Kay is right. The village cannot raise a child. Increasingly, the "village" is taking our children away from us. And as I told you last month, that is why I have written a new book of my own, *Our Hopes, Our Dreams: A Vision for America*. Like Mrs. Clinton's, my book is about families and children—but there the similarity ends.

In fact, it would be difficult to imagine two books more diametrically opposed on the major issues facing our families and our nation. Mrs. Clinton writes with admiration of Western Europe's "openness about sexuality"[2] and wishes we were similarly enlightened. *Our Hopes, Our Dreams* ponders how our sex-saturated society can restore the virtues of fidelity and chastity. (I wonder if Mrs. Clinton has watched any cable t.v. lately or checked the tabloids as she walked through a grocery check-out lane?) *It Takes a Village* deplores abortions only if they are "unsafe"[3] and argues that the "village" should promote contraception to young people to "help them deal responsibly with the consequences of their actions."[4] My book questions the future for a nation that has abandoned the sanctity of human life and lost the meaning of holy matrimony.

Hillary Clinton, *Newsweek* says, champions a government "program for every problem"[5] and accuses conservatives of opposing Big Government because we desire "to advance narrow religious, political and economic agendas."[6] My book yearns for a rebirth of family and community that restores the federal government to its limited constitutional role. Mrs. Clinton believes that "everyone should wait until the age of 21 before having sex."[7] Not only should sex be within the bonds of marriage, but I believe that the virtue of an action does not depend on one's age.

Hillary Clinton believes that out-of-home child care is controversial because, she says, "Americans have never sufficiently valued the work of caring for children" and have long been ambivalent "about whether surrogate child care is acceptable."[8] *Our Hopes, Our Dreams* argues, instead, that America's families place the highest value on caring for children. Families have told pollsters time and again that they not only favor parental care of children, but also want public policies that support that choice.

The first lady's book is receiving tremendous attention in the national liberal media. She has also been interviewed by the major news magazines. The best-seller lists will no doubt track her book's sales with enthusiasm. As you know, however, those lists completely ignore books like mine which come from Christian publishers such as Focus on the Family. The media will try to ignore our pro-family message, too. In some ways the outcome of the family policy debate in 1996 will be determined by whether more Americans support Hillary Clinton's message of Big Government and liberal values or whether they accept and embrace the message of renewal and faith contained in *Our Hopes, Our Dreams*. With your help, we can win this first "debate" of 1996 by making sure *Our Hopes, Our Dreams* reaches as many Americans as possible. I hope you will choose to read this pocket-size paperback and then help distribute it to your friends, neighbors, co-workers, sunday school class and anyone else interested in America's future.

Hillary Clinton, however, is not the only public figure tossing around adjectives like "extreme" these days. If you've watched the long-running budget battle between the Congress and the White House, you've heard some of the nastiest descriptions ever applied to elected legislators by the sitting president and his staff. Specifically, they've described the congressional freshman class as everything from "the far right" to "inflexible extremists."

Listening to the president, you would think that these first-term legislators hate the elderly, intend to starve the poor, abandon children, trash the environment, and close schoolhouse doors. The budget deadlock that gripped this city was even blamed on these newcomers. Last March, I wrote to you that these very same members of Congress "bring to Washington a spirit of service that is truly rare." In the aftermath of the recent government shutdown, has my opinion changed?

Not at all! If anything, I hold the congressional freshman class in even higher regard now than I did a year ago. The reason is simple: they have kept their word. The vast majority of these members came to Washington as citizen-legislators. That is, they did not see themselves as part of a permanent governing class. They supported term limits. They promised to rein in runaway government. They promised to cut taxes on families with children. They pledged to balance the budget and eliminate useless bureaucracies.

I have often prayed with these deeply faithful new members, and I wince as I see them daily attacked in the liberal press. The media have been an echo chamber for the White House, unfairly charging the freshmen with denying funds for everything from Meals on Wheels to school lunch programs. Medicare is the primary example. Throughout the budget battle, Bill Clinton accused these men and women of seeking "to strip our government and our country"[9] of its rightful role. Clinton huffed that the Congress has held some 40+ hearings on the Whitewater scandal, but only one on the Medicare bill he was asked to sign.

Actually, Congress held over 50 hearings on Medicare, but Bill Clinton "counted" only the one hearing held on the actual bill. Where was our adversary press on this one? Furthermore, Medicare spending under the GOP seven-year balanced budget plan will increase by 89%. Per-person spending will also increase from just over $4,800 per year now to over $7,000 in the year 2002. To keep Medicare from going bankrupt, seniors would pay an additional $7 per month, an "increase" that happens only because the GOP plan keeps the beneficiaries' share of the premium right where it is now at 31.5%. The President's alternative was to shift more of the costs of the program to taxpayers who do not receive any of the benefits. Moreover, the House-backed plan provided the elderly with a new freedom, medical savings accounts, to help them take charge of their own coverage and avoid the threat of rationing posed by the Clintons' health reform model.

Watching the president's January press conference, this thought occurred to me, too. He pointed out that he has halved the budget deficit in three years. That's true—even if you believe, as I do, that the administration's policies are not the primary cause of the decline. Much of the additional revenue necessary to reduce the deficit came as a result of Clinton's tax increase, $280 billion over five years[10], the largest in our nation's history! My question is this: If Bill Clinton could cut the deficit in half in three years, how can it be "extremist" for congressmen to advocate wiping out the *other* half of the deficit in seven years?

Let me share with you just a few of the House conservatives' other extraordinary accomplishments for the family:

- Passed a $500 per child tax credit for all families with dependent children under the age of 18. Insisted on the full amount of this credit in tough negotiations with the Senate, and held their ground during the federal shutdown when Clinton vetoed the budget bill.

- Passed a $5,000 credit for adoption expenses to facilitate the placement of children in permanent homes.

- Restored the ability of the states to deny taxpayer funds for abortions; denied federal funds for human embryo research; adopted language to deny foreign aid funds to agencies like International Planned Parenthood that promote and perform abortion overseas; protected the accreditation of teaching hospitals that refuse to participate in abortion training; restored the ban on use of taxpayer funds to subsidize abortions under federal employee health plans; reimposed limits, lifted in 1993 by President Clinton, on the performance of abortions in U.S. military hospitals; passed a ban on partial-birth abortions. The first four items have been bottled up in the Senate, but none of these actions would have been possible without the pro-life members added to the House in 1994.