

Candidates clash over change, character

ST. LOUIS — Bill Clinton and President Bush argued over character and the economy Sunday night in a three-way debate with Ross Perot.

From taxes to crime to AIDS to foreign policy, the three men grappling for the White House outlined differing visions in a 90-minute debate.

In his first major campaign appearance, Perot provided a series of one-liners and offered himself as an outsider who could shake up the system.

Bush began the debate by saying he felt the most important issue separating the candidates was experience.

But Perot was quick to ridicule the notion by observing that it's true, he had no experience in "running up a \$4-trillion debt" or in overseeing "a gridlock government" or presiding over a crumbling education system.

"If it's time for action, I've got the kind of experience that counts," he said.

Bush, criticized throughout his campaign for paying too little attention to domestic affairs, promised to name James Baker as his domestic coordinator. It had been thought that Baker was interested in returning to his former post as secretary of state.

Perot said, "We do have to have change," and that the first priority should be to rebuild the nation's job base.

The opening moments were highly charged, with Bush criticizing Clinton for anti-war activities while he studied overseas at Oxford University during the Vietnam war. In contrast, Bush held out his service during World War II.

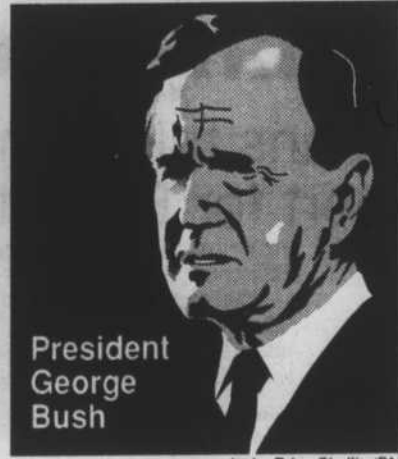
Clinton responded directly to Bush, who seemed not to return his gaze.



H. Ross Perot



Gov. Bill Clinton



President George Bush

portraits by Brian Shellitor/DN

“The government has lost touch with the people. We've got to change the system.”

Perot

“I offer a new direction: invest in American jobs, American education, control health care costs, bring this country together again.”

Clinton

“I hope I've earned your trust because a lot about being president is about trust and character.”

Bush

“When Joe McCarthy went around this country attacking people's patriotism, he was wrong,” Clinton said. “Your father (Prescott Bush) was right to stand up to Joe McCarthy. “You were wrong to attack my patriotism. I opposed the war, but I love my country,” he said to applause from the audience. Bush said he was not attacking Clinton's patriotism, but his character and judgment.

Clinton's running mate, Sen. Al Gore, said Bush had finished fourth behind Clinton, Perot and moderator Jim Lehrer.

Clinton made several references to his own life. He noted that he came from a broken home and, in arguing against decriminalizing drug use, that his brother was a recovering drug abuser.

On taxes, a subject of conflicting television commercials, Clinton said his economic proposals would shield all households with incomes of less than \$200,000 from tax increases and “restore some fairness to the tax code.”

“We've got to have no more trickle down,” he said.

Bush, who has charged that Clinton's plan would raise taxes on the middle class, said, “You end up socking it to the working man.” Over and over, he characterized Clinton economics as a tax-and-spend program.

Perot said his own economic plan included a period for “shared sacrifice,” and defended his proposal to raise the gasoline tax by 50 cents a gallon.

“I know it's not popular... but the people who will be helped by it the most will be the working people who will get jobs created by this tax.”

The president said he was anxious to work with a “brand new Congress” next year, though there is no guarantee he would be more successful with the new lineup than with the old.

Bush insisted the nation's problems were not so severe as Clinton claimed. “This country's not coming apart at the seams,” he said, and the United States has recovered from worst problems than the current ones.

But Clinton said American wages had declined in the last 12 years of Republican rule in the White House.

Perot said international competitors were doing better than the United States, with business and government working hand in hand.

Each man had two minutes for a closing statement. Perot used his to underscore his outsider's candidacy. “The government has lost touch with the people. We've got to change the system,” he said.

Clinton said, “I offer a new direction, invest in American jobs, American education, control health care costs, bring this country together again.”

Bush had the last word and asked voters for “four more years.” He recalled the collapse of communism and other dramatic world events of the past four years, and said he would turn his attention more to domestic issues.

“I hope I've earned your trust because a lot about being president is about trust and character.”

Columbus maintains hero status

NEW YORK — The reputation of Christopher Columbus remains relatively untarnished 500 years after his arrival in the New World, an Associated Press poll indicates: About two of three Americans regard him as a hero.

The anniversary of the Italian navigator's first voyage across the Atlantic has brought renewed scrutiny of the explorer's effect on the natives of the land he mistook for “the Indies.”

Columbus robbed, brutalized and enslaved Native Americans and started centuries of destruction of their cultures. But only 15 percent in the poll said they agreed with those who called Columbus a villain.

About 64 percent said he was a hero. Nine percent said he was both. The remainder said he was

neither, or were unsure.

A majority, 56 percent, said they would like to see Columbus Day observed as a celebration, while 32 percent wanted it to be a solemn day to reflect on the past. The rest were unsure or wanted it observed both ways.

The poll was taken Sept. 30 to Oct. 4 among a random sample of 1,001 adults by ICR Survey Research Group of Media, Pa., part of AUS Consultants. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

History has recorded that Columbus was devoted to — perhaps obsessed with — the idea of sailing west to reach “the East.” He spent more than seven years preparing and seeking the backing of the Spanish monarchs for his 1492 voyage.

Those polled were more likely

to see Columbus as motivated by a quest for knowledge than by greed.

Six in 10 cited his curiosity about the world as a motivation. Half agreed that he was motivated by a sense of adventure. Forty-four percent cited a search for gold and profits. Just 20 percent said a desire for fame was one of the motivations.

Men were slightly more likely than women to mention fame and profits. Those who considered Columbus a villain most often saw him as motivated by the search for gold.

Eighteen percent of men but only 12 percent of women considered Columbus a villain. While a majority of those who vilify Columbus wanted the holiday to be solemn, a third of them still wanted it to be a celebration.

speaker with other College Republicans. The community college was about three miles from Washington University, the site of the debate.

Afterward, students once again cheered on the presidential motorcade as it zoomed back to the hotel.

Andrew Sigerson, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, said he thought Bush held his own.

“I think he made a very respectable showing.”

Sigerson also said he didn't think the president was specific enough on some issues. But the outcome of the debate will depend on how it is portrayed in today's newspapers, he said.

Jon Scheve, a freshman business administration major, said he thought Bush would benefit from the debate.

“His ratings will go up — his and Perot's,” he said. “Clinton's will go down. People just don't like Slick Willie.”

Despite the right-winged atmosphere of the trip, the group's bus driver, Terry Stunden, remained unswayed by the president's appeal.

“Bush is an ass.”

KKAR

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John Mitchell of Omaha, president of Mitchell Broadcasting Co., KKAR-AM radio of Omaha and five other Nebraska radio stations, appeared at the meeting to protest the vendor selection process.

Mitchell said he had offered the university a larger fee, higher revenue-sharing percentages and more services, but was eliminated because he preferred a five-year contract with a five-year extension option at his discretion.

Mitchell said he might have been

SIS

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But NU President Martin Massengale recommended the SCT system on the grounds that systems of the IA family were already in use at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

“Every single consultant I talk to” recommends that the campuses' stu-

dent registration systems be able to tie into each other, Van Horn said. Tying in is more easily and cheaply achieved when the systems belong to the same family, he said.

The integrated system would replace a patchwork of computer programs used to store student records at UNL. The system will run on the university's IBM 480 mainframe computer under one of the relational database management systems.

Red Cross officials made plans Sunday to evacuate 3,000 women and children from the besieged Bosnian capital, where food and fuel are desperately short.

Intense fighting was reported overnight around the city, and on Sunday government troops pounded an arc of land linking rebel Serb territories in the north.

But for the first time since the U.N. Security Council banned military flights over the breakaway Yugoslav republic last week, there were no reports that Serb rebels staged air raids on government-held cities.

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mentary and presidential elections should be moved up. Opponents view the hastily called referendum as a ploy by hard-liners to hold onto power despite worldwide condemnation of Yugoslavia's role in instigating the ethnic bloodshed in Bosnia.

Around Sarajevo, residents grimly welcomed heavy rains that helped to ease a dire water shortage. Steady bombardments were reported during the night near the capital's airport, the old town and the suburbs of Stup and Ilidza.

Nine mortar rounds landed Saturday near Camp Beaver, the U.N. peacekeepers post near the airport, but none of the U.N. troops was hurt, U.N. spokesman Mik Magnusson said.

Debate

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vocalize our support.”

Mark Byars, a freshman accounting major, agreed.

“I've been involved in a number of campaigns, sticking, hammering up yard signs, making phone calls. This is something that really doesn't happen all that often.”

For some, the trip provided a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the president in person as he walked from the Drury Hotel near Union Station downtown into a waiting limousine.

“It was neat to actually be there and be part of the crowd that was cheering for him,” said Cara Catlett, a junior political science major.

About 200 supporters erupted in applause when Bush and his wife, Barbara, walked around the car and waved to the onlookers as fireworks exploded in the air above.

The students from Nebraska traveled to Forest Park Community College to listen to the debate via loud-

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