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CBS News

FACE THE NATION

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**GUESTS: Senator CHUCK HAGEL (R-Neb.)
Member, Foreign Relations Committee**

**Senator CHRIS DODD (D-Conn.)
Member, Foreign Relations Committee**

MODERATOR: BOB SCHIEFFER - CBS News

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***FACE THE NATION - CBS NEWS
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BOB SCHIEFFER, host:

Today on FACE THE NATION, the tale of two wars, Iraq and Lebanon. Can either be won?

Ten Israeli soldiers were killed today when a rocket slammed into Israel, the deadliest rocket attack of the war. In Lebanon, Israeli bombs killed 10 civilians. And in the other war, more US troops are arriving in Baghdad in an effort to regain control in a country that America's top generals say is closer than ever to civil war. Will we ever get out of Iraq, and what are the chances of pushing through a cease-fire in Lebanon? We'll talk to two influential members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, and Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut.

Then I'll have a final word on the week's other big story, the news about Fidel Castro according to the only Cuban official who has the authority to talk about it: Fidel Castro.

But first, two wars on FACE THE NATION.

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

SCHIEFFER: And good morning again. What next in Iraq, what next in Lebanon? We're going to let our correspondents on the scene set the scene for us this morning by going first to them.

And we go first to Lee Cowan, who is in Beirut this morning, and has been in the Middle East since almost the beginning of this war.

Lee, bring us up to date. What's next?

LEE COWAN (CBS News Correspondent): Well, Bob, there's been a lot of talk about the wording of this UN cease-fire proposal that the US and France have been trying to hammer out. But this morning just a short time ago, Lebanon rejected that cease-fire plan out of hand. The speaker of the Lebanese parliament angrily denounced it, saying that essentially it wasn't in the best interest of Lebanon.

The biggest sticking point, Bob, is really that there's no mention in this draft proposal of any time table for withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. And as one prime minister put it a short time ago, if there's even one Israeli soldier over the border in Lebanon, they can't abide to the terms of any cease-fire deal.

SCHIEFFER: OK, and what about on the battlefield, Lee?

COWAN: Another very deadly day, Bob. In fact, Hezbollah fired another barrage of rockets into northern Israel today, more than 80 so far, and one of them, Bob, landed right in the middle of an Israeli Army camp. At least 10 army reservists were killed in that attack. That would be the worst single

death toll--the highest death toll from a single attack from Hezbollah rockets on the Israeli side of the border since this whole conflict began. Israel for its part continued its pounding of southern Lebanon, and announced what it's calling a small victory. It says it has captured at least one of the Hezbollah militants that were responsible for the kidnapping of those two Israeli soldiers that started this whole conflict some three weeks ago.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, thank you very much, Lee.

And for the latest on the situation in Iraq, we want to go to correspondent Mark Strassmann, who is in Baghdad this morning.

Mark, what's the latest there?

MARK STRASSMANN (CBS News Correspondent): Oh, Bob, every day brings another grizzly discovery. Today about 12 bodies found around Baghdad. All but one of them had been shot in the head and tortured, almost a sure sign that these were reprisal killings. All of this is the latest evidence of why a security crackdown is necessary here. And the first wave of another 3700 US troops are now in the capital, in a Sunni neighborhood in west Baghdad, trying to reassure residents that, 'We are here to protect you, reopen your stores, come back out, life is going to get better.' And that's the key message to people here, Bob, that you're going to be safe, and life really is going to be better.

SCHIEFFER: Well, is there any suggestion that this is going to work, Mark? I mean, we've tried all kinds of things, and so far not much has worked, to bring order to Baghdad.

STRASSMANN: They're really hoping it will by, first of all, having the security crackdown. And no question, security is the immediate need here, making people feel safe again. But they also have a plan to come in and try to offer hope to people with short-term and long-term neighborhood projects.

But US commanders, Bob, here, will tell you this is not going to work unless they get some help from the Iraqis. The Iraqis have to do a better job of policing themselves, and there also has to be a more of a show of political will by Iraqi political leaders here. As one US commander said to me, now quoting Ulysses Grant, he said, "It's time for 2:00-in-the-morning courage." He wasn't talking about Iraqi soldiers and police, he was talking about Iraq's political leaders.

SCHIEFFER: OK. Well thank you very much, Mark.

And here to talk about all of this, from Omaha, Nebraska, Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. With us from Hartford, Connecticut, Senator Chris Dodd, on the same committee.

And, gentlemen, let's start with what Lee Cowan just reported. The United States and France hammered out a cease-fire resolution to take before the United Nations this week, but already this morning, the leader of the Iraqi

parliament said, 'No way, no how,' that this doesn't come close to meeting what Lebanon wants here. Senator Hagel, are we back to square one?

Senator CHUCK HAGEL (Republican, Nebraska; Member, Foreign Relations Committee): Well, I don't know if we're back to square one, Bob, but the fact is, as we all know, diplomacy is hard work. It is concentrated, focused effort. And a crisis focuses the mind of leaders. It focuses a nation's attention. This is a regional issue. It is evolving into a global issue. We've got to keep working it. And until we have that cease-fire that stops all of this, we can't move toward moving to a high ground here, moving a process to get us to a resolution, which we all support, and we all know what it is: a two-state resolution.

But as Dennis Ross, the former Middle East peace envoy for presidents--first President Bush, President Clinton--once said, and he's exactly right, without a process, events turn into crises. Process absorbs events. So we need to find that cease-fire, and then this series of events have to happen rather quickly.

This is the 26th day of this slaughter, Bob. What it's doing, it's driving the hatred in the Middle East deeper and deeper into the fabric of that region. It's going to make it more and more difficult to find that, that middle ground to start unraveling this and doing the things that we need to do to find a cease-fire. We have to stay at it. The president of the United States must be personally involved in this.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, Senator Dodd, what do you think we ought to do now? Because, clearly, the Lebanese and the leader of the parliament is the one who's been more or less speaking for Hezbollah. He says this just won't work. He says they want an immediate cease-fire, this doesn't call for that. What should happen next, in your view?

Senator CHRIS DODD (Democrat, Connecticut; Member, Foreign Relations Committee): Well, I'll pick up on what Chuck has said to you here: We've got to go right back at this again. And he's absolutely right here. This is a--you've got to have an ongoing process here, and unfortunately, that has not been the case. Too much time elapsed, allowing this to fester and grow. Obviously, the attacks by Hezbollah on July 12th provoked all of this, and you have to begin there, clearly. Having a militia on your border--the Israeli border, here--firing missiles into your country, no country that I know of anywhere in the world would do anything but what Israel's had to do and respond to that.

But clearly here, you need to engage--and the president needs to engage. Now, I may be corrected on this, but I've heard the president has not even had a conversation with Prime Minister Olmert, let alone some of the other heads of state in the region. This is almost unprecedented. I can't think of another American president, in the last 25 or 30 years, at moments of crisis, that has not been engaged--directly and personally--with his peers. That is, trying to move and cajole those leaders into a--INTO some sort of a political cease-fire here at this point.

So I would strongly urge the administration not to give up on this. Frankly, the reaction of the Lebanese at this point is not unexpected. And I would anticipate you're going to have to go back and work this. But clearly, the effort needs to be made. This is going to be resolved not by military force alone. Understandably, Israel wants to clean out these militias that are threatening their existence. Remember, Hezbollah is not fighting about land here. They're fighting about destroying the state of Israel. That's their goal here.

But the answer is not going to come exclusively with a military victory. There are politics involved here. And clearly, the ability of Hezbollah to gain support as it is--when I see where the grand mufti, the Sunni leader in Egypt, is issuing proclamations of solidarity with Hezbollah, and organization support by the Shiites out of Iran, then you begin to see that this is spreading. This conflict between Shias and Sunnis may actually be not as great when it comes to this particular conflict. So politics and diplomacy are really essential at this hour.

SCHIEFFER: Well, Senator Hagel, do you think that we're about to get into a regional war here? Or are the parties, they're about to get into something that involves more than just Israel and Hezbollah?

Sen. HAGEL: Well, Bob, the fact is, we are in a regional conflict. For many years, there have been a number of people who have understood the Middle East as a regional dynamic. And I know, in Iraq, for example, some said--and I was one--that you can't take Iraq and isolate that in some kind of a vacuum tube without understanding the central issue in the Middle East between Arabs, Muslims and Israelis, is the Israeli/Palestinian issue.

Now, there are Islamic extremists using that for unholy purposes, yes, we understand that, but the fact is the region isn't entirely aflame; it could be if we don't get control of this. That's the danger of it, Bob, because, just as Chris Dodd said, you've got Sunnis and Shias, just as General Abizaid said in his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee this week, the sectarian violence in Iraq is the worst that it's been in three and a half years since the United States invaded Iraq.

Of course it's regional, we've got our three strongest allies in the Middle East in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt saying this--have been saying this to the administration. So you cannot separate what's going on in Lebanon and Israel from Iraq or any--anywhere else, this is going to have to include Iran, Syria--that means engagement, that means direct talks, and put all of it on the table. But we have to stop the slaughter. That's the first thing we have to do.

SCHIEFFER: Well, the foreign minister of Syria said just this morning that he was ready to join Hezbollah and do their bidding. And when asked if he thought this might evolve into some kind of a regional war, he said that's welcome. Two very provocative statements here. Senator Dodd, what's your reaction to that?

Sen. DODD: Well, that's exactly what we feared here. And I think--on this show this morning, we're doing two parts and two segments, in fact it's one seamless issue here that has to be addressed. We need to have these kind of direct talks. I regret deeply that the administration has taken this view that we don't talk to people we have basic disagreements with. I've always looked at it, those are the people you do negotiate with, you don't need to negotiate with your friends here. But the idea that we're not going to have any diplomatic relations here or any effort to try and--to involve these other countries that are going to play principal roles on a variety of issues. We've got--we're trying to get something cooking with Iran on the nuclear issue, but we need to deal with Iran, we need to deal with Hamas, with Hezbollah, with the issue of Israel's right to exist, with Syria, we each have all of those issues that have to be confronted. You need to engage this as a whole, and until we do that, I think this is going to be a serious and a growing problem.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you, Senator Hagel, do you think we are anywhere close to assembling this international force that people keep talking about, to insert into the war zone there between Israel and Lebanon? I understand we have, what, how many UN observers already there, and now you're talking about expanding that as some sort of a peacekeeping force. But I don't hear anybody volunteering to send their troops there.

Sen. HAGEL: Well, to start with, Bob, I don't have all the facts; I don't know all the details, but with that said, no, I don't think we're anywhere close to really seriously finding 10,000 troops, whatever it's going to take, to be more than just an observer group. This must be--and it must happen, this IS--some of us have been calling for this for a long time, Bob. The only way you're going to start the process to unwind this and to have some assurance on the Israeli side so that whatever moves that the Israelis make to give up territory, whatever, is going to be guaranteed, as much as you can guarantee anything, with a security force there made up of an international force, a real combat-ready international force. On the other side, the Arab side, they have to have assurances.

But until you have that force in place--it needs to be done--I don't think you'll ever get to where we need to be here. And that's going to require, at the beginning, a cease-fire and some of the diplomatic efforts that are being made now and what we know has to be in. Tough work, just as Senator Dodd and I have explained and we all know. But that international force is absolutely going--critical to being able to stop the bloodshed and the violence so that we can start to move to a higher ground of a process to finally get some resolution. We were close in '94, and I give a lot of that credit to the first President Bush and Jim Baker, they set that up for President Clinton. Clinton picked that up, President Clinton was close in 2000. We can find a way out of this. But it's going to take a lot different--a lot different approach than what we've seen.

The last point I'd make: diplomacy and engagement and talking to adversaries is not and cannot be seen as a reward. It is part of the diplomatic process.

SCHIEFFER: OK. Well, let me just ask Senator Dodd one quick question about this. Isn't this international force, whatever it turns out to be, isn't it going to have to disarm Hezbollah? I mean, what gives you any indication that Hezbollah is just going to lay down its weapons?

Sen. DODD: Well, that's going to be a hard question, but I--a while ago, you couldn't have convinced me that Syria was going to leave Lebanon, either, but after the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri, that happened. It's possible here. Remember, there's a lot of people who are very nervous in the Middle East about Hezbollah and about Iran. I spoke to a very high-ranking Egyptian official who said, 'I--when you negotiate with Iran, don't leave us out of this.' They're very uneasy about where this is going. So I believe we may be able to achieve that result. Remember, resolution 1559...

SCHIEFFER: OK.

Sen. DODD: ...which was adopted 2004 called for the removal of Hezbollah from Lebanon as well.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, when we come back--we're going to take a break here--we'll talk some about Iraq in just a moment.

Sen. DODD: OK. All right.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And we're back again with Senators Chuck Hagel and Chris Dodd.

Senator Dodd, let's talk a little bit about Iraq. Not much news about Iraq lately, not because things have been going well there, but because Lebanon has simply pushed it off television and off the front pages.

Do you have any reason to be optimistic about what's happening there?

Sen. DODD: Well, I try to be an optimist, Bob, in all things. You have to be to be in the business that Chuck Hagel and I are in. But it's awfully difficult to have much optimism about this situation. You're looking at 100 deaths a day, violent deaths a day, in--in Iraq. You've had now some 10,000 people who have lost their lives in Iraq in the last four months, 182,000 people have moved out of areas, moving out of Iraq, and moving out of areas where the conflict is most severe and intense.

This is a civil war. I think the generals the other day were cautious in their language, but I think they were telling us something loud and clear to anyone who wanted to listen. This is a civil war, and I frankly don't believe that US military people can necessarily play referee in that kind of a situation. I think we're being asked to do something that is impossible for us to achieve under these circumstances. We might provide some modicum of security for a while, but in the long run this is an Iraq issue, the Iraqi politicians, the Iraqi police and the people themselves have to assume

responsibility for this. They don't seem to be willing to do it, therefore I think this is really a civil war today as it exists.

SCHIEFFER: Senator Hagel, you, of course, have broken with the White House and with many in your own party on this, talking about it is time to start thinking about getting American troops out of there. Where do you go from here, senator, and what happens if we do pull troops out?

Sen. HAGEL: The fact is, the fate of Iraq will be determined by the Iraqi people, not the United States. We have been there three and a half years, and the fact is last month, July, was the worst month in those three and a half years, measured by any measurement you care to measure, starting with deaths, attacks across the board.

The Iraqis are going to have to step up and govern, defend themselves, support themselves. To pour--to pour more Americans troops into Baghdad, reversing a policy of five years--or five weeks ago is wrong. This isn't going to stop it. And I think where we go from here, with all the problems and inconsistencies, is a cold, hard assessment that Iraq is not going to turn out the way that we were promised it was, and--and that's--that's a fact, not because I say it, that's where--where it's going, just as the generals said it very honestly I think this week before the Congress.

What you do, I think, because we don't have many options--there's no good options here, no good options. I--I would move toward a higher ground toward right back to what you talked about, Bob, the regionalization. I would--I would get the first President Bush, President Clinton involved and try to impanel a--a regional security conference, a regional diplomatic conference. The UN can be part of that. Unless you come at it that way, we're going to be leaving Iraq, and it is not going to be the way we intended to leave Iraq. Because that--that is the direction of where this is going. It is very wrong, Bob, to put American troops in a hopeless, winless situation, just keep feeding them in to--to what's going on. That's irresponsible and that is wrong.

SCHIEFFER: But if, if the United States leaves, won't you somehow have a confederation of Iran and the government there with the Shiites that are in--in--in southern Iraq?

Sen. HAGEL: Bob, like I said, there...

Sen. DODD: (Unintelligible)...

Sen. HAGEL: ...there--Bob, Bob, there are no good options here. That--that may well happen, I don't know. But let me ask you the question, and I hope the president and his people are starting to ask themselves this question, that what is--what is the alternative? Are we going to put our troops in the middle of a civil war? Who are they going to fight? This will be slaughter of immense proportions. The American people will not put up with it, the leadership in Congress will not put up with it. I hope this administration has got a way out of this, because yes that's a tough question, Bob, but the

fact is that may well be the way it turns out. But we cannot put American troops, and ask them to do the things that we're asking them to do in the middle of a civil war, and that's where it's headed.

SCHIEFFER: Well, let's just get Senator Dodd's reaction to what you've just said. Senator:

Sen. DODD: Well, I'd--I'd say amen to what Chuck Hagel has said here. And this is again where presidential leadership is absolutely essential here. There's no conclusion, either you can reach that necessarily--you can have Iran dominating Iraq. Remember, they have a long history of hostility with each other, and there's strong resentments about what Iran may be up to.

But nonetheless, we're not going to guarantee that outcome by continuing to pretend somehow that we can sort out the differences in this--in Iraq. We've given them an opportunity, an incredible one, at great cost, with more than 2,500 of our men and women in uniform have lost their lives, more than 18,000 injured, and the numbers keep escalating here. I can't in good conscience, Bob, face a family in Connecticut and say to them, 'Send your sons and daughters there because they're going to be a referee in a civil war.'

That just doesn't make any sense. I want to underscore what Chuck has said here. This is a time for the president to start engaging directly. He needs to call upon his father, President Clinton and others to meet with the Arab leaders in that part of the world, and start talking about the regional solution here, of which Iraq plays a pivotal role. That's the kind of leadership that's necessary, not kicking the ball down the road as the president has said, let some future administration grapple with this. This is his job, his responsibility, and he's failing at it right now.

SCHIEFFER: But Senator Hagel, how do you answer the administration when they say this will really make it a more dangerous world for us if we have to pull out of Iraq, that this is just a victory for terrorists?

Sen. HAGEL: Well, Bob, let's--let's again, let's face some facts here. What are the options? First of all, we're ruining our United States Army. We are decimating our Army. We can't continue with the tempo and the commitment that we're on right now. You go talk to any sergeant major, sergeant first class who's been around a little bit, or any general, quietly, and they'll tell you--I get the calls, Chris gets the called--calls. So let's not pretend that things are a certain way. They are where they are.

SCHIEFFER: OK.

Sen. HAGEL: We have got to understand that and deal with the facts as they are.

SCHIEFFER: Senator Dodd, let me ask you quickly, what about the race Senator Lieberman is facing in your home state? Where do you think it stands right now? We got about 30 seconds here.

Sen. DODD: Well, I--Joe is--I'm working with him every day, he's working hard. I think we're probably behind in the polls, but obviously the big test comes on Tuesday, and I'm very hopeful Joe will be renominated. He really has been a very good senator, he's a good man, and I think he deserves to be chosen by my party. So that's what I'm going to be working on very hard over the next two or three days.

SCHIEFFER: But at this point, you think he's behind?

Sen. DODD: Well, I think so--that's what the polls indicate. But I was out all day yesterday, Bob, and again, it's not a scientific survey. I heard great comments of support from--for Joe Lieberman at the West Indian Festival, the Hispanic Festival, the fire department barbecues. He's in--sounds in good shape in those places.

SCHIEFFER: OK. We'll be back with a final word--thank you both--in just a minute.

Sen. DODD: Thank you.

Sen. HAGEL: Thank you Bob.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Finally today, for years I have been telling journalism students the difference between totalitarian societies and democracies is that in a totalitarian society, the only source of news is the government. In a democracy, a free press provides a second source.

Last week, Fidel Castro provided a splendid example of why having a second source to check against the government's version is a good thing. The only news about Castro's emergency surgery came from Castro himself, who reported his condition was stable, but added he couldn't say more for national security reasons.

Now here's the problem: from the time he came to power in 1959 and gave an exclusive interview to FACE THE NATION, Castro has shown himself to be an outrageous liar. That day he promised free elections.

(Excerpt from FACE THE NATION in 1959)

Unidentified Host: But, Dr. Castro, what guarantees are there then, after 18 months? What is the guarantee that there will be free elections after 18 months?

Dr. FIDEL CASTRO: Well, the public opinion, first place. Second place, our word.

(End of excerpt)

SCHIEFFER: That and everything else he said that day, including denying that

he was a Communist, proved to be a lie, and he has been lying ever since.

So who knows if he is even in the hospital? Maybe he went to Disney World. The next time you become exasperated with the liberal press, or maybe can't stomach another word from Rush Limbaugh, just imagine how it would be if they weren't there, and we had only the government's version of events. The press is not perfect and is sometimes wrong, which is why the off switch on our radio and television is so useful. But when an administration--any administration--tells you tougher controls on the press will make us safer, just remember how we got the news about old Castro. The more I think of it, he could be at Disney World.

That's it for us, we'll see you next week right here on FACE THE NATION.