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TELEVISION PROGRAM TO "CBS NEWS' FACE THE NATION."



October 17, 2010 Transcript

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TRANSCRIPT

BOB SCHIEFFER: Today on FACE THE NATION, let's talk some politics. With two weeks until the election there's no question the country is angry. But do the parties hear the people? All sides seem to agree the Republicans will pick up strength. But then what? Will the two sides find a way to work together or is there more gridlock ahead? Why is the nation so polarized?

We'll talk with a former head of the Democratic National Committee Howard Dean; Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, who's tried to find common ground with Democrats; Republican strategist Liz Cheney; and the former advisor to President Clinton, Bill Galston of the Brookings Institution.

I'll have a final word on why spring is fine, but fall is better.

But first, fixing a divided nation, on FACE THE NATION.

ANNOUNCER: FACE THE NATION with CBS News chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer. And now from Washington, Bob Schieffer.

BOB SCHIEFFER: And, good morning again. And welcome to all of our guests. Let's see here. Howard Dean is in Burlington, Vermont. Liz Cheney and Bill Galston are here in the studio with me. And Lindsey Graham is at Clemson South Carolina.

Well, I pretty much stated the conventional wisdom in the opening there. The thinking here in Washington seems to be whether or not they actually get a majority in either House. Republicans are going to pick up a lot of seats in-- in the next Congress. I don't think there's anybody who would argue otherwise. But here's the question. Whether they take the majority or not, what is ahead? Are the two sides going to find a way to work together, or will they be just deeper and-- and harder gridlock? Let me start with you, Governor Dean. What-- what do you think is ahead.

HOWARD DEAN (Former Chairman, DNC): Well, I think we've got-- first of all, let me thank Senator Graham for his willingness to work together. But look what happened to him when he got home. The-- the far right of his own party pilloried him. And that-- I think-- that's a big problem, not just on the right but all the districts are drawn in more and more partisan ways so you have very partisan big majorities. Your challenge as a Republican is likely to come from the right as we've seen this sess-- this election season. And your challenge for-- as a Democrat is likely to come from the left. So the-- the part of the problem is not just the rhetoric. It's the fact that we-- we're so polarized in what we've done to each other as parties over the last thirty years in redistricting that it's very, very hard to overcome your own constituencies and move to the middle.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Liz Cheney, you've been known to take a hard line, as it were. What do you think is coming?

LIZ CHENEY (Republican Strategist): You know, I think it will depend a lot on what President Obama does frankly. I think that once he doesn't have control any longer of both Houses of Congress, if he wants to get things done, I think he's going to have to move more to the center, which certainly will help the situation. I also suspect, because he's a-- he is a very good politician that he will get the message. He's got to listen to the American people. And I don't

think that, you know Governor Dean's point about, you know this about is about polarizations because of redistricting is accurate. I believe that in fact, what we've seen is a president who has taken much more radical positions than the people voted for in 2008. And so, I think that if the White House hears the-- the people speak and if the President himself moves to the center, there may in fact, be a chance to get more done.

BOB SCHIEFFER: You know, I can remember a time when sitting senators would not even campaign against senators of the other party if they were also in the Senate. It was just something that-- a line you never cross. But yet, look how that has changed. Here's what Senator John McCain said the other day in Barbara Boxer's home state of California.

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN: Barbara Boxer is the most bitterly partisan, most anti-defense senator in the United States Senate today. I know that because I've had the unpleasant experience of having to serve with her.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Now Lindsey Graham, you are known as a very close friend of Senator John McCain. You were one of his top advisors during the presidential campaign. What about that?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-South Carolina): Well, I think John is reacting to an agenda that he thinks has really been overreaching now. It is different. The Senate is different now. But to your point about bipartisanship after the election, I predict there'll be a good bit of it. There'll be a bipartisan effort to extend the Bush tax cuts and not let them expire. Two thousand and twelve and 2014 Democrats in swing states are going to get the message from independent voters to come to the middle. So I think we're going to have some bipartisanship when it comes to replacing the health care bill with a more moderate approach. You'll see some Democrats and Republicans working early on to try to moderate things as Liz said. But Senate has changed. No doubt about it.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Bill Galston, that is rather unusual to see a senator go to another senator's home state. I guess Bill Frist was probably the first one who did it when he went to campaign against Tom Daschle.

BILL GALSTON (Domestic Policy Adviser, Clinton Administration): Yes, but it's a sign of just how polarized our political party system has become. There's no question about it. The parties are a lot more polarized than they were thirty years ago. The American people aren't as polarized as the parties. But the center of the electorate is weaker and more people have flocked toward the extremes. That does make cooperation across party lines more difficult. Having said that, I am a bit of an optimist as well, I think there's going to be an early confrontation, particularly if there's a fired-up new majority in the House of Representatives with perhaps eighty new representatives beholden in some ways to the Tea Party people. But speaking as a veteran of the Clinton White House, I can tell you that the confrontation comes to an end when one side or another hits a wall because the American people expect parties who have a share of governing power to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

BOB SCHIEFFER: And-- and we would-- we should add, you were in the Clinton White House. You're now at the Brookings Institution--

BILL GALSTON (overlapping): Correct.

BOB SCHIEFFER: --where you spent a lot of time studying the partisan divide.

BILL GALSTON: Indeed, I did.

BOB SCHIEFFER (overlapping): And-- and how it came about. Where is the middle right now in American politics?

BILL GALSTON: Well, there is a middle in American politics. You have thirty-five percent of the American people who call themselves moderates. That's down some from ten years ago, but that's still a big slice of the electorate. You have thirty percent of grassroots Republicans, who call themselves moderates or liberals. You have sixty percent of grassroots conservatives, who call themselves moderates or conservatives. So there is a potential coalition of the center there but our party system is not very good at expressing it right now.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Howard Dean, let me ask you, Bill Galston just brought up the Tea Party. What do you make of the Tea Party? I think I saw somewhere, where you said the other day that Republicans have-- have created a monster.

HOWARD DEAN: I didn't say that. Somebody did say that. I don't think it is a monster. I think-- they are going to have trouble with it. And I-- let me just say, I would disagree with Senator Graham and-- and Liz on the notion that Obama's not in the middle. His health care plan was essentially the same as Mitt Romney's. Mitt Romney is never been accused of being a liberal. So the fact of the matter is, I think-- and I truly believe this, I'm not trying to be partisan. But I think I will be. I-- I think the-- the Republicans are too far right for the country. And I think they are-- they are-- they believe-- are two very conservative people both of whom are talking about running for president or believed to be running-- going to run for president. I shared a stage or a forum with them in the last couple of days. Both of them said this is not kind-- the time for compromises. It's not the time for working together. The status quo helps liberals. We're going to change the country. And I-- that's why I'm less skeptical-- more skeptical about the possibility that we're going to be able to work together after this. I think there-- you know, the Republicans think they're on a mission. And I think mission is well outside the mainstream. The Tea Party people I see differently. There is a racist fringe and all that stuff which the news media hypes up. I think most of them are anxious to-- anxious about the control that's going on in Washington. And it was-- in some ways there's some similarities other than the ideology of the people-- then with the people who supported me for president in 2004.

BOB SCHIEFFER (overlapping): Well, who--

HOWARD DEAN: The real desire to have power come back to the-- to the people. That's what I think people share in common in this country.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Who are the two people that you shared the stage with--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): Ah, Sarah--

BOB SCHIEFFER: --just so we know--

HOWARD DEAN: Well, Sarah Palin was one of them who gave a fairly uncompromising speech and the other was Rick Santorum.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Well, Liz, do you want to respond to that?

LIZ CHENEY: Yeah. You know--

BOB SCHIEFFER: Liz Cheney.

LIZ CHENEY: I mean, I think that this notion that the tea parties is too far right is really wishful thinking or that the Republican Party is somehow on the fringe or the extreme of the American Electorate. Again, I think it's wishful thinking. I think that-- you know all you have to do is look at somebody like Marco Rubio who won the Republican primary in Florida. And when he did, a lot of the pundits said, well, that's great. He won the primary, but he's clearly won be able to win the general election. And, he now has double-digit lead over Charlie Crist in that election. Crist was supposed to be the moderate Republican, who was going to come in and demonstrate that he could capture this supposed mass number of people who are in the center--just not the case. What the Tea Party stands for is a set of conservative principles which are for limited government, low taxes--really individual rights. And, you know, those aren't fringe. I would say those are fundamental American values. So, you know, I understand why Governor Dean may be wanting to try to portray this as fringe, But I-- I'd say, you know, continue to do that because I think that fringe is going to, in fact, demonstrate to you that they have enough support to have a very big win come election day this November.

HOWARD DEAN: Yeah. But, see I would argue that-- that the-- your own example of Florida shows that the Tea Party are nowhere close to the majority. Rubio's-- if he does win is going to get about forty-four percent of the vote. And-- and Meek and Crist together will get fif-- fifty-six. So that's-- it proves my point.

LIZ CHENEY: Well, I don't think it proves your point. I think Marco Rubio is a clear conservative candidate. Somebody who stands unashamedly and the same way that you, you know, talk about Governor Palin, for these sets of conservative principles. And he's going to win that Senate race. Now if you want to portray that as a loss, go ahead. But that's not going to give your party--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): I just wanted to say--

LIZ CHENEY: --the majority in the Senate come November.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --portray that he doesn't represent the majority of Floridians.

LIZ CHENEY: Hm.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. Lindsey Graham, let me ask you this. The name Sarah Palin has come up in our discussion this morning. Can you foresee her getting the nomination for the Republican Party in 2012? A lot of people said in the beginning she's just out there as a fundraiser, a celebrity and so forth. I'm beginning to hear people say they-- they think she might actually make a run for it. What-- where do you think all that is right now?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Well, I think she's obviously toying with the idea. Let me tell you when she came into South Carolina and endorsed Nicky Haley, it-- it took her from fourth place to first place. She's had a lot of power in these primaries. People on our side like Sarah. She talks in a way they can understand. But at the end of the day, why are we talking the way we're talking two weeks from an election? You know, Howard Dean is trying to explain the health care bill as moderate. The-- the best way to evaluate the health care bill is that no Democrat is talking about it. The Democrats who are talking about it are talking about that I voted against it. The West Virginia democratic candidate for Senate just shot a hole literally in

the cap-and-trade bill. So what you see here is a reaction to an agenda that started out centrist during the 2008 campaign and became a left ditch agenda during the last two years. And the Tea Party has risen up speaking against excessive government, but the American public is in the right center of the road. They're not in the right ditch or the left ditch. So our Tea Party friends have done us a favor. But if we talk about doing away with Social Security as part of our agenda then we're going to lose the public. The public is in the middle of the road, right of center. Sarah Palin could do well if that's where she-- she aligns herself with. But if you get too far right or too-- too far left you're going to lose the American people.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Bill Galston. And I know you've made-- made some studies of this. One of the things that we're seeing now is that a lot of people on the left seem upset or at least disgruntled about the Obama administration. Why is he having trouble with his own left, because a lot of the things he said he-- he wanted to do and campaigned to do, he's done. But they do not seem to be too popular even with some in his own party. A lot of Democrats don't like the health care reform--bill that finally came out of the Senate.

BILL GALSTON: Well, that's true. I wouldn't want to exaggerate the disaffection on the left.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Mm-Hm.

BILL GALSTON: Because the surveys I reviewed recently suggest that support for the President there is just as widespread as it has been but certainly the enthusiasm has declined. And-- and there have been in the eyes of the left some sins of commission and sins of omission. Sins of commission, they don't think the White House fought hard enough for the public option in the health care bill. They don't think that the White House has fought hard enough to remove Don't Ask, Don't Tell. They don't think the White House has fought hard enough for immigration, immigration policy. And you put all of that together and you add to it the extraordinary level of expectation created by the 2008 campaign. Some White House staffers have said that people expected that everything would be done immediately on all fronts, and that turned out not to be possible. That generated disappointment on the left.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. We're going to take a break here and then we'll come back and we'll talk some more about all this. Is this an election about Barack Obama? Is it an election about the economy? Or what will decide this midterm election.

In a minute.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. We're back with our panel. And I just want to go around the table here and get your thoughts here. Is this midterm election about President Obama? Is it a referendum on him? Is he a referendum on the economy? Or is it about something entirely different from that? Liz--

LIZ CHENEY: I think--

BOB SCHIEFFER: --Cheney.

LIZ CHENEY: I think it's both things. I think that people have now had twenty months to watch President Obama in office. And clearly something has happened. There's been a big shift from the kind of enthusiasm and excitement that propelled him into office in 2008. I think people are

concerned about the direction in which he's taking the country. And I think something that's very telling is the fact that you haven't heard the President stand up and give a big picture vision speech. He hasn't stood up and said here's where I want to lead you. His speeches are all very much focused on we've got to get out of the ditch. We got to do health care reform, we've got to do stimulus. There very tactical. And-- and it seems to me pretty clear that he knows that the American people don't want to go where he's trying to lead. They don't want to go where his big picture vision is. So I think it's clearly a referendum on him and absolutely on the economy. The debt and spending is something that people are very nervous about.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Governor Dean?

HOWARD DEAN: Of course, I disagree. I think the economy is the big problem, of course. Every-- every administration, Republican or Democrat, has problems when the economy is in trouble. But I actually think we're going to hold the House and the Senate. And the reason I think so, I think the President-- election-- electorally wise has done a really good job convincing people this is a choice not a referendum. We-- frankly, we have better candidates than the Republicans, not because they're Democrats and the other guys are the Republicans. Well, that's, of course, my bias. But, because, when you have incumbents they can do a lot of things for their constituents that challengers can't do. There picking up people, people like John Hall that are going to win re-election. Tim Bishop will win re-election. But not because this isn't a tough year for Democrats but because they've really helped a lot of their constituents and a lot of those constituents are Republicans. So this is a choice. Now the President has created this election as a choice. And that's-- that's-- that's going to help us I think hold on to the Senate and hold on to the House. Both by small margins, of course, but I think it's going to work.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Lindsey Graham. Is it about Barack Obama, the economy, what is it about?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Well, I don't think it's about everybody becoming a Republican in the last two years. I do believe it's the rejection of an agenda that scares people. The health care bill, the stimulus package, the financial regulation, all the spending was not what people expected from this President. He turned his agenda over to the most liberal people in the House and two weeks before the campaign nobody's running for the health care bill. Most Democrats in swing states are running against Nancy Pelosi and against the Obama takeover of most of society. So this is a rejection of an overreach of governing from the left ditch. They had a chance to put us out of business, Bob. If he had to campaign-- govern like he campaigned this would be a different election cycle. It's about an overreach and we have to guard against it on our watch if we do take over.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Sum it up for us, Bill. What's your take?

BILL GALSTON: Well, if unemployment right now were 8.6 percent and going down rather than 9.6 percent and stable, we'd be having a very different discussion. Having said that, it is also true that many of the big-ticket items that the Obama administration and the democratic leadership recommended and pushed through are not now popular which is not to say that they'll always be unpopular but they're not popular now. And so, it is the economy plus the perceived inability of the agenda to fix what's wrong with the economy coming together, I think.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Liz Cheney, money in politics. This one is more expensive than the one we had the last time and it was more expensive than the one before. But now, the big question is all of this money that's coming in that you don't know where it's coming from. David Axelrod was on this broadcast last week and was very critical. He said we ought to know where these-- these

funds are coming from. And Republicans say, well, people have a right to give money anonymously.

LIZ CHENEY: Well, people give money anonymously to both parties. Frankly, I think that it would be a better system if we had no limits on contributions but a requirement for mandatory transparency and mandatory, we know, within twenty-four hours you've to disclose who your donors are. But those aren't the rules right now. That's not the law.

BOB SCHIEFFER (overlapping): But I take if you would like the--

LIZ CHENEY: And David Axelrod did more--

BOB SCHIEFFER: --you would like to see the rules changed.

LIZ CHENEY: Well, yeah. I mean I was an opponent of McCain-Feingold. I'm-- I'm not-- not thrilled with the system that we've got now. However, what David Axelrod said to you was stunning. When you told him what's his evidence that there's foreign money going to the Chamber of Commerce. He said, well, what's your evidence that there isn't. And-- and I think it is really an important thing for people to realize that the President of the United States at this point, when he goes out and he makes this charge which is completely baseless, what he's really doing, he's attempting to limit people exercise their First Amendment. I believe he's attempting to chill political speech. He's hoping that by making this allegation of ill-- excuse me, illegality that people will stop continue contributing. And I think--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): Well, wait a minute.

LIZ CHENEY: --that's shameful and I think it's wrong and there's no evidence that this has gone on. So the Democrats ought to get themselves focused--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): There is-- there is--

LIZ CHENEY: --on the substance of these issues--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --plenty of evidence that the-- foreign money--

LIZ CHENEY: --and not on this kind of speeches.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --is going to the Chamber of Commerce.

LIZ CHENEY: There is no evidence that foreign money is going into our political campaign, which is exactly the charge that's been made.

HOWARD DEAN: Yeah, well-- because nobody knows if it is or not. Look, I-- I think--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): There-- Governor Dean--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --you can't argue.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --that, you know, you and I can make any charge that we want.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --you cannot argue. The-- the Republican argument--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): And then assert that there's got to be evidence against it.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --that then people can anonymously give money in political campaign is outrageous.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): That's not how it works.

HOWARD DEAN: This is really undermining and harming our democracy.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): There is--

HOWARD DEAN: One of the worst the Supreme Court decisions ever was John Roberts'-- this notion that you can-- corporations are people. That's not-- it's not in the Constitution. Whatever happened to strict constructionism? Nowhere in the Constitution says a corporation is a person--nowhere. This-- this-- this is one of the worst cycles I have ever seen because of the amount of money in an off-year election. It's appalling.

LIZ CHENEY: Well, it's a worse cycle from your perspective I'm sure Governor Dean because of the massive amounts of-- of money, because the Republicans are able to mobilize more money than the Democrats. George Soros--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): From people like Coke brothers and Rupert Murdoch.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): George Soros--

HOWARD DEAN: We don't want the right wing buying elections.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): You just want the left wing--

HOWARD DEAN: And that's what's going on here.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): You just want the left wing buying elections?

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): We don't want anybody buying elections.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): I mean George Soros started all of this with MoveOn.org--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): I know McCain-Feingold, they weren't able buy elections.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --which was a big backer of yours, Governor Dean. So I think that, you know--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): Who was a big backer of mine?

LIZ CHENEY: George Soros, MoveOn.org.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): No he wasn't. No he wasn't a big--

LIZ CHENEY: Governor Dean, I think that the notion--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --neither-- neither was MoveOn.org, as a matter of fact, just to set the record straight.

LIZ CHENEY: Yeah. Well, the notion, Governor Dean, that somehow people don't have the right to express their political views under our Constitution--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): They do in public, not in anonymously.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --by contributing-- by--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): And cooperations don't have that right.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --the Constitution doesn't say that. The Constitution says you've got the right to Freedom Speech. So then--

HOWARD DEAN: The Chamber of Commerce has become an arm of-- finance arm of the Republican Party.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): Do you have evidence?

HOWARD DEAN: It's ridiculous.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): Governor Dean, do you have evidence that any foreign money from the Chamber of Commerce is going into the American election right now.

HOWARD DEAN: That is not the issue. The issue is we have a right to--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): Well, that's what David Axelrod--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): -- we have a right to know if foreign money is going into the--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --and the President of the United States thinks that's the issue.

HOWARD DEAN: And we have a right to know if foreign money is going--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): That's not the charge the President has made.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): We don't know and we ought to know. And we have a right to know what the Coke Brothers are doing. We do know how much money Rupert Murdoch of Fox gave-- two-- two and quarter million dollars between the Chamber and the RGA. This is-- this is a sick thing. And, you know, the Tea Party people don't like this either. That's one of the things about the Tea Party people. They think corporations have too much influence in American life and they do. And this is going to have a real fix of campaign finance reform. Citizens United was an outrage.

LIZ CHENEY: Gov-- Governor--

BOB SCHIEFFER (overlapping): Twenty seconds.

LIZ CHENEY: Governor Dean, look. If-- if the President of the United States is going to stand up and make a charge, you can try to throw spaghetti here and see what sticks and hits. The

President said there is foreign money from the Chamber of Commerce going into this election cycle through Republican Candidates. That's not true. It's not fair and it's an abomination and a shame that he's attempting to chill First Amendment rights--

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): What is he--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): --that the action of people in United States.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): What he has said is there's foreign money going into the Chambers of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce is proudly stood-- stood up for giving millions and millions of dollars to the right wing--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): That's not what he said.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): --of the Republican Party.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): Now you can try to clean up what he said.

HOWARD DEAN (overlapping): That is in fact-- what's happening.

BOB SCHIEFFER: The bell--

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): Governor, you can try to clean up what he said.

BOB SCHIEFFER: The bell has rung.

LIZ CHENEY (overlapping): But that's not what he said.

BOB SCHIEFFER: We got to go.

Thank you all. Be back with the final thought.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: Finally today, I would guess that more poems have been written about spring than any other time of the year. And it's not surprising. Spring is the time of beginnings, of expectations and hope. But yesterday, I noticed the leaves on my favorite maple tree were beginning to turn. They're yellow now. Soon they'll be red. I've been watching that tree put on its fall show for many a year now. Every year seems better than the one before. I love spring, but I've come to like the fall even more. Maybe because as we grow older, we come to understand that the last part of anything can be as beautiful as the beginning, because only then can we fully appreciate what has gone before. Fall brings its special delights--the colors, the crispness in the air, Halloween and Election Day. Even though, it is getting harder and harder to tell which is which. They are still both worth doing. But best of all fall brings college football with its spectacle of bands and alumni and cheerleaders and students. It brings an excitement that professional sports just can't match. I could tell you that my enthusiasm has nothing to do with the fact that my team, the TCU Horned Frogs is one of the best in the country this year. But I won't, because the truth is it has everything to do with it. And I'm having a fine time just thinking about all of it. I love the fall and so far this has been a really good one.

Back in a minute.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: And thanks for watching, everyone. We'll be back right here next week on FACE THE NATION.

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