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

CBS News

FACE THE NATION

Sunday, August 22, 2004

**GUESTS: Senator PAT ROBERTS, (R-KS)
Chairman, Select Committee on Intelligence**

**Senator CARL LEVIN, (D-MI)
Armed Services Committee**

**ALEXANDRA KERRY
John Kerry's Daughter**

**VANESSA KERRY
John Kerry's Daughter**

**NINA EASTON
The Boston Globe**

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, a political summer turns hot. Should we go fast or slow on reforming our intelligence agencies? What about the Swift Boat attacks? And what's it like when the candidate under attack is your dad? We'll ask John Kerry's daughters. We'll talk about the war in Iraq, intelligence reform and the dispute over Kerry's war record with Pat Roberts, Republican chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee; and Senator Carl Levin, the ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee.

Then we'll check in with Alexandra and Vanessa Kerry. How hard is a campaign on the candidate's family? Our 50th anniversary Flashback takes us back to the first war against Iraq, and then I'll have a final word on wasting time in a presidential campaign that ought to be focusing on issues.

But, first, the nation's intelligence 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. With us, in the studio, Senator Roberts, who is chairman of the Intelligence Committee; Senator Levin, who is the ranking Democrat on Armed Services; and Nina Easton, with The Boston Globe, is here with us this morning to join in the questioning.

Well, I must say, Senator Roberts has come today armed with some news. You are unveiling today your proposal on how to overhaul and reform the intelligence services in this country. You came in and surprised me by giving us two pages of what you intend to do. And, I must say, it is a major reform that you're calling for.

One of the things you're calling for is to have a director of intelligence who would oversee all of these agencies. You're taking stuff out of the Defense Department and putting it in a different place. You're actually--you're not going to have the CIA but another kind of organization there. Tell us about this and have you talked to the White House about this, and where do you think this is going, Senator?

Senator PAT ROBERTS (Republican, Kansas; Chairman, Intelligence Committee): We've been talking with the White House and the National Security Council people that are trying to put together their version of what they think is appropriate for some time. We will share it with them on Monday. You said today actually. It's going to be tomorrow. This is sort of an advance. We also want to share with the 9-11 Commission members. We've already talked to several and their reaction has been positive. I think that will come as of Wednesday as to whether or not they would endorse it. I'm not saying whether they will or not. I regret very deeply that I have not been able to work as closely as I wanted to with my colleagues across the aisle, Senator Rockefeller, Senator Levin, and others, they're very valued members of the committee. And we have been working in a bipartisan way.

We're going to share it, obviously, with the Government Affairs Committee who has the jurisdiction. I talked to Joe Lieberman last night. He's pretty excited about it. So basically what we took a look at is what we call real reform. It's called the 9/11 National Security Protection Act. We do give a lot of authority to the national intelligence director. We give him the line item authority on budget. We give him the authority in regards to personnel and to re-program funds and to transfer funds.

And we just sort of stepped back from the trees and instead of worrying about boxes and

agencies and turf, just said what would you put together now that really represents an answer to what the 9-11 Commission has recommended and what our Senate report has indicated, what is right for our national security, what is real reform. We've put that together. It's not a tablet written in stone. If anybody wants to make changes or if anybody wants to lob a brick bat or two, well, you know, we're perfectly ready.

SCHIEFFER: Let me just--you know, as you well know, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld kind of advised going slow when he testified up on Capitol Hill last week. We heard when President Bush announced his version of having a national intelligence director, he really didn't give him very much authority. It was almost like he was proposing creating a new agency there but he wouldn't have budget and hiring and firing authority.

As I just go through some of the things you have outlined here; let me just read them to you. 'The national intelligence director would have complete budget and personnel authority over intelligence units at Treasury, Energy, Homeland Security, the State Department, and the remaining analytical elements of the Defense Intelligence Agency.'

You're proposing such things as taking the National Security Agency. That would be the people that do the electronic eavesdropping, as it were, of things that are now under the Department of Defense, you're putting them under the direct control of this new person. You say the Central Intelligence Agency's director of operations and the Department of Defense intelligence agencies' human intelligence assets, in other words, human spies, you're going to put them in an independent agency under the direct control of this director of intelligence. So these are major things that you're pro...

Sen. ROBERTS: This is a very bold plan. As I said, we didn't pay any attention to turf or agencies or boxes. We said, 'All right. What are the national security threats that face this country today in an asymmetrical world and what we face down the road?' As I've also indicated, it is not a tablet, you know, coming down from a mountain written in stone.

SCHIEFFER: Yes.

Sen. ROBERTS: I expect a lot of debate, should be a lot of debate. There's going to be five or six other bills that are introduced, you know, probably the first day that we get back. But my worry is that if the administration comes out and does not go far enough in regards to the 9-11 Commission and the families or for that matter with my friends across the aisle and then they simply introduce a bill that encapsulates the recommendations of the 9-11 Commission, that's not a bill. It's a good list of recommendations. It's not a bill. And then we'll fuss about it. And then the campaign...

SCHIEFFER: So...

Sen. ROBERTS: ...will take over and we won't get anything done. Now I have said time and time again that we have an urgent need to move, but we have to get it right. This was not an idle thing. This is co-sponsored or this is actually proposed by eight other members of the Intelligence Committee. It is at least a marker that we can start the debate.

And let's not forget it is the Government Affairs Committee that has the jurisdiction. So I'm trying to build a consensus around something that is very different. It's very measured. It's very bold. But let's get it out on the table and let's talk about it.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Senator Levin, I think it would be unfair because you told us before the broadcast you had not seen this report as yet, so I guess it would be...

Senator CARL LEVIN (Democrat, Michigan; Armed Services Committee): Not been shared with me and not been shared with the ranking Democrat, Senator Rockefeller.

SCHIEFFER: So...

Sen. LEVIN: It's much better that we proceed on a bipartisan basis. The eight people who've signed on to this proposal, and I don't know the details in here, are the Republicans members of the Intelligence Committee. I think it'd be better to start on a bipartisan basis with a bipartisan bill which is what the direction has been to Senators McCain and Lieberman to put a 9/11 recommendation into bill form and that we then start with that. And, frankly, I hope we'll start with that as soon as we get back and not fool around with other political gestures to spend weeks in September when we should be focusing on reform of the Intelligence Committee.

SCHIEFFER: Well, you're not saying Senator Roberts has put out a political gesture.

Sen. LEVIN: No, what I'm saying is that it is not a bipartisan bill...

SCHIEFFER: I understand.

Sen. LEVIN: ...and I think it's a mistake to begin with a partisan bill no matter what is in it. It's much better...

Sen. ROBERTS: Well, we haven't introduced a bill yet.

Sen. LEVIN: OK.

Sen. ROBERTS: You know, that's the first or second week of September.

Sen. LEVIN: Also, if I can make one other comment here, Bob. It's also important we take bold moves to make the director of intelligence independent and objective, and what we have seen is the politicization of intelligence over--during this administration. We've seen a director whose intelligence has been shaped to support administration policy, and in any bold move if we're going to give more power to the intelligence director, we've got to take steps to make sure that that director is just not a yes man for any administration, and that's just as important as any of the structural reforms.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Let's...

Sen. ROBERTS: He's just agreed with one of my tenets, by the way, and pardon that pun.

SCHIEFFER: OK. Well, let's shift to other subjects here and let's go to Nina Easton.

Ms. NINA EASTON (The Boston Globe): Senator Levin, Senator Kerry has been under attack this week and previous weeks by this Swift Boat Veteran group. He condemned those ads this week. He finally issued a harsh condemnation and suggested the Bush campaign was behind these attacks. Do you think he waited too long? Do you think the damage has already been done?

Sen. LEVIN: No, I think it's a despicable attack. I think the American people will see it for what it is. It's just a partisan attack. He's perfectly able to defend his own reputation. He and his buddies on that swift boat have stated what happened. He earned those medals. The same effort was made by some Republicans with Bush against John McCain four years ago. It was resented then. It's resented now by the American people. And I would hope

President Bush would listen to John McCain and tell those folks, 'Get those ads off the air. It is not right.'

Ms. EASTON: Senator Roberts, why doesn't the Bush White House condemn the ads? Why doesn't President Bush condemn those ads?

Sen. ROBERTS: I think there's one person that served as an adviser on his Veterans--you know, blue ribbon task force or whatever that did have something to do with these ads, but you've got to understand that after McCain-Feingold, you have a bunch of 527 groups who've come out and can say anything they want. You may not even control it or want it, and they pop out of the woodwork. There's going to be \$20 million spent for them. They have every right to express that.

It's amazing to me when you get into a combat situation--and as a former Marine, I can certainly attest to this--and you have one group who sees things one way and another group who sees things another way and so consequently I think they have, you know, every right to do it.

I will tell you what my veterans say. They'd like to, you know, put the Swift Boat controversy into a dry dock and start talking about VA health care, national security needs, our defense posture, you know, so on and so forth, but this group has every right to say that. Politics is not beanbag. I know there's been just as tough ads on Bush in regards to his service. He's not bringing it up. John Kerry did bring it up and made it a highlight in regards to the Democratic convention. I would hope that we could cease and desist, rev the Swift Boats down, put them in a dry dock and let's get on to other issues.

SCHIEFFER: Let me just ask you one thing that's sort of intrigued me since the beginning of this. People have said the president ought to condemn these ads, but every time somebody asks an official--from President Bush right on down--they give this very carefully crafted answer. They say, 'We condemn all these ads,' but they will not condemn this ad specifically. Why is that?

Sen. ROBERTS: I guess that's just the way or the nature of politics. I know when they had the one campaign meeting where some Hollywood figures made some very untoward comments and people asked both Kerry and Edwards, 'Well, you know, will you condemn that?' 'Well, you know,' whatever. I just think that's the kind of campaign we're into. And I--you know, I've never seen a campaign quite start off so personal with such personal vilification on both sides. The vice president comparing the president to Hitler and a bunch of brown shirts. My word. Now I can go the other way, too, in terms of all the Purple Hearts and all of that, in terms of Senator Kerry. We ought to get out of the character assassination business and get on to the issues that affect the American people and their daily lives and pocketbooks.

Sen. LEVIN: And the president should do the responsible thing and say, 'Take that ad off.' Sure they can keep running the ad if they want to, if they're Independent, which is dubious. But nevertheless, if they're independent, they can run the ad. But the president has the responsibility of expressing his opinion, 'Take that ad off. It is a disgusting ad. It undermines the credibility of medals which are awarded to our heroic people.'

SCHIEFFER: But you have to admit, Senator Levin, that back when another Independent group was talking about George Bush's attendance record in the National Guard, Senator Kerry didn't condemn them. He said, 'George Bush served honorably in the National Guard' and he let these people keep making the same charge.

Sen. LEVIN: He said, what I think my memory is, he told them that that ad was wrong and that they should take it off. If that's not right, then he should have done it, too. But President Bush has the responsibility to tell people who are putting on an ad that he says is irresponsible to take that ad off. He will not do that. The same tactic was used against John McCain four years ago. It worked then; it should not be allowed to work now. And I don't think the American people will allow it to work now.

SCHIEFFER: OK. Well, thank you very much, gentlemen. And, Senator Roberts, we'll be hearing more about this proposal that you unveiled is morning...

Sen. ROBERTS: I hope so.

SCHIEFFER: ...I'm sure throughout the week. Thank you both.

Sen. ROBERTS: OK, thank you.

Sen. LEVIN: Thank you.

SCHIEFFER: Joining us now from Long Island, New York, Vanessa and Alexandra Kerry. And we want to welcome both of you to the broadcast this morning.

You both were big hits at the Democratic convention, but, you know, you've been out on the campaign trail now for a couple of weeks, and I must say I think all of us wonder what is it like to be out there when you hear these attacks on your dad? How do you handle that?

Ms. ALEXANDRA KERRY (Kerry-Edwards 2004): Well, I think that--I was just thinking about that actually this morning--and whether you're out there on the trail or you're at home with your friends, there's no way that you can get away from what's going on right now. So I think whether we--we're out there being vocal about what we believe and how we supported our father or we were at home, we'd be experiencing it the same way.

Ms. EASTON: Vanessa...

Ms. VANESSA KERRY (Kerry-Edwards 2004): I think for...

Ms. EASTON: Go ahead.

Ms. V. KERRY: No, I was just--I was going to say in terms of hearing these things about our father, it's incredibly frustrating just in terms of seeing somebody--sort of the moral character being attacked. And I think that what upsets me is I just have the question of which wound do you want to see? Which scar do you need to see to prove that my father served? And it's very frustrating when you grow up seeing somebody who's continually being courageous, fighting for something he believes in, sort of get attacked unfairly and with lies.

Ms. EASTON: Vanessa, your father has been...

Ms. A. KERRY: And his moral...

Ms. EASTON: Your father's been out on the campaign trail quite a while and certainly in public life for a very long time. And yet, people still think of him as somewhat of an enigma. He's hard to figure out. Could you give us some insight, maybe an example of a critical decision that he had to make at some point, and how did he reach that decision?

Ms. V. KERRY: Well, I mean, I think that it's interesting that people say my father is an

enigma. And I think it's hard. People want--someone is running for the highest office in the land, people want to know all aspects of his character. And I think people are coming to see the family man, the laughing, goofing dad, the very warm character because people have always seen the public servant before, somebody who takes the issues very seriously and fights seriously for what he believes in. You know, and I think what people are starting to see now in dad is, I think, his real insight, his real commitment to truth, his real commitment to integrity, also in decision-making, but also his fight.

You know, he took, I think, great chances in this primary season when people wrote him off, he decided that he was gonna put a lot on the line in order to continue fighting for what he believed in, and also with the real sense that he could win and knew he could win. And I think that that willingness to take that chance shows his gut, his integrity; and it was certainly a tough time, but here we are. And I think that shows, sort of, part of his decision.

Ms. EASTON: Alexandra, tough decisions he's had to make?

Ms. A. KERRY: Tough decisions he's had to make--obviously, we always talk about those in a personal context. I'm sure that's less interesting to you, but whether it was, I guess, to jump in and save the hamster or what time our curfew is--but I think tough decisions he's had to make--I think, you know, people should--people deserve to hear about how he sees this country. But because the swift boats are an issue right now, I would say you can talk to all of the people who served with him. And he made tough, grounded, very strong decisions during the Vietnam War. And I think that a great deal of his leadership is based on that integrity. And he makes the same, decisive decisions now, whether it's making decisions about protecting our environment or whether it's about making decisions about how to better the educational policies in this country. I think it's a question of...

Ms. V. KERRY: Yeah.

Ms. A. KERRY: Were you going to say something?

Ms. V. KERRY: No, no, my ear piece fell out.

Ms. A. KERRY: Oh, the ear piece fell out. I think that we watch him every day make very sound decisions. You know, I've been shooting some documentary footage, and I was watching him. I was watching some of the tapes. And I watched as he listened with the people who he trusts the most around him, but I watched how quickly he understood the situation and made a very quick decision about how we were going to proceed. And those are the things that Vanessa and I get to experience every day by being part of the campaign. And so it's an honor to be able to share those aspects of him with people.

SCHIEFFER: Vanessa, do you think that he takes these attacks personally, or has he been in politics so long that they don't bother him? Or can you be in politics long enough that you don't take some things personally?

Ms. V. KERRY: Well, I think it's hard--when you're attacking the moral character of a man with blatant lies, I think it's hard not to try to keep it out--and, you know, to realize it's politics and to try to keep it from being personal. But the thing is that Dad is incredibly focused on not making this part of a wedge issue or not making this--I mean, yes, he's going to fight back, and he's going to fight back against lies and he's going to fight back against character assassination. But at the same time, he's also going to stay focused in talking about what we need to be talking about in this country: things like health care for all Americans, health care for the new generation of veterans that we are creating; talking about, you know, investing in early education, talking about creating more jobs and helping to fix the middle-

class squeeze.

We have a lot of issues on the table, and that's what this election is about. It is about our future. It is about what is going to happen in the next four years and beyond. It's not about 30 years ago. And it--I think that, as he focuses on that and continues to fight for it, the American people are going to be able to make a decision about what kind of leadership they want going ahead from this year on. And that's what we need to stay focused on.

SCHIEFFER: OK.

Ms. V. KERRY: So yes, you fight back on a level, because you have to tell the truth, but...

SCHIEFFER: Let me...

Ms. A. KERRY: We have...

SCHIEFFER: Alex, let me ask you...

Ms. A. KERRY: Oh, sorry.

SCHIEFFER: Let me just ask you this question. I have watched a lot of candidates' families, a lot of presidential children over the years. And sometimes I think it's harder on the family than it is on the candidate. Do you feel pressure when you go out to talk that perhaps you might say the wrong thing or you might do something that would hurt your father's campaign?

Ms. A. KERRY: Out of respect to him, I think we're always considering how something could reflect on him, but I wouldn't say--I think my father always gave us a great amount of confidence, and so I think I'm sure we'll make mistakes, and we have, but I think that you don't live in fear. You live more about the--wanting to go out and communicate things. And we are young adults also, so while we're his family members, we're also voters. We're also people who care about the things that are going on in the country. And when I think about some of the swift boat issues, I think about my friends who are fighting right now in the war, and I think about them coming back. And if 20 years down the line, if they weren't being honored, how would we feel? How would they feel? It would be very difficult to watch. So it's not just about the family. It's about the people who we're trying to communicate to, and that's what we try to focus on. And then it removes it from yourself a little bit.

Ms. V. KERRY: Plus there are 48 million young Americans between the ages of 18 and 30 who can be involved in this election and vote, and if we can go out and be a part of communicating to that constituency and get people involved and really understanding the power of our voice, that's a great thing to do. And so yes, you do your best every day and you hope you don't mess up. But when you're fighting for something you believe in, you tend to be able to speak the truth and...

SCHIEFFER: All right.

Ms. V. KERRY: ...stay on line.

SCHIEFFER: I think we have to...

Ms. A. KERRY: With that, we are...

SCHIEFFER: We have to end it there. I'm very, very sorry. Thank you both for being with us

this morning.

Ms. A. KERRY: That's OK. Thank you so much.

SCHIEFFER: Of course, we hope to hear from members of the Bush family as we get into the campaign.

Back with another 50th anniversary Flashback in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was one of the most feared and ruthless leaders of the 20th century. In August of 1990 Hussein invaded neighboring Kuwait. That is this week's 50th anniversary Flashback.

The invasion triggered what would become known as the Persian Gulf War. On FACE THE NATION undersecretary of State for political affairs Robert Kimmitt said Hussein had bitten off more than he realized.

Mr. ROBERT KIMMITT: It's not Saddam Hussein vs. the United States. It's Saddam Hussein vs. the world. There are 21 nations who have forces either in the region or on the way. Over half of them are either Arab or Islamic countries, and so this notion that he is standing up to the US is simply a canard. He's trying to stand up to the rest of the world and the world firmly is saying no.

SCHIEFFER: Led by the United States 32 nations joined forces to drive Saddam back into Iraq, but he would remain in power until he was toppled by US troops in March of 2003.

Another FACE THE NATION 50th anniversary Flashback. And I'll be back with a final word.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Well, here we go again. Just when we needed a campaign about serious issues, and for a minute there it looked as if we might get one, along comes the Swift Boat crowd and their charges that John Kerry didn't deserve the medals he won for valor under fire in Vietnam. Never mind that the accusers can't quite seem to get their stories straight. Negative television commercials are powerful things and the polls suggest the allegations have caused Kerry's support among veterans to slip.

So now Kerry is regrouping to counterattack. He's rolling out his retired military people to argue with the Bush military brigade or, as I understand it, Bush supporters who have no connect to the Bush campaign. You can make the argument that since Kerry chose to flaunt his military record, that record is fair game. But I find the whole thing insulting to the rest of us, just as I found it insulting when some Democrats who, as I understand it, support Kerry, but have no connection to the Kerry campaign, tried to steer that campaign away from real issues to focus instead on George Bush's attendance record during his long-ago days in the National Guard.

Remember this: George Bush spent enough time in the National Guard to learn to fly a jet plane. And Kerry volunteered to fight in a shooting war. Can't we just let it go at that and get on to talking about something that matters? We're a country at war. And our military is stretched thin. And we need to know how these two men propose to deal with that, not who did what in Vietnam. We know how that came out.

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