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CBS News

FACE THE NATION

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**GUESTS: Senator JOHN McCain, (R-AZ)
Armed Services Committee**

**Dr. ED RAPPAPORT
National Hurricane Center**

MODERATOR: BOB SCHIEFFER - CBS News

**PANEL: Michael Duffy - Time Magazine
Lara Logan - CBS News**

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

Today on FACE THE NATION, Hurricane Katrina is bad and getting worse as it bears down on New Orleans. And what about Iraq? Has it become another Vietnam? We'll talk about that with Senator John McCain. Early today, Iraq's negotiators finally drafted a constitution and sent it to the parliament, but the parliament adjourned without voting on it. Is it already doomed? Can the Sunni sect minority be convinced to go along? They say no. What happens if they don't? We'll get the latest from CBS News correspondent Lara Logan in Baghdad and then we'll talk with Senator John McCain. Mike Duffy of Time magazine will join in the questions and I'll have a final word on why I've lost faith in the media--well, sort of. But first, the hurricane and Iraq 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.

We are starting with Hurricane Katrina this morning because it has literally gone from bad to worse. It's now a Category 5. That means winds of 160 miles an hour. It's out in the Gulf due to hit land tomorrow sometimes and New Orleans is right in its path. Dr. Ed Rappaport, the deputy director of the National Hurricane Center, is with us.

And, Doctor, if this thing hits land at 160 miles an hour, it could be catastrophic.

Dr. ED RAPPAPORT (Deputy Director, National Hurricane Center): That's correct. And, in fact, Category 5 is considered potentially catastrophic. A similar hurricane came ashore in 1969 not far from where we're forecasting landfall now. That was Hurricane Camille, also Category 5, produced storm surge of 35 feet. And more than a hundred people lost their lives along the coast. More than another hundred people lost their lives in inland areas. That was a less-populated region.

We've always been very concerned about New Orleans area because it's below sea level, always a storm surge. So New Orleans is at great risk, as are the communities and towns either side of New Orleans. We can't tell you which parish or which county is going to get the worst now. You have to assume, though, if you're in that area that you're going to get the worst of the conditions.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, thank you. That's not very encouraging news, Doctor, but at least with the news out, the people there can begin to plan for it and we're told that they are telling them to evacuate.

Thank you so much, Doctor.

Dr. RAPPAPORT: Thank you.

SCHIEFFER: So we turn from the hurricane now to the other big story. This morning several hours ago the people putting together the draft constitution in Iraq finally finished their assignment and sent it on to the parliament for its approval. It will be voted on, of course, in October by the Iraqi people. Our CBS News correspondent Lara Logan is in Baghdad this morning.

Now the parliament adjourned and did not vote on this, Lara. Is there any significance in that?

LARA LOGAN reporting:

Not really, Bob, I mean, apart from symbolic significance because parliament isn't required to vote on the draft constitution by law. And what they actually did this morning was read it out in all the National Assembly members because not all of them have even received a copy. They've said they're going to reconvene tomorrow morning to discuss the amended document and you could look at that and say that it gives the Sunnis, who've objected to this amendment, time if you like to come on board, but that's probably not going to happen. And they fulfilled their legal obligations. What's clear is that this amended draft is what's going through to that referendum on October 15th, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: Now some of the Sunnis who worked on this did sign off on it this morning. Does that suggest that there could be a split among the Sunnis as to whether to approve this and go along with it?

LOGAN: Well, there are certainly lots of splits among the Sunnis. There are Sunni clerics and Sunni leaders who are calling for active participation in the political process. There are hard-liners who don't want to see that happening at all as long as the Americans are still present in this country. It's unclear exactly how the Sunnis are going to play this at the moment. We're expecting some kind of announcement from them in the next few hours or the coming days. But what is clear is that the Iraqi people are going to have a chance to make this decision for themselves in the referendum. And if the Sunnis campaign for a no vote, there's a real irony in that. The US has wanted the Sunnis to participate politically. They'll be exercising their democratic right to do so even if they choose to vote no, but it will delay the chances of bringing stability to Iraq, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: Lara, let me understand this now. As I understand it, if two-thirds of the people in three Iraqi provinces vote this down, then it fails. Is--could that happen? And if it did, where would that put us?

LOGAN: Yes, absolutely that could happen. The Sunnis have a majority in four of Iraq's 18 provinces. And as you said, they only need a no vote in three of those provinces to actually defeat the constitution. The question is: Will they be able to get to the polls? There'll be violence. There'll be threats. There'll be intimidation. And they were given a distinct message from their leaders last time around not to vote in the elections so the Sunni leaders will have to overcome that. And it will take a lot of work but it is possible, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: All right. You were there last in February. You arrived at the beginning of this month. Lara, how has the situation there changed in the time that you were away?

LOGAN: Well, the one thing that is strikingly clear is the fact that it has got a lot more dangerous. You know, I was standing in Freedom Square when the statue of Saddam Hussein came down. And in the first few days after the fall of Saddam, we were able to go anywhere we wanted to. And that certainly is not a reality now. The violence continues, and the word 'violence' really doesn't do justice to the scale of suffering of the Iraqi people here. There is almost no one that hasn't been touched by this.

And not only that, but when you talk to people on the streets, you get a real sense that time is running out for US troops in the sense that they're welcome here. The longer they're on the ground, the easier it is to blame them for everything that goes wrong, not only the violence but also the lack of basic services, lack of electricity, shortage of water. And you get a sense that

there really is a limited amount of time here for the US troops in the sense of their welcome from the Iraqi people, as much as some Iraqis do acknowledge that it will be very difficult to build a stable government and strong security forces without assistance from the US. The one thing everyone agrees on is that the sight of US troops on Iraqi streets is incredibly unpopular with the Iraqi people, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, Lara, you be very careful and thank you very much.

And now we go to Cottonwood, Arizona, where Senator John McCain is standing by. Joining in the questioning this morning, Mike Duffy of Time magazine.

Senator, thanks for coming. I want to start where Lara left off there. She said there's one thing that people seem to agree on there and that is that the sight of American troops still on the streets makes people angry, I believe is the way she put it. Is time running out? Can the use of American troops still be effective there?

Senator JOHN McCAIN (Republican, Arizona; Armed Services Committee): I think they have to be there and I think they have to be effective. I think it's clear that a premature withdrawal would be catastrophic in its consequences. And, look, I don't mean to disagree with Lara in any way, but we've made progress in many areas of Iraq. Unfortunately not enough; unfortunately, there is still a viable insurgency that we have to face, but this process is going forward, albeit haltingly. And the Sunnis will have to make a decision as to whether they want to take part in a new government or whether they're going to do as they did before when they didn't take part in the elections, which many of them feel was a mistake. And--but we need, Bob, to go in to places and control it, install an environment that people can live in in peace and security and expand that. Our tactics have been that we go in to a place and we have a search-and-destroy operation and then we leave. This is largely due to circumstances, including not having enough troops on the ground. So then the bad guys reassert themselves and we have to go back again.

Mr. MIKE DUFFY (Time): Senator...

Sen. McCAIN: So we need to improve our tactics but we must win. We cannot afford to lose. And we can and will win.

Mr. DUFFY: Senator McCain, last week your colleague Chuck Hagel said that Iraq was in danger of becoming another Vietnam, both at home politically and overseas in terms of what's going on the ground. Is he right?

Sen. McCAIN: Chuck Hagel is one of my dearest and best friends, and we'll always be that. I just--we just have an honest disagreement here. Vietnam the--never had a legitimate government in Saigon that the people believed in and trusted. There was superpower engagement in a huge way. We had a problem with the Syrians but nothing like what the Chinese and Russians, who were doing for the North Vietnamese. You have basic sanctuary--you had a sanctuary in North Vietnam. The whole situation, I think, was very, very different. And I'd like to point out one additional aspect is when we left Vietnam, there wasn't a fear that the Vietnamese would come after us. If we fail in Iraq, it will be cataclysmic. You'll see factionalization and eventual Muslim extremism and terrorist breeding grounds that would, I believe, pose a direct threat to the security of the United States. And I'm very glad that the American people, undertsandably dissatisfied, understandably frustrated, still, the majority of them don't think we ought to cut and run.

Mr. DUFFY: Do you think we need more troops?

Sen. McCAIN: I've always said that, that we--I'm glad that there are more co--going over for the elections. I think we need more and I think they need to stay longer. The problem is, is that we didn't expand the size of the Army and the Marine Corps and we put enormous strains on the Guard and Reserves and on active duty personnel. We need to expand the Army and expand the Marine Corps, and have more troops over there for as long as is necessary. The irony here is that we could have had less troops here now if we had had more troops when they were needed where, in the view of literally every military person I talked to in Iraq, right after the victory.

SCHIEFFER: Senator, you said some months ago--in fact it was last year, I think--that you expressed the feeling that you had lost confidence in the secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. Do you still feel that way? And do you now feel that it's time for him to go?

Sen. McCAIN: I have been--had strong policy disagreements with the secretary of Defense. He serves at the pleasure of the president and with the confidence of the president. It does not help in any way for me to get into some kind of a fight with the secretary of Defense, since he is there. We're in a crucial time in our history. I think that I will do everything in my power to work with the secretary of Defense. His continuance or non-continuance in the office is up to the president.

SCHIEFFER: But...

Sen. McCAIN: ...and I'll support the president.

SCHIEFFER: You seem to be saying this morning that they did everything wrong. They didn't send enough troops in. They didn't have the right policy in the beginning and because of that we are where we are.

Sen. McCAIN: We did a lot of things wrong. We did some things right, and lately with the training of the Iraqi military and others, we are making some progress there and we need to have that progress. We had significant policy disagreements, and I hope that some of those policies have been fixed. As I say, I'm encouraged that more troops are coming over for--to be there during the election. I wish they were there until we can stabilize certain areas and expand the areas of control so that people can live normal lives. The frustration the Iraqis feel is that we haven't been able to maintain their security which is the first step in any country that expects to...

SCHIEFFER: But, Senator, when you say we need...

Sen. McCAIN: ...to have a democracy.

SCHIEFFER: Yeah. When you say we need more troops, how many more troops?

Sen. McCAIN: At this time I would say we need at least 15,000 to 20,000 additional troops, but I hate to get into specific details because I'm not--frankly I'm not that knowledgeable. I know we need more Marines, we need more Special Forces, we need more linguists, we need more civil affairs people. We need the kinds of people that also help build their democracy and maintain a safe and secure society.

Mr. DUFFY: Are you willing to keep troops there--for how long? Five years? Ten years? The Army chief of staff said it would be 100,000 troops for four years last week. How long would you be will to go keep them there if you were commander in chief?

Sen. McCain: I would keep them there and as the Iraqi military is trained and capable of taking on the responsibilities as a supplemental to our military for a period of time until they are able to handle their own security and take care of their own responsibilities. Then I would be withdrawing American troops into enclaves and then gradually withdrawing them.

Look, the key is not the presence of American troops. We've had American troops in South Korea for 50 years. We've got them all over the world, including Germany.

Mr. DUFFY: But they weren't under fire. They weren't under fire there.

Sen. McCain: The key is reduction. That's right. That's the point. We've got to reduce the casualties, and the way we reduce the casualties is an effective control over areas that is gradually expanded and the training and equipping of the Iraqi military, plus a government that the Iraqi people can trust and believe in. And believe me, a democracy in the Middle East will have profound positive effects throughout the region.

SCHIEFFER: Senator, at a breakfast meeting with the Tucson Chamber of Commerce the other day, you said that Cindy Sheehan is probably being used by people who oppose the war in Iraq, but you said, and I believe this is your quote, "She is a symptom, not a cause of the growing public discontent with the war." What did you mean by that?

Sen. McCain: First of all, I meant that people have the right to disagree with their government, and I cherish that right. And what I mean when she is being used, of course people that are against the war will take advantage of a sympathetic figure such as this. That's not the first time in American history that's happened. And I also believe that the president did meet with Ms. Sheehan and expressed his sympathy, and believe me, this president grieves, and he carries a heavy burden and cares about those men and women who have sacrificed.

SCHIEFFER: But...

Sen. McCain: And I believe that Ms. Sheehan is a symptom of the polling that show that the American people are not happy with what's happening in Iraq.

SCHIEFFER: But what do you think is the cause?

Sen. McCain: But the American people are still--might want to cut and run.

SCHIEFFER: Yeah.

Sen. McCain: I think I lack--I think I lack...

SCHIEFFER: Precisely. I take your point on that...

Sen. McCain: Yeah. Yeah.

SCHIEFFER: ...that we shouldn't cut and run. But why do you that suddenly this summer the public just seems to be losing the support for this war, just seems to be going down among the public? Why do you think that is?

Sen. McCain: I think it's because of the lack of perceptible--the lack of progress that people can grab ahold of, even though progress is being made, I would assert. And I also think that the--sometimes events grab people's attention, and certainly the tragic loss of those 15 young Marines from a suburb in Cleveland grabbed our attention. But also I applaud the president for his steadfastness as opposed to some things that were coming out of the Pentagon. I applaud the president for keeping this as a high priority, and I think that he is articulating the message of how critical this conflict is.

SCHIEFFER: All right. We'll continue this conversation in a minute. Let's take a break here.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And we're back again with Senator John McCain.

Senator McCain, as we went to break there, you said you applauded the president for his steadfastness I think you said in contrast to some of the things that are coming out of the Pentagon. What did you mean by that?

Sen. McCain: A few weeks ago there was unnamed sources in the Pentagon saying we were going to start withdrawals and that, you know, it was going to be phased out, etc., and I was very happy to see the president immediately say, 'We're in a war. We're going to see it through till the end and we're going to do whatever is necessary.' That's what I was talking about.

SCHIEFFER: Well, do you think that the Pentagon has given up on this? I mean, have they decided this is something that can't be won or what?

Sen. McCain: No, I don't--I--no, no. No, I believe our military are committed to victory. Look, one of the reasons why I'm optimistic is these men and women who are serving in Iraq are phenomenal. Our retention in Iraq is the highest. They're doing magnificent work and they are committed to the belief that they need to do whatever is necessary including sacrifice to bring democracy and freedom to the Iraqi people.

SCHIEFFER: Well, do you feel that the civilian officials in the Pentagon share that feeling?

Sen. McCain: I don't know what their feelings are. I just know that there was information that came out of the Pentagon a few weeks ago saying they were planning on withdrawals. That's not the right message.

SCHIEFFER: OK.

Sen. McCain: The message is that we're going to withdraw after the situation is stabilized and that the Iraqi military can handle their own security requirements.

Mr. DUFFY: Senator, the \$500 billion defense operations bill has basically been postponed. It's disappeared pretty much because you want to force the Army and other military services to, you know, play by the rules at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib with respect to prisoner treatment. The White House says that you're trying to tie their hands and make it difficult for them to conduct foreign policy by forcing them to stick to their rules. Who's right here? Do they have a point...

Sen. McCAIN: Well, first of all...

Mr. DUFFY: ...about you getting your hands into the details of how they handle the treatment of prisoners?

Sen. McCAIN: Well, first of all, obviously one of the greatest setbacks that we've experienced was the Abu Ghraib scandal. I want to do whatever is necessary to make sure that the men and women who are actually handling the interrogations have a clear set of rules as to how those should be conducted so we'll never again have another Abu Ghraib. There are many who believe that Congress needs to act in this way and it's appropriate for us to do so. And I hope that we can do that, but I don't know why the leadership of the Senate yanked the defense authorization bill. It's vital. This is the authorization for our men and women in the military to be trained, equipped. There's pay raises in it. There's bonuses. It's care for our National Guard and Reserves. It's inexplicable that we would not continue and finish this defense authorization bill immediately upon our return so that we can take care of the men and women in the military and our national security needs.

SCHIEFFER: Senator, you met with the vice president about this amendment you want to put on the bill which basically says that we will not torture prisoners that we take. Why did the vice president tell you he was against that?

Sen. McCAIN: Well, I don't usually talk about my private conversations but I think it's well known that the vice president feels that it's not necessary for Congress to be involved and somehow this would be harmful. Somehow I don't understand that. I don't get it. We are signatories to a number of international agreements prohibiting torture, and we have used this Army training field manual for many wars so that everybody knows exactly what can be done to prisoners and what can't.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, Senator, I want to thank you very much for being with us this morning.

We'll be back with a final word in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And late word on the hurricane. The mayor of New Orleans has now issued a mandatory evacuation for the city of New Orleans; winds up to 175 miles an hour. It's expected to hit land tomorrow.

And a final word today. I have been trying to catch up on the news since I came back from vacation and I'll tell you one thing. These critics are right. You can't believe anything you read in the paper or see on TV anymore. I mean, I just read that the Miss America contest is leaving Atlantic City. Bad TV ratings. Well, maybe that could be true. Miss America celebrated winners and those TV reality shows that get the big ratings always humiliate losers. Even so, moving Miss America out of Atlantic City is like saying the Alamo is moving out of Texas. That's as farfetched as those stories that the Reverend Pat Robertson wanted to assassinate the leader of Venezuela because it's cheaper than fighting a war or that Israeli Prime Minister Sharon, who led the drive to settle Israelis in the occupied Palestinian territories, has just led a drive to move the Israelis out.

Actually I hope that one is true, but can this next one be right? That portraits of Alan Greenspan are the art world's new best sellers? A young artist named Erin Crow put 18 of her Impressionist paintings of the Fed chairman in a show in Sag Harbor, Maine, sold out in a Wall Street minute and some of them are now bringing as much as \$10,000 apiece. Alan is a handsome devil, but still I wonder about it.

And then there's that story that Jennifer Connelly, the actress in those scary movies, told a reporter. She said she likes to shop online while having sex. I think she's kidding, but a guy my age is convinced he did know her mother. Maybe so, but I still don't trust the media.

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