, DO NOT UNDERSTAND	53
NO OPINION	7

NOW YOU KNOW . . .

Indulging her love for dance, Chelsea Clinton showed up Monday night at the star-studded gala opening of the San Francisco Ballet. Accompanied by Stanford University sophomore Matthew Wilsey, Clinton sat in a box in the sold-out War Memorial Opera House, which seats 3,200. Among those in the orchestra, reported the San Francisco Chronicle, were Wilsey's grandparents Tina and John Cella.

Actress Sharon Stone also made her usual grand entrance on the arm of her steady boyfriend, San Francisco Examiner Executive Editor Phil Bronstein.

■ Among the overheard mutterings around Washington:

"At this rate, you'll be vice president in a month," a pilot aboard US Airways' 9 a.m. shuttle from New York cracked to Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.).

And over in the West Wing, some young White House staffers were referring to "George Stephanopoulos, ABC News common-traitor."

■ Bob Dole says he never really knew his neighbors in the



BY RAY SCOTTY MORRIS—SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Matthew Wilsey and Chelsea Clinton arrive at their box seats for the San Francisco Ballet opening.

Watergate apartment complex until he saw the media stakeout in front of Monica Lewinsky's door. When he saw the camera crews and reporters, his spokeswoman Joyce Campbell told the Associated Press, "He thought to himself, 'Look, I won! I'm back!'"

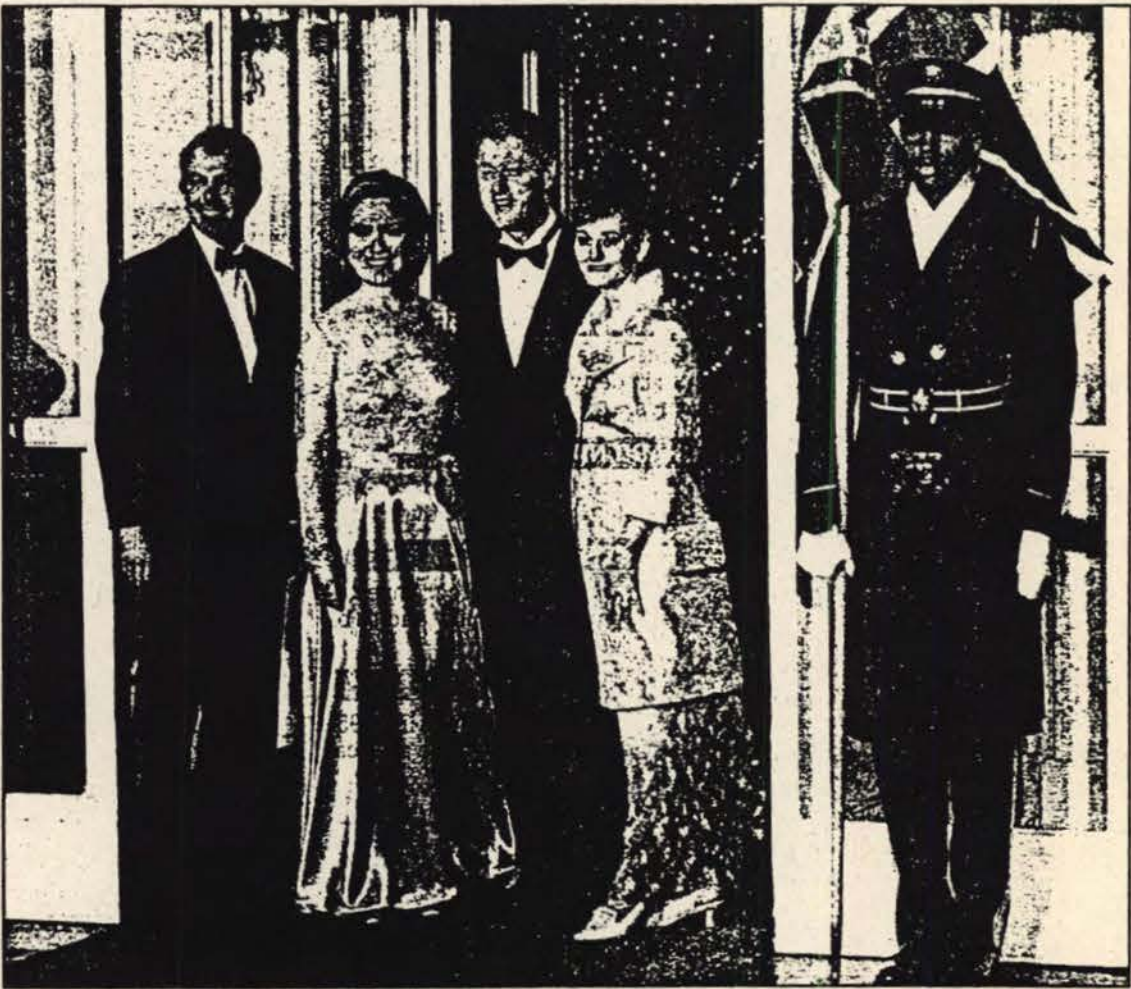
HRC Clips



Blair Visit
February 5-7, 1998

NATION

A Stately Occasion



Associated Press

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, left, and his wife Cherie frame President and Mrs. Clinton at the White House on Thursday night. The Blairs were arriving for an official state dinner.

FEBRUARY 5, 1998
OFFICIAL DINNER MENU

**WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL DINNER HONORING
THE RIGHT HONORABLE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND MRS. BLAIR**

MENU

Honey Mango Glazed Chicken
Spicy Vegetable "Noodles"
Herb Tuile

Grilled Salmon Fillet "Mignon"
Oven Seared Portobello Mushrooms
Tomato Shallot Fondue
Baby Vegetables and Balsamic Reduction

Marinated Fresh Mozzarella
Roasted Artichokes and Basil Tomatoes
Salad of Mache and Arugula
Lemon Oregano Dressing

"Strawberries and Cream"
Devonshire Sauce
Brandy Snaps Shortbread
Honey Nougat Chocolate Fudge

WINES

Newton Chardonnay "Unfiltered" 1996
Swanson Sangiovese "Estate" 1995
Mumm Napa Valley "DVX" 1993

The Night the White House Rocked

Clintons Turn Up the Volume At Dinner for Britain's Tony Blair

By Roxanne Roberts
and Lonnae O'Neal Parker
Washington Post Staff Writers

It's been a tough couple of weeks for President Clinton. But there's nothing like company to shore up sagging spirits. And last night's star-studded White House dinner for British Prime Minister Tony Blair was just the ticket.

The guest list included Sir Elton John and Stevie Wonder, who teamed up for an after-dinner performance. "It's a bit like playing a wedding reception," said John. Barbra Streisand and her fiancé, James Brolin, were there, plus John Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette, Tom Hanks, Harrison Ford, Steven Spielberg, Ralph Lauren, Tina Brown, Anna Wintour, Carol Channing and (whew!) Warren Buffett.

Clearly, it was Clinton's party.

"I'm really pleased the American people have shown great support and good judgment in this matter," said Streisand. "I wish the people who do these illegal leaks and the media who exploit them would show similar respect for the right to privacy and the presumption of innocence. After that, it's no one's business what anyone does behind closed doors."

Not to mention that "he's the most fun president we've ever had—I think we can all agree about that," said Brolin. "The fact is, the job is getting done and he's enjoying himself."

See DINNER, B2, Col. 1

DINNER, From B1

With 240 guests, it was the largest official Clinton administration dinner held inside the White House. Several guests who originally declined the invitations later scrambled to accept, a testament to Clinton's approval ratings and the collective star power.

"I can't say we campaigned to come tonight, but we *would* have," said Sony President Howard Stringer. "It's the ultimate Brit night out." He later added, "If it gets any cooler than this I'll be frozen."

Even a "not too social" fellow like Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott couldn't refuse. "My wife would kill me if I tried to skip an event like this," he said.

This is the first real baby-boomer White House dinner: Clinton, 51, and Blair, 44, both have boyish good looks, Oxford educations, wives who support their political careers and a passion for popular music.

And so it was no surprise that they bonded so quickly. The Clintons went to London shortly after Blair's victory last May, but this is the prime minister's first visit to Washington.

The official agenda: Iraq, Bosnia, Northern Ireland and NATO expansion. The unofficial agenda: proof that it's business as usual at the White House. Pundits speculated that Blair was serving as a "human shield" for Clinton, a charge the prime minister flatly denied. "I don't regard myself as doing a favor at all," he told ABC television earlier this week. The visit had been scheduled before the allegations of hanky-panky with a former White House intern hit the headlines.

The mere presence of John and Wonder was enough to assure a memorable evening. "Two of the world's greatest entertainers are here," said presidential pal Harry Thomason. "So being in the entertainment business, how could you go wrong?"

"Everyone's really buzzing," said designer Lauren. "It's really exciting."

"I'm excited," said presidential adviser James Carville. "It's fun to call everybody afterward and tell them what it was like."

This was the second White House dinner in a row for Spielberg, who was a guest at October's fête for China's Jiang Zemin. There, he said, he felt like Forrest Gump. This time, "I brought Forrest Gump," he said, pointing to Hanks.

As one might expect with such an array of star power, there was quite a display of fashionable attire. Hillary Rodham Clinton's gold lace gown by Pamela Dennis complemented the gold dinner suit of Cherie Blair.

Bessette was sleek and elegant in a black fitted gown. Streisand designed her own empire-waist burgundy velvet dress. Diane von Furstenberg fluttered in a navy ostrich boa. But it was Channing, who has traded her trademark blond hair for a salt-and-pepper do, who caught everyone's eye with tinted sunglasses, rhinestones and a gaudy, sparkling choker.

The toasts before dinner were long on charm and laughs and short on diplomatic pontificating. Clinton began by acknowledging the "uncommon friendship" between the two nations. "In honor of your visit," said the president, "the place where you and Cherie are staying will now forever be known as Blair House—a line that drew a big laugh from the guests."

Blair's tribute began on an equally lighthearted note, but the prime minister went on to affirm his friendship with Clinton: "Bill, I'm pleased to call you a good colleague and proud to call you a good friend. I know I'm not alone in supporting you. I know the American people support you, too." There was sustained applause from the audience, then Blair went on to praise the first lady as well.

To reflect the "warm" relationship between the two countries, Hillary Clinton decorated the East Room in tones of gold, peach and terra cotta. She selected a menu of honey-mango glazed chicken, grilled salmon fillet "mignon" with portobello mushrooms, and marinated fresh mozzarella (a favorite food of Blair) served with roasted artichokes and basil tomatoes. All the wines were from Napa Valley but had ties to England.

Dessert was a spectacular chocolate basket filled with strawberry mousse, served with fresh strawberries and chocolate figures of London's Big Ben.

After dinner, the guests swept into a tent erected over the West Terrace for the entertainment. Wonder sang for the Clintons at the 1997 inaugural gala, but John was performing at the White House for the first time.

"I've loved Stevie Wonder since I was 9 years old—he's my hero," said Melissa Mathison, screenwriter and wife of actor Harrison Ford.

There was a rumor that the two rock-and-roll leaders—Clinton with his saxophone and Blair strumming a guitar—might join the musical legends onstage. But the White House sadly announced no instruments had been requested for what would have been a historic jam session.

"It's a pretty high-powered battle of the bands either way," Hanks said.

The hour-long concert began with John performing "Your Song." After he finished, the singer said he was so nervous he had forgotten to greet the distinguished guests and proceeded to do so. He then launched into a series of his greatest hits: "I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues," "Daniel," "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" and "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me."

After John introduced him as "one of the all-time great musicians," Wonder took to the piano. He paused. "Just looking at everybody," the blind musician kidded.

He launched into a version of "Overjoyed" by saying, "This song probably describes how I feel about this night. Check it out."

He tried to get the crowd to clap while he sang "For Once in My Life," and continued to implore audience participation. "Snap your fingers, shake your head. Do something!" he pleaded. "You guys sound like a library meeting."

After "I Just Called to Say I Love You," which elicited some snickers from the press corps, Wonder continued with "Sir Duke." "Isn't She Wonderful" and, in honor of Mrs. Blair, "My Cherie Amour," which drew an appreciative laugh from the audience.

Sir Elton returned for the last song, which Wonder introduced by saying that "love was wonderful, but when you can't get the love, this is what you ask for." The two then jumped into a rousing rendition of "Money Money."

They received a standing ovation, of course. Clinton added his appreciation. "Thank you, Sir Elton," he said. "I wish I could give Stevie a knighthood."

FINAL

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

Stars cut clouds for Clinton, Blair

WASHINGTON — "What's probably important about this evening is decorum," said ABC anchor Peter Jennings as he arrived as a guest at Thursday's White House dinner for Prime minister Tony Blair and wife Cherie.

The White House is under a cloud, but most guests were excited to be at this high-profile event, and the name Monica Lewinsky was not a favorite topic of party chat. The evening was "sparkling," said *New Yorker* editor in chief

Tina Brown.



Jeannie Williams
News & Views

A large Hollywood contingent turned out, with presidential pal **Barbra Streisand** (silent until now on the subject) the most vocal supporter of the Clintons.

Surrounded by reporters, the entertainer — fiance **James Brolin** at her side — said firmly: "I'm really pleased the American people are showing great support and good judgment in this matter. And I wish that the people who do these illegal leaks and the media who exploit them would show similar respect for the right to privacy and presumption of innocence. And I feel after that, it's no one's business what anyone does behind closed doors. What matters is what kind of job they do, and how well they're doing — whether you're a farmer or a doctor, a performer or a president of the United States."

John F. Kennedy Jr. gave an icy stare to a male reporter who asked: "Are you going to put Monica Lewinsky on the cover of your magazine (*George*)?"

ABC was one of the first to report on Lewinsky, but a number of ABC staffers — including Jennings, **Barbara Walters** and ABC News chairman **Roone Arledge** — were guests. ABC White House correspondent **Sam Donaldson** stood behind the press ropes. "All of ABC News is here and I want to welcome them."

The guest list was heavier on reporters than usual, including some who have defended Clinton (such

THE GUEST LIST

On the guest list of 230 at Thursday's White House dinner for Tony Blair:

► ABC News chairman **Roone Arledge** and wife **Gigi**

► *The New Yorker* editor in chief **Tina Brown** and husband **Harold Evans**, vice chairman of *U.S. News & World Report*

► Berkshire Hathaway CEO **Warren Buffett** and wife **Susan**

► Actor **Harrison Ford** and wife **Melissa Mathison**, screenwriter

► Actor **Tom Hanks** and actress wife **Rita Wilson**

► Sen. **Jesse Helms** (R-N.C.) and wife **Dorothy**

► Musician **Elton John** and companion **David Furnish**

► *George* editor in chief **John F. Kennedy Jr.** and wife **Carolyn Bessette Kennedy**

► Designer **Ralph Lauren** and wife **Ricky**

► Attorney General **Janet Reno**

► Sen. **John Warner**, R-Va., and ABC broadcaster **Barbara Walters**

► General Electric CEO **John F. Welch** and attorney wife **Jane**

► Entertainer **Stevie Wonder**

as **Margaret Carlson** of *Time* and *Newsweek's Eleanor Clift*).

Though **Harrison Ford** played a U.S. president in *Air Force One*, this was his first visit to the White House, wife **Melissa Mathison** said. Senate Majority Leader **Trent Lott** walked up to Ford and said, "I kept seeing you in my Sigma Nu bulletin." Turns out Lott and the actor are both members of the fraternity — Lott pledged at Ole Miss and Ford at Ripon College. Lott quizzed Ford: "Did you actually go to college?"

"I spent most of my time in the fraternity, not in class," responded Ford, who wore his usual gold earring to the dinner.

Steven Spielberg's presence was requested by Blair. He said he and wife **Kate Capshaw** spent time at the prime minister's country house last summer.

Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright** was escorted by financier **Maurice Tempelman**, the former companion of **Jacqueline**



Photos by Newsham H. Natchayan, for USA TODAY
Streisand and Brolin: At a dinner for Prime Minister Tony Blair



Entertainment: Elton John arrived with companion David Furnish.

Onassis.

Hillary Rodham Clinton and **Cherie Blair** both wore gold gowns — the first lady's designed by **Pamela Dennis**.

Blair toasted Clinton for "his determination, his statesmanship and his courage," adding "I know I'm not alone in supporting you. I know the American people support you too." He also paid tribute to the first lady, praising her demeanor at **Princess Diana's** funeral. "Within the past few days, the whole world has seen those qualities of dignity and grace again."

The guests dined on a menu influenced by both countries' cuisine: honey mango glazed chicken, grilled salmon, baby vegetables and strawberries. Trays of cookies surrounding chocolate replicas of Big Ben followed dessert.

The wines included a **Newton 1996 California chardonnay**, a **Swanson Sangiovese red** from the Napa Valley and **Mumm Napa Valley DVX 1993 sparkling wine**.

Blair unwavering in Clinton support

British forces would take part in striking Iraq

By Warren P. Strobel
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A1

Visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair teamed up with his ally President Clinton yesterday to prepare for military action against Iraq if Saddam Hussein fails to give U.N. weapons inspectors unfettered access.

Trying to balance the threat of force with diplomatic leverage, both men said they still hoped for a peaceful resolution to the standoff but insisted that one way or another, Saddam must open suspected weapon sites for inspection.

Mr. Blair sounded, if anything, more bellicose than Mr. Clinton. "We want a diplomatic solution to the crisis, but the success or failure of diplomacy rests on Saddam," he said. "If he fails to respond, then he knows that the threat of force is there and it is real."

To underscore that threat, the Pentagon prepared to send an Amphibious Ready Group of about 2,000 Marines and additional aircraft to the Persian Gulf. They would bolster the three aircraft carriers and hundreds of aircraft Mr. Clinton already has deployed to the region.

Mr. Blair's endorsement of U.S. policy in the Gulf was hardly unexpected, but it came at a welcome time for Mr. Clinton, as Russia, China and other major nations appeared to be moving away from the United States and stressing the need to avoid conflict.

France said yesterday it would not participate in a strike on Iraq, meaning that the United States and Britain likely would have to go it alone. A spokesman for Mr. Blair confirmed that British forces would participate in military action if necessary.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Blair both tried to shrug off a renewed warning from Russian President Boris

Meanwhile, State Department spokesman James Rubin said media reports that Washington planned to use nuclear weapons to destroy chemical and biological storage facilities in Iraq "have no basis in fact."

"The U.S. has no plans or intentions of using nuclear weapons," he said. But, he added, "If any country were foolish enough to attack the United States or our allies or our forces with chemical-biological weapons, our response would be swift, devastating and overwhelming."

A flurry of diplomats have passed through Baghdad this week to try to mediate. Saddam has offered to allow limited inspection of presidential palaces previously off-limits, but U.S. officials say that

falls far short of what is required.

It was not only on the subject of Iraq that Mr. Blair rushed to Mr. Clinton's side.

Moments after he and his wife, Cherie, arrived on the rain-soaked White House grounds in a moss-green Rolls Royce, Mr. Blair praised Mr. Clinton's record in office.

The furor over Mr. Clinton's reported affair with intern Monica Lewinsky clearly on his mind, Mr. Blair — without mentioning the scandal — offered a paean to the president.

"He said what he wanted to deliver for the American people, and he is delivering," the prime minister said. "He never said it would be easy, but he stuck to his guns. He never promised miracles, but he has delivered progress, real progress, for the people who elected him."

The British prime minister and the U.S. president are close political cousins who led their long-exiled parties back to power by stressing centrism and modernization.

The Clintons are giving the

Blairs first-class treatment, including yesterday's visit to a local high school, last night's official dinner, a trip to Camp David tonight and a joint radio address tomorrow.

The subject of Iraq dominated a 1-hour, 40-minute working lunch between the president and prime minister yesterday that began with a discussion of the recently opened peace talks in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Blair began the day on Capitol Hill, where he lobbied 20 influential senators and congressmen with connections to the powerful Irish-American lobby, seeking assurances that the Irish Republican Army will find no sympathy in Washington if it ends its current cease-fire.

"This is one area where your help is essential," he said. "We must all make clear that violence can never be an answer in Northern Ireland."

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Blair also talked about a range of other subjects, including Bosnia, global warming, NATO expansion, the Middle East peace process and this spring's economic summit in

Birmingham, England.

On Iraq, the Blair spokesman — who by tradition is not identified — said the two men agreed on a strategy to educate the public on the threat from Saddam, continue diplomacy and prepare for military action if needed.

Asked about the level of detail in military planning the two men discussed, the spokesman said, "The preparations are being made" for military action if it becomes necessary.

A U.S. official said, "They didn't have the [bombing] maps out" but added: "That's not what their discussions were intended for."

Military action is unlikely at least until after Defense Secretary William S. Cohen returns from a tour of the Persian Gulf region next Friday.

Mr. Clinton rejected calls from some on Capitol Hill and in the military to make removing Saddam a goal of any military strike.

• Bill Gertz contributed to this report.

see BLAIR, page A12

BLAIR

From page A1

Yeltsin, who said a strike could touch off a world war.

"We must not allow a strike by force, an American strike," Mr. Yeltsin said. "I told Clinton about it: No, we shall not allow that."

The Washington Times
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

Clintons bring out the stars for Blair

By Ann Geracimos
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President and Mrs. Clinton pulled out all the stops — musical and otherwise — for last night's official White House dinner in honor of British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife.

British pop star Elton John and American pop legend Stevie Wonder, appearing together for the first time, entertained at the largest function of its kind the Clintons have held to date. The guest list of 240 included Hollywood screen idols and New York fashion gurus among such political luminaries as Attorney General Janet Reno, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and Sen. Jesse Helms.

Mr. Blair in turn had a surprise of his own when he announced at dinner that famed American comedian Bob Hope, a London native, was to be given an honorary knighthood.

The presence of such box office names as Barbra Streisand and her fiancé, James Brolin, along with actors Harrison Ford and Tom Hanks raised the glamour quotient considerably. New Yorkers of note included John F. Kennedy Jr., designer Ralph Lauren and the editors in chief of the New Yorker, Vogue and Harper's Bazaar magazines.

Maurice Tempelman, friend and confidante of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, accompanied Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, just back from a sojourn in the Middle East. The only religious leader on the list was the Most Rev. Frank Griswold, the new presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church.

Other media representatives included Barry Diller, Mike Medavoy, ABC's Peter Jennings, Jim Lehrer of PBS, columnists Eleanor Clift of Newsweek and Margaret Carlson from Time, Harold Evans, editorial director of U.S. News & World Report, the New York Daily News and Atlantic Monthly. Warren Buffett, one of America's richest men, came from the business world.

Mr. Blair had requested film director Steven Spielberg, who spent the night in the Lincoln Bedroom when he was last present for a state dinner. Only family members were staying over today, said Social Secretary Capricia Marshall.

Close White House friends and officials included Press Secretary Michael McCurry, having a night off — and out — in his normal working quarters, Counselor Paul Begala, National Security Affairs adviser Samuel R. Berger, presidential assistant Sidney Blumenthal, and adviser James Carville, accompanying wife Mary Matalin.

Such invitations might be considered a reward for good behavior in light of pressures during recent days.

Anglophilia was the theme of the evening, carried through in the menu and decorative elements chosen to symbolize the warmth of friendship between the two couples as well as between two longtime allies. Both Mr. Blair and Mr. Clinton attended Oxford and married high-powered lawyer wives. Cherie Blair is a judge as well as Britain's first lady.

Chef Walter Scheib, appearing before reporters in the afternoon, obviously had gone all out to put the talents of his staff on full display. The entree was rolled Maine salmon over grilled portobello mushrooms followed by a buffalo mozzarella made in Peekskill, N.Y. Mr. Blair is known to favor mozzarella, and dessert was strawberry mousse and candy rose in a chocolate basket accompanied by a chocolate miniature Big Ben.

The prospect of Sir Elton on the premises had caused a sort of low-grade "hysteria" in the White House Thursday, according to Mrs. Marshall. An unusual venue was selected for the after-dinner concert: the West Terrace, tented over and lit with soft pink hues, resembled an intimate nightclub.

Whatever condition the ship of state was in earlier in the day, matters appeared shipshape by 7 p.m. when the energetic young British couple was met by the Clintons in a formal arrival at the North Portico.

The Washington Times
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

The Reliable Source

By Ann Gerhart and Annie Groer

NOW YOU KNOW . . .

■ During his visit with President Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair is staying at Blair House. And yesterday he visited Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring. Truth be told, with all the Blair spots about town, he could have made a day of it.

"I saw the entourage with the police and the limo with the British flag on it buzz on by here," said Blair Road Service Center general manager Paul Carroll, but the motorcade didn't even slow down.

"He should have stopped by; I would have been glad to sell him a bottle," said the manager at Blair Liquors on Blair Road in the District.



BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST

First lawyers Blair, left, and Clinton.

■ The 40 lawyers and judges Hillary Rodham Clinton invited to the White House yesterday for lunch with barrister Cherie Blair were part of an elite Washington sorority: JD (juris doctor).

"I looked around the room, and I thought, 'This is the '90s [version] of ladies who lunch,'" said White House director of public liaison Maria Echaveste. "It was all these high-powered lawyers. It was really fun."

"We were all of a certain age and we all sort of knew each other," said divorce attorney Marna Tucker. And over pumpkin soup, herb-crusted chicken, two salads, a sorbet and a sinful fruit-filled chocolate ball, they traded tales and toasted fellow legal eagles Clinton and Blair, who actually has been able to keep her job.

Blair's "law day" continued with a Supreme Court tour that included tea with Mary Brennan, widow of Justice William Brennan, in the Ladies Dining Room.

That quaint appellation for the rest stop for justices' wives was bestowed in 1935. When she joined the court, Sandra Day O'Connor declined an offer to change its name, for the sake of history.

The Price of 'D'Amore'

■ The Washington Opera's production of "L'Elisir d'Amore" has had enough mishaps for, well, an opera.

On opening night in December, lead soprano Paula Almerares fell ill in mid-performance and was replaced by Svetla Vassileva. So quick was the change that there wasn't time to completely lace up her costume's back. Several performances later, a recovered Almerares tripped and fell going offstage, forcing the show to a halt as she lay stunned on the floor.

On Tuesday, Vassileva, who took over the role of Adina last month, fell ill, so her understudy, Angela Turner Wilson, went on with only a few hours' notice. Wilson—a Texan making her Washington Opera debut in the small role of Papagena in Mozart's "The Magic Flute"—had never sung the part in public before.

But that wasn't the only drama in the house that night. Just for good measure, a member of the audience fainted during the performance and was taken away by ambulance.

The production closes—mercifully, perhaps—Monday.

Marlene Cooke's Son Has Troubles Of His Own

Beck marveled that the payments had not been made, given that Marlene is the widow of Redskins owner Jack Kent Cooke, who left a fortune estimated at \$500 million to \$825 million. Marlene's been battling for a share of the estate.

"It's not like they didn't have the money to take care of their obligations," Beck told The Post's Justin Blum. "Maybe they'll drive to court in that car and I'll quickly remove it. They can take the bus home."

"We do have a finder's fee," Beck offered. Finding the car might prove hard: Beck didn't know the license plate number.

Beck said he sent someone to look for the car at Marlene Cooke's Watergate at Landmark apartment in Alexandria, but he couldn't get into the secured parking lot. Beck wouldn't say how much Rodrigo owes, but the car's worth a hefty \$12,580 if it's in good shape. Neither he nor his mother returned telephone calls yesterday.

U h-oh. Here comes the repo man, hunting down Marlene Ramallo Cooke's son—and his white BMW convertible.

Seems nobody's made any payments on Rodrigo Gómez García's 1989 325iC since his grandmother, Edna Neves, bought it for him in 1995. Neves refused to pay before her death in 1996, and representatives of American Investment Bank have been looking for the car ever since, said Kevin Beck, a repossession collector with the Salt Lake City bank.

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

Guest List for White House Dinner

The guest list for last night's dinner for the British prime minister:

Prime Minister Tony Blair and Cherie Blair
Jack Straw, home secretary
Helen Liddell, economic secretary
Alan Milburn, minister of state, department of health
Sir Christopher Meyer, ambassador of Britain, and Lady Catherine Meyer
Jonathan Powell, chief of staff to the prime minister
John Hones, principal private secretary to the prime minister
Alastair Campbell, spokesman for the prime minister
Fiona Millar, personal assistant to Mrs. Blair
David Miliband, director for policy, 10 Downing St.
Anthony Giddens, director, London School of Economics
Gavin Davies, chief economist, Goldman Sachs
Geoff Mulgan, policy unit, 10 Downing St.
Madeleine Albright, secretary of state, and Maureen Tempeisman
Roone Arledge, chairman, ABC News, and Gigi Arledge
J. Brian Atwood, administrator, Agency for International Development, and Susan Atwood, National Democratic Institute
Donald A. Baer, consultant, Discovery/BBC Worldwide-America, and Nancy Bard, attorney
Morton Bahr, president, Communications Workers of America
Donald Bandler, special assistant to the president, and Jane Bandler
Paul Begala, counselor to the president, and Diane Begala
Samuel R. Berger, assistant to the president for national security affairs, and Susan Berger
Michael Beschloss, historian and author, and Afsaneh Mashayekhi Beschloss, director of investments, World Bank
Sen. Joseph R. Biden (D-Del.) and Joseph R. Biden III
Sidney Blumenthal, assistant to the president, and Jacqueline Blumenthal, director, White House Fellows Program
Alma Brown, senior vice president, Chevy Chase Bank, and Tracey Brown

Peter Brown, president, Brown and Argus, and Paige Peterson
Tina Brown, editor in chief, the New Yorker Magazine, and Harold Evans, vice chairman and editorial director, U.S. News & World Report, Daily News, Fast Company and Atlantic Monthly
Ronald Brownstein, national political correspondent, U.S. News and World Report, and Nina Easton, senior writer, Los Angeles Times Magazine
Warren Buffett, chairman and CEO, Berkshire Hathaway Inc., and Susan Buffett
Ronald Wayne Burkle, the Yucaipa Cos., and Janet Burkle
Thomas M. Caplan, author, and Lucy Clive
Margaret Carlson, columnist, Time Magazine, and Courtney Carlson, field coordinator, Lois Capps for Congress campaign
James Carville, political consultant, and Mary Matalin, CBS Radio talk show host
Eleanor Clift, contributing editor, Newsweek Magazine, and Thomas Brazaitis, Washington bureau chief, Cleveland Plain Dealer
William S. Cohen, secretary of defense, and Janet Cohen
John Cooke, executive vice president, the Walt Disney Company, and Diane Cooke
Andrew M. Cuomo, secretary of housing and urban development, and Kerry Kennedy Cuomo
William M. Daley, secretary of commerce, and Loretta Marie Daley
Sen. Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) and Linda Hall Daschle
Barry Diller and Diane Von Furstenberg
Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.) and Jackie Clegg
John Doerr, partner, Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield and Byers, and Ann Doerr
John Joseph Donovan, correspondent, ABC News, and Ranit Mishori
Rahm Emanuel, senior advisor to the president, and Amy Rule
Rep. Robert R. Etheridge (D-N.C.) and Faye Etheridge
Colin Michael Foale, NASA astronaut, assistant director (technical) NASA Johnson Space Center, and Rhonda Foale
Harrison Ford and Melissa Mathison
J. Richard Fredericks, senior managing director, NationsBank-Montgomery Securities, and Stephanie Fredericks
Mary Mel French, chief of protocol
Alvin From, president, Democratic Leadership Council, and Ginger From, R.N., Potomac Home Healthcare
Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Jane Gephardt
House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Marianne Gingrich
Daniel Glickman, secretary of agriculture, and Rhoda Glickman, deputy chief of staff to Secretary Oromo
Vice President and Tipper Gore
Stanley B. Greenberg, CEO and pollster, Greenberg Research Inc., and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.)
Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, and Phoebe Wetzel Griswold
Marc Grossman, assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, and Mildred Patterson, managing director, office of visa services, department of state
Rep. Lee H. Hamilton (D-Ind.) and Nancy Hamilton
Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson
Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Dorothy Helms
Alexis M. Herman, secretary of labor, and Dr. Charles L. Franklin
Marife Hernandez, president, Cultural Communications Group, and Dr. David Clayton, chairman, Psychology Department, Cornell Medical College
Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Stefany Hemmer
Carolyn Colley Huber, special assistant to the president and director of personal correspondence, and Gregory C. Huber
Peter Jennings, anchor and senior editor, ABC "World News Tonight," and Kayce Freed, producer, ABC's "20/20"
Sir Elton John, singer, and David Furnish
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Tex.) and Thomas Henderson
Jeffrey Katzenberg, partner, DreamWorks SKG, and Marilyn Katzenberg
Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Victoria Kennedy
John F. Kennedy, Jr., editor in chief, George magazine, and Carolyn Bessette Kennedy
Michael Kinsley, editor of Slate Magazine, Microsoft Corporation, and Wendy Wasserstein, playwright
Orin S. Kramer, general partner, Kramer Spellman, L.P., and Hilary Ballou
Philip Lader, ambassador to the United Kingdom, and Linda LeSourd Lader
Ralph Lauren, chairman and CEO, Polo/Ralph Lauren Corporation, and Ricky Lauren
James C. Lehrer, executive editor and anchor, "The News Hour With Jim Lehrer," and Kate Lehrer
Alan M. Leventhal, chairman and general partner, Beacon Capital Partners, and Sherry Leventhal
Robert L. Livingston and Bonnie Livingston
Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and Patricia Lott
Gilman Louie, chairman of the board, MicroProse, Inc., and Amy K. Chan, president, LegalNow! Inc.

Deryck Maughan, co-chairman and co-CEO, Salomon Smith Barney, and Va-Maughan
Michael McCurry, assistant to the president and press secretary, and Debra McCurry
Gerald McEntee, president, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and Barbara McEntee
Larry McQuillan, senior White House correspondent, Reuters News Service, and Dr. Geraldine McQuillan, Centers of Disease Control
Morris Mike Medavoy, chairman, Medavoy, and Irena Medavoy, founding partner and president, High Heels and Loafers
Marc B. Nathanson, chairman and CEO, Falcon Cable TV, and Jane Nathanson, psychotherapist
Joseph S. Nye, dean, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and Mary Nye
Eileen Mary O'Connor, White House correspondent, CNN, and John Bilotta, producer, ABC News
Alan J. Patricof, co-chairman, Patricof and Co. Ventures, Inc., and Susan Patricof, Normandy Center for Child Development
Norman J. Pattiz, chairman, Westwood One, and Mary Pattiz
Federico F. Pena, secretary of energy, and Maria Pena
Kim Karin Polese, CEO, Marimba
Franklin D. Raines, director, office of management of budget, and Wendy Raines
John Reid, chairman, Rocket Records
Janet Reno, attorney general
Richard Riley, secretary of education, and Tully and Riley
Gov. Roy R. Romer (D, Colorado)
Haim Saban, chairman and CEO, Saban Entertainment/Fox Kids Worldwide, and Gail Saban, author
Andrew Schiff and Karenna Gore Schiff
William Schneider, senior political adviser, CNN, and Dora Schneider
Bernard L. Schwartz, chairman and CEO, Lorai Corporation, and Irene Schwaditz
Eli J. Segal, president and CEO, Walling to Work Partnership, and Phyllis N. Segal, chair, Federal Labor Relations Authority
Donna E. Spalala, secretary of health and human services, and Anastasia Fritzel
Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman, joint chiefs of staff, and Carolyn Shelton
Walter H. Shorenstein, chairman, the Shorenstein Company, and Carol Shorenstein
Stanley Saxe Shustman, executive vice president, Allen and Company Inc., and Sydney Robert Shustman
Rep. Ike Skelton (D-Mo.) and Susan Skelton
Rodney E. Slater, secretary of transportation, and Cassandra Wilkins Slater, senior adviser to the social security administrator
Steven Spielberg, partner, DreamWorks SKG, and Kate Capshaw
Barbara Streisand, singer and actress, and James Brolin, actor
Howard Stringer, president, Sony Corp., and Pamela Patterson
Lawrence H. Summers, deputy secretary of treasury, and Victoria Perry Summers
John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO, and Margaret Sweeney
Strobe Talbott, deputy secretary of state, and Brooke Shearer, senior adviser, department of interior
George J. Tenet, director, Central Intelligence Agency, and A. Stephanie Glakas-Tenet
Harry Thomason, president, Mozaik Productions, and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, television producer
Elizabeth Tilberis, editor in chief, Harper's Bazaar, and Andrew Tilberis, artist-inventor
Alex Trotman, chairman, president and CEO, Ford Motor Co., and Valerie Trotman
Melanne Vermeer, assistant to the president and chief of staff to the first lady, and Philip Louis Vermeer, attorney
Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) and Barbara Walters
Sanford T. Weill, chairman and CEO, the Travelers Group, and Joan Weill, board member, Women in Need
John F. Welch, chairman and CEO, General Electric Company, and Jane Welch, attorney
William Weld, counsel, McDermott, Will and Emery, and Susan Roosevelt Weld, Harvard Law School, East Asian Legal Studies
John C. Whitehead, former chairman, Goldman Sachs
Anna Wintour, editor in chief, Vogue, and Dr. David Shaffer, chief of child psychiatry, Columbia Presbyterian Hospital
Stevie Wonder, entertainer-artist, and Brian La Roda
Janet Yellen, chair, council of economic advisers, and George Akerlof, professor of economics, Brookings Institution

The Washington Post
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998



President Clinton points toward a computer and British Prime Minister Tony Blair stands by as senior Marcus Baker takes his turn e-mailing students in England. In back are students David Moore and Lillian Teng.

PHOTOS BY DAYNA SMITH—THE WASHINGTON POST

A President and a Prime Minister Come to Blair High

By Fern Shen

Washington Post Staff Writer

Students welcomed President Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to Montgomery Blair High School yesterday with stomping cheerleaders and thunderous applause, though some students complained that school officials invited only some students to the program.

Clinton and Blair, who is on a three-day visit to the United States, came to the Silver Spring school to trumpet their support for educational programs and watch students demonstrate their Internet skills.

"We just were in your computer room and we were e-mailing students in England!" Clinton marveled, to the crowd of about 2,000 students, teachers, dignitaries and community leaders gathered in the school's gymnasium.

Montgomery County schools may be adept at using new technology, but the school system initially was stymied by the logistical challenge of accommodating a student body population of 2,600, as well as the several hundred dignitaries and community leaders, in a gymnasium with a capacity of about 2,000.

School officials' initial solution to the problem angered students, who complained that gifted students were allowed to attend the event, but many others were shut out. School officials invited students who were still in school for the eighth period late in the afternoon.



Crowd at Montgomery Blair greets Clinton and Blair with thunderous applause. The school squeezed in the student body and several hundred dignitaries.

Most students leave school on buses after sixth or seventh period, but some stay later to participate in extracurricular activities, athletics and the magnet program for gifted students.

Earlier in the day students circulated petitions protesting the decision, charging that the school's approach was discriminatory, effectively shutting out minority students and students in the regular high school program.

"I find it really unfair that seventh- and eighth-period students were the only ones invited," said Erica Kern, 14, a freshman who attended the rally.

"It's really unfair that we couldn't have full Blair inclusion."

School officials said they restricted attendance because of the limited space and the need to invite community leaders. They also worried that students who ride buses might be stranded at the school after the speech.

"We were somewhat limited by the White House's schedule; they needed to come at 3 p.m., and they wanted us to invite all these other people as well as make room for press and security," said school system spokesman Brian J. Porter.

In response to the complaints, school officials removed chairs from

the center of the gym and invited the whole student body to the speech, squeezing 1,800 students into the gym instead of the 1,300 they originally planned.

If there was a scandal threatening the presidency, it was nowhere to be seen in the school's tiny gymnasium, where students clutched cameras and shook American flags and Union Jacks and screamed "We love you, Bill!"

Clinton spoke primarily about his commitment to making educational opportunities available to all Americans.

School officials said they were not sure why the White House chose Blair High School as a stop on the British leader's visit, but they speculated it was the school's combination of ethnic diversity and academic achievement. The school has 16 semifinalists in the prestigious Westinghouse Science Talent Search this year, more than any other high school in the Washington region.

The other possibility is that Blair might be related to the Montgomery Blair after whom the school is named. He served as Postmaster General under President Abraham Lincoln and came from a prominent Maryland political family.

Prime Minister Blair did not say whether there was any shared ancestry, but he told the crowd he was aware of the name coincidence.

He said he would return to Britain and pronounce the students "thoroughly worthy of the great name!"

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

Blair Begins Visit With Warm Words

By Edward Walsh
Washington Post Staff Writer

A cold drizzle greeted Tony Blair at the White House yesterday, but the youthful British prime minister projected a message of warmth and solidarity toward the United States and admiration for what he called the "real progress" achieved by his friend, President Clinton.

On his first official visit here as head of the British government, Blair vowed to back the United States in any military showdown with Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, promised to assist in advancing the Middle East peace process and thanked Clinton for his support for British efforts to end decades of violence in Northern Ireland.

But Blair, who drew on Clinton's example when he moved his Labor Party toward the center, reserved his warmest words for the American president, whom he portrayed as a fellow champion of "the radical center."

"On so many issues we think alike," Blair said. "We are in politics for the same thing."

"Ours is an ambitious project precisely because it seeks to reach out beyond the old boundaries of left and right, which the people found to be irrelevant long before the politicians did," he added. "Ours is the politics of the radical center, managing that vast economic and social change that confronts us rather than allowing it to manage it."

The Blair visit, with its glowing expressions of mutual respect and shared goals, was a welcome respite at a White House that has been under siege for two weeks because of allegations that Clinton had a sexual relationship with for-



BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST

The president and first lady host White House ceremony for British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife, Cherie.

mer White House intern Monica S. Lewinsky. But any hope that the respite would be more than temporary was dispelled at an Oval Office photo opportunity before the two leaders began a one-hour, 40-minute "working lunch."

The first two questions directed at Clinton concerned Lewinsky. He brushed them aside, asserting that "I've already said that the charges are false" and that "there is an ongoing investigation."

The cold, wet weather all but eliminated the traditional welcoming ceremony for a visiting head of government on the White House South Lawn. Shielded by the White House South Portico, Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton greeted Blair and his wife, Cherie, and then stood with them only briefly facing a damp military honor guard before the two couples turned and entered the White House.

"We apologize for the rain, but the sun is shining in our hearts today because you are here," Clinton said in his welcoming remarks in the Grand Foyer of the White House.

Like Blair, Clinton stressed their common, centrist approach to government. "In both our nations, we have moved to build a government for the 21st century going beyond the dogmas of the past," he said. Clinton made only a passing reference to the stalemate with Iraq, thanking Blair for dispatching the British aircraft carrier *Invincible* to the Persian Gulf.

But according to U.S. and British officials, Iraq was the dominant topic at the Clinton-Blair lunch. A U.S. official

quoted Clinton as saying "there is absolutely no light between us" in a shared determination to force Saddam Hussein to allow full access to United Nations weapons inspection teams in Iraq, by military force if necessary.

Two officials briefed reporters under so-called "British rules" in which spokesmen for the two leaders—normally White House press secretary Mike McCurry and Blair's official spokesman, Alastair Campbell—could be identified not by name, but as "official spokesmen."

The British spokesman said Clinton and Blair had "agreed on a strategy" to "educate" the U.S. and British publics about the size of Saddam Hussein's chemical and biological weapons arsenal, to seek a diplomatic solution to the stalemate but at the same time to prepare for military action.

The Iraqi leader has "never responded to anything unless there is the threat of force or occasionally the use of force," he added.

The U.S. spokesman said that Clinton will not ask Congress for authority to launch a military strike against Iraq. "We believe we have ample authority under existing law, but we always welcome expressions of support from our Congress," the spokesman said.

Responding to questions before the Oval Office lunch, Blair sounded more determined than Clinton to force Saddam Hussein to live up to the terms of the U.N. resolutions he accepted at the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

"It's absolutely clear, I think, to everybody in the international community

that Saddam Hussein has to be stopped," he said. "And of course we want to do that by diplomatic means. No one wants a conflict. But the bottom line has got to be that he is prevented from developing those weapons of mass destruction and brought back into line with the agreements that he entered into."

Blair began his first official visit to the United States by attending a breakfast meeting with House members of Irish ancestry. He told them that the goal of reaching a tentative settlement in Northern Ireland by May "remains realistic" and that "we are determined to stick" to that timetable.

Blair also appealed to the lawmakers to help make clear to the bitterly divided sides in the Northern Ireland conflict "that any return to violence cannot and will not be countenanced." Late yesterday Blair met for about an hour with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders at the Capitol.

Today, the prime minister is scheduled to have breakfast with Vice President Gore and other U.S. officials at the State Department and hold a news conference with Clinton at the White House. He, Clinton, Gore and a group of U.S. and British domestic policy officials will also participate in an unusual "seminar" on domestic issues meant to signify the two leaders' interest and similar approaches to domestic policy.

Tonight Blair and his wife will join the Clintons at Camp David, becoming the first foreign visitors invited by Clinton to the presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains.

TODAY IN CONGRESS

SENATE

Not in session.
Committees: none

HOUSE

Not in session.
Committee:
Joint Economic Committee—9:30 a.m.
January '98 employment statistics & consumer price index. 1334 Longworth House Office Bldg.

— LEGISLATE INC.

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

By MARIAN BURROS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5 — Invitations for tonight's White House dinner in honor of Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife, Cherie, have been the hottest tickets in town — the first chance to see the British Prime Minister and a chance to see the embattled Clintons taking a night off.

One reason invitations were so coveted was that people expected it to be a genuinely pleasant occasion, perhaps even interesting.

It is clear that the Clintons and the Blairs (two centrist leaders married to lawyers, each of whom wore long champagne-beige evening dress) not only have a lot in common but actually like each other. And Washington has no shortage of Anglophiles.

It was, in short, not just a dinner that people had to attend. They wanted to attend — so many that it was held in the East Room instead of the State Dining Room.

Besides the usual political figures, the celebrities included journalists like Eleanor Clift of Newsweek, Margaret Carlson of Time magazine and Peter Jennings of ABC; John F. Kennedy Jr., who bowed to the Clintons and the Blairs; Barbra Streisand, Harrison Ford, Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks.

With Mr. Hanks at his side, Mr. Spielberg recalled attending a White House dinner in honor of Chinese leaders. "Last time, I felt like Forrest Gump," the movie-maker said. "This time, I brought him."

Technically, tonight's event was not quite a state dinner: Mr. Blair is only the head of the British Government, not head of state. So he rated only a 19-gun salute, instead of the 21 shots Queen Elizabeth II would have been given. But no one was counting.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, who has been the first line of defense for her husband during the swirl of scandal, still took time to oversee the planning of this dinner, as she does for all the White House entertaining.

From the type of food and style of service to the timing of the toasts and the location of the receiving line, the First Lady, whom most Americans do not associate with home arts, has left her mark.

"Mrs. Clinton is very involved in the flowers and the table settings," said Nancy Clark, chief floral designer at the White House, "more involved than any other First Lady, even Mrs. Reagan. I get samples of flowers and tablecloths and china and set them up and Mrs. Clinton comes and looks and says, 'I would like to move the rust and move the cream.' 'She has a pretty good eye.'"

Even for an event as structured as a White House dinner, each Administration puts its own stamp on the style. Mrs. Clinton has made more changes than any First Lady since Jacqueline Kennedy replaced the U-shaped tables with small round tables and reduced the number of courses to four, from five.

After a disastrous year with a French chef left over from the previous Administration, Mrs. Clinton was determined to find an American to cook American food that would be lighter and fresher than the usual cream and butter-based sauces.

Tonight's first course was Honey Mango Glazed Chicken, served with a 1995 Newton Chardonnay from California. By contrast, for a typical state dinner during the Nixon Administration, the first course was Le Saumon La Fayette, accompanied by a 1966 Puligny-Montrachet. The Johnsons served vichyssoise; the Reagans, lobster mousse.

Walter Scheib, who arrived as chef in 1994, also changed the style of

service from French (presentation of platters of food) to American, allowing the chef to create individual plates of fantasy with artfully arranged garnishes.

Tonight's main course, for example, was grilled salmon fillet, slices of stuffed and rolled salmon served on seared portobello mushrooms with a tomato shallot fondue and baby vegetables with a balsamic reduction, served on the Reagan tomato-red china. The wine was another from California, a 1995 Swanson Sangiovese.

Dessert service, however, remains French, the better to show off the pastry chef's fanciful creations. Tonight's dessert, with a tip of the hat to the English, was "Strawberries and Cream," handmade chocolate baskets for each table into which the pastry chef, Roland Mesnier, had spooned 10 alternating layers of strawberry mousse and chocolate, topping it with Devonshire cream been mixed with lemon curd.

The tray of cookies was decorated with a chocolate version of Big Ben's clock, made from a mold that did not arrive from England until 10 this morning, two weeks late. At noon, Mr. Mesnier was frantically making 24 molds and putting the finishing touches on the lunch desserts, as well as those for the dinner.

For the last three years the White House has had a resident wine expert, Daniel Shanks, who ran the restaurant at the Domaine Chandon winery in California and knows America's best vineyards.

With help from a wine buyer in California, the White House is often able to serve American wines from stocks of such limited production that they seldom make their way into the market. Tonight's wines were Anglo-American, in a sense: Newton Vineyards is owned by Peter Newton, who was born in London, and Swanson Vineyards is owned by Clark Swanson, whose brother-in-law, Charles Price, is a former Ambassador to London.

As Mr. Scheib prepared for both the dinner and the two lunches given today by Mrs. Clinton and the President, he talked about working with the First Lady: She is very good, he said, about conveying her likes and dislikes.

"For high-profile dinners like this one, she does many tastings," he said. "She is very specific, telling you what something needs more of."

The cost of the food, wine and service for tonight's dinner was estimated by local caterers at \$200 a person, not including flowers, place cards, invitations and cocktails. Cocktails, served in the State Dining Room, were wine, sparkling water and juices, with mixed drinks on demand.

Tonight's dinner was hardly the first to take place in an aura of crisis: Lyndon B. Johnson was bogged down in Vietnam when he entertained the Shah of Iran; Jimmy Carter had to contend with the hostages in Iran at a state dinner in honor of the Prime Minister of Ireland. And if Mr. Clinton has to worry about Saddam Hussein's conduct, as well as questions about his own, those considerations did not get in the way tonight.

Representative Dick Gephardt of Missouri, the Democratic minority

Hillary Clinton proves to be a homemaker on a grand scale.

leader; Defense Secretary William S. Cohen, and Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi, the majority leader, conceded that Iraq was on their minds, despite the festivities.

But Mr. Spielberg, who said he had already called Mr. Clinton to bolster him during his personal travails, said: "We've already sent our message of support to him, and now is a night to have fun."

Ms. Streisand said she, too, backed the President and was pleased that "the American people have shown great support and good judgment."

"We elected him President, not Pope," she said.

Mr. Clinton clearly enjoyed himself, flashing numerous "thumbs up" signs and smiling frequently. When he saw Harrison Ford, star of the movie "Air Force One," the President joked, "He's got a better plane than I do," a reference, perhaps, to the substitute Presidential plane that ran amok recently at a Midwestern airport.

Tonight's toasts were made before dinner, another Hillary Clinton change. She felt after-dinner toasts interrupted the flow of the evening. After dinner, guests went directly to a tent erected atop the West Terrace. The tent came with a guarantee to withstand 70-mile-an-hour winds.

In his toast this evening, Mr. Clinton praised the "special relationship" between the United States and Britain. "Our alliance is strong," he said. "Our personal friendship is strong."

In warm reply, Mr. Blair referred to his visit today to a high school in suburban Maryland, saying the teenagers were shouting for President Clinton. "I know I'm not alone in supporting you," Mr. Blair said. "I know the American people support you, too."

Then Mr. Blair compared Mrs. Clinton to Diana, Princess of Wales, saying the two possessed similar "qualities of dignity and grace."

Elton John and Stevie Wonder, rock-and-rollers for baby boomers, entertained. Stevie Wonder sang a medley for Mrs. Blair, including "Cherie Amour."

Champagne and dancing followed in the Grand Foyer and Cross Hall. The last time the West Terrace was used was for a party given by the Nixons' daughter Patricia.

During the Nixon Administration, cigarettes and ashtrays were on the tables, and cigars were passed after dinner with liqueurs. The Reagans removed the cigarettes; the Bushes banished the ashtrays. The Clintons banished tobacco.

During the Clinton era, several nervous performers have been spotted outside under the portico puffing away before they go on. But there are no more burns in the carpet.



Agence France-Presse

President Clinton welcomed Prime Minister Tony Blair to Washington yesterday, and later the two joined a banquet full of other Anglophiles.

The New York Times

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1998

2/2

Blair's wife set for time in spotlight with Hillary

By Martin Kettle
LONDON GUARDIAN

British prime ministers have been warmly welcomed by American presidents many times, but this week's Washington visit will be the first in which a prime minister's spouse will play such a high-profile role alongside America's first lady.

Cherie Blair and Hillary Rodham Clinton will meet several times between the Blairs' arrival tomorrow at Andrews Air Force Base and their departure Saturday.

As well as attending the welcomes and dinners that are the centerpieces of the formal side of the visit, the two women will attend policy seminars, make visits to see aspects of the American legal system and join their husbands away from the media glare when the Blairs join the Clintons at Camp David on Friday.

Although Mrs. Blair and Mrs. Clinton share many things in common — including successful careers in law, a lifelong interest in politics, and the problems of com-

Although Cherie Blair and Hillary Rodham Clinton share many things in common, they also differ in many respects, too.

binning family and fame — they also differ in many respects, too.

Mrs. Clinton is a politician in her own right, with her own staff, and has always been a central figure in the Clinton White House. She was given responsibility for the failed health care reform package in her husband's first term and has led the public fight against the president's accusers in the ongoing Monica Lewinsky affair.

Mrs. Blair is a crucial behind-the-scenes figure in the Blair government, but she plays no public political role at all. She too stands by her man, but unlike Mrs. Clinton, she doesn't have to give interviews about it.

The Washington Times
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1998

CULTURE, *et cetera*

Public vs. private lives

"Wasn't it only a few years ago feminists were insisting that we had the right to know about the sexual habits of Clarence Thomas? Now, Molly Ivins, a feminist journalist in Texas, declares in her cowboy prose style: 'I, for one, do not think the president's sex life has squat to do with his job!'"

"I disagree. I think Americans had every right to know that President Jack Kennedy was having an affair with a Mafia moll. Kennedy's famous libido, so carefully protected by the Secret Service and by crony journalists, jeopardized the entire nation. ... I say this as a homosexual man. All my life, heterosexual America has tried to draw a straight line between my private and public life ..."

"Many Americans, I fear, are inclined to live with a disparity between the public and the private, so ambitious have we become for the former. Many women, I know, tolerate the spectacle of a feminist president who mistreats female subordinates,



Hillary Rodham Clinton

emerging from church, Bible in hand. ... Hillary Clinton may be the problem. ... She tolerates her husband the way a Victorian wife tolerated male misbehavior and arrogance.

"She smiles. She stands by her man. When he turns his puppy eyes toward the camera and insists he never had a 12-year affair with Gennifer Flowers, she nods. She wants the public life too

much to ask questions about the private man." — From *"Why the Private Life of Public People Matters"* by Richard Rodríguez of Pacific News Service.

Scandalous George

"I did a little reading on the history of the president and the presidency. And here is one of the early entries:

'As has occurred in nearly every administration since then, there was a short honeymoon between the president and the press during the president's first term, longer in the great man's case, because of the extraordinary adoration in which he was held.

"But the number of newspapers was steadily increasing, rising with the tide of the conflict between the parties. It was inevi-



Roberts

table that the president would not be spared for long.' This article is talking about George Washington.

"The criticism of Washington extended to all manner of things. In the eyes of his enemies, every official action was open to suspicion, if not downright accusation. His personal affairs were bandied about, and his private customs and habits were condemned alike, for what he did or did not do. No item was too small to furnish the basis for new criticisms and accusations."

"These questions have been with us for a long time."

— ABC News correspondent Cokie Roberts, speaking on *"The Newsroom Challenge: Reflecting America,"* at the University of South Dakota, Oct. 2, 1997

Strict ratio

"If the white characters in *Amistad* are made to take their historical lumps, the black ones are allowed to create a history of their own. ..."

"What this meant in practice is best seen in the film's treatment of the black abolitionist Theodore



Steven Spielberg

Joadson. Reviewers have noted two things about this character. First, that he is entirely fictional. ... Second, that he is an empty vessel, leaving Morgan Freeman 'seriously underused' ... in an 'underwritten role.' ...

"Having established these two salient points, however, no critic has asked why Spielberg went to the bother of having Theodore Joadson at all. The answer is obvious: He is necessary to maintain a racial quota. *Amistad* never departs from a strict one-to-one ratio between black and white lead characters. ..."

"In point of fact, *Amistad* does not challenge the racial stereotypes that distort contemporary American discussions of race. Mirroring our mendacious system of counting by race, of which it is a faithful expression, it confirms and extends those stereotypes. What is more, it will go on doing so for years to come. ... For the foreseeable future, *Amistad* is destined to be shown to our children as the featured movie of Black History Month. By this means and others, Steven Spielberg's film will long contribute to making it harder and harder for us to tell the truth, either about our history or about ourselves." — Gary Rosen, writing on *"Amistad" and the Abuse of History,* in the February issue of *Commentary*

The Washington Times
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1998

Far From Home, an Ideal Crowd at Last

By EDMUND L. ANDREWS

DAVOS, Switzerland, Feb. 2 — For a First Lady who had spent the last two weeks fending off accusations of her husband's infidelity, it might have been the perfect audience.

Hillary Rodham Clinton was the star speaker tonight at the World Economic Forum, the annual gathering here in this luxury Alpine ski resort for chief executives and political leaders from around the world. And for a few hours, she was among kindred spirits.

Mrs. Clinton was applauded warmly for her speech, on "Individual and Collective Priorities for the 21st Century," in which she told of a need to strengthen "civil society." During the question period, no one even hinted at names like Monica S. Lewinsky or Paula Corbin Jones. Klaus Schwab, host of the gathering, introduced her as "the most remarkable, the most courageous woman of our times."

The First Lady offered very little beyond a bland appeal for cooperation among government, business and society. In the closest she came to a reference to the uproar in Washington, she warned elliptically that the American media might be undermining civil society by forcing a rush to quick judgments.

"The pressure for instant, simultaneous judgment," she said, "is turning people away from being active citizens."

Then, apparently referring to popular culture and entertainment, she went on to criticize "consumer capitalism" and a "media that stresses short-term capitalism."

Her audience was more than simply polite. It was also an audience made up largely of Europeans, many

of whom said today that they could not comprehend why the possibility of sexual liaisons by a political leader would create such a furor. And it was an audience of executives like William H. Gates, chairman of the Microsoft Corporation, who have had their own battles with unruly news organizations and who more than sympathized with the First Lady's decision to turn down all requests to speak with the press here.

"Obviously we are in a different world than yours," Michel Bon, chairman of France Telecom, said in

Shielded from the press, at least for now.

an interview. "Look at the whole experience with President François Mitterrand, who had a mistress and a daughter by that mistress, who were living in an apartment paid by the Government — and that was very good."

Mr. Bon, one of about 100 people invited to dinner with Mrs. Clinton on Sunday night, confessed that he had been charmed by her.

"You know," he said with a shy smile, "she really is very beautiful."

Mrs. Clinton arrived here on Sunday evening but, until her speech tonight, remained shielded from public view by the World Economic Forum's well-oiled machine for protecting celebrities who want their privacy. The conference hall here is inundated at all times by guards armed with machine guns. Although

public attention is usually focused on the speeches and the seminars, the real talking and deal-making here take place in meetings and at meals behind closed doors.

When CBS News asked for permission to set up a camera in order to interview executives leaving after Mrs. Clinton's speech, Mr. Schwab, the host, flatly refused.

Although Europeans of all stripes routinely snicker at what they consider American prudishness, they have followed the Lewinsky episode with almost the same relish for detail as Americans. As the participants here relax between discussions of the Asian financial crisis or globalization, their conversations have inevitably drifted to the most recent comments by Ms. Lewinsky's lawyer and to speculation about President Clinton's ability to survive in office.

Perhaps as a result, Mrs. Clinton avoided both the fabulous skiing at Davos and most conference activities. After arriving here from Lucerne, where she had visited a school and allowed herself to be photographed with local children, she made a point of keeping out of the public eye. Today, a spokeswoman for the First Lady said, Mrs. Clinton stayed secluded in her hotel room in order to prepare her speech.

As in other recent appearances, she spoke calmly and betrayed no hint of anxiety. But she also showed no signs of humor. She made no jokes, and smiled only occasionally.

"There is no doubt that we are creating a consumer culture that could undermine both capitalism and civil society," she said in response to a question about the impact of American culture. Taking what appeared to be an oblique swipe at the frenzied coverage of the Lewinsky case, she



Hillary Rodham Clinton addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last night, having been introduced by the host as "the most remarkable, the most courageous woman of our times."

denounced the "pressure for instant, simultaneous judgment."

She then appeared to shift her focus to the entertainment media. "Because we have a very broad understanding of the First Amendment," she said, American children are being exposed to an "unstoppable" message of "instant materialist pleasure."

The reaction here to Mrs. Clinton's speech was muted but positive. Indeed, the biggest status symbol of this conference for the rich and the powerful was an invitation to the

dinner with her.

"After Reagan and Bush, the Americans should be happy to have people like Clinton and his wife, because at least they have brought some humanity to the Presidency," said Ursula Engelen-Kefer, deputy chairwoman of the umbrella group for German labor unions.

"It's ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous," Ms. Engelen-Kefer continued, echoing the amazement of others that even the possibility of a sexual affair could generate such a furor. "This happens all the time here: It's

no big thing. The only moral question is whether politics and sex have become mixed up," or whether any sexual contact between Mr. Clinton and Ms. Lewinsky "was forced."

At least so far, Ms. Engelen-Kefer said, "the whole thing is a show."

Mrs. Clinton as well seemed to suggest a pragmatic approach to politics and governing, saying there was neither a perfect marketplace nor a perfect government.

"We have to work with human beings as we find them," she said.

From a Friend Indeed, Clinton Awaits a Visit

By WARREN HOGE

LONDON, Feb. 2 — The trip was planned months ago, but it is hard to think of a world leader whom President Clinton would be luckier to have as his White House guest this week than Tony Blair.

He arrives in Washington on Wednesday for a timely four-day visit that is expected to put on further display the remarkable camaraderie between the popular 44-year-old New Labor Prime Minister and his embattled 51-year-old New Democrat counterpart. The visit also brings to the President's side the leader of the only nation to pledge military assistance in Iraq at a moment when a strike on Saddam Hussein appears increasingly imminent.

"I freely confess to you that I happen to have a high regard for Bill Clinton," Prime Minister Blair said today in a shirt-sleeves interview in his private office. "I am delighted to call Bill Clinton a friend, and I believe what's more important than anything else is that he does a good job as a President, and for that he deserves all our support, so it's as simple as that really."

Mr. Blair said he suspected that the sudden growth of support for the President during the last week came from voters' impatience with "arrogant politicians and arrogant media" who, he said, like to "try to reverse the outcome of elections." He fully expected to encounter a President "focusing on the big picture," he said, and not "sidetracked by all that stuff which may be interesting to some parts of the media." He added, "Politics shouldn't be run at the level of a gossip column."

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Blair have frequently been compared because of the commonalities of their youthfulness, their appetites for policy discussions, their moving their parties more to the political center and their emphasis on government's shaping social policies in an era of global economic pressures and public distaste for taxes and spending.

In the area where the President is presently most vulnerable, the conduct of his personal and family life, Mr. Blair is unassailable, and British commentators in recent days have been speculating on how the Prime Minister might turn this to his advantage during the coming visit. The notion clearly makes Mr. Blair uncomfortable.

"I do not presume in any way to interfere with the American political process," he said. "I've made clear my support for the President, and let me say at once I've never pretended to be any better or different than anyone else."

Mr. Blair looks very much at home after nine months in 10 Downing Street, working with jacket off in a side room off the main entrance corridor. Putting his jacket on, he greets guests or Government ministers in the cream-colored Cabinet room next door, with its two fluted white

columns at one end and three brass chandeliers spaced along the ceiling.

Busts of Benjamin Disraeli and William Pitt stare out from either side of the entrance as a reminder of what British prime ministers used to look like before the present informal incumbent. A portrait of a Labor Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, has been hung in the space that during John Major's term bore the likeness of a Conservative, Stanley Baldwin, and during Margaret Thatcher's years bore a picture of Churchill.

It is only five years since Mr. Blair — then the shadow home affairs minister from a party that had lost four straight general elections — went to Washington and watched the Democrats prepare for the first inauguration of their invigorating new leader, Bill Clinton. The two men didn't even meet then.

Mr. Blair returned to Britain and a year later became the leader of Labor with an aggressive agenda: to shed its socialist past and turn it into a center-left group willing to lend an ear to business and dedicated to capturing the middle class, which had seen the Conservatives as the only party that encouraged opportunity.

That transformation swept Mr. Blair and his party into office last

Tony Blair lashes out at 'gossip column' politics.

May 1 with a majority of 179 in Parliament. He set out on an ambitious and activist program of social change and an attempt to settle the bloody conflict in Northern Ireland that have given him the highest job approval ratings of any British prime minister in history.

Mr. Clinton added London to his itinerary on a visit to Europe last June, and he and Mr. Blair emerged from 10 Downing Street to give a news conference in the Rose Garden that was much commented on for its quality of mutual admiration.

Two months ago, Hillary Rodham Clinton came to Northern Ireland and England with several Administration officials and spent a weekend at Chequers, the official retreat. Along with Mr. Blair and his wife, Cherie, who is a noted lawyer and part-time judge, a group of Cabinet members gathered for an extended discussion of common social policy challenges like juvenile crime, welfare to work, school class sizes, child care and public health.

Emblematic of this unusually close association, a similar session has been scheduled for the Presidential retreat at Camp David on Saturday, and Mr. Blair has chosen as his Government companions for the trip



Agence France-Presse

Prime Minister Tony Blair arrives this week in Washington.

Cabinet members from the social policy field. He is to be feted at a dinner Wednesday night; have a working meeting at the White House and a visit to Congress on Thursday; breakfast at the State Department and give a news conference with the President on Friday, and possibly participate Saturday in the President's weekly radio address.

On Iraq Mr. Blair reiterated the British commitment, saying, "We will obviously want to give support in any way that is possible and feasible for us because we believe very, very clearly that at the end of the gulf war certain conditions were laid down for the way that Saddam Hussein conducted himself and those conditions have to be met, and if they are not met there will be far greater trouble in the world to come."

He praised Mr. Clinton's backing for British and Irish efforts to achieve a settlement in Northern Ireland, saying the President had been "absolutely as solid as a rock on it all the way through." In answer to a question about an accusation from a former United States Ambassador, Raymond G. H. Seitz, that the British suspected the White House of leaking security information to the Irish Republican Army in the early years of the Clinton Administration, he said, "I can't speak for the past because I am not in a position to do so, but as far as I am concerned, there are no problems on that score at all."

He said he saw Britain as a "bridge between the U.S. and Europe" and resisted the notion that Britain's perceived closeness to America prejudiced its relations with Europe. "It is not just Britain who stands as an American friend," he said, adding, "Europeans I can tell you, the ones that I talk to, are fully 100 percent behind a strong relationship with the U.S."

On Bosnia he said: "I would say to the American people that it is actually important that you are in Bosnia. It may seem distant and far away, but if we had let the possibility pass of getting involved there and we had let that civil war explode and spread, we would have had a real problem on our hands for the whole of Europe."

The New York Times

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1998

A crisis in diplomacy — for the media

The media might feel uncomfortable asking President Clinton personal questions while he's with the British prime minister. But they'll do it anyway.

By Martha T. Moore
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — For the second time since allegations about his personal life surfaced, President Clinton faces the media today with a world leader by his side. And for the second time, world affairs are likely to take second place to sex and scandal.

Clinton's news conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, at 11 a.m. ET, is to be carried live on broadcast networks and cable channels.

In an earlier uncomfortable mix of domestic scandal and international diplomacy, Clinton fielded questions about allegations of an affair with a former White House intern at his appearance Jan. 22 with PLO leader Yasser Arafat. To many who watched on television, it was an embarrassing moment.

Nonetheless, Helen Thomas of UPI predicts the topic of Clinton's personal life will come up today "in spades."

Thomas, who gets to ask the first question, says she "absolutely" will raise the topic. "If we want to win a popularity contest with the public or the administration we won't ask, but we've got to."

In a White House attempt to absorb some of the onslaught, Clinton fielded media questions Thursday at a photo session with Blair in the Oval Office. That tactic is similar to one used last October, when Clinton answered questions while flying to Brazil about allegations of illegal campaign fund-raising. But at his joint news conference with Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, questions resurfaced anyway, much to Clinton's annoyance.

On Thursday, three of eight



By J. Scott Applewhite, AP

Touchy topics: President Clinton and Britain's Tony Blair, meeting in the Oval Office Thursday, give a news conference today. But questions for Clinton on tensions overseas are likely to take a back seat.

questions from the U.S. media were on the scandal. The rest were on Iraq.

CNN's Wolf Blitzer fired off the first query. "We've been asking the president politically embarrassing questions ever since he took office five years ago, with foreign leaders," he says. "Sometimes it's not pretty the way we do our work; sometimes it's acrimonious. But that's the way we do it."

White House press secretary Mike McCurry downplayed any possible squeamish reaction. "The country knows you are pursuing" the Monica Lewinsky story, he said. "They expect that." But some reporters are still sensitive to asking

about domestic affairs in the presence of a foreign leader.

"It's a ticklish situation, when the president is standing with a foreign leader, to ask such a personal question," says Terry Hunt, who covers the White House for The Associated Press. "You go in with a half-dozen or a dozen questions, you see what the temperature is."

But the White House press corps is dying for a chance to ask Clinton anything. Until Blair's appearance with the president Thursday, it had been more than 10 days since they got the chance to ask the president a question, even a shouted one.

"It's unfortunate," CBS' Scott Pelley says. "But that's the position we're left in."

Protocol is likely to require that each press corps — U.S. and British — take turns asking questions.

"I think out of courtesy we'll let the American media ask questions (about the allegations) until they're exhausted or run out of ideas," says Jeremy Thompson of Britain's Sky TV. "If we feel we have a different approach to it, we will certainly help them out as needs be."

Contributing: Haya El Nasser and Susan Page

► More coverage, 1A, 6A

Iraq's call for 'Olympic truce' quickly scorned

By Susan Page
and Lee Michael Katz
USA TODAY

As a third U.S. aircraft carrier and 2,200 Marines were dispatched to the Persian Gulf, President Clinton and visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair vowed to use military force if diplomacy fails to bring about unconditional weapons inspections in Iraq.

As the clock seemed to be ticking toward a new bombing campaign, Iraq's U.N. ambassador called for the United States to honor the traditional "Olympic truce" and not bomb Iraq during the Winter Games, which start today and run through Feb. 22. "I think the Olympic spirit will have to be respected," Nizar Hamdoon said in an interview.

But the White House and 10 Downing Street dismissed the idea the Olympics would affect timing.

Objections to a military operation also were raised by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who warned for the second time in two days that a military strike could spark a world war.

Clinton said a military operation wouldn't aim to remove Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from power, as some GOP congressional leaders have urged. "That is not what the (U.N.) has authorized us to do," he said.

Clinton hails a '21st century alliance'

By Robert Peston,
Political Editor,
in Washington

Britain and the US are forging a "21st century alliance", President Bill Clinton proclaimed yesterday as he welcomed Tony Blair, the British prime minister, to the US.

Rewarding Mr Blair for his support during the turbulence over his alleged sexual liaison with a former White House employee, Mr Clinton said "a new Britain and a new America" could "blaze new paths for the world".

The US president risked annoying other European governments when he said: "Britain is the clear leader

in forging a new Europe."

Mr Clinton looked tense alongside the prime minister in the Oval Office as journalists fired questions at him about the investigation into his alleged relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

He reiterated his denials and said it would be wrong to comment while the investigation was in progress. Earlier Mr Blair had given him much-needed succour, when he said Mr Clinton had "always conducted himself with strength, determination and integrity".

Mr Blair also attempted to deflect the media from its obsession with the private lives of politicians on both sides of the Atlantic. People

should put to one side "difficulties in personal lives" and concentrate on governments' achievements, he said.

His spokesman said Mr Blair's remarks applied equally to Robin Cook - whom he described as an "outstanding foreign secretary" - and Mr Cook's much-publicised divorce and long-standing relationship with his aide, Gaynor Regan.

At the White House ceremony welcoming Mr Blair, Mr Clinton said the two countries would "stand together for peace" and would jointly confront the economic challenges of globalisation.

He compared Mr Blair with the "earliest English

settlers who came to this country" because he was showing "the foresight, the imagination, the daring to envision a new world and the determination to make that vision real".

Mr Clinton also deliberately revived the idea of a special relationship between the two countries, much touted in the 1980s when Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were the respective government heads, by saying it had never ended.

Mr Blair and he were "sort of on the same wavelength" and he felt "very good" about the relationship.

The UK prime minister was not quite so effusive, but he said he was "confi-

dent of strengthening the bonds that tie us together and building a new transatlantic relationship founded on the successful modernisation of our two countries".

He also distanced himself from remarks by Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, to the effect that the enactment into British law of the European convention of human rights would circumscribe the ability of the media to examine the private lives of politicians.

His spokesman said Mr Blair was completely committed to self-regulation in this area. "There won't be a privacy law either by the front door or the back door," he said.

FINANCIAL TIMES
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 6 1998

New Special Relationship: A Deft Defense of Clinton

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6 — Tony Blair gave a whole new meaning this week to the "special relationship" that has defined British-American relations since Churchill and Roosevelt joined forces against the Nazis in World War II.

On a four-day visit here, his first to the capital since his election last May, the cheerful British Prime Minister provided a much-needed emotional lift for the American President, who has been increasingly besieged over reports of a sex scandal.

And Mr. Blair, who last year gave valuable public relations advice to the royal family after the death of Princess Diana, offered such a ringing defense of Mr. Clinton that he seemed to be performing a similar rescue mission.

At their joint news conference today, Mr. Blair was asked if his forthright defense of Mr. Clinton was a "politically risky strategy."

"I've said it because I believed it and because I think it is the right thing to do," Mr. Blair answered without hesitation.

"In the end, you either decide in politics, when you're asked about people, you're going to say how you actually feel or you're going to make a whole series of calculations," he went on. "And my belief is that the right thing to say is what you feel. And I happen to think — I don't know whether it's my place to say it or not — that if you look at the American economy, you look at the respect with which America is held right round the world today, if you look at the standing and authority of the President, it's a pretty impressive,

record for anyone."

Mr. Blair had been interpreted to Americans as a protégé of Mr. Clinton, a member of the postwar generation who copied Mr. Clinton's successful formula in moving his party to the center. But somewhere during this visit, the dynamic changed between the 44-year-old Mr. Blair and the 51-year-old Mr. Clinton, and Mr. Blair no longer seemed the initiate.

During their news conference today, Mr. Clinton's qualities of appearing relaxed, expansive and politically deft belonged to Mr. Blair.

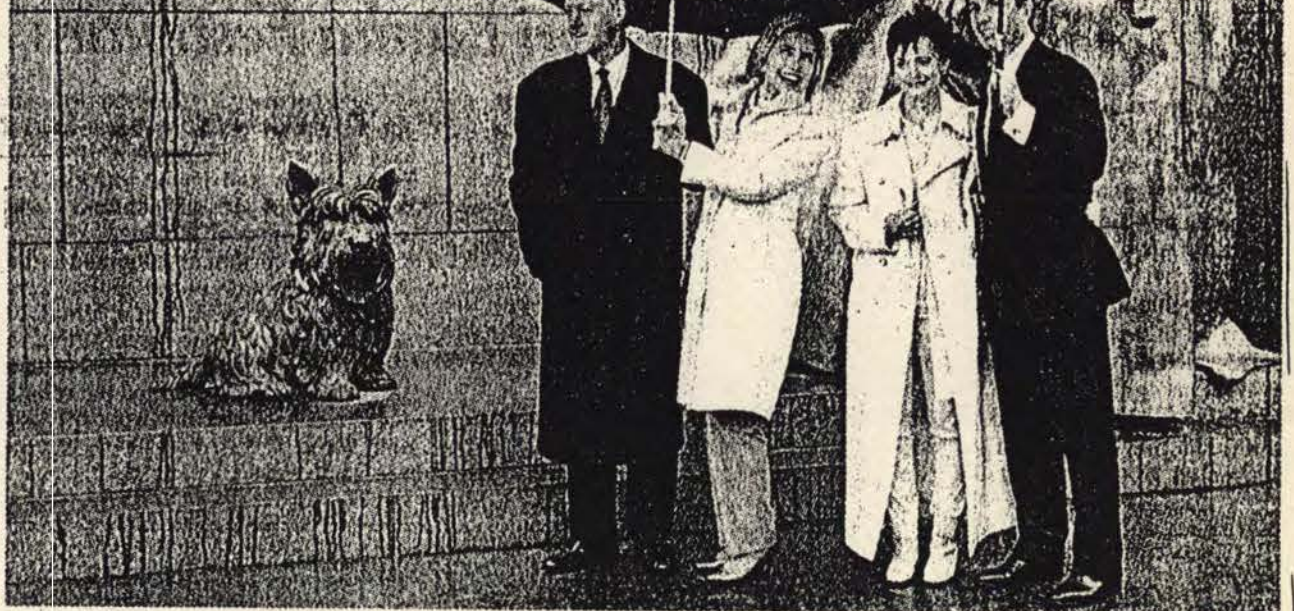
Andrew J. Pierre, a professor of international relations at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, said that because of the timing of the visit — as tensions build over Iraq — Mr. Blair had "nothing to lose" in his strong defense of Mr. Clinton.

"To the extent that Blair builds up Clinton, it's money in the bank, it's political capital, and it won't be forgotten. When the day comes that Blair is in trouble — and I'm not suggesting it will be the same kind of trouble — Clinton will go out and support him."

"It's of value to Blair domestically because it puts him on the broader world stage, it gives British diplomacy a new élan to once again be in tandem with the leader of the free world," Mr. Pierre said. "And it's a godsend to Clinton. It gives him a few light hours."

Anthony Cary, a spokesman for the British Embassy, basking in the afterglow of the news conference, said: "It was no great surprise to us. People on the outside are saying that Blair was deliberately being an um-

THEY (WHO) SEEK TO ESTABLISH
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RULERS. CALL THIS A NEW
IT IS NOT NEW AND IT IS NOT



The Clintons and the Blairs visited the Franklin D. Roosevelt memorial in Washington yesterday. The Prime Minister, regarded as something of a Clinton protégé, used the trip to step out of the President's shadow.

brella or a life raft, or that their relationship blossomed because there was a particular need on one side. But that is only because of the domestic context. There is a very good personal chemistry between them and a good fit of their agendas."

Today Mr. and Mrs. Clinton took Mr. Blair and his wife, Cherie, on a tour of the new memorial here to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Tonight the Blairs headed to Camp David for a private, informal dinner with the

Clintons and the Gores. The Blairs are to fly back to London on Saturday morning.

During toasts at a formal dinner at the White House Thursday night, Mr. Blair spoke conversationally. Rather than stuffily pretending that nothing was amiss, Mr. Blair made direct reference to his host's troubles since reports surfaced that Mr. Clinton had been sexually involved with a 21-year-old White House intern.

In his toast, Mr. Blair described

his afternoon visit to a high school in suburban Maryland and the enthusiastic crowd of more than 2,000 students.

"I know I'm not alone in supporting you," Mr. Blair said. "I know the American people support you too." The declaration gave the dinner audience of 240 luminaries a starting point for sustained applause.

Mr. Clinton, who offered his toast first, made no mention of his difficulties.