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



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TRANSCRIPT

HARRY SMITH: Today on FACE THE NATION, the politics of Medicare, jobs and the Joplin tornado.

This week Democrats won an upset victory in a New York special election. They said was a direct response to the Republican Medicare plan. But will Democrats get hurt by not having their own proposal? As Republicans try to turn the focus to jobs, we'll talk to House Majority Leader Eric Cantor. Then we'll hear from the newly elected chairwoman of the Democratic Party Debbie Wasserman Shultz.

Plus, this year is now officially the deadliest tornado season since 1950. Will the affected states get the help they need from the government? As the President gets set to tour the area, we'll get the latest on the devastation in Joplin.

It's all ahead on FACE THE NATION.

ANNOUNCER: FACE THE NATION with CBS News chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer. And now from Washington, substituting for Bob Schieffer, Harry Smith.

HARRY SMITH: Good morning and welcome to FACE THE NATION. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor is here with us. But today, we're first going to go and get an update on this week's big story--the Joplin tornado, which took one hundred thirty-nine lives and that number is expected to get higher. President Obama will be there later today, to tour the devastation and speak at a memorial service. I spoke with the governor of Missouri just a short while ago.

Governor, good morning. And thank you for taking the time to be with us today. Now that it's almost a week since this tornado hit Joplin, is it possible to put into words just the-- the-- the scope of the devastation and the-- and the human suffering that your city is enduring?

GOVERNOR JAY NIXON (D-Missouri): Well, with the-- with the focal point during the early part of the week and quite frankly even all night last night into work, it has been hard to kind of put into context how deep this destruction is. But I think today's memorial service when people have a moment just to pause for an hour and pray together and think about this, they'll begin to see the pictures of the hundreds of friends who are gone, the schools that are gone, the fact that it's going to be a long, long pullback for the people of Joplin. I-- I-- I feel resolve here. But there-- there's going to be some sad moments here over the next few days.

HARRY SMITH: We saw an enormous amount of-- of-- of-- of motivation there during the week, this week of people trying to put their lives back together again. But this is going to require an enormous amount of federal money. Have you gotten an-- an assurance from anyone on the federal level that Joplin in Missouri will get the money it needs to rebuild?

GOVERNOR JAY NIXON: Well, in my state side to make whatever match is available I order my budget director to put millions aside, the other day, twenty-five million just to begin the process here so that we would have our state match money available. We'll be talking to-- well, I've talked obviously to all the secretaries. The President is in today. We'll make our-- we'll make our case. And I-- and I'm sure it will be an effective case to make sure we get the-- the-- the dollars that other regions have gotten. But quite frankly really the healing here has got to start from the souls and the heart. We got to have a commitment to rebuild and it's going to take a

long time. I mean there's going to be a-- a tremendous amount of potential frustration, a tremendous amount of pain and-- and an anguish through this process. And I see our role not just to be the accountant in chief but more importantly to be somebody who-- who-- who is working to make sure with each one of these families that have suffered disasters that they get back to it. That school starts again next year on time, that families get back to work, that the folks are hired here to rebuild this are-- are from-- from this community so we don't lose folks from this area. We're focused on-- on the long haul. But in the short run today on this-- this very emotional day memorial service with the-- this sort of devastating loss.

HARRY SMITH: But in an era when budget deficit cutting is-- seems to be the most important thing that people here are talking about in Washington, do you-- are you concerned at all that you may not get the money you need in-- in the end of the day to-- to get your town rebuilt?

GOVERNOR JAY NIXON: I'm-- I'm confident we'll find the resources to get this done from what other-- whatever method it takes. I mean, we've had an-- an unbelievable outpouring of private donations already and-- and I have a great deal of experience with our federal partners. I-- I fully expect that we will have the resources to rebuild here. The bottom line is I-- I am confident that, you know, when it comes to priorities, when-- when-- when God chooses your town and takes it away from you, then the people of Missouri and the people of America are going to do everything within our power to make sure we help rebuild this town.

HARRY SMITH: Governor, we thank you very much for your time today. Do appreciate it.

GOVERNOR JAY NIXON: Thanks, Harry.

HARRY SMITH: And joining us now House Majority Leader Eric Cantor. Mister Leader thanks very much for being here.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR (R-Virginia/Majority Leader): Good morning, Harry.

HARRY SMITH: One of the things you said earlier this week is that emergency funding should be offset by cuts to the budget deficit. Do you standby that?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: First of all, Harry, I-- I know that America is just stunned by the scope of devastation and loss and-- and the horrific tragedy that the people of Joplin and other places across the country really are experiencing this tornado season. And so I know. And our hearts go out to them. And also we see in the healing process that there is an appropriate federal role. Congress will find the money and it'll be offset. And we're going to wait for the President to come forward with his recommendations as to the amounts. And again, Congress will have the money to help begin the rebuilding and the healing process in Joplin.

HARRY SMITH: But will you insist that there is a quid pro quo that there's a trade?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: You know, Harry, it-- it's like this if when a family is struck with tragedy, like the family of Joplin, you know, they have, let's say if they had, you know, ten thousand dollars set aside to do something else with--to buy a new car, to do something else. And then they were struck with a sick member of the family or something and needed to take that money to apply it to that, that's what they would do because families don't have unlimited money. And-- and really neither does the federal government. But there's no question there's a federal role here to play.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Congress will find the money. It will be offset. And until the President comes forward with his recommendation--

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --about how much, you know, I know there were plenty of charitable efforts going on now. JoinJoplin.org is a terrific organ-- effort on the part of the alliance on aging in Missouri.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And I know all of America wants to join to help people who have been so struck by tragedy.

HARRY SMITH: Let's talk about the special election that took place earlier this week up in New York, up in New York 26. Some people suggested that Medicare was in fact, the single issue that put the election over in a fa-- favor of the Democrats. Do you believe that's true?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Well, I mean, Harry, I don't think and it's undeniable that it played some role in the election. But any time you have one side demagoguing and frankly, accusing the other side in-- in-- in a way that's not factual of trying to reform the program, certainly that's going to influence an electorate. But listen, as far as Medicare is concerned, you know, there's a simple choice here. Either we're going to save the program or you let it go bankrupt. And, in fact, we put forward a program to reform Medicare and to save it. But this Congressional Budget Office as well as the trustees--

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --of the program itself say it will go bankrupt. The real question--

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): In the next decade.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --it-- within next decade. So for those fifty-four and younger in this country, they won't have the Medicare that exists today. And it's a fact.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And so the question is and I know Debbie Wasserman Shultz will be on after me-- I'd ask her where is their plan?

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: They don't have a plan. We put a plan forward. And, you know, again it's a question of leadership here.

HARRY SMITH: Do-- do you and the rest of the Republicans in the House stand by the Ryan plan as-- as you all voted for?

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Ab-- absolutely. I mean, you've seen that. And you've seen the vote in the Senate. We put forward a plan that saves 6.2 trillion dollars over the ten-year budget window included in that is a necessary reforms to save the, you know, entitlement programs.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR (overlapping): We know--

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): But the-- but the question becomes, is it-- is the voucher the answer? Is that the only answer? Because, if I understand it correctly, I get a voucher and then I have to go out on the marketplace and hope I'm going to get the insurance I need. And if that's the-- that's the case, you're talking about medical rationing. You're talking about going to insurance companies to-- to get what you hope you-- you deserve.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Well, Harry, I'm-- the-- the-- the reforms that we put forward would apply to everyone fifty-four and younger. And again, what it does is it reforms the program to ensure its still there. And it is much like what most people have with their employer plans.

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: That they are by the employer given the benefit but then choose from a variety of plans out there that best fit their family's needs. So it's an attempt to try and personalize the-- the Medicare program to allow seniors to choose much like they have with the Medicare Part D program--

HARRY SMITH: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --when it comes to prescription drugs. But we believe very strongly that if we can put in place the kind of reforms necessary in the health care arena to allow for more choice, to allow people to actually choose what's best for them and not have Washington do it, that that is the best way to reform. But again, I think the point is, Harry, the other side--

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --has not put forward any plan--

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): Are you—

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR (overlapping): --any plan.

HARRY SMITH: --are you concerned at all that this could turn into a political albatross though? I mean there are some Democrats that are saying, yahoo, look where they are. This is what we're going to run on and this is what's-- this could get us the House back.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Well, again this is demagoguery. I think it is the typical Medi-Scare, sort of tactics that the Democrats are using again. And I believe the country, you know, they understands what leadership is. And let's look at that Medicare program. Here are the facts. The facts are ten thousand people a day.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: New eligible people a day--

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): Pretty much.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --every single day--

HARRY SMITH: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --become entitled. Then secondly, when you look at the revenues arrive from Medicare premiums and taxes, they cover only a little over fifty percent of the program. So that means every single day times--

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --ten thousand you are fifty percent in the hole.

HARRY SMITH: And the cost that's--

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR (overlapping): You--

HARRY SMITH: --medical care continues to skyrocket.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --you can-- right. You cannot survive that.

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And that's a reality. And this is what is so striking is that Democrats have not put forward any plan whatsoever. It's bankruptcy for them. And so, I-- I think that the American people are tired of promises--

HARRY SMITH: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --being made and not kept.

HARRY SMITH: Let's talk about something else you introduced this week which was a-- a jobs program. And one of the key po-- portions of it was a notion to reduce corporate taxes down to twenty-five percent. Some people said, well, this sounds like stuff we've heard before. The Washington Post said, called it "old ideas with fancy new clip art." Is this-- are-- are these real ideas? Is this a real way to put people back to work?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Listen, Harry, I was hosting a small business job forum in my hometown of Richmond last week. I met with a number of small businesses and

entrepreneurs. And they weren't telling me, hey, we want something new. They don't really care about that. They care what works.

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And-- and what they said was that why can't we get a Washington that sort of helps us, not hurts us?

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And the kinds of things that they were asking for were lower the tax rate, try and put some common sense back into the regulatory environment here in Washington. Make it so that small business can invest again and create jobs. You know, there are too many people out of work in this country. And frankly, the economy is not growing enough. And our small business jobs plan is about speaking to the entrepreneurs that we know are the job engine.

HARRY SMITH: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And the question I would go back to you just like on the spending issue.

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Republicans have put forward a plan.

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Now we have also demonstrated again that cutting is just not enough. We've got to grow this economy. We've got a plan. Where's theirs?

HARRY SMITH: Let's talk about the cutting. You meet with Vice President Joe Biden twice a week, several hours each meeting. The rumblings we're hearing from it is that you're actually making progress. Have you really isolated a trillion dollars in-- in budget deficit reductions?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Those-- those talks which actually we've-- we've been meeting for I think over three weeks now, they have been, I think, all po-- all positive. Everything is on the table. We've said as Republicans we're not going to go for tax increases.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: I think the administration gets that.

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: But we've also put everything on the table as far as cuts. And I can see, yes, we-- we can accomplish well over a trillion dollars in cuts.

HARRY SMITH: Well over a trillion.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Well over a trillion dollars in cuts. But the-- the striking thing, Harry is, you know, you get people in the room of different philosophies--

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --and persuasions and I think what we've actually seen is it's easier to find places to cut and to gain efficiencies than the Democrats may have thought otherwise.

HARRY SMITH: Is Medicare included in this?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Everything is on the table. Everything on the table.

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And as we know the big drivers in our deficit often in the future are the health care entitlement programs.

HARRY SMITH: Right. Sarah Palin is in town this week. And she's getting ready to start a bus tour just in the last couple of days since that was announced. I mean she gets a lion's share of the attention. Would you like to see her get in this race?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: I mean, you know, listen, Sarah Palin is someone that I think reflects what we Republicans believe.

SARAH PALIN: Hello, Madison, Wisconsin.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: And that is this country has a choice to make. The-- the country has a choice to make this upcoming election, November '12. And that is do we want a country that speaks of more government and higher taxes or do we want a country that's-- that tilts towards the private sector and says, you know what, that's where the innovation comes from. That's where the opportunity lies. And I think Sarah Palin, like the other individuals looking at this race or in this race, believe very strongly that we have to put forward a plan to get that America that we know going again.

HARRY SMITH: You satis-- you satisfied with the candidates who are-- are-- are at least talking about running or said they're going to run, Republican candidates?

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Yes. The candidates that are in the race are serious. They've all said, you know what, Washington has not changed as far as the White House is concerned. What we hope to do as Republicans in the House to say--

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: --look, we want leadership. We want real leadership. And that's why we put forward these plans. And, in fact, I think our candidates are beginning to embrace the type of things we're doing because we're actually beginning to change the way that this town works. We just need some help in the White House and in the Senate.

HARRY SMITH: Do you want Michele Bachmann to stay in the House or do you want her to run for President.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Listen, Michele Bachmann is a great American. She's a smart woman. She's articulate. She is a--a-- a business woman, an attorney, a tax attorney. She is very qualified to do whatever it is she would like to do. And I've, you know had the pleasure of working with her and know she brings a lot to the table.

HARRY SMITH: Mister Leader, we sure appreciate you coming on this morning.

REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CANTOR: Harry, thank you.

HARRY SMITH: Thank you very much. We're going to be back in one minute to hear what the head of the Democratic Party has to say about all this, right when we come back.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

HARRY SMITH: We turn now to the newly-elected chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, Congresswoman Debbie-- Debbie Wasserman Shultz who is in Fort Lauderdale. Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ (D-Florida/Chair, Democratic National Committee): Good morning, Harry.

HARRY SMITH: So you heard what Congressman Cantor said about the Democratic response to this victory in New York 26. He called it demagoguery. Would you classify it as demagoguery?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Well, coming from the majority leader who was part of the architect of the 2010 elections focusing on scaring seniors a-- about what Democrats were-- were doing with Medicare, he would know. What-- what we're doing is making sure that we can prevent the Republicans from ending Medicare as we know it. And that's what Kathy Hochul ran on leading up to her vic-- victory this Tuesday in New York 26. We need to make sure that we won't continue to reform Medicare in the way that the Democrats have done under the Affordable Care Act, Harry. The trustees this week for Medicare said that we actually saved in the Affordable Care Act we reduced costs in Medicare by-- by twenty-six percent.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: We-- we made sure that we added eight years of solvency in the Affordable Care Act to Medicare and gave us room to sit down at the table like Eric Cantor has been with the vice president--

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: --to really negotiate some long-term reforms with Medicare.

HARRY SMITH: But the trustees also said just what-- a couple of Fridays ago that this thing could be insolvent in the next decade. Doesn't something really dramatic have to happen and as the congressman suggested the Republicans have a plan. Do the Democrats have a plan?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Like I said, the-- the Republicans have a plan to end the Medicare as we know it. What they would do is they would take the-- the people who are younger than fifty-five years old today and tell them you know what you're on your own. Go and find private health insurance in the-- in the health care insurance market. We're going to throw you to the wolves and allow insurance companies to deny you coverage and drop you for preexisting conditions. We're going to give you "x" amount of dollars and you figure it out. And these are people who have paid for their whole life into the system, are counting on that safety net. Americans sent a very strong message not just in New York this week--

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: --but in Jacksonville Florida last week when they elected a Democratic mayor for the first time in twenty years in a state House race in New Hampshire, same issue. Americans support Medicare and the structure that we have for Medicare.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: They want us to sit down together and work on some long-term reform--

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: --which is what the-- the Republicans and Democrats are doing with Vice President Biden right now.

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): All right. Would you--

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ (overlapping): That's the direction we need to go.

HARRY SMITH: One of your colleagues has suggested that Medicare puts the House back in play in 2012. Would you go as far as to agree with that?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Well, I think American voters have-- are making it clear that they have seen a preview of what the Republicans would do to Medicare, do to the direction that this country is-- would go. And they-- they're-- they're rejecting it. They're saying they don't like it. And so if-- if Republican candidates cling as my Republican colleagues in the House have to the Ryan plan to end Medicare, to what-- focusing on tax cuts for the wealthiest and insisting on that and balancing all the pain that we-- that-- that-- they're imposing on middle class and working families, then I think that Democratic candidates for Congress and President Obama and other Dem-- Democrats up and down the ballot are going to find some success.

HARRY SMITH: Do you think the Tea--

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ (overlapping): What we need to do is sit down together and work on our nation's problems.

HARRY SMITH: Do you think the Tea Party is losing some of its appeal?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: I-- I think Tea Party activists and Republican candidates elected to Congress by the Tea Party are finding that governing is hard. And that, you know, it's easy to, you know, to-- to throw bombs and-- and to be incendiary. Not so easy to sit down and actually govern. And-- and what we-- what we need to try to do is what the President called for, sit down around the table and deal with our long-term issues. And engage in shared sacrifice, Harry. That-- we-- we can't do what the Republicans want to do which is pile all the pain in terms of the cuts we need to make to our long-term deficit problems on the backs of people who can least afford it and the middle class and still preserve tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires.

HARRY SMITH: Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Americans don't think that's fair. And they're sending that signal in elections.

HARRY SMITH: Well, you've got this big new job now. And it's very interesting. This presidential election is going to be upon us before we know it. The Republican presidential field is starting to take shape a little bit. Who would you prefer they nominate?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Well, I mean, I'll leave who they nominate to the Republicans. We-- we certainly expect that they will have a vigorous primary. And the-- the-- the eventual Republican nominee will be battle tested. And we expect it to be a significant election like every presidential election is.

HARRY SMITH: The President's approval numbers have improved significantly in the last month or so. But if the unemployment numbers stay the same and the economy doesn't start catching fire, is President Obama re-electable?

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SHULTZ: Well, I think that the-- the President's approval numbers are improving because Americans like the direction that he's been taking this country. In my home state of Florida just a couple of days ago--

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): They showed don't-- his numbers on the economy still aren't good. They're quite bad, quite frankly.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: Well, you-- what Americans want us to do is focus on creating jobs and turning the economy around. They don't want us to focus on an extremely radical social agenda, which is what the Republicans have been proposing since they took the majority back in the House. They don't want us to-- to engage in-- in an imbalanced approach to dealing with our long-term deficit reduction needs. Both parties, Harry, have said, you know, we need about four trillion dollars in deficit reduction. But we don't need to be doing Americans have said, is doing that by slashing education, by slashing health care, by ending Medicare and hurting seniors.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: They want us to sit down together and take a balanced approach. And-- and-- and that's what we're pushing for. That's what President Obama has been pushing for. And Republicans seem to be pushing back against that. And Americans see it. I think that's reflective in the President's numbers.

HARRY SMITH: Right. And-- and you heard Eric Cantor say-- say just a couple of minutes ago, raising revenue is not-- is not going to be part of any package that they're going to agree with. Do you-- do you feel absolutely--

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (overlapping): At the same time, he was saying everything's on the table.

HARRY SMITH: --well and-- do you absolutely feel that raising--

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (overlapping): Typical.

HARRY SMITH: --taxes has to be a part of-- of getting this thing back in sync.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: Like I said I think both parties under President Obama's leadership and the-- the Republicans have said, you know, about four trillion dollars in deficit reduction is the right number. What we need to sit down and-- around the negotiating table and agree on is that there needs to be some shared sacrifice.

HARRY SMITH: Mm-Hm.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: The Democrats acknowledge under President Obama, you know, he said, look, there's-- there's things that we think are important that are going need to be cut--

HARRY SMITH: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: --that that we can't afford right now.

HARRY SMITH (overlapping): Congressman--

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (overlapping): Republicans need to make the same sacrifices.

HARRY SMITH: We have about twenty seconds left.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (overlapping): That-- that-- that and they're not-- they don't seem to be willing to do that.

HARRY SMITH: All right. We're going to leave it at that then. Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, the brand new, newly-elected chairwoman of the Democratic Party. We thank you very much for your time this morning.

REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: Thank you, Harry.

HARRY SMITH: You bet. We'll be right back.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

HARRY SMITH: Welcome back to FACE THE NATION. When I was a kid, we called it Decoration Day. I thought we called it Decoration Day because we all decorated our bikes with red, white and blue streamers and we'd follow the parade that ran through my hometown. The

parade ended at the VFW Hall and the World War II vets would stand in the parking lot sharing a laugh and a beer. We knew these were the guys who beat the Nazis. These were the guys who fought at Guadalcanal. No, we didn't know that Decoration Day started after the Civil War and that women would go to the graves of union soldiers and yes, decorate them. Decoration Day became Memorial Day and somewhere along the line it became the unofficial start of summer. Most of those men in the VFW parking lot have passed on and a lot of people didn't want to remember Vietnam. And today, a lot of people don't want to think about Iraq and Afghanistan, where more than six thousand service people have died. We should not let this holiday go by without remembering all of them.

Thanks for watching FACE THE NATION. Bob will be back next week.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

ANNOUNCER: This broadcast was produced by CBS News, which is solely responsible for the selection of today's guests and topics. It originated in Washington, DC.