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CBS News

# FACE THE NATION

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**Barack Obama Supporter**

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**Columnist, The New York Times**

**Mr. CLARENCE PAGE**  
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BOB SCHIEFFER, host:

Today on FACE THE NATION, it's getting down and dirty and it's far from over. But will the long fight for the Democratic nomination hurt the Democrats' chances in November? The candidates are fighting each other over race, readiness, foreign policy credentials, you name it. But it's looking more and more like neither candidate will have enough delegates going into the convention to capture the nomination. Should superdelegates decide who runs against John McCain? Should the Democratic Party find some way to wrap this up before the convention? We'll ask Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, an Obama supporter; and Leon Panetta, the former chief of staff for Bill Clinton.

We'll talk about the rest of the week's political news with David Brooks of The New York Times and Clarence Page of the Chicago Tribune.

I'll have a final word on whatever happened to Iraq.

But first, the race for the Democratic nomination 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 start this morning in Boston with Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick.

Governor, welcome to FACE THE NATION.

Governor DEVAL PATRICK (Democrat, Massachusetts; Obama Supporter): Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: I must say, if I were going to name this week I would name it after that old politician's prayer, which begins, "Lord, protect me from my friends. I can handle my enemies." I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like what's been going on this week. First, Senator Clinton's campaign finance person Geraldine Ferraro came up with this. We just want to play it so people will know what we're talking about here.

Gov. PATRICK: Hm.

Representative GERALDINE FERRARO: (From John Gibson Radio show on Fox Talk, February 26) If Barack Obama were a white man, would we be talking about this as a potential real problem for Hillary? If he were a woman of any color, would he be in this position that he's in? Absolutely not.

SCHIEFFER: And then, of course, from the--from Senator Obama's side, this hullabaloo blew up about his minister of many years...

Gov. PATRICK: Right.

SCHIEFFER: ...the man who married him, baptized his children. And this was really off the charts.

Reverend JEREMIAH WRIGHT: (From file footage) The government gives them the drugs, builds bigger prisons, passes a three-strike law and then wants us to sing "God Bless America"? No, no, no. Not God bless America, God damn America--that's in the Bible--for killing innocent people. God damn America.

SCHIEFFER: And of course I guess it's fair to say that would not be helpful. Senator Obama...

Gov. PATRICK: Yeah.

SCHIEFFER: ...has distanced himself from that. But what is going on here all of a sudden? This was a pretty good campaign up until the last couple of weeks, governor.

Gov. PATRICK: Well, I guess I would--I'd caution everybody to remember who is and who is not the candidate, you know. The good reverend is not the candidate. He's fortunately not running for president. And neither is--neither is Geraldine Ferraro. We've got two really strong candidates, two very involved and engaged campaigns, and an American public, Bob, that is hungry to be unified, to be pulled together. And I think Senator Obama has shown that he's the candidate who's offering that vision, and he's energized an awful lot of people, the majority of people to rally around him.

SCHIEFFER: Well, it is pretty clear now that neither of these candidates is going to have enough delegates when they get to the convention to capture the nomination. What's going to happen if these so-called superdelegates wind up being the ones who select this nominee?

Gov. PATRICK: You know what? I think the superdelegates, in the end, will ratify the will of the people and the pledged delegates, whichever candidate has the majority of them. I certainly hope so. I think the Democratic National Committee is working on solutions now for Michigan and Florida, and I hope that those and trust that those solutions will respect the rules that were agreed to and in place at the beginning of the campaign, but also enable representatives from Michigan and Florida to participate in the convention.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you this. Let's say--because it looks like now that if Senator Obama even loses in Pennsylvania, which is the next big prize, he will still probably go into the convention with the larger share of the popular vote, he will have won more contests and--can he be denied the nomination if he goes in there under those circumstances?

Gov. PATRICK: Well, you know, Bob, I'm--I am the last one to presume an outcome. I feel really great about the fact that Senator Obama has won twice as many states, the largest number of the popular--proportion of the popular vote, the largest number of delegates. That's all good news. There are 10 more contests to go. Pennsylvania is one of those 10. And this is, I think, going to remain an uphill climb for Senator Obama. But I think if he goes to the convention with the majority of pledged delegates, that is where the nomination belongs. He will have earned it, he will have earned it against a very entrenched and strong contender.

But frankly, the people are hungry for change and unity. That has been his message. That's his life. And he's shown that he can offer that kind of leadership.

SCHIEFFER: What about Michigan and Florida? You just mentioned that these delegates, nobody knows whether they're going to be counted or not counted. Right now they're not going to be counted. What do you see as the solution to that, governor?

Gov. PATRICK: Goodness know. I mean, I do think that it's up to the Democratic National Committee and the leadership--I guess it's the rules committee who has to fine--be the final arbiter of this, and I think they ought to turn to that soon. I think that certainly everybody, both campaigns, all Democrats want to make sure that Michigan and Florida have an opportunity to participate in the convention. But we also have to acknowledge, there were rules agreed to by all of the candidates and all of the campaigns at the outset. Those rules were violated by Michigan and Florida, and so we have to find a way now to include those delegates so that they can participate at the--at the convention, and I think that's up to the DNC. And I hope they turn to it soon.

SCHIEFFER: Mark Penn, who of course is Mrs. Clinton's campaign manager, says that if Barack Obama loses Pennsylvania, there's no way he can win the nomination.

Gov. PATRICK: Well, consider the source. I mean, this is--I mean, I have enormous respect for Mark Penn, but they have moved the goalposts just about every two weeks since the primary season began. You know, first Michigan didn't count. Now, according to the Clinton campaign--and now it's vitally important that the--that the nonprimary primary count in some--in some way. Come on. Pennsylvania is important, no doubt about it. But I think that Senator Obama has shown an interest in and a respect for the votes of people all over the country, and he has won those votes, north and south, east and west, the central part of the--of the--of the United States as well, all kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds. And we will compete in Pennsylvania with that same spirit and with that same vision of unity.

SCHIEFFER: If Senator Obama does not get the nomination, do you think black voters will stay home?

Gov. PATRICK: I hope not, because I think that it's the future of all of us, of our United States that's at stake and ought to be at stake in this--in this election, and always is at stake in a presidential election. And we all have a share in that--in that future. So I certainly hope not. But I'm going to be working real, real hard to see that Senator Obama is in fact the nominee and that we--not just as Democrats, but as Americans rally around the promise of leadership that he offers and send him to the White House.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, governor, thank you so much for being with us this morning.

Gov. PATRICK: Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: We'll be back in one minute with Leon Panetta, the former chief of staff in Bill Clinton's White House.

Thank you, governor.

Gov. PATRICK: Thank you.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And with us now from Monterey, California, former Clinton White House chief of staff Leon Panetta.

Mr. Panetta, thank you for coming. Well, you just heard Governor Patrick say if Obama comes to the convention with the largest share of the popular vote, with more victories in the caucuses and primaries than Senator Clinton and with more delegates, then you really shouldn't deny him the nomination. What's your response to that?

Mr. LEON PANETTA (Former White House Chief of Staff, Clinton Supporter): Well, it's been a long campaign, and I think all of us have to take a deep breath and let the rest of this campaign play out. We've got 10 more states that will determine how those primaries go. We've got the issue of the endorsements of people like Al Gore, John Edwards and others. We've got what happens with Michigan and Florida that's going to play a role here, and then ultimately it goes to the superdelegates.

Mr. PANETTA: But it seems to me that, in the end, that the superdelegates were created as an independent body; otherwise, they wouldn't exist. And they have to exercise independent judgment. Yes, they have to consider the popular vote, who's ahead. Yes, they have to consider who's got the most delegates. But they also have to consider who has the strongest chance of winning in November and who has the most momentum going into that race. I think all of those factors have to be considered by the superdelegates in deciding who the nominee is going to be.

SCHIEFFER: Well, wouldn't there be just absolute chaos at that convention if an African-American candidate came in there leading in all these categories and then these superdelegates, most of whom are white, basically took it away from him and gave it to Senator Clinton?

Mr. PANETTA: You know, we've got--we have a very unique race on our hands. For the first time in our history, we've got a woman running for presidency of the United States with a good chance of getting the nomination. We have a black who's running for president of the United States with a good chance of getting the nomination. I think the Democrats ought to be in a situation where they understand that we really do have a very unique chance of not only getting someone who never in history has had the opportunity to run for president, but also that we have a very good chance of winning in November. The only way we can win in November is if the party comes together behind whoever is selected as the nominee. If different segments and constituencies go off, if this party breaks apart, then clearly we'll probably pull defeat from the jaws of victory. But if the nomination is one in which all of the party comes together and decides 'this is the strongest nominee, this is the strongest ticket,' then I think the Democrats have to unify behind that ticket and put a good race on for November.

SCHIEFFER: Well, Doug Wilder, the former governor of Virginia and now the mayor of Richmond, was on this broadcast a couple of weeks ago. And he said, if what I just described happened, he said it would be pandemonium. He said the '68 convention in Chicago would be nothing compared to what would erupt this time around. Do you think he's overstating it?

Mr. PANETTA: Well, I think there're going to be a lot of people who are going to overstate a lot of things in these next few weeks. We've already seen this last week and the kind of statements that have been made by a number of people. But, you know, my sense is that, as this race plays out and we go through these remaining primaries, we see what happens with the superdelegates as they come down, that it may well be that, before we get to the convention, that there may be an agreement as to where the nomination is going. And if that happens, I think the party will be unified. Clearly, if this goes to the floor of the convention and there is a lot of conflict and disputes and an ugly scene at the convention, then that certainly is not going to help whoever becomes the nominee of the party.

SCHIEFFER: Well, why do you think this campaign suddenly has taken such a negative turn? It's been a pretty good campaign up until the last couple of weeks, and then all of a sudden, you know, we showed some of these clips just a little earlier. What do you think's happened here?

Mr. PANETTA: Well, there're obviously a lot of distractions that take place as individuals connected with both campaigns make statements--some silly, some that are very divisive--and the press focuses on those statements. But I think, in the end, it is about the two candidates. They're the ones that are running for president. And I would hope that both candidates understand that they have to keep this on a high plane. They've got to talk about the issues facing this country. Look, whoever is elected president, whoever runs for president is going to face some of the most incredible crises we've ever faced in our history. We've got two wars on our hands. We've got the war on terror. We've got an economy that's probably in the worst crisis since the '30s. We've got record deficits. We have record gas prices. We've got a falling dollar. The next president of the United States is going to face some huge crises, and that is what these candidates ought to be talking about, and that's what the country ought to be focusing on.

SCHIEFFER: Well, do you think that Senator Clinton is trying to remind everybody that Barack Obama is an African-American? Do you think that's part of the strategy here?

Mr. PANETTA: You know, I think that the fact is that Barack Obama is running for the presidency, happens to be black, and Hillary Clinton is running for the presidency, and she happens to be a woman. I really do think that the principal issue here is not race, not whether she's a woman, but what is there position on issues, and how are they going to confront these crises I just talked about. That's what the American people care about, and that's what they're going to be looking to, and it's the candidate who says to the American people, 'This is what I want to do to confront these issues,' and presents those kinds of solutions, presents the kind of tough and difficult path that we're going to have to follow here to fix this country. It's that candidate who I think is going to win. And it's--it isn't related to race and it's not related to sex or gender. It's related to what candidate is presenting the best solutions to try to deal with these crises.

SCHIEFFER: Do you think Senator Clinton will have to put Barack Obama on the ticket if she hopes to get the African-American vote after what is already a very bruising primary here?

Mr. PANETTA: Well, there's talk, as you know, about the dream ticket. And whatever that is, I--you know, I think sometimes in politics everybody likes their particular dream ticket. And I, you know, I would think that either one of these individuals who get the nomination may want the

flexibility to decide who they want on their ticket to try to deal with the--both the political issues and substantive issues they're going to have to confront. But clearly, if this is a divided convention, and if it's one in which you've got constituencies in the Democratic Party going in different directions, it may be that some kind of combined ticket of these two candidates may be necessary in order to bring the party together and in order to win in November.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, Mr. Panetta, thank you very much for your insights this morning. It's nice to talk to you again.

Mr. PANETTA: Thanks, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: We'll be back in a moment with our roundtable discussion.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And joining us now for a campaign quick check, Clarence Page of the Chicago Tribune, a columnist there; and David Brooks, who is a columnist for The New York Times.

Well, gentlemen, what do you make of this? All of a sudden we have these inflammatory statements, Geraldine Ferraro coming out there. Do you think this stuff is hurting Barack Obama?

Mr. DAVID BROOKS (The New York Times): I do. I thought his statement on Jeremiah Wright, his pastor, was perfect.

SCHIEFFER: Hm.

Mr. BROOKS: I thought it was a fantastic statement that really elevated the campaign for the first time in two weeks.

Nonetheless, over the long term I think this is going to be a tough period for Barack Obama. It's going to be trench warfare. This is something the Clintons are very good at.

Mr. CLARENCE PAGE (Chicago Tribune): Mm-hmm.

Mr. BROOKS: And the psychology could really change. We've got 10 races, maybe more. We've got months and months and months. The psychology could change so that, if say Clinton wins eight of the last 10, it won't be--he'll still have more pledged delegates, he'll still have more national votes, but he could be trailing in the national polls and people could think, 'Well, maybe he isn't ready.' So Clinton--I still would bet on Obama getting the nomination, but this sort of trench warfare the Clintons are good at. I think she really has a--still has a shot at this thing.

SCHIEFFER: Do you think this is by design, these things that we're seeing here, Clarence? I mean, Geraldine Ferraro, I mean...

Mr. PAGE: Mm-hmm.

SCHIEFFER: ...she comes out there and says this, and then she's separated from the campaign. Other people have said--made provocative statements.

Mr. PAGE: You know, it's hard for me to say whether Geraldine Ferraro deliberately was trying to be provocative. I don't think she was trying. But the campaign is in the sort of state of trench warfare in which any statement will be re-spun if at all possible. You remember when Bill Clinton made a comparison between Obama and Jesse Jackson in '88. This was immediately taken as a shot at Obama and bringing race back into the campaign and a statement that Obama and Jackson are essentially the same. That's kind of what Geraldine Ferraro did the other day.

But, you know, I think this is all the sort of thing that Obama needed to be expecting, and I suspect from that brilliant statement that he did make in regard to his religious belief that that was a statement that told me this guy's been thinking about this for a while. He knew Jeremiah Wright, that controversy was coming down the road. He's been profiled before. And these kind of things do come up. So this is all part of the test of any candidate who's looking for a critical office to see how well can he get through this situation.

SCHIEFFER: What about Michigan and Florida? What's the way out of this for the Democrats?

Mr. BROOKS: I think they're going to re-vote. It looks more likely in Michigan right now than Florida, but I think at the end of the day they're going to re-vote. And this is why I think the psychology could really change. Pennsylvania's going to be built up by the press. We're going to be sitting there in Pennsylvania for weeks, and it's going to be built up as a major test of the two candidates. And say Clinton wins. We're going to--she's going to be on the cover of all the magazines, she'll get all the glorious coverage. Then she goes on and wins again in Florida and maybe again in Michigan. Suddenly she doesn't look like a vicious, beaten woman who's desperately trying to claw her way back into this race.

Mr. PAGE: Mm-hmm. Yep.

SCHIEFFER: What do you think, Clarence, about what I just described just a minute ago to Leon Panetta?

Mr. PAGE: That scenario of the convention? Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

SCHIEFFER: He comes in--Obama--with the most delegates, the most--the biggest part of the popular vote and the superdelegates who are--the majority of them are white, decide to give it to Hillary Clinton.

Mr. PAGE: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

SCHIEFFER: Will African-American voters vote, or will they stay home if that happens?

Mr. PAGE: I'm hearing the--the conventional wisdom among black folks right now is, 'Well, if Hillary Clinton goes and prevents him from getting what is fair, then I'm not going to vote for her,' or 'I'll vote for John McCain.' It remains to be seen if people really would do that. But certainly that kind of sentiment is already being talked about. You know, Democrats are

traditionally a fractious party. They love to have internal debates that turn into arguments, and then they come back together again.

This is--to me, I think that at--having--remembering '68 and '72 and '80, if the Democrats don't sell this before their convention and present to the world a nice infomercial that conventions usually are in this era, then they're asking for trouble in November. And they know that. The old timers, they're--certainly remember what's happened in the past. And exactly how they're going to resolve this, if it continues to be the kind of dead heat race that it is, I don't know.

SCHIEFFER: The so-called dream ticket. You think that's a possibility? I mean, my sense of it is that she may have to put Barack Obama on the ticket if she wants to get a big African-American turnout.

Mr. BROOKS: I guess so. But, you know, they dislike each other. And I just dislike the idea of the candidates who dislike each other are going to serve together.

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. BROOKS: John Edwards and John Kerry disliked each other and it really ruined the campaign.

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. BROOKS: But they may be forced into it by the violence of the--of this...(unintelligible).

SCHIEFFER: Lyndon Johnson and John Kennedy didn't have much love for each other.

Mr. BROOKS: Yeah, it didn't always work out so well in that case, either.

SCHIEFFER: And John Kennedy wouldn't have been president had it not been for Lyndon Johnson.

Mr. PAGE: They had a great strategy, though. You know, LBJ worked the South, Kennedy...

SCHIEFFER: Yeah.

Mr. PAGE: ...worked the North and all and it worked out. I just want to say, Bob, if I'm nominated I want David Brooks to be my running mate.

SCHIEFFER: There you go.

Mr. PAGE: Because--and David, it's always an honor to be out here with him.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, on that note we'll say thanks to both of you and give you a chance to get out and get your campaign under way.

Back with a final word in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And finally today, a new Pew Foundation poll shows more than one-third of the American people are closely following this campaign. I'm not surprised. This campaign is creating interest in a way that we haven't seen in years.

But here is what really bothers me. Twice this many people--12 percent--had more interest in the death of movie actor Heath Ledger than were following developments in Iraq. Only 6 percent said they were closely following the war news. Only 28 percent knew the death toll in the war has now risen to nearly 4,000. There are reasons: The elections and the shaky economy and the fact the war zone is quieter now have pushed the war off TV and the front pages, and for many it has become out of sight, out of mind. With an all-volunteer military made up of only one-half of 1 percent of us making the sacrifices in this war, it's easy for the rest of us to forget the war still goes on.

Certainly there have been few reminders from the campaign trail. John McCain says it is still winnable, but he hasn't said what winning it will take. The Democrats haven't said much beyond 'we have to withdraw at some point.' As long as Iraq is relatively quiet, the candidates'd rather not talk about it. It puts people in a bad humor. But it is still there, and we can't ignore it forever. It won't let us.

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

