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

CBS News

FACE THE NATION

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GUESTS: Senator JOE LIEBERMAN (I-CT)

**General WESLEY CLARK (Retired)
Obama Supporter**

**Mr. DAVID SANGER
The New York Times**

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

Today on FACE THE NATION, suddenly it's all about foreign policy. Barack Obama says he'll take a campaign break this summer and go to the Middle East and Europe. Will he stop in Iraq? And what does he think about the Bush administration's new deal with North Korea? We'll talk with one of his chief foreign policy advisers, retired General Wesley Clark, and we'll get the views of Democrat-turned-McCain adviser Joe Lieberman, senator from Connecticut.

David Sanger, the chief Washington correspondent for The New York Times, will be here with analysis on the campaign break for foreign policy. And I'll have a final thought on vacation destinations.

But first, Lieberman and Clark 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. Under the "who'd have thought it" category, eight years ago Senator Joe Lieberman was on the ticket, the vice presidential nominee running with Al Gore. Today he is supporting Republican John McCain.

Good morning to you, Senator.

Senator JOE LIEBERMAN (I-CT): Good morning to you, Bob. Good to be here.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you this. Is your problem with the Democratic Party in general or Barack Obama in particular?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: My problem is with the party overall, for sure. In other words, this is a--this is a separation that has occurred mostly on matters of foreign and defense policy, where I feel very strongly that the party that I joined when President John F. Kennedy was its leader--a party that believed in progressive government at home and a principled, strong internationalist foreign policy, economic policy, pro-trade--that party is not represented by the leaders today.

And that's why I decided to endorse Senator McCain. I did it last December, when all the candidates in both parties were there, and I did it for two main reasons. One is that John McCain is ready to be commander in chief on day one. He knows the world, he's been tested, he's ready to protect the security of the American people. Second, the biggest problem I think we have in our government today is reflexive, poisonous partisanship that stops the government in Washington from--Washington from working. It's been that way for, oh, the last two administrations, anyway. And I think John McCain, more than anybody else in either party, has a record that shows that he will always reach out and work across party lines to get things done, because ultimately he puts his party ahead--excuse me, he puts his country ahead of his party.

SCHIEFFER: Well...

Sen. LIEBERMAN: That's why not all the people in his party love him.

SCHIEFFER: ...that, of course, begs the question, if he's ready to be president, do you believe Barack Obama is not ready to be president?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Well, let me--let me put it affirmatively, which is what I really mean, because ultimately--we rarely make the choice between perfect and terrible. John McCain is more ready to be president on foreign and domestic policy because of his extraordinary experience. And it's good experience. It's experience where he's had the guts to do what's right for his country, including in Iraq, where he opposed the administration policy for a long time. The surge was implemented by President Bush, it's now working. Senator Obama, unfortunately, like a lot of the Democratic leadership, continues to take a position that we ought to withdraw--which, to me, is retreat, accept defeat--even though the new policy is working. So I hope Barack Obama goes to Iraq, and frankly, I hope he changes his position. Because if we had done what Senator Obama asked us to do for the last couple of years, today Iran and al-Qaeda would be in control of Iraq. It would be a terrible defeat for us and for our allies in the Middle East and throughout the world. Instead, we've got a country that's defending itself, that's growing economically, where there's been genuine political reconciliation and where Iran and al-Qaeda are on the run. And that's the way it ought to be.

SCHIEFFER: You're saying if we had done a drawdown, as Senator Obama had suggested, that Iran would now be in control of Iraq?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Yeah. And here's what I mean. And it's not just Senator Obama, it's generally the leadership of the Democratic Party. On this issue, I respectfully but deeply disagree. Because they were saying a year ago, two years ago, Iraq was lost. They were saying--they were proposing amendments that would have ordered a withdrawal, a retreat of our forces to begin and end rather rapidly. If that had happened, in Iraq today there wouldn't be an Iraqi government, there'd be chaos. There'd probably be genocide, definitely civil war, and the main beneficiaries of that would be Iran and al-Qaeda. Instead, Iran--al-Qaeda is on the run and on the verge of a terrible defeat. Our--one of our most significant victories over them since 9/11, maybe the most significant. Iran is being pushed back. And just a couple of weeks ago, Prime Minister Maliki of Iraq went to Tehran and Ahmadinejad, and the supreme leader, Khamenei, pleaded with Maliki, 'Don't enter into a long-term strategic agreement with America.' And he said, 'Sorry, folks. I want to have good neighborly relations with you, but the Americans are our friends. We appreciate what they've done for us and we're sticking with them.'

SCHIEFFER: Well let's say that John McCain is not elected and in fact Barack Obama is elected. He is talking about withdrawing over a period of a year and a half. What would be the result of that, in your view? Is the country strong enough to be able to tolerate that now?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Here's my objection to the continued commitment of Senator Obama to order a withdrawal according to a time schedule. It does not, as far as I've heard him ever say, depend on what's happening on the ground. Things are really going well in Iraq today, but what if there's a crisis of some kind? What if Iran takes some bold and aggressive action? What if there's some terrible act taken against the leader of Iraq? Do you want to continue to withdraw? What if as we withdraw--which we're doing now, what Senator McCain has wanted us to do. And because the

surge is working, we're bringing out troops out. I think General Petraeus is going to announce this summer that we can continue to bring our troops out with victory, with honor and success. But if you just say, as Senator Obama continues to say, 'No matter what's happening, I'm taking the troops out,' that's an invitation to real trouble, to--as Churchill, I guess, once said, 'To snatching defeat from the jaws of victory,' and to sending a very uncertain signal to our allies, Arab and Israeli in the Middle East, and frankly to our allies all around the world who want us to be strong. They depend on it. And John McCain knows that. That's why they have such confidence in Senator McCain's leadership.

SCHIEFFER: Charlie Black, who's the main adviser running the McCain campaign, said last week that a terrorist attack on this country would actually help John McCain. A lot of people kind of took a deep breath on that one.

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Well, I did, too, and so did--so did John McCain. You know, Charlie's a real pro and sometimes even the best of them say things that are not what they intended to say. Certainly the implications there, I know, were not what Charlie intended, and he apologized for it. Senator McCain said he didn't agree. And, of course, I feel the same way.

But here's the point. We're in a war against Islamist extremists who attacked us on 9/11. They've been trying to attack us many, many ways since then. We've been very fortunate as a result of 9/11 reform legislation, which Senator McCain championed; a lot of good work by people who work for our country that that hasn't happened. But we need a president who's ready to be commander in chief on day one. Senator McCain is. Incidentally, Senator Clinton said that over and over again, and she was right. She's ready--she was ready to be president on day one. Why? Because our enemies will test the new president early. Remember that the truck bombing of the World Trade Center happened in the first year of the Clinton administration. Nine-eleven happened in the first year of the Bush administration. John McCain is ready to take the reins on January 20th, 2009. He doesn't need any training.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you about the deal that the administration announced last week with North Korea. They said they will take North Korea off the list of states that sponsor terrorism--that will clear the way to begin some sort of economic aid and fuel oil to North Korea--in return for them handing over sort of a history of their nuclear things, the things that they've been doing to develop nuclear weapons. They did blow up that cooling tower.

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Yeah.

SCHIEFFER: Is this a good deal, bad deal? What do you make of it?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Well, look. It's hopeful, Bob. And I think Senator McCain feels the same way, this agreement with the North Koreans. But honestly, we're not going to know whether this was a significant step forward or not for about, oh, five years, because it's only the beginning. And the truth is that the North Koreans made only a partial disclosure of what they had promised. Yes, they told us what they've done with plutonium to make bombs. They haven't really told us about how many bombs they have and they haven't told us what they've done with uranium. Pretty odd that at the same time that we had this partial agreement with them, we found residue of uranium on some

of the documents they gave us, and that's what you use for highly enriched uranium bombs. They haven't told us anything about proliferation as in the case of the atomic plant in Syria. They got a lot of work to do, but it's a beginning. I'd say with the North Koreans, if I may paraphrase President Reagan, you got to mistrust and verify. This is--this is an agreement that the next president, with a combination of strength and a willingness and an intention to improve our relations with North Korea, will have to carry forward. And of course, I believe John McCain has both of those capabilities. They'll--our enemies in the world will fear and respect John McCain; our allies will trust and like him.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you a little bit about the Supreme Court. The court reminded us this week that it is moving more to the right. It threw out the handgun ban here in the District of Columbia. Most people think the next president's going to appoint two members--two justices to the Supreme Court. You are pro-choice, John McCain is not pro-choice. Are you going to be--or doesn't that concern you a little bit that he may be willing to appoint justices who will overturn Roe v. Wade?

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Well, John and I have a good faith disagreement on that, and I think we respect each other's positions. In a way, part of why I'm supporting John McCain, obviously I agree with him on big issues like foreign and defense policy, climate change, lobbying and ethics reform. But where we disagree, that's the point. It's time that people who disagree get together for the benefit of the country. We got to forget our loyalty to the Democrat/Republican Party. We got to put our loyalty to America.

But the Supreme Court made some interesting decisions the last two weeks; not all of them went to the right. You might say that in conventional terms, the establishment of the individual's right--individual right to handgun ownership went to the right, but the decision in the habeas corpus case, you might say, went to the left. The decision invalidating the death penalty case in case of a rape of a minor, you might say, went to the left. Here's the important thing about Senator McCain. He's against judicial activists. He's a conservative. He's not an extremist. By his leadership the Senate preserved, in the so-called Gang of 14, the 60-vote requirement for confirming justices of the Supreme Court. And to me, that means whether you think they're liberal or conservative, they're not going to be too far from the center.

SCHIEFFER: All right.

Sen. LIEBERMAN: And that's where we need them to be.

SCHIEFFER: Joe Lieberman, thank you so much...

Sen. LIEBERMAN: Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: ...for coming by. We'll get the other side of some of these issues in just a minute when we talk to Wesley Clark.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: With us now from Little Rock, Arkansas, retired General Wesley Clark. He was for Hillary Clinton during the primaries. Once Hillary was out of it, he announced that he was supporting Barack Obama.

And let's get right to it here, General. You heard what Senator Lieberman said. He said that Barack Obama is simply more ready to be president than Barack Obama.

General WESLEY CLARK (Retired; Obama Supporter): Well, I think--I think Joe has it exactly backwards here. I think being president is about having good judgment, it's about the ability to communicate. As one of the great presidential historians, Richard Neustadt, said, 'The greatest power of the presidency is the power to persuade.' And what Barack Obama brings is incredible communication skills, proven judgment. You look at his meteoric rise in politics and you see a guy who deals with people well, who understands issues, who brings people together and who has good judgment in moving forward. And I think what we need to do, Bob, is we need to stop talking about the old politics of left and right and we need to pull together and move the country forward. And I think that's what Barack Obama will do for America.

SCHIEFFER: Well, you went so far as to say that you thought John McCain was, quote, and these are your words, "untested and untried." And I must say, I had to read that twice, because you're talking about somebody who was a prisoner of war, he was a squadron commander of the largest squadron in the Navy, he's been on the Senate Armed Services Committee for lo these many years. How can you say that John McCain is untested and untried, General?

Gen. CLARK: Because in the matters of national security policy making, it's a matter of understanding risk, it's a matter of gauging your opponents and it's a matter of being held accountable. John McCain's never done any of that in his official positions. I certainly honor his service as a prisoner of war. He was a hero to me and to hundreds of thousands of millions of others in the armed forces as a prisoner of war. He has been a voice on the Senate Armed Services Committee and he has traveled all over the world. But he hasn't held executive responsibility. That large squadron in the Navy that he commanded wasn't a wartime squadron. He hasn't been there and ordered the bombs to fall. He hasn't seen what it's like when diplomats come in and say, 'I don't know whether we're going to be able to get this point through or not. Do you want to take the risk? What about your reputation? How do we handle it publicly?'

SCHIEFFER: Well...

Gen. CLARK: He hasn't made those calls, Bob. So...

SCHIEFFER: Well, General, maybe--could I just interrupt you?

Gen. CLARK: Sure.

SCHIEFFER: I have to say, Barack Obama has not had any of those experiences either, nor has he ridden in a fighter plane and gotten shot down. I mean...

Gen. CLARK: Well, I don't think riding in a fighter plane and getting shot down is a qualification to be president.

SCHIEFFER: Really?

Gen. CLARK: But Barack is not--he is not running on the fact that he has made these national security pronouncements, he's running on his other strengths. He's running on the strengths of character, on the strengths of his communication skills, on the strengths of his judgment, and those are qualities that we seek in our national leadership.

SCHIEFFER: Well, let me ask you this. Senator Obama announced yesterday that he's going to Europe and to the Middle East. Most people think that he'll probably stop off in Iraq, where he hasn't been in more than two years. Why now?

Gen. CLARK: I think this is a good opportunity. It's a window of time. The convention is late in the calendar this year and he's got the window of time to go overseas, meet with foreign leaders. You know, we were meeting with him the other day and as he said, he doesn't want to count his chickens before he--before they hatch, but he recognizes this country is in such a plight both at home and abroad that no one can contemplate taking the office of the presidency without having some very good ideas about what needs to be done from the get-go. There's not a learning period in this job. The next president's going to have to step right into the job, he's going to have to have the policies there. And I think Barack is taking a very sensible view of this by going abroad and meeting firsthand the leaders at this critical moment in times of America's needs abroad.

SCHIEFFER: General, what do you think would be the impact, let's say, on Iran, on the neighborhood around Iraq if in fact Senator Obama's elected and he does announce that he's going to bring back the troops on a specific time schedule? As Senator Lieberman said, he's totally discounting things that could happen along the way. Would he follow that schedule no matter what?

Gen. CLARK: I don't think Barack Obama is discounting things that have happened along the way. I think the critique is more like this, Bob, that the Bush administration and Joe Lieberman in the forefront have, from the beginning, relied excessively on military force as the answer to all the nation's security problems. And what Barack Obama understands is that military force may have to be used as a last resort, but it's not the first resort. So let's take the case of Iraq. This administration went to a war it didn't really have to fight. Barack Obama called it like it was at the time, in a speech early on, before we went into Iraq. And once there, the administration relied excessively on the men and women in uniform. It failed to put in place the overarching diplomatic strategy and the regional strategy that was necessary to deal with Iraq's neighbors. It more or less invited Iranian incursions by threatening that Iran and Syria were next on the hit list in military actions and efforts in the region, without having an effective strategy in the region. So, when we talk about troop withdrawals from Iraq, yes, I think the major muscle movement for the United States needs to be less reliance on military power and more reliance on all the other tools of US power, including diplomacy.

So it's within that vein that Barack Obama is talking about pulling troops back from Iraq. It doesn't mean that he's not going to be sensitive to other actions in the region. He's going to be much more

sensitive to those actions than the kind of mechanistic, militaristic response that John McCain has habitually given. What I think you'll see from an Obama...

SCHIEFFER: Could I ask...

Gen. CLARK: ...campaign is a regional strategy that does include dialogue with all of Iraq's neighbors and in which the military component is one part of an overarching strategy to protect American interests.

SCHIEFFER: Do you think that Barack Obama is going to put Hillary Clinton on the ticket? Would that be a good thing, General?

Gen. CLARK: I'd love to see Hillary Clinton on that ticket. But I have a lot of respect for Hillary. I've known her for a long time, I think she's an outstanding person. But I think that's a decision that Barack Obama himself is going to have to make, and I'm sure he's weighing that decision.

SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, General, thanks so much for being with us this morning.

Gen. CLARK: Thank you.

SCHIEFFER: Hope we can talk to you again along the way.

Gen. CLARK: Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: Back in a moment with a little analysis of all this.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: And joining us now, David Sanger of The New York Times.

David, you, of course, were the one that broke the story about North Korea helping Syria to build some sort of a nuclear facility in Syria. The Israelis bombed it, it's not there any more. What do you think of this deal that the administration announced this week to start sending fuel oil and so forth to North Korea because they've now given us this document which supposedly outlines their nuclear activities?

Mr. DAVID SANGER (The New York Times): Bob, the--President Bush got about a quarter of a loaf here. Remember, when he came to office, he said 'We'll give things to North Korea only if they give up their entire program.' What they've done instead is they've disabled their big plant that was making nuclear fuel. They have that great photo-op with the cooling tower, they've turned over these operating records. What the president didn't mention the other day when he came out to announce this is that in those months that we were headed to Iraq, they--North Koreans threw out the nuclear inspectors and took the fuel to make six or eight more nuclear weapons. So you've got a North Korea that has got an arsenal that's much larger than it was when George Bush came to office, and that's what the next president will inherit.

SCHIEFFER: So this is basically a step. If it--if it stopped here, we wouldn't get much.

Mr. SANGER: If it stopped here, you wouldn't have gotten anything. The North Koreans will have emerged from the Bush administration with a far more powerful nuclear arsenal than they had before. But you do have a process in place, and what--the best thing the president can say now is 'We're handing that process off to the next president.' It's a pretty different tone than 2001, when they were telling you and me that what they really wanted to do was basically push the North Korean regime into the ash heap of history.

SCHIEFFER: Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

Mr. SANGER: It's a good thing, because the alternatives would have been so much worse. But, you know, it isn't much yet. What it does do, though, Bob, is it tells you what happens when you sit down and you talk to a member of the axis of evil. Through direct negotiations they got a little bit this way, and I think it's going to bolster the case of those who say that's what you need to do with Iran.

SCHIEFFER: David, thank you very much for a quick analysis here this morning. Back with our final word in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Back in the '60s, when I came to work at CBS News, I got the kind of assignments the new guy usually gets: a tea party at the White House, the birth of tiger cubs at the National Zoo. Once was even assigned to cover a miniature golf tournament, which brought forth this memorable sign-off.

(From file footage) Bob Schieffer, CBS News, at the National Putt-Putt Championships at Rockville, Maryland.

My mother was so enraged she called and said, 'I didn't send you to Washington to cover a miniature golf. You tell those people to assign you to some real news.' I told her better assignments would come in time, and they did.

But maybe covering miniature golf was more prestigious than I thought, because today, in a two-page spread, the travel section of The Washington Post recommends Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, as a vacation destination because it offers the best miniature golf in America. It boasts 40 or 50 courses that feature jungle themes, a volcano that erupts in propane-fueled anger and, of course, the popular putting through the windmill blades. The Post spread even includes a little map on how to get there and reports operators are so serious about it they hold professional tournaments which draw contestants from as far away as Europe, and they hope to make it an Olympic sport one day.

Now, I'm not so sure about that part, and my mother is long since gone, but somehow I hope she knows that things not only worked out well for me, but for miniature golf as well. The truth is, I've always like miniature golf.

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