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CBS News

FACE THE NATION

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**GUESTS: Senator HILLARY CLINTON, (D-NY)
Armed Services Committee**

**ANDREW CARD
White House Chief of Staff**

MODERATOR: JOHN ROBERTS - CBS News

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**FACE THE NATION - CBS NEWS
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JOHN ROBERTS, host:

Today on FACE THE NATION, New York Senator Hillary Clinton, and White House chief of staff Andy Card.

Another American soldier is killed in Iraq as the guerrilla attacks continue. What is the exit strategy? Can troops really come home as early as next summer? We'll ask White House chief of staff Andy Card.

Then we'll talk with Senator Hillary Clinton, Democrat of New York, about her recent trip to Iraq and Afghanistan, and politics; her future and the current field of Democratic candidates for president. Senator Hillary Clinton and Andy Card today on FACE THE NATION.

Announcer: FACE THE NATION with chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer. And now from Washington, substituting for Bob Schieffer, CBS News chief White House correspondent John Roberts.

ROBERTS: And welcome to the broadcast. Bob Schieffer is off this morning.

Joining us now from the White House is White House chief of staff Andrew Card.

Mr. Card, good morning.

Mr. ANDREW CARD (White House Chief of Staff): Good morning. Good to see you, John. Thank you.

ROBERTS: Welcome. Good to see you as well. So Newsweek magazine today carries an interview with Newt Gingrich, who is now a member of the Defense Policy Board, who says that in the post-war period, the administration has gone off a cliff in Iraq, that Coalition Provisional Authority--CPA stands for--can't produce anything. Those are pretty harsh words coming from a member of your own party, a supporter of Don Rumsfeld.

Mr. CARD: Well, first of all, I think things are going very well in a very tough situation in Iraq. The president has as his goal, first of all, to remove the regime of Saddam Hussein, and we've done that. He is no longer the threat to his own people or to the world that he was when he was in office.

The second thing is that he is working to bring democracy and hope to the Iraqi people, and all around Iraq there are dramatic signs of improvement in life. Schools are open, small business are working. Yes, we have to do more work on the security front, but it's really limited to kind of the Tikrit, Mosul, Baghdad area. And we're working hard to address that problem, but we're making significant progress and the--the life of--for the average Iraqi is much better today than it was under Saddam Hussein.

ROBERTS: So how is it, though, that some members of your own party see it quite differently than that?

Mr. CARD: Well, Newt Gingrich is not all-knowing, and I'm sure he has opinions, and he's always expressed them. But I can tell you from the perspective of the generals who are on the ground and--and Ambassador Bremer, who is running the Provisional Authority over there, things are going better than they could have been expected to go at this time, and we're making great progress. More has to be done, and we are committed to staying there until it's done right. We'd--would like to see the Iraqi people have more opportunities for self-government, but we're going to stay there until the job is done.

ROBERTS: You're being accused in--in some parts of Iraq of, for lack of a better word, barbed-wire diplomacy, ringing entire villages in--in razor wire, making people pass through checkpoints, detaining family members of suspected Iraqi insurgents, destroying buildings that the insurgency has been using. Some people in Iraq are saying this is very much like the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians. And I'm wondering is--is this the way to win hearts and minds in Iraq?

Mr. CARD: Security is very important, and we are winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people by improving their life. Again, the schools are opening, small businesses are working, and more and more Iraqis are part of the security solution in Iraq and they're part of the governing structure in Iraq. We're making progress, but we are going to work to secure their communities, and we'll have to work hard to do that as they build their own security forces. And this is just one step. And it's a transitional step, but security is important in order to have these other habits of a healthy and hopeful life to take place.

ROBERTS: Are you concerned, though, that--that trying to provide security in this fashion could engender the same type of anger that the Palestinians feel?

Mr. CARD: I think that is a too-far place to go. I think, first of all, the Iraqi people understand that they are much better off today without Saddam Hussein, and they're finding the opportunity to govern themselves, and we're making great progress. So I do not view this as a--a road toward something that would look like the Palestinian-Israeli situation at all.

ROBERTS: All right. The chief civilian--ci--civil administrator there, Paul Bremer, said recently that he expects attacks are going to increase as you make this transition toward sovereignty, that these holdouts, these dead-enders will try to stop the process by stepping up attacks. Do you agree with that assessment?

Mr. CARD: Well, the more and more that the old Ba'athist regime loses their authority, the more they're going to fight back. But the--the will of the people is most important in Iraq and the people want to see a road toward security and hope and opportunity, and that's what the coalition is working to help provide. But I think that we will find that the security situation is still a challenge, but the good news is the United States is up to that challenge.

ROBERTS: If indeed attacks are going to escalate, as Mr. Bremer suggests, shouldn't the president be out there warning the American people that this could happen?

Mr. CARD: Well, the president has said all along that this is a--a difficult task, but it's one that can be met, and he is very supportive of the work that is done by our troops. And you should be supportive, too, because they're carrying out the most important mission, and that's to help to rid the world of--world of a horrible regime and create hope and opportunity for democracy.

ROBERTS: So on another topic. Are we going back to the moon?

Mr. CARD: Well, we are very interested in spaceflight and the president talked about that when we had the chair--the tragedy with the space shuttle. So we're not going to abandon the hope and explor--exploration of space but I'm not going to go into specifics on what we might be looking for. But I can tell you this president is committed to first of all having a secure and safe environment at home, creating an oc--an economic opportunity for all Americans where they can find a job when they want to find a job, and we want to make sure that America has dreams. And this president will be providing lots of opportunities for dreams.

ROBERTS: So on the subject of--of--of dreams, I understand the moon is a viable option, though, is it not?

Mr. CARD: Let's take a look at the context under which we have to build a budget and address the challenges that--that are close at hand. The first challenge is to secure America. And we're doing that through a--a stronger budget for homeland security and--and to defeat the terrorists. And that's why we are focusing on the war on terror, and rebuilding our economy.

ROBERTS: Which brings me to my next question, with--with the budget in the shape that it's in now, a deficit projected of \$525 billion, where's the money to go to the moon? And what do we get out of going

back?

Mr. CARD: Well, first of all, spending has been on the downward path when it comes to discretionary spending that the government has in the non-defense, non-homeland security area. We went from a 15 percent growth in that spending under the previous administration. We've gone to a 6 percent growth to a 5 percent growth and to a 3 percent growth in the budget that we are living under right now. So we're--we're building down toward a-a plan that'll have the deficit cut in half within five years and that's responsible fiscal activity on the part of the president and we're going to hold the pressure to Congress.

ROBERTS: So you're--you're saying that--so you're saying the money to go to the moon might be there at some point?

Mr. CARD: Well, you're--you're taking it to a step that I'm not willing to take to. I can tell you that the president will do everything he can to be a good steward of the taxpayers' resources, and--and the taxpayers' resources go to fund the government and he is reducing the growth of the federal budget in the non-defense, non-homeland security discretionary spending on the part of the budget.

ROBERTS: OK.

Mr. CARD: He's going to secure the homeland and he'll fight the war on terror, and that will be the priority, as well as build the economy.

ROBERTS: Security today. We'll hear about the moon later.

Mr. Card, thanks very much for being with us.

Mr. CARD: Thank you, John.

ROBERTS: Appreciate it. Andy Card, White House chief of staff.

We'll be back in just a moment with New York Senator Hillary Clinton. Stay with us.

(Announcements)

ROBERTS: And with us now is New York Senator Hillary Clinton.

Good to see you this morning. Thanks for coming in.

Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON (Democrat, New York): Thank you. Glad to be here, John.

ROBERTS: So Andy Card paints a pretty rosy scenario of what's going on in Iraq. Do you agree with him?

Sen. CLINTON: I think rosy scenario is alive and well in the White House these days based on what Mr. Card had to say. There are some things that are going right. My trip to Afghanistan and Iraq illustrated clearly to me that our troops are doing a great job under very difficult circumstances and that we are making some progress on the ground, but we have such a long way to go. And I think that one of the missing elements in our strategy thus far has been the president and the administration leveling with the American people about what it is we're up against, how long it's going to take, how much it's going to cost.

ROBERTS: This is a rare moment where you seem to at least be partially in agreement with Newt Gingrich.

Sen. CLINTON: Yes, I--I--I find myself amazed by that. I'm sure he's even more so. He has apparently

written quite a critical piece of the administration's policy in Iraq, and in it...

ROBERTS: Accusing them of going over a cliff in the postwar period.

Sen. CLINTON: That's right, and pointed out some of the deficiencies in the--on-the-ground operation in Iraq. No reasonable person looking at the facts can't see that there are some real problems that we have to deal with. I don't think happy talk, you know, is a substitute for a policy. And maybe they'll listen to Newt Gingrich. They certainly haven't listened to anybody else.

ROBERTS: You've talked about the need to internationalize the operation there. What do you mean when you say internationalize? How--how could it be more internationalized than it is already? You already have troops from a number of different--different countries there. You have a number of different countries participating in the rebuilding.

Sen. CLINTON: Well, what I have in mind is something more on the order of both what we did in Bosnia and Kosovo in the Clinton administration and what we have been attempting to do in Afghanistan. You know, if you remember in Afghanistan, we had a--a conference in Bonn that brought together many of the leaders of Afghanistan. We put into place a process that led to a Loya Jirga that selected President Karzai which provided legitimacy within Afghanistan for the Karzai government. We have a NATO mandate which has given some real support to what we're doing in Afghanistan, although, frankly, I'm disappointed NATO hasn't stepped up with more forces and equipment.

But Afghanistan is not under the same kind of attack as Iraq because, in effect, it has to be internationalized even though clearly the United States military and the United States political leadership is still calling most of the shots. In Iraq, it is clearly an American operation. We do have allies, unfortunately not as many or in the numbers that we need, and we don't have, though, the international legitimacy that would really benefit us as we move toward some kind of governmental transition.

ROBERTS: But when you talk about bringing the United Nations in and giving over some control to the UN, I mean, how much control would you give them? Would--would you give them command of US troops? Would you let them oversee the elections?

Sen. CLINTON: Well, I think those are two very different questions. In the Afghan situation, of course, American troops are under American command even though NATO troops are in there and we want more NATO troops, and even though the UN will oversee the elections, there are many ways of working this out. The administration's stubborn refusal to try to enlist friends and allies to be partners in our effort in Iraq I think is undercutting the legitimacy and the potential success of what we are trying to accomplish.

And what I would recommend is that we do something along the lines of what we've done in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan: Convene the friends of Iraq, convene some kind of oversight that would provide legitimacy. I don't think it would hurt us in the least to have a--an international face on the political side of this. American military command would stay right where it belongs under American military leadership, but perhaps we could persuade if not NATO than others to come in with more security support as well as political, economic and reconstruction aid.

ROBERTS: The administration has set a timetable for June to try to stand up a provisional government in an effort to try to draw down troops. You've said that this appears to be happening on a--a political timetable. But is it not legitimate to try to stand up an Iraqi government as quickly as possible, and to begin to bring the troops home?

Sen. CLINTON: Absolutely. And what I've said is that I hope it's not on a political timetable, although I certainly heard from a lot of people in Iraq that that was the concern. And I know today a distinguished military expert has written in The New York Times--expressing what he heard on the ground in Iraq from many of the military commanders, that they feel many of the decisions are being pushed by our election

timetable.

And look at our dilemma. Yes, we do need some kind of Iraqi governance that is viewed as legitimate and that can serve as a transition, because we know that we're not going to make the progress on the ground that we need until that's in place. But we've lost valuable time, and we don't have a bridge between the American occupation--which, remember, we declared as an occupation--and that sovereignty or governance in Iraq. That's why I think the international bridge makes sense.

Unfortunately, if you look at the next six months and the transition that has to be undertaken, we're facing some big challenges. You know, the hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, begins late January, February. There's going to be a pent-up demand in Iraq for people to go to Mecca. There are going to be a lot of pilgrims who are going to want to cross Iraq. That poses tremendous security challenges. And also, we've got to look at March and April, when the troops who've been on the ground, doing a fabulous job--they're the ones who, frankly, have fixed those schools and those hospitals and stood up those local governments. They're going to be leaving.

So just at the most critical moment that we expect to make a transition to something in June, the people who've developed the relationships, who have been primarily military, not civilian, are going to be leaving, and the Iraqis are going to have to deal with a whole new set of military commanders. And this is not just a job that's been done by generals. It's been done by other officers down through sergeants and privates. And it's really, something that I think we don't understand fully, the implications of making that transition at such a sensitive time.

ROBERTS: So just back to my original question--you--you have suggested that there's a political imperative here to try to get the troops out. One of the places where you--you made that claim was while you were on the ground in Iraq, and people accused you of playing politics...

Sen. CLINTON: Well...

ROBERTS: ...taking--taking that moment to criticize the president. In--in hind...

Sen. CLINTON: Well, actually, that...

ROBERTS: In hindsight, would--would you have criticized the president while you were on the ground in Iraq?

Sen. CLINTON: Well, let me correct the record, that it didn't happen. I know that's the--the latest flaming charge by the right wing. But that's not what happened. What happened is that when I was in Afghanistan and Iraq, speaking with a lot of our soldiers, who I think are doing an extraordinary job under dangerous and difficult circumstances, they asked me on one particular occasion, 'Well, you know, what do people think of us and what we're doing back home?' Now I'm not going to lie to an American soldier, particularly a soldier in the 10th Mountain Division from Ft. Drum, New York. And what I said is, 'I think you have universal support among the American people. They cannot be prouder of you. And there are questions being raised about the administration's policies.'

Now they know that. They get the Internet. They get the media. They're well aware of that. When I returned home, Senator Reed and I held a press conference, and in that I said that I heard from many people, both Iraqis and Americans, that they were concerned that the administration's policy, which has hardly been an example of 'steady as you go' and has instead been improvised and--and, frankly, the failure to plan for the post-military period has really undermined and hurt us--that there were questions being raised about whether this was really about what's best for the long-term stability of Iraq or what's best for the November elections. Other commentators are starting to say that, too, because they hear the same things that I heard on the ground.

ROBERTS: Let me just ask you one more question about Iraq, if I could. You were there right after the president made his clandestine trip to Iraq.

Sen. CLINTON: That's right.

ROBERTS: Your--your impressions of that, and should, as the Iraqi people have complained--should the president have tried to get out a little bit more?

Sen. CLINTON: I have said--I was in Afghanistan on Thanksgiving, and I think it's--it's terrific any time an American elected official, particularly the president, who is the commander in chief, goes out and sees our troops in a conflict zone. So I had nothing but positive response to the president taking the risks, which are genuine, because I know from my own trip that, you know, the security situation is not good.

ROBERTS: Well, could he have risked getting out from the airport or was it prudent for him to be there for two and a half hours and then fly back?

Sen. CLINTON: You know, I'm not going to second-guess the planning of the Secret Service and the White House staff. I just would say that it was terrific that he went, and I think it gave a--a boost to our troops.

Having said that, a trip is not a substitute for a plan, and the administration has not had a plan. And for the life of me, I don't understand that. During the time of my service on the Armed Services Committee, since last January, there have been numerous hearings and witnesses who came before us, both before and after the military action commenced. Time and again we would say, 'Well, how many troops are we going to need? How long will we have to be there? How much is it going to cost?' and we were told, 'Well, we don't know that.'

And, well, we didn't get the facts except that one moment when General Shinseki, to his great credit, said, 'You know, we're going to need 150,000 to 200,000 troops,' and he was called on the carpet. The Army chief of staff telling the truth, not only to the Armed Services Committee, but to the American people, and he was, I think, treated rudely and unfairly. But--but the problem is that they weren't just holding something back. Many of us thought, 'Well, you know, they don't want to share their plans.' They didn't have a plan, and that's what we are living in the aftermath of, unfortunately.

ROBERTS: I want to move on to a couple of other topics because we're beginning to run out of time already. Can you absolutely, or will you absolutely rule out a run for the presidency in 2004?

Sen. CLINTON: You know, I've said--said this so many times that--and--I--you know, I'm not running. I'm going to support who the nominee is. And I think we've got...

ROBERTS: So you won't go back on that?

Sen. CLINTON: I...

ROBERTS: You can say absolutely not running next year?

Sen. CLINTON: I have said it over and over again. I think we've got at least a 50-50 chance for our nominee to win in November, and I'm going to do everything I can to elect the Democratic nominee.

ROBERTS: So who it? Is it--is it Howard Dean? Is he indelibly out in front now? I mean, he's obviously the person to beat. Can he be president?

Sen. CLINTON: John, I have learned a long time ago and--and sitting here now 12 years after December of 1991 when my husband had, I don't know, 2 or 3 percent in the polls, and even in the months after that,

nobody thought he could win. I don't make any guesses. It's really up to the people who go to the trouble to vote in primaries and attend caucuses. I think we've got a vigorous campaign going on. I believe the person who will emerge from that is going to be in a good position to take on President Bush.

ROBERTS: Is Dean the sort of person that you could support?

Sen. CLINTON: I'm going to support the nominee. I am excited about this campaign. I'm not at all discouraged by, you know, the second-guessing that goes on here in Washington because having now been out in the country and having talked with a lot of people because of my--my book tour over the last many months, there's a tremendous unease about the direction this administration is taking our country. And if you just compare where we were and where we are now in the last three years, are we safer, are we stronger, are we fairer, are we better than we were? I think the answers to those questions are going to give a lot of people pause.

ROBERTS: Let me talk about the Democrats, if I could, for a second here. They--they seem to have had a lot of trouble in the legislative process recently. There's been a tremendous number of Republican victories. I think I--I read an article that said it very eloquently that on the Medicare bill, Democrats got steamrolled by their own steamroller. Why are they in such disarray? Why are the Republicans getting everything they want?

Sen. CLINTON: Well, first of all, the majority in both houses of Congress have tremendous power. You know, I've only been in the Senate a little less than three years. I've been in the minority, the majority and the minority. And the majority has an extraordinary ability to set the agenda. And once the agenda is set, it may not be your agenda, you have to react to that agenda. So I think on--on many grounds, the Democrats have ameliorated the most extreme versions of the right-wing agenda coming out of the Republican leadership and the White House. But it's a difficult position to be in. And I still believe that the majority of Americans are more in agreement with the policies of the Democratic Party, but we have to do a better job of communicating that.

ROBERTS: One of the big social issues that--that may rise to the surface next year is this idea of gay marriage. You've--you've said that you're in favor of civil unions. Are you still opposed to gay marriage?

Sen. CLINTON: I am, you know, for many reasons. I think that the vast majority of Americans find that to be something they can't agree with. But I think most Americans are fair. And if they believe that people in committed relationships want to share their lives and, not only that, have the same rights that I do in my marriage, to decide who I want to inherit my property or visit me in a hospital, I think that most Americans would think that that's--that's fair and that should be done.

ROBERTS: Would you be opposed to a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage?

Sen. CLINTON: Yes, I think that would be a--a terrible step backwards. It would be the first time we've ever amended the Constitution to deny rights to people. And I think that should be left to the states. You know, I find it hard to believe in one program I'm agreeing with Newt Gingrich, now I'm about to agree with Dick Cheney. But I think Vice President Cheney's position on gay marriage is--is the right one.

ROBERTS: Well...

Sen. CLINTON: You know, leave it to the states. Let the states decide what's in their constitutions, what is in their legislative agendas and let it go forward from there.

ROBERTS: Well, those two items if nothing else, are news. Senator Clinton, thanks for being with us this morning. Good luck at the Grammy Awards.

Sen. CLINTON: Oh, bless your heart.

ROBERTS: Your nomination for "A Living History."

Sen. CLINTON: Thank you so much.

ROBERTS: All right. Take care.

And we'll be back in just a moment.

(Announcements)

ROBERTS: And that's our broadcast for this Sunday the 7th of December. For Bob Schieffer, I'm John Roberts. Thanks for watching FACE THE NATION.