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

CBS News

FACE THE NATION

Sunday, April 27, 2008

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BOB SCHIEFFER, host:

Today on FACE THE NATION, is the race for the Democratic nomination tearing the party apart? Less than two weeks remain before the Indiana and North Carolina primaries, but is the bitter race dividing the party? And is the split along racial lines? We'll talk with top advisers to the two campaigns: for Senator Clinton, Howard Wolfson; for Senator Obama, David Axelrod.

Then we'll talk with former CBS News correspondent Roger Mudd, who's got a new book out about television, politics and the way it used to be.

I'll have a final word on history in the making.

But first, is the campaign hurting the party 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.

Joining us from Chicago, Obama's chief campaign strategist, David Axelrod. With us from New York, Clinton communication director and strategist Howard Wolfson.

Gentlemen, thank you both for coming. I want to get right to it, this whole idea that a racial divide is developing in the Democratic Party. Mr. Wolfson, let me just quote something that was said by James Clyburn. He, of course, is the African-American congressman from South Carolina. He's the third-ranking member of the Democratic congressional leadership. He said, according to The New York Times, there is a widely-held opinion among African-Americans that the Clintons are committed to doing everything possible to damage Senator Obama to the point that he won't be able to win the general election, the idea being to set it up so Hillary Clinton can run against John McCain four years from now. How do you respond to that kind of a charge?

Mr. HOWARD WOLFSON (Communications Director, Clinton Campaign): Well, we just disagree. First of all, this primary contest has been great for the Democratic Party. We have seen record turnout in states that Senator Obama won, and we've seen record turnout in states that Senator Clinton won, most recently in Pennsylvania. Democrats are enthused, they're excited. They want to send a Democrat to the White House.

SCHIEFFER: Well, why then would Congressman Clyburn say something like that?

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, I'm sure he's sincere in saying that, and he's, of course, entitled to his belief, but I think that both the Obama campaign and the Clinton campaign are absolutely committed to coming together at the conclusion of this process, coming behind whoever the nominee is, and enthusiastically supporting that person. I believe that person will be Senator Clinton, of course. But regardless of the outcome of this primary contest, we're going to come together as a party, we're going to go behind whoever is the nominee, and we're going to do everything we can to elect that person because the stakes are that high.

SCHIEFFER: Well, David Axelrod, what do you say in response to that?

Mr. DAVID AXELROD (Chief Strategist, Obama Campaign): Well, you know, in many ways I agree with Howard. I think that we do have a party that's very, very focused on winning. We understand that a continuation of these Republican policies would be disastrous for people across Indiana, across North Carolina, who are sitting there this morning watching this program and going through their bills and wondering how they're going to pay them, and know that we can't afford more of the same Bush economic policies.

But--and the question is how we get to that change, and I think there--that's important. We do have to come together as--not just as a party, but as a country. We have to get past our divisions. We have to push back on the special interests in Washington. We have to level with the American people about what needs to be done and move forward, and that's what Senator Obama is offering.

I don't, by the way, believe that Senator Clinton--I think she's competing very hard. I don't think she's doing it because she wants to defeat Senator Obama in the fall, I think she's doing it because she wants to be the nominee, and we have a very spirited battle going right now.

SCHIEFFER: Well, let's talk about that just a little bit, because not only are we seeing a divide here over race--she gets 65 percent of the white vote in Pennsylvania, he got 90 percent of the black vote--we see a difference, a breakdown in age--he seems to do better among the younger, she does better among the older. He does better among those in a higher economic level, she does better with those at the lower level. Is it going to come down to, don't both of these candidates need each other, and won't, no matter who wins this thing, won't they have to put the other one on the ticket, Mr. Wolfson?

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, I think both of them have run very strong races. But I think it is very premature to talk about a ticket at this point. We have many contests yet to come. We have nine contests remaining. We're very much looking forward to those contests. Millions of Americans have yet to weigh in. We have Florida and Michigan yet to be decided. And so there's a long road ahead of us. And, as David said, we're having a spirited but fair battle between two very strong candidates.

SCHIEFFER: Well, what is it that has caused this divide, Mr. Wolfson? Why is it the party seems--it looks like there's just a wide gap here between what people on one side of the party think and what a whole different group think on the other side. Why do you think that is?

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, I don't think that's unusual. I think you have two strong candidates with a lot of passionate supporters, and I think an awful lot has been written about Senator Obama's ability to inspire his supporters. Senator Clinton also has an enormous ability to inspire her supporters. Some of those are different people. But as we saw in Pennsylvania, she is somebody who can appeal to working people, people who have real concerns about this economy. She won overwhelmingly with those voters who were concerned about the economy. She has been campaigning strongly throughout this country, appealing to the middle class and focusing on people who want to turn this economy around, want to get gas prices down, want to get health care for everyone. But--so I don't think there's anything unusual that both candidates should inspire strong passions in the behalf of their supporters.

SCHIEFFER: Well, Mr. Axelrod, why is it that Senator Obama's having such a hard time getting through to working-class Democrats? I mean, I think it'd be very difficult for any Democrat to get elected without a large African-American vote, but, by the same token, how's a Democrat going to win if he can't win blue-collar voters?

Mr. AXELROD: Well, and certainly Senator Obama has proven through many of these primaries that he can do very well with that vote. Don't assume that because Senator Clinton did well in some that that means that we can't do well in the general election with these voters. And we've in--according to the places where there were exit polls in a dozen or so of these states we carried, we carried that vote.

But, Bob, yes, we need that vote, and we need--we need the votes of minorities and we need the votes of independent voters, we need the votes of disaffected Republicans. And what Senator Obama has done in these primaries and what he would do as a general election candidate is bring all these elements together in the coalition we need to win. We can't win with any single one of them; we have to have all of them. And that entails having a candidate who can, as Howard says, inspire and encourage people to come together and see our common stake in each other as Americans. We've been missing that in our politics, and I think that's one of the reasons Senator Obama has engendered such enthusiasm and brought so many new people into the process.

SCHIEFFER: Well, I mean, with all--with all due respect to both of you, you both say that these are candidates who can bring all these people together, but at this point, neither of them has. Why do you suppose that is?

Mr. AXELROD: Well, I..

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, I--go ahead, David.

Mr. AXELROD: Well, first of all, I--you know, I do--one of the reasons I think that Senator Obama will be the nominee and will be the strongest candidate in the fall is I think he has a greater ability to bring all of these elements--all of these elements together.

But again, Bob, let me repeat what I said at the beginning. I think there's a hunger for change in this country. I think people are going to come together in a great coalition for change. I think it's important that that change be not just change of party, but a change of politics in Washington. We can't continue to play the same games we've played for the last several decades, or we're going to have the same result that we had for the last several decades on energy, on health care, on all the issues that are touching people's lives right now. So it's critically important that we change the politics of Washington. I think that's something that Senator Obama would bring to his--to the nomination and to the presidency.

SCHIEFFER: Mr. Wolfson.

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, Bob, I think after significant losses in Ohio and Pennsylvania on behalf of Senator Obama, I think Democrats do have questions about whether or not he is going to be able to reach out and successfully win over the kind of blue-collar voters that Democrats need to win in order to take the White House back in November. I think Senator Obama was well poised to win Ohio, he was well poised to win Pennsylvania. He outspent us in Pennsylvania three-to-

one; he set spending records in Pennsylvania. And the fact that he was unable to put Senator Clinton away in these two key battleground states I think does raise questions on behalf of Democrats around the country about whether or not he would be our best nominee to face John McCain in the fall.

SCHIEFFER: I'll let you respond to that, David Axelrod.

Mr. AXELROD: Yeah, Bob. The fact is that we never--these were strong states for Senator Clinton, they were in the beginning. From the beginning of the campaign we had--we had them identified as probable wins for Senator Clinton. Our goal in Pennsylvania was to limit her margin there. We did that. Got in to single digits coming from 22 points. But let's be clear. Seven months ago, Howard, Mark Penn and others at the Clinton campaign were essentially writing us off, talking about her as the inevitable nominee. We've won two-thirds of the primaries and caucuses that have taken place since then. So the question really is, how do you go from inevitable nominee to not winning two-thirds of the primary? That creates significant questions about your ability to move forward.

And looking forward, understand that in many of these states we are as competitive or more competitive than Senator Clinton. There was a poll last week that showed us leading in her home state of New York by a point more than she was. But beyond that, we're bringing in states that we have to have if we're going to expand the playing field. We're leading in states like Oregon and Washington and Colorado, where she is not. We're doing--we're leading in Iowa, where she is not. We have to win these states in order to build a winning coalition in November. So--and to do that you have to bring in independent voters, you have to bring in disaffected Republicans, you have to bring in people up and down the income scale; and Senator Obama, I think, has the best chance to do that.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, let's take a quick break here. We'll be back in one minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: We're back again with David Axelrod and Howard Wolfson.

Mr. Wolfson, I want to ask you about Bill Clinton.

Mr. WOLFSON: Sure.

SCHIEFFER: You know, he had the reputation of being one of the most gifted politicians of our time--even Republicans would say that--yet he has made a series of remarks during this campaign. He was very dismissive, of course, of Barack Obama down in South Carolina. He brought up all this business about Mrs. Clinton being under sniper fire when the story seemed to be dying. And then--at then suggested at one point that maybe she said it because she was 60 years old, suggesting that, you know, she was getting old. What do you think is going on with him, and why does he keep saying things like this?

Mr. WOLFSON: Well I think in fairness, Bob, the media has not exactly covered President Clinton all that fairly. He has a grueling schedule, he is out doing event after event in places that the major candidates are not going to. He is a tireless campaigner, and everywhere he goes he

wins over votes. He is Senator Clinton's best advocate and he gets large crowds everywhere he goes, great press wherever he goes, and I think that that has not been reported enough. He is really, in a lot of ways, our secret weapon, and I think anyone would love to have him on their side in any political contest.

SCHIEFFER: Well, Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic speaker of the House, is--suggested he was having sort of a senior moment when he started talking about that Bosnia incident. So I'm not sure that she would agree that it's the fault of the press on this one.

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, look, I look at the results. Where senator--where President Clinton goes, we do well. If you look at his travel in Pennsylvania, he went to counties that Senator Obama and Senator Clinton were not able to go into as much, and we got huge votes out of those counties. So he is very popular among Democrats. He's very popular among Americans of all parties, and I think he's been a tremendous, tremendous asset to this campaign.

SCHIEFFER: What do you think about it, Mr. Axelrod? Do you think any of this has been calculated, or is he just making mistakes or...

Mr. AXELROD: Well I can't climb into President Clinton's head and explain why he said some of the things he said, and some of them have been regrettable. But I--let me say this. He--his wife is running for president of the United States, and he is working very, very hard to try and get her elected president of the United States. And to some degree, that's understandable. And maybe some of these indiscreet remarks can be written off to the passion he feels about trying to get his wife elected president, so I think it should be seen in that perspective.

I do think that it is important for everybody in the process, whether they're surrogates or candidate--the candidates themselves, to be thoughtful about the things that they say, because words do have meaning, and they can be very disruptive and divisive. And we don't need that as a party; and frankly, we don't need that as a country.

SCHIEFFER: Speaking of surrogates and friends and so forth, Reverend Wright, Senator Obama's rather controversial pastor, is back in the news. He gave a big interview to Bill Moyers over the weekend, labeled Obama just another politician. I'm told he's going to make a speech now at the National Press Club this week. Do you find Reverend Wright helpful to the Obama campaign, Mr. Axelrod?

Mr. AXELROD: Well, Bob, first of all, I wouldn't--I saw the interview. I don't think I'd characterize him as saying he was just another politician. He said he had a different role, that he was a pastor, and Barack was a politician and public figure, and they--and those are different roles. And, of course, that's true.

But Reverend Wright has a right to speak--the truth is that he has been, in certain ways, you know, an unwilling participant in this campaign. He is a--he is a minister, he's not a politician. All of a sudden, he's been thrust into the national scene. And the fact is that while he said some things that are--that were, you know, very objectionable in his--and they were put together on a reel and shown to the country, you know, he feels, I'm sure, that there's more to the story, as people saw on the Moyers thing. And Senator Obama said yesterday he didn't go to church to worship his pastor, he went to church to worship God and to be part of a community, a church

community, the United Church of Christ, and that particular church that's done a lot of great things in the community and kind of lived out the prophetic word, in terms of taking care of the needy and the poor and so on. I'm sure he wants to get that story out, and that's for him to do, we have no control over what he does.

SCHIEFFER: Well, do you--Mr. Wolfson, do you think people ought to hold Senator Obama accountable for things that his pastor has said?

Mr. WOLFSON: Well, I think that's up to voters. I think voters in Pennsylvania were mostly holding Senator Obama accountable for things that he said. I think there was a lot of concern in Pennsylvania over the remarks that Senator Obama made in California about voters clinging to religion because they were economically distressed. I think there was a lot of concern about the fact that Senator Obama was saying he didn't take PAC money or lobbyist money when, in fact, he had taken almost \$2 million in money from PACs and lobbyists and corporations throughout his career. So I think voters in Pennsylvania were reacting more to what Senator Obama was saying than anything else.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, gentlemen, I want to thank both of you for coming by this morning. We'll back--be back in just a minute, and talk with my old friend Roger Mudd.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And joining us now, someone who's no stranger around these parts, CBS News correspondent--former CBS News correspondent Roger Mudd, who's written a new book called "The Place To Be: Washington, CBS and the Glory Days of Television News."

Roger, welcome back to CBS.

Mr. ROGER MUDD (Former CBS News Correspondent; Author, The Place to Be): Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: It is a pleasure to be here. Well, I'm going to ask you the question that everybody asks me: Have you ever seen anything like this campaign we're seeing here?

Mr. MUDD: It is unprecedented, isn't it? Just aside from the Republican side, just the Democratic side is phenomenal in itself: A black American and a woman, and the choice is unprecedented.

SCHIEFFER: Well, thinking back on it, how does this compare to some of the campaigns you covered, starting all the way back to, what, 1964, I guess, was your first campaign? Or maybe it was 1960, I don't...

Mr. MUDD: '60. '60.

SCHIEFFER: Uh-huh.

Mr. MUDD: Well, back then, in the--in the--in the '60s and the '70s, you could get very close to candidates. It was in the '70s when the Secret Service moved in, following the assassinations of...

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: ...Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. And at that point--of course, the president already had the Secret Service, but now candidates for the presidency got Secret Service protection. And suddenly there was a cocoon in which the candidate operated. And they were with him every moment. So there was a distance between the candidate and you that had not existed before.

But I think, Bob, the main change from those years to this period is the proliferation of debates. If you remember, you didn't get a debate until after the convention, after the parties had picked their two nominees.

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: There was the Kennedy-Nixon great debate in 1960. Johnson refused to debate. Nixon refused to debate. It was not until Gerry Ford and Carter got together. And there was a series of debates, and there was a mistake in each one of them that damaged that candidate. You remember, Gerry Ford said Poland was free?

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: And Ronald Reagan came and said to Carter, 'There you go again.' And Reagan said to Mondale, 'I won't use age'...

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: ...'as a weapon against you.'

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: And they caught George Bush looking at his watch. Remember all those?

SCHIEFFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. MUDD: But now the debates are all the time, and those debates now furnish the raw material of the coverage.

SCHIEFFER: In a way, I think that's sort of good, though, because it was getting--so many of these campaigns were getting to be where most of the people were getting their information was on the television commercials. And even though we were out there and the papers were out there covering these things, surveys would show that it was the commercials that were the deciding thing. At least people are getting something that sort of counters those commercials. You can't do enough stories on the evening news or even on cable to balance out the number of commercials that are read. So I sort of think that's good.

Mr. MUDD: Well, it is good. I mean, every access that the voter has to a candidate is good. The question is whether those debates are, in fact, genuine debates or whether they're practiced,

professionally coached spinning. I mean, I watched you interview Mr. Wolfson and Mr. Axelrod, and they didn't lay a glove on you, Bob, did they?

SCHIEFFER: No. They didn't get off the talking points.

Mr. MUDD: Yeah.

SCHIEFFER: I mean, they were like little boys in Sunday school. They've been told to behave themselves on Sunday morning. I find that a little bit striking, because this campaign--how really harsh it has become.

Why'd you decide to write this book, Roger? And I must say, it is charming. It's a lovely book about a time that seems like a long time ago to me, but--when we were all in this bureau and we were having so much fun playing tricks on one another, and actually doing some serious work, covering the news. What caused you, after all these years, to decide to put it down on paper?

Mr. MUDD: I wanted, by indirection, to demonstrate, or to lay out, what life was like back then and what it meant to a viewer, and to show that there were and could be again serious journalists working--not that they don't work hard now, but there is such a proliferation of outlets that there is no place to go, or very few places that you can go on television and watch a professionally produced rundown of what's happened in the world today. There are so many voices now, so many competing voices that it's hard to find a place.

SCHIEFFER: Well, it's a wonderful book, and I hope you sell a lot of them. I think people will really enjoy it, Roger. Thank you so much for being with us this morning.

I'll have a final word in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Finally today, we keep hearing that, no matter what, this is an historic election. The possibility of the first woman president or the oldest person to win the presidency, or perhaps the first African-American to win, and all of that. Well, it will be November before we know which of those things happen, but we've already seen some firsts, or at least some pretty weird stuff.

Who'd have thought we would ever see one of Richard Nixon's daughters supporting a Democrat? But there was Julie Nixon Eisenhower's name listed as a contributor to the Obama campaign.

Who'd have thought the first African-American who had a real chance to be president would be defending himself against charges that he was a condescending elitist?

Who would have believed that a politician would call in the cameras to record her drinking whiskey? But there was Hillary Clinton knocking one back for the TV boys. It must have worked; she won Pennsylvania. But I just can't get it out of my mind how politicians with a drink in their hand used to give it to someone else or just turn tail and run when they saw a camera.

The times, they are a-changing. Are they ever. Else we never would have known that Hillary Clinton liked duck hunting. I guess we're not to the historic part yet, but so far it has been different.

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

