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## March 2: Political roundtable

James Carville, Mary Matalin, Mike Murphy, Bob Shrum

updated 10:17 a.m. PT, Sun., March. 2, 2008

MR. TIM RUSSERT: Our issues this Sunday: In just 48 hours, the Texas, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont primaries, as Clinton and Obama campaign furiously following their debate on Tuesday.

SEN. HILLARY CLINTON (D-NY): I have been a critic of NAFTA from the very beginning.

SEN. BARACK OBAMA (D-IL): I think that it is inaccurate for Senator Clinton to say that she's always opposed NAFTA.

MR. RUSSERT: With us, he helped put Bill and Hillary Clinton in the White House in 1992: Democrat James Carville. She worked for Bush 41, Bush 43 and Dick Cheney: Republican Mary Matalin. He worked for John McCain on his 2000 presidential campaign: Republican Mike Murphy. And he worked for Kerry, Gore and Barack Obama's key supporter Ted Kennedy: Democrat Bob Shrum. The very latest polls, strategies and issues. The race for the White House through the eyes of Carville, Matalin, Murphy and Shrum, only on MEET THE PRESS.

And in our MEET THE PRESS minute, the founder of the modern conservative movement, William F. Buckley Jr., died this week at the age of 82. Nearly 43 years ago he famously reflected on the uniqueness of the average American right here on MEET THE PRESS.

(Videotape, October 17, 1965)

MR. WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR (Conservative): You know, I would rather be governed by the first 2,000 people in the Boston telephone directory than by the 2,000 people on the faculty of Harvard University.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: But first, this is it, just two days away from what has become known as junior Super Tuesday. Here are the latest polls in Ohio and Texas.

In Ohio, it's Clinton, 47; Obama, 43. Look at this gender gap. Amongst men it's Obama 51-38; women it's Clinton 53-38. And the age differential, if you're under 50, Obama 52-to-38; if you're over 50, Clinton 54-to-36.

Let's look at Texas, 46-to-45. And look at this gender gap. It's the same. Obama, 54; Clinton, 37. Women, Clinton, 51; Obama, 40. The breakdown, blacks vs. Hispanics, and here it is: blacks, Obama 86-to-6; Hispanics, Clinton 62-to-30.

James Carville, what does it tell you?

MR. JAMES CARVILLE: I--it tells me that we're going to have to see what happens Tuesday night. There's nobody in the world could look at these two polls and predict with any confidence the, the outcome. And by the way, this is reflected in almost every public poll I've seen, as she has a slight margin of error lead in Ohio, and that Texas is, is neck and neck. And it's going to--we'll just have to wait and see.

MR. RUSSERT: Mike Murphy.

MR. MIKE MURPHY: Polls show a close race, I agree with James. But I think the energy is with Obama, and the thing I'd be watching on election day is turnout in Obama's demographics, the young. A lot of these polls are modeled on history, you know, what happened last time, which is a fair assumption. Obama is the last-time breaker. He--it creates a turnout dynamic that's incredibly powerful. So my gut tells me he's going to take them both, and that'll be the end. But we don't know yet. They're close races.

She's in trouble, though. The problem is, even if she wins, maybe it's 15, 16 delegate advantage when she's more than 100 behind. So going on, she buys a ticket to keep fighting, but it's an uphill fight all the way. The math--the delegate math is very hard for her.

MR. RUSSERT: Bob Shrum, it is tough trying to figure out these primaries. For example, that poll in Texas

estimates the black turnout at about 22 percent...

MR. BOB SHRUM: Right.

MR. RUSSERT: ...of Obama's overall. In 2004 it was 21 percent. The Obama camp will say it might be higher because of the energy in the campaign.

MR. SHRUM: Well, it will be. 2004 was a nonevent. John Kerry was already the Democratic nominee for president. No one, no one really cared. I think Mike's on to something here when what we're really seeing is a generational struggle inside the Democratic Party. We've seen this before. I think Senator Clinton is a little like the Beach Boys and has the same kind of reaction as when The Beatles arrived in America. She can't believe that someone's taking her place.

And there's a huge fight going on inside the party, I think, between the old order and an emerging new order. And I don't know how it's going to be resolved. I think it's very, very close. I do believe Bill Clinton was right: She must win both of these. They cannot move the goalposts. In fact, I think a lot of Democrats that I've talked to, including some who are supporting Senator Clinton--and the ones who are supporting Senator Clinton want her to win both, but if she's going to lose one, they'd rather have her lose both so this thing is over.

MR. RUSSERT: Mary Matalin, as a political strategist--take away your own political identity--what would you be saying to Hillary Clinton today after looking at those polls?

MS. MARY MATALIN: That even if she wins barely--well, she loses, she's out. But one thing that we don't know for sure yet, and there's not been a pattern that's emerged through these primaries of who voted early and who did they vote for, and who's voting late and where are they going to break. They've broken in different spots. So say, if she loses both, that's one scenario. If she wins both, even fractionally, she says, "He can't close the deal. There's something, you have a lot of concerns about me. I've run a terrible campaign. I might not be the face of change that he is, but I've"--you know, go back to the message that worked, connect with people, quit talking about herself like, "Why do I always get the first question?" "Why do I always get the last question?" What, what--that's not about what they care about. So go back to those things that work and say, "Why can't he close the deal? He can't close the deal."

MR. MIKE MURPHY: And she's got one thing working for her, which is the near-death experience phenomena this year. Every time it looks like...

MR. BOB SHRUM: That's right.

MR. MURPHY: ..."Perils of Pauline," the train's coming, she has a rescue. And in their meeting, they have the simplest message of all: "Guys, victory or death." So.

MR. SHRUM: Right.

MR. CARVILLE: And, and, and if--but if she does win both, it changes the narrative.

MR. SHRUM: Well, if she wins...

MR. CARVILLE: And wins big--if she wins both, it changes the narrative.

MR. BOB SHRUM:

MR. CARVILLE: Then she has a real case, then she has a real sort of case to make that she's coming back.

MR. SHRUM: She has a real...

MR. MURPHY: She does. She has...

MR. SHRUM: She has a real case to make where the math is very much against her.

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. CARVILLE: Right. That's right. Right.

MR. SHRUM: She has to go to Pennsylvania then, which is going to be a seven-week campaign, which is

going to be amazing. And she has to win by more than a point or two, not only because she can't catch up in the math, but because she's got to establish some kind of moral claim to the nomination.

MR. RUSSERT: All right, let, let's go through that math so our viewers have a sense of it. These are elected delegates to date. Obama, 1,194; and we have Clinton at 1,037, a difference of 157. Here's the breakdown amongst the so-called superdelegates. Now it's Obama, 208; Clinton, 254, a lead of Clinton, 46. Since Super Tuesday, about a month ago, Obama has gained 38 superdelegates. She has lost six. You put all those together, and you have Obama with 111 delegate-vote lead, including the superdelegates. Chuck Todd, our political director, says this: "According to our delegate math, Clinton winning both Ohio and Texas by 52 to 48 would net her a combined five to six delegates. Yet toss in a potential Obama landslide in Vermont, and then her net March 4 haul could be as little as two to five delegates."

So you would still, even with victories in Ohio and Texas...

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. RUSSERT: ...have Obama in a very controlling elected delegate count.

MR. MURPHY: Right. And the great irony here is the Democrats have this kind of Mr. Nice Guy delegate system of proportional delegates. So even if she starts winning primaries, it's hard to win big enough to get the delegate advantage. We Republicans like these sudden-death, winner-take-all--because we're mean. That's why I joined up. We're all social Darwinists. And if they had had winner-take-all primaries in California and New York like the Republicans do, the vast right-wing conspiracy, she'd be in front and hard to beat right now.

MR. RUSSERT: Those liberals who made those party rules, Murphy.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah. Yeah. The liberals are the ones who did her in.

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: Harold Ickes.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah. It's Harold's fault, yeah.

MR. RUSSERT: Yeah. We're going to get to Harold Ickes in a second.

MR. MURPHY: I think I heard that from Penn.

MR. RUSSERT: But James, this has been...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. RUSSERT: You mentioned Bill Clinton. This is what Bill Clinton said on February 20th in Beaumont, Texas.

(Videotape)

FMR. PRES. BILL CLINTON: If she wins in Texas and Ohio, I think she'll be the nominee. If you don't deliver for her, I don't think she can be. It's all on you.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Then Mark Penn on February 13th said this: "After March 4, we project that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama will be virtually tied with" all "delegates still to be chosen in Pennsylvania--"with 611 delegates still to be chosen in Pennsylvania," "remaining states."

Howard Wolfson, her campaign communications director, said: "I think" we'll "be ahead in the delegate" count "race after Texas and Ohio."

And then on Friday, this memo came out: "The media has anointed Barack Obama the presumptive nominee, and he's playing the part. With an 11-state winning streak coming out of February, Senator Obama is riding a surge of momentum that has enabled him to pour unprecedented resources into Texas, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont. Senator Obama has campaigned hard in these states. He has spent time

meeting editorial boards, courting endorsers, holding rallies and--of course--making speeches. If he cannot win all" four "of these states with all this effort, there's a problem."

MR. SHRUM: Holding rallies, James, can you believe that? He's holding rallies.

MR. RUSSERT: Are those goalposts being moved there, James?

MR. CARVILLE: I--look, it doesn't--you got to hang up--you got to, you got to win something. OK, it doesn't matter who we are.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah.

MR. CARVILLE: And politics is not an exercise in mathematics you go through.

MS. MATALIN: Right.

MR. CARVILLE: If she wins in Ohio, and she wins in Texas, President Clinton is right, the, the, the tenor of the race changes, she has a compelling narrative. She's come back after, after going down \$35 million in February. Her supporters really stuck with her in an unprecedented way. She wins these two states, there's not a single person in Pennsylvania that's going to say, "We don't want to weigh in on this." It, it goes on.

MR. SHRUM: My only disagreement with that is...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: ...she has a narrative. She doesn't necessarily have a compelling narrative.

MR. CARVILLE: But...

MR. SHRUM: Because if Pennsylvania is then close, he wins North Carolina, he wins Mississippi...

MR. CARVILLE: But...

MR. SHRUM: ...he has a real delegate lead...

MR. CARVILLE: OK. It, it...

MR. SHRUM: ...you may see the superdelegates decide that they're going to go with a guy who won the delegates.

MR. CARVILLE: If, if...

MR. MURPHY: I'll give Howard Wolfson the professorship in bad math; I'm barely any better. If she wins Pennsylvania--off what James is talking about--60-40, most of the delegate projections give her a gain out of that like 28-to-30 delegates still. Not enough to probably catch up unless...

MR. CARVILLE: If we--right.

MR. MURPHY: ...all the superdelegates to swing back.

MR. CARVILLE: If we think that this is not--if, if she wins Ohio and Texas, comes in and wins Pennsylvania, then the process goes--they have to do--I mean, she--yes, this is not, this is not a--somebody sitting in green eye shades with a calculator figuring things up. Then the narrative becomes something is switching out there in the party, if she starts winning elections.

MR. SHRUM: But it is--but, James, it is somebody at the end of the day calling the roll at the convention.

MR. MURPHY: right.

MR. SHRUM: And the number of delegates you have is going to matter. That's why I said she has a narrative, not necessarily a compelling comparative narrative. She's going to have to win Pennsylvania convincingly...

MS. MATALIN: But her...

MR. MURPHY: But, but then she has to...

MR. SHRUM: ...and then deny him North Carolina and Mississippi.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah. She has to win North Carolina. If she got this switch a few primaries ago, back in time, she'd have enough time to wrap--to start gaining enough delegates.

MS. MATALIN: There's still time; there's still states.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, but I'm...

MS. MATALIN: What people are forgetting, however late it is, is Puerto Rico has 63 delegates

MR. MURPHY: Yeah.

MS. MATALIN: ...and they usually swing one way or the other. Changing the narrative will change the numbers. It's--change the numbers. She may not have a compelling narrative for herself, but she will create a compelling non-narrative, a negative narrative for him. "He can't close the deal." The states he's been winning, where he's getting his delegates from--he's not going to win Kansas and these places in the general election. She's winning big blue states.

MR. SHRUM: Because...

MR. MURPHY: But there aren't enough delegates. I mean, I'll make a cash money bet right now on Obama.

MS. MATALIN: You don't think these superdelegates are going to flip back?

MR. SHRUM: The numbers matter.

MR. MURPHY: The math, the math...

MR. SHRUM: I'm in, I'm in between the two of you. I'm just saying she has a narrative, a real narrative, but it's not necessarily a compelling narrative. because the numbers still matter.

MR. RUSSERT: All right, let me show you, though, there's a map, and this is a map of the remaining 12 states, 611 delegates starting with this Saturday--next Saturday be Wyoming and in Mississippi, our calculation is, even if Senator Clinton wins Ohio and Texas say 52-48, she'd have to win 70 percent of the vote in each of those states in order to get enough delegates to surpass Obama among selected delegates. If she didn't, James Carville, I understand--I'm hearing you, that even if she was behind amongst elected delegates...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. RUSSERT: ...she could say "I finished strong.

MR. CARVILLE: Yeah. Of course.

MR. RUSSERT: I won Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, I should be the nominee."

MR. CARVILLE: And, and, and we're also forgetting they have to do something about Florida and Michigan. Now, you can say we, we discount the, the previous election, they have to go to like what they call a firehouse caucus or something. But part of her calculation would be that she's showing strength...

MR. SHRUM: Right.

MR. CARVILLE: ...and then she does--you got to put the--they're not going to not seat something from Florida and Michigan. It may not be based on the previous...

MR. RUSSERT: But what you're saying is that she would go to a convention and say, "I did not win elected delegates, I did not win as many states, primaries, caucuses as Obama, I did not win as much popular vote, but I should be the nominee because you should seat Michigan and Florida."

MR. CARVILLE: Well, well, well, we may not--wait, I mean, look...

MR. RUSSERT: What would happen inside that convention?

MR. CARVILLE: Well, first of all, I'd say now many Idahos does it take to count as California? I mean, come on, that's a little bit of a...

MS. MATALIN: Wait...

MR. SHRUM: That would be...

MR. CARVILLE: But it would be...

MR. MURPHY: That's the beauty of it.

MR. SHRUM: Someone from the Clinton campaign is a fraud.

MR. CARVILLE: What...

MR. SHRUM: Barack Obama is going to carry California if he's the nominee, he's going to carry New York, he's going to carry New Jersey.

MS. MATALIN: I...

MR. SHRUM:

That's not the issue. The issue here--the issue here is you cannot go into this convention and not have some moral claim to this nomination.

MS. MATALIN: I...

I think she can acquire one in the next few weeks, but she's got to acquire it by winning these two states, then winning Pennsylvania, and doing better.

MS. MATALIN: I agree.

MR. SHRUM: But she cannot in the end, "By the way, nominate me by giving me the delegates out of the Soviet-style primary in Michigan where we only had one person's name on the ballot."

MR. CARVILLE: I wouldn't--Bob...

MR. MURPHY: From the Republican point of view, the wonderful delicious thing here is, if this happens, you know, and if Martians land to help her do it, if it happens, we'll be sitting over in Republican headquarters drunk and high-fiving each other, watching the Democratic establishment try to put the Barack Obama phenomenon back in the bottle and tell all those people, "Yes we can, no we can't." Not going to happen. Sorry. You know, we had delegate maps in the Texas...

MR. RUSSERT: But Mary Matalin is laughing during this entire discussion.

MR. SHRUM: Oh, she's promoting this, actually.

MS. MATALIN: This is why we call them the Democratic Party. There's nothing democratic about their process. On the other hand, it's so kumbaya it can't pick a nominee. It's not that they won't we unified, but the--because they like both their candidates. But the longer they go in this contest, the more left they get, get pushed. They get--we need to talk about NAFTA, because they're going...

MR. RUSSERT: We're going to get there.

MS. MATALIN: ...over the edge on NAFTA. And the longer there's...(unintelligible)...the lefter they go, and we're high-fiving already on that.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, that will be great.

MR. CARVILLE: It's really up to the Democrats in Ohio and Texas.

MR. MURPHY: I agree with this.

MR. CARVILLE: If they decide that they want--if they, if they vote for Senator Clinton, they're saying let the process continue, and if they don't, it's--what?

MR. SHRUM: Do you agree with me that if Obama carries one state, it's effectively over?

MR. CARVILLE: It is very, very, very difficult. And I've--and, and I said that earlier; President Clinton has said it. It becomes exceedingly difficult if she, if she loses either Ohio or Texas. That's, that's evident. You got to...

MR. RUSSERT: It's over.

MR. CARVILLE: It's very, very, very difficult.

MR. RUSSERT: Oh, you're...

MR. CARVILLE: No.

MR. RUSSERT: Two weeks ago, you said it was over.

MR. CARVILLE: It--I don't know what the difference is. It sounds good to me.

MR. MURPHY: It's one sentence he'd like to have back.

MR. CARVILLE: It's--I don't have this reject...

MR. RUSSERT: I think he got a phone call this morning, "Don't say it's over." Right?

MR. CARVILLE: No, I--in, in effect, I, I agree with President Clinton.

MR. MURPHY: There you go.

MR. CARVILLE: And I--I'll leave it at that.

MR. RUSSERT: Yeah. Now, I want to go inside the Clinton campaign--I want to get to the issues--but I want to go inside the Clinton campaign for a second, because here's an interview from Harold Ickes, the senior adviser, in The New York Observer newspaper. Headline, Ickes blames Penn, meaning Mark Penn. "Mark Penn has run this campaign," said Harold Ickes. "Besides Hillary Clinton, he is the single most responsible person for this campaign. I have been at meetings where he introduces himself as the campaign's chief strategist. I've heard him call himself that many times, say, "I am the chief strategist." Asked if Penn preferred the title of chief strategist to pollster, Ickes said, "Prefer it? He insists on it!" When asked if Penn was therefore responsible for the campaign's strategy, Ickes said, "It's pretty plain for anyone to see that he has shaped the strategy of the campaign. He has called the shots. Mark Penn has dominated the message in this campaign. Dominated it."

Bob Shrum, you've been in a few campaigns. What's going on?

MR. SHRUM: Well, Harold Ickes is not some--first of all, he's one of the most talented people in politics, also one of the most persistent people in politics. You don't want to make an enemy of him. But I think that he believes--correctly, in my view--that Penn was the architect of a strategy that positioned her as the establishment candidate in a year of change. She could have been a change candidate. She would have been--she would be the first woman president. She could have had some big change ideas. You know that conference call the other day sort of typified what's gone on. They--they're putting out this ad with the ringing phone at 3 in the morning, and someone from Slate, I think it was, asked Penn, or asked the whole group of them, "Can you name a crisis that she's had to deal with, an international crisis?" And there's this long, awkward silence. And you'd think people would have thought in advance that that question might be asked. And the answer finally comes, she's on the Armed Services Committee. Well, you know, the only crisis on the Armed Services Committee is when John McCain loses his temper. It's not an international crisis.

MR. RUSSERT: It was John Dickerson...

MR. SHRUM: Yeah.

MR. RUSSERT: ...of Slate who asked that question. Let me show you that ad, and then a lot of other ads close to it, similar to it, other statements similar. Many campaigns revolve around it, but here's the latest incarnation of an ad about a po--impending crisis. Let's watch.

(Videotape of political ad)

Narrator: It's 3 AM, and your children are safe and asleep. But there's a phone in the White House, and it's ringing. Something's happening in the world. Your vote will decide who answers that call, whether it's someone who already knows the world's leaders, knows the military, someone tested and ready to lead in a dangerous world. It's 3 AM, and your children are safe and asleep. Who do you want answering the phone?

SEN. HILLARY CLINTON: I'm Hillary Clinton, and I approve this message.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Now, the Obama campaign countered in pretty close to record time in turning a response ad, from what I can see.

MR. SHRUM: Yeah.

MR. RUSSERT: Here was their response.

(Videotape of political ad)

Narrator: It's 3 AM, and your children are safe and asleep. But there's a phone ringing in the White House. Something's happening in the world. When that call gets answered, shouldn't the president be the one, the only one, who had judgment and courage to oppose the Iraq war from the start? Who understood the real threat to America was al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, not Iraq? Who led the effort to secure loose nuclear weapons around the globe? In a dangerous world, it's judgment that matters.

SEN. BARACK OBAMA: I'm Barack Obama, and I approve this message.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Murphy.

MR. MURPHY: I think it's a weak, hack-y ad. I think the Obama people saw it coming a year away, were ready for it, knocked it right back on them. The only call--crisis call she may get is from Texas. So, no, I, I thought--in fact, Shrum and I were joking in the green room six months ago, "God, you think they're going to panic and do the old red phone ad?" The problem is, in a change year, it's an old execution. Now, I will say the message of trying to push the final moments of the campaign back to who's ready for a crisis and who isn't, not a bad strategy, best card she had. I just think the execution is kind of pat and predictable, and I think Obama got the better of the exchange.

MR. CARVILLE: Yeah, look, to--first of all, this is not an overly negative thing. It's something that they've been trying to say for a long time. They're certainly entitled to say it. Obama is a man, by the way, has ample resources and ample talent in this campaign, and they've put an effective answer up. I, I view this all very much in, in what's fair in politics. My, my personal preference would have been that it had a little more of an economic tinge to, to, to the ad, is that the impending economic situation that families are facing. But that's a choice that her campaign made. I think that--and, and I'm told and I'm--that, that Mr. Penn himself wrote this ad, that he--it was not a Roy Spence ad, it was a Mark Penn ad. And he feels that way, and Senator Clinton approved it. It's a completely fair ad, and the Obama response is completely fair.

MS. MATALIN: But...

MR. SHRUM: It has, it has one big downside. And the big downside is it brought Iraq and the vote on the Iraq war right back to the middle of the stage of the campaign. And I think that David Axelrod and Jim Margolis, who were doing the media for Obama, did a very, very smart thing by focusing their response so heavily on the Iraq war and the Iraq war vote.

MR. CARVILLE: Well, I would, I would call it fair ad, fair response.

MS. MATALIN: The worst bad thing of it was it was a good ad for John McCain. The first time I saw it, I said,

"When Hillary came on, it was jarring. I thought this was John's ad." So Hillary's ad was experience, Obama's response was judgment and the--McCain is sitting there, "I got experience, I got judgment, and I've been up at 3:00 in the morning dealing with a crisis." I really...

MR. SHRUM: You know, Mary, I have--you just made me think of something. That ad's antecedent is Walter Mondale.

MR. MURPHY: Ah, right.

MR. SHRUM: He used it against Gary Hart.

MR. MURPHY: Right, right.

MR. RUSSERT: Let's show that. Wait a minute, let's show that.

MR. SHRUM: Yeah.

MR. RUSSERT: In 1984, Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, tough, bruising primary, the red phone ad.

(Videotape, 1984 political ad)

Narrator: The most awesome, powerful responsibility in the world lies in the hand that picks up this phone. The idea of an unsure, unsteady, untested hand is something to really think about. This is the issue of our times. On March 20th, vote as if the future of the world is at stake.

Mondale. This president will know what he's doing, and that's the difference between Gary Hart and Walter Mondale.

(End videotape)

MR. SHRUM: I mean, one of the things that's interesting about that is Mondale partially won that nomination. I mean, Hart made some mistakes, but partially won that nomination by raising this question. But, as Mary suggested, it's a very dangerous question to raise in a context where he was then going to run against Ronald Reagan. Because if you said to people, "Who do you want picking up the red phone, Walter Mondale or Ronald Reagan?" if it moved on into a general election contest, the answer, as we know, was Ronald Reagan.

MR. RUSSERT: Now, that was in 1984, before the Berlin Wall fell. This is 1992, George Herbert Walker Bush--your man, Mary Matalin--running against Bill Clinton--your man, Mr. Carville. Here's George Bush, July of '92, framing the campaign.

(Videotape, July 27, 1992)

PRES. GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH: Many times in the White House, late at night, the phone rings. And usually it's some young aide calling in about double-checking the next day's schedule. But occasionally it's another voice, more serious, more solemn, carrying news of a coup in a powerful country or asking how we should stand up to the Baghdad bully halfway around the world. And the American people need to know that the man who answers that phone has the experience, the seasoning to do the right thing.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: The phone used by Bush against Bill Clinton.

MS. MATALIN: I love that man. I love Pappy Bush so much. Anyway, I still can't believe we lost that campaign. And we didn't lose it. Perot beat us, not you.

Yeah, the reason we keep making those contrasts when people are voting for a president, they're voting for an unknown, unforeseen set of circumstances. So it's always the right question to ask.

MR. MURPHY: This year, beware of cliches. And that red phone shtick has become a cliché. And that is the fundamental Hillary Clinton problem. Her style and everything is old politics. That's the energy Barack runs off of. So I thought the thing was off by tone, even--not necessarily by message. And I do agree with James about the economy part of it.

MR. RUSSERT: Here's the interesting thing about politics and why we love to cover campaigns. This year's being now described as fear vs. hope. The phone represents fear, and Obama is trying to suggest hope. Back in 2004, your man, William Jefferson Clinton, campaigning for John Kerry, framed Clinton's political law this way. Let's watch.

(Videotape, October 25, 2004)

FMR. PRES. CLINTON: Now, one of Clinton's laws of politics is this: If one candidate's trying to scare you and the other one's trying to get you to think, if one candidate's appealing to your fears and the other one's appealing to your hopes, you better vote for the person who wants you to think and hope.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: James.

MR. CARVILLE: Well, first of all, the red telephone ad has been around 1984, 1992, OK. Fair. And, and I, I also think that--with what her campaign was trying to do is, is to tell you to think about the red telephone. I, I don't--like I say, it wouldn't be--it's a fair ad. It might not have been the ad that I would have run myself if I was there, but it's not outside of bounds.

MR. SHRUM: It's...

MR. RUSSERT: But is...

MR. CARVILLE: And Obama's response is, is, is--and Obama had a good response to it.

MR. RUSSERT: But is President Clinton right, that the candidate who appeals to hope beats the candidate who appears--appeals to fear?

MR. CARVILLE: Well...

MR. SHRUM: Well, I wish he'd been right in 2004. But I think, I think in 2000, I think in 2008...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: ...it is probably the case that the candidate who appeals to hope beats the candidate who appeals to fear. The reason James is right, that this should be about the economy, is because by making it about national security and foreign policy, it enabled the Obama people to pull Iraq right back into the middle of this debate.

MR. CARVILLE: I...

MS. MATALIN: This is a false choice, hope/fear, to use one of Clinton's other terms. We are in a fearful age. We are--we have economic insecurity around the world, we have a new terrorist threat, it's a new enemy. It is--not an--you can't--they're not one or the other, hope or fear. False choice. And that is old-style politics for Obama, who's about to get into the real world of politics, OK? What--he's pretty soon going to be on the old-style politics, and you can already see it, the way he's up there Bush bashing and McCain attacking. "That's the party of yesterday, not the face of the future." So stop with the false dichotomies, which will be the only new style politics, to not make it about fear/hope.

MR. RUSSERT: We're going to take a quick break and come back and talk about Iraq, NAFTA, some issues, and the differences between the Republicans and Democrats right after this.

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: More of our political roundtable. What the voters say in one word describes the candidates after this station break.

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: And we're back.

On the debate on Tuesday, I initiated a question to Senator Obama about, after he withdrew troops from Iraq, if, in fact, al-Qaeda reconstituted and posed a threat, what would he do. His response triggered a

response from John McCain and President Bush, and then a rebuttal from Obama himself. Let's watch.

(Videotape, Tuesday)

SEN. OBAMA: As commander in chief, I will always reserve the right to make sure that we are looking out for American interests. And if al-Qaeda is forming a base in Iraq, then we will have to act in a way that secures the American homeland and our interests abroad.

(End videotape)

(Videotape, Wednesday)

SEN. JOHN McCAIN (R-AZ): I am told that Senator Obama made the statement that if al-Qaeda came back to Iraq after he withdraws, after the--after the American troops are withdrawn, then he would send military troops back if al-Qaeda established a base in Iraq. I have some news. Al-Qaeda is in Iraq. Al-Qaeda--it's called al-Qaeda in Iraq.

(End videotape)

(Videotape, Thursday)

PRES. GEORGE W. BUSH: It's an interesting comment. "If al-Qaeda is securing a al-Qaeda base..." Yeah, well, that's exactly what they've been trying to do for the past four years.

(End videotape)

(Videotape, Wednesday)

SEN. OBAMA: I do know that al-Qaeda is in Iraq, and that's why I've said we should continue to strike al-Qaeda targets. But I have some news for John McCain, and that is that there was no such thing as al-Qaeda in Iraq until George Bush and John McCain decided to invade Iraq.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Is that what we're going to see in November?

MR. SHRUM: I think we're going to see some of this debate. I think a little bit of it's a mistake, and I'll let Murphy explain that in a minute. Look, the center of al-Qaeda is Afghanistan. Despite all of the Republican chest-thumping, 60 percent of the country still wants a gradual withdrawal from, from Iraq. The much of what's going on in Iraq is Shiite factionalism, which is now so broken down that they can't even hold provincial elections. Until you say we're going to leave at a certain point, you're not going to get the kind of political settlement and military capability on the part of the Iraqis that can keep order in that country. But I think it's a mistake for McCain to be attacking Obama at this point.

MR. MURPHY: Well, I think McCain, being the foreign policy adult vs. Obama, helps McCain. But I do, I do think the McCain campaign has to be very careful because we're in an election with tremendous wrong track, tremendous desire to change Washington. And if we break out the moldy old Republican playbook and run the single note liberal, liberal, liberal campaign, it's going to turn McCain into Bob Dole, and we lose. McCain, we got the one different kind of Republican this year who can go to the center, and a lot of the Obama stuff that the energy behind his campaign, other than the war, is the same political reform stuff that John McCain built his reputation on and, frankly, showed a lot more courage in a lot of votes than Barack Obama ever has. So I think McCain can co-opt that space in the center and then beat him on liberal economics and beat him on experience in a crisis. To just go lumpy liberal on him, which is kind of the Republican reflex sometimes, I think is a big mistake. And we ought to let McCain be McCain.

MR. SHRUM: Well, even worse, what if Hillary does come back? It seems to me him out there attacking Obama at this point actually drives potential voters, independent voters who like Obama and may be aggrieved if Hillary wins, away from him. So I, I don't understand this strategy.

MR. MURPHY: Look, the McCain campaign's got to, in my view, anyway, from the outside, understand that the primary's over. They don't need to be campaigning with televangelists in San Antonio. They need to pivot to the general election in a way, in a way, with all due respect to the good reverend, and I will say, as a Catholic boy who's spent a lot of time with John McCain, there's not an anti-Catholic atom in, in John McCain.

He loves my people. But pivot to the general election and take the fact that McCain is a different kind of Repub and run with it in a very bad environment where we need that kind of guy to win, or Democrat City, it'll set the conservative movement back 50 years.

MR. RUSSERT: Let me show you another issue where there will be a big difference between John McCain and either Obama or Clinton, and that's NAFTA, Mary Matalin, North America Free Trade Agreement. Bill Clinton, the centerpiece of his presidency in 1993. What a difference 15 years makes. Here are both Democratic candidates coming out against NAFTA. Let's watch.

(Videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Let me button this up. Absent the changes that you're suggesting, you are willing to opt out of NAFTA in six months?

SEN. CLINTON: I'm confident that as president, when I saw we will opt out unless we renegotiate, we will be able to renegotiate.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Obama, simple question: Will you, as president, say to Canada and Mexico, "This has not worked for us. We are out"?

SEN. OBAMA: I will make sure that we renegotiate in the same way that Senator Clinton talked about. And I think, actually, Senator Clinton's answer on this one is right. I think we should use the hammer of a potential opt out as leverage to ensure that we actually get labor and environmental standards that are enforced.

(End videotape)

MS. MATALIN: Boy, so wrong on so many levels. First of all, the--25 percent of our growth is dependent on exports right now. NAFTA has worked. Thirty-five percent of our trading is through NAFTA partners. He's wrong. Secondly, our best friends, Canada, is sitting on--they're sitting on our most secure source of foreign oil. Those sands up there have as much oil as Saudi Arabia. And Harper and the trade minister came out and said, "You want to opt out? You want to threaten to opt out? Guess what. We'll open up the clause, and we'll renegotiate so you don't get favor--favorability relative to energy trade, and I--we'll sell our energy to China." It was so naive. And he--and he opened himself up to a real volatility, because in '04 he said enormously beneficial on NAFTA. So he's either lying in '04 or he's lying to Ohioans now. And then he had that Canadian thing, where, "I'm saying this, but I mean that," which the Canandians are continuing to say...

MR. SHRUM: He absolutely denied that, Mary, so let's at least be fair to him.

MS. MATALIN: Well, the Canadians are...

MR. SHRUM: And you've got...

MS. MATALIN: ...absolutely confirming it.

MR. SHRUM: ...you've got a right wing government in Canada that is trying to help the Republicans and is out there actively interfering in this campaign. I sure hope John McCain campaigns the length and breadth of Ohio and Pennsylvania for NAFTA throughout the fall.

MR. MURPHY: Well, the one thing I'll say as, a Republican, I used to love about Bill Clinton, was he was brave enough to be for free trade.

MS. MATALIN: Yeah.

MR. MURPHY: So...

MR. CARVILLE: I can--something I can attest to personally, and I, I have checked, she--in, in 1992, she was decidedly cool toward NAFTA. Came up with--we came out for NAFTA during the campaign. And I--the reason I remember it so well is it's one of the few times that I actually disagreed with, with Hillary Clinton on anything. I made it my business to try to agree with her on, on most things. Now, I don't know what happened in between 1992 and this campaign, but I do know that she was decidedly cool on, on the idea of us endorsing NAFTA during that campaign.

MR. MURPHY: But she has a theory about what happened...

MR. RUSSERT: But in 2004, she did say, "On balance, NAFTA has been good for New York and for America."

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. CARVILLE: I, I--again, I, I do know that--what it was in 1992. I can't attest other...

MR. RUSSERT: Do you think that--do you think if Obama or Clinton actually got elected they would try to do something with NAFTA?

MR. MURPHY: Yeah.

MR. SHRUM: I actually think you can...

MR. MURPHY: Yes. That's the question.

MR. SHRUM: I actually think you can do something on the environment and labor standards with both Mexico and Canada. I don't think you have to cause the whole thing to collapse. I think you can have a renegotiation of certain items without basically blowing the treaty up.

MR. MURPHY: I'm going to put my faith in what Count Bismarck said, which is "The greatest lies are told before the marriage, after the hunt, and during the election." And nothing like losing 11 in a row to turn Hillary Clinton into a protectionist in steel towns in Ohio. I'm hoping this is a Clinton wiggle.

MR. RUSSERT: Boy, Bismarck from Murphy.

Let me ask you...

MR. SHRUM: Bismarck said young people were all liberals. What happened to you?

MR. MURPHY: I got old.

MR. RUSSERT: Let me ask you about the economy, Mary Matalin, because look at this number. CNBC has a new poll coming out tomorrow, wealth in America. They asked one question, the current state of the economy. Excellent or good, 16; fair or poor, 83. In an election where the economy central to people and the Republicans are actually asking, in effect, for a third term in the White House, what do those numbers mean to you?

MS. MATALIN: Well, there, there's an element of cognitive dissonance there, because if you ask them how their own personal finances are, are going, those numbers completely switch. But politically there has not--yes. See, looking around, that's completely true. They absolutely switch about your own personal finances.

MR. SHRUM: I think most people are getting very insecure about their own personal finances.

MS. MATALIN: Let's--because they're berated with these sort of--these numbers. However, politically, we haven't had the contrast yet. People do not want, as a furtherance of economic policy, the kind of centralization that Obama and Hillary are proposing. They don't want more regulations, they don't want higher taxes, they don't want less trade. Maybe, you know, there's a way to help it through the transition in Ohio and Pennsylvania, those manufacturing states. But when you start contrasting liberal--I'm--not liberal, liberal, liberal, just you--redistributionist policies with limited government policies, the limited government, conservative policies economics win every time.

MR. RUSSERT: Is it the economy stupid?

MR. CARVILLE: Of course it is. And people are feeling it. This is not something created by the media. I mean, these, these, these mortgages, or high energy costs, these, these pathetic employment numbers, the, the health care costs, food costs are just killing people out there. They're not being told that, that things are terrible. They are feeling this every day. And, and I think that there's got to be a relentless focus on this, you know. And and the Republicans always talk about the court. I thought this was, like, the most telling moment in the--since, since Bush took office is literally the chief justice of the Supreme Court almost weeping that Exxon was being treated unfairly by a jury in Alaska. I mean, it was really like, like the powerful

please come to the court where you can seek redress for these unfair people. And people are seeing this in their lives every day, and I want, and I want these candidates to bring that up more and more and more.

MR. MURPHY: No doubt the pain is there, which is going to move that up--economic issue way up in the election. The opportunity for the, for the Republicans is to put protectionism and tax raises and big spending Obama liberal economics on trial in the election. We can win that fight.

MS. MATALIN: That's right.

MR. SHRUM: Murphy, you just did what you said McCain should be doing.

MR. MURPHY: No, no, no. It's part of the--no, no, no, no, no.

MR. SHRUM: Wait a second. Wait a second. Let me tell you--let me tell you.

MR. MURPHY: Wait a minute, wait a minute, Bob. I got to answer that quickly.

MR. SHRUM: No, no.

MS. MATALIN: You're recasting.

MR. MURPHY: No, no, I said you have the economic debate after you recapture political reform, which is who McCain is.

MR. SHRUM: Let me tell you what's going to happen here.

MS. MATALIN: That's right.

MR. SHRUM: James ran a campaign in 1992 which went out and said "We ought to have tax cuts for the middle class. We ought to raise taxes on people at the top." That campaign won. I think this assumption that Republicans can lie again and say, "Because you want to raise taxes on people who make over 200 or \$250,000, you're trying to raise taxes on everybody," won't work. Number two, you have a president who the other day was asked about the prospect of \$4 a gallon gas...

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. SHRUM: ...and he looked completely flummoxed. "Is that really right?" I think they seem so out of touch. And then you have a Republican nominee, John McCain, who said--he's trying to back away from it--"I don't know anything about economics."

MR. MURPHY: That's not what he said.

MR. SHRUM: "I rely on my economic team."

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: His economic team is a circular firing squad, consisting of Jack Kemp, Pete Peterson.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, Bob! You're blowing smoke now. Come on.

MR. SHRUM: It is!

MR. MURPHY: Come on. Save it for the union hall, Bob.

MS. MATALIN: Man, you're not The Beatles. You're Elvis. You're so old.

MR. SHRUM: No, I'm--you're not--Mary, you're not political?

MR. RUSSERT: All right, issues, big divide, no doubt. But what about personalities? Do--voters in the Pew Foundation poll volunteered words. First they asked about a candidate's likeability, and here's what they said. Obama, 50 percent likable; 35 percent said somewhat likable; 10 not likable. Clinton, 26, 37, 33; McCain, 21, 55 somewhat, 18 not likable. That's an 85 percent likable for Obama, 63 for Clinton, 76 McCain. That's both parties across the board.

Then Pew said, "Give us a word that you think best describes these candidates." The first one was McCain. Old was the first word people threw out. Honest, experienced, patriot, conservative, hero, liberal.

Then they asked, OK, Obama. Inexperienced, charismatic, intelligent, change, inspirational, young, new.

Clinton. Experienced, strong, untrustworthy, intelligent, smart, determined, rhymes with rich. That's what the poll said. They used a different word. But it's a family poll, and this is a family program. What does that tell you, James?

MR. CARVILLE: You know what, it breaks my heart, because I, I know her, and I think she is literally one of the warmest people I know. She's the first person to call with anything. She's a terrific parent. I, I really love her as a human being. And, and I understand that people have these feelings. I, I--one of these...

MR. RUSSERT: But what about--what do those numbers tell you?

MR. CARVILLE: Well, that people think she's smart, experienced, tough and not a particularly likable person. I--I'm just saying from my standpoint, I agree with all that, I think she's a very likable person. I'm crazy about her, and it breaks my heart, but I don't deny the numbers.

MR. RUSSERT: Does likeability matter in an election?

MS. MATALIN: And, and this personality contest is not over. We all know so well John McCain's life narrative, and we're all goo-gooing and swooning over the Obama life narrative. He's young and he's hip and he's cool. But John is hip and cool in his own way. He's not young, but he's old in the way that is the best of what this country is. He's stood up with such courage to an adversity, a savagery the likes of which most of us can't even imagine. That life narrative that's old, it's a product of old, is a better narrative than young, hip, new, which is essentially different. He's just different. He may be the face of the future, but John's old face is the best of what this country is.

MR. MURPHY: Well...

MR. RUSSERT: So to try to take advantage of old.

MS. MATALIN: This story that--these personality contests are not over yet.

MR. MURPHY: Well, young, hip and new is clearly my department here, so--no. Look, Obama is terrifically powerful as a pop phenomena right now in the center of the country, but so was the hula hoop. And the question is, is it a fad or is it a real movement? This is the beginning of where these general election campaigns, the campaigns that counter prosecuted from. And McCain has a great story. The word I saw on McCain was honesty. And that is as much of a change of how people perceive broken politics now as anything else. That is McCain's ace card. Obama has a lot of energy...

MR. CARVILLE: But...

MR. MURPHY: ...and it is a little bit of a tragedy what's happening with Senator Clinton.

MR. CARVILLE: Very good point.

MR. MURPHY: It's just the level into the future is somebody...

MR. CARVILLE: Bob:

MR. SHRUM: You see us now sorting ourselves out on, on partisan divides. I want to go beyond that for a minute. I think John McCain's a very appealing person to people. I think that, while his record doesn't always support it, there's a sense of independence, a sense of a guy who will stand up for what he believes. I agree with James. Hillary Clinton is a much more attractive human being, at least as I have known her on occasion...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: ...than she's been portrayed in this campaign. And the time she's done best in the campaign is when she's been herself. I would not discount the power of what Obama has. He's touched a responsive chord in people, much as John Kennedy did, much as Ronald Reagan, who was much older, did. Somehow

or other he's speaking something Americans deeply feel.

MS. MATALIN: (Unintelligible).

MR. RUSSERT: But does inexperience...

MR. MURPHY: Yeah.

MR. SHRUM: Well, that 45 percent inexperience. I notice when you went down the...

MR. RUSSERT: That's 45 individuals, is...

MR. SHRUM: Right, 45 percent saying inexperience, that's probably sort of the vote that's going to be against him if he's running. I mean, he's, he's not going to get more than 55 percent of the vote. It's the easiest thing to say about him.

And one of the things that's interesting to me is that people ought to ask this question comparatively; does he have enough experience to be president, rather than is he inexperienced.

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: Because in 1960, people would've said Kennedy was relatively inexperienced, but he had enough experience to be president.

MR. CARVILLE: Tim, I be, think, first of all, if Senator Obama--I think Senator McCain is an admirable man. He has 59 lobbyists in his campaign. I mean, idea that he's going to be some kind of reform thing when this is over is, is not going to play out. And the second thing is, whoever the Democrat that runs against Senator Obama, the slogan of this campaign should be, "if you liked the last eight years with John McCain, you're going to love the next four." I mean, that, that he has an, essentially, a, a continuation of the Bush economic policy...

MR. MURPHY: That's harsh.

MS. MATALIN: Yes.

MR. CARVILLE: ...and the Bush foreign policy.

MR. SHRUM: That's harsh.

MR. MURPHY: If the McCain campaign allows them to get away with that...

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. MURPHY: ...that'll be the fundamental fail...

MR. CARVILLE: But then tell me where...

MR. MURPHY: Nobody is a more different--(clears throat) excuse me, kind of, I'm getting choked up I'm so moved by this.

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. MURPHY: A more different kind of Republican than John McCain. And to say McCain is the capital of lobbyists...

MS. MATALIN: Right.

MR. MURPHY: You ask any Republican lobbyist in town, there is no Republican senator more disliked...

MR. CARVILLE: Well, why have 59 in his camp?

MS. MATALIN: All right.

MR. MURPHY: Well, Obama has a ton of lobbyists advising him. So does Hillary Clinton.

MR. CARVILLE: I'm just saying. All I'm...

MR. MURPHY: Doesn't mean they run their campaign.

MR. CARVILLE: I'm making the point that he wants to continue the Bush economic policies. He wants to continue the Bush foreign policy. And, by the way, what's wrong with that? If you liked the Republican rule of the last eight years, you'll like John McCain, you're going to love the next four. He is an admirable man.

MS. MATALIN: So easy. I pray they go there.

MR. MURPHY: "Continue" is not a fair word for what he wants to do.

MS. MATALIN: You forget what a problems John McCain had in the primaries because he wasn't a Bush Republican. He's now getting those conservatives, but you can't switch--you can try.

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MS. MATALIN: But you're not going to be successful.

MR. CARVILLE: But you're saying he's become more of a Bush Republican.

MS. MATALIN: No, I'm saying he's becoming...

MR. CARVILLE: That's how he's being successful?

MS. MATALIN: ...an articulate conveyor of conservative economic thought.

MR. SHRUM: He had--he had--he even had problems with Mary.

MR. MURPHY: Ask Rush Limbaugh what a Bush Republican he is.

MR. CARVILLE: Right.

MR. SHRUM: Let me make an off-the-wall prediction about John McCain, that if he becomes president, he's going to look at the situation, he's going to say, "Given my age, I'm going to be a one-term president." And to the discomfort of Republican conservatives, he's going to go off and make some kind of deal on the tax cuts so that he'll get some of them extended, let some of them expire. And to the discomfort of Democrats, he may go off and bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran. I mean, this is a guy who, if he decided to be a one-term president, could be himself and just do what he wanted. And I agree with Murphy, he actually doesn't really fit these categories in one sense. He's uncomfortable with some of the conventional Republican stuff, even when he mouths it.

MR. RUSSERT: Well, then what that means is his vice president selection's all important.

MR. MURPHY: It's very important. It's...

MR. RUSSERT: Who's he take, Mike Murphy?

MR. MURPHY: You know, I have--maybe Shrum, after that sales pitch. But I don't know.

MR. SHRUM: That's not a sales pitch. I don't want to bomb Iran.

MR. MURPHY: There's no, there's no, you know, there, it's the beginning of the beginning. If I had--look, there are a lot of good governors out there. Pawlenty, Charlie Crist, Tom Ridge, I think in some ways is attractive because McCain really likes him, he's a totally vetted adult, there're good Pennsylvania politics there.

MR. RUSSERT: But he's pro, he's pro-abortion rights.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, but McCain is pro-life, and it's a bounce party.

MS. MATALIN: (Unintelligible).

MR. MURPHY: I mean, I don't know. I think it's too early to tell. I guarantee you this, though.

McCain--knowing McCain, though, McCain will come down from his cabin out there in Arizona and he'll have his list, which will be Warren Beatty, Jay Leno. It'll be highly entertaining, but there will be some great patriots on there. One of them will be picked, will be a terrific ticket, and it'll win if they run the right center campaign.

MR. RUSSERT: James Carville.

MR. CARVILLE: I, hey, it's not going to be Tom Ridge. If the Republican Party is not going to have a pro-choice vice presidential nominee. That's not going to happen.

MS. MATALIN: We'll see.

MR. CARVILLE: He might, he might have a conversion, as George H.W. Bush had in 1980, but short of a conversion, that's not going to happen.

MS. MATALIN: It--what affects abortion are the courts, and John has a good record on abortion. Ridge would be a good pick. But the most important thing for John McCain is, given his personality and the nature of governance, is it has to be somebody he trusts, can work with, not looking over his shoulder, not setting up his agenda...

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MS. MATALIN: ...to run in four years. That relationship is the most important.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, with McCain it's all about good guy who can be president and not a jerk...(unintelligible).

MR. RUSSERT: James Carville, there's a conventional wisdom that either Obama or Clinton emerges the nominee, they have to ask the other to be the running mate. Do you buy into that?

MR. CARVILLE: No. It's, but it's not unprecedented. I mean, Kennedy and Johnson and Reagan and Bush and Kerry and John Edwards. But I think both, I think Democrats are very happy with--they're, both of these candidates have very high favorables within the Democratic Party. I hope and expect that once we settle on a nominee that we're all going to get behind that nominee. I know that's clearly my intention, and every other Democrat I know.

MR. SHRUM: That's what, that's what's going to happen, but, no, I think Hillary might be under more pressure to pick him than he would necessarily be to pick her. But it could happen.

MR. CARVILLE: I don't think, I don't--yeah.

MR. RUSSERT: Well, if Obama's campaign has turned the page, and you can't send the same people back, the same old problems...

MR. MURPHY: They can't pick her, I don't think. I think it just ruins his theme totally. Plus...

MR. SHRUM: I was trying to say that mildly.

MR. MURPHY: ...she'd never--yeah, yeah. No, you got to live in Democratic politics.

MR. RUSSERT: So who should Obama pick?

MR. MURPHY: I, I'm always the--an adult who can win a state, or the anti-war general thing is kind of interesting on, in theory. It's very hard to find a general who's a good politician. So, I...

MS. MATALIN: Sam Nunn is the, kind of has that.

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, you know, Zinni is the, it just--that, that, that's a little too clever by half, the anti-war general, because most--well, anybody over three star kind of is a politician. But to be a real electoral politician is something. So you're, you're, you know, Bayh is, Chris Dodd, maybe, a Senate guy again. You'd get into that change/not change thing, but an adult.

MR. CARVILLE: What about--yeah, I mean, Evan Bayh?

MR. MURPHY: Yeah, Evan Bayh.

MR. CARVILLE: You know. I mean, he might go and there would--yeah.

MR. MURPHY: That would be strong.

MR. SHRUM: I think, I think, I think he would look outside of conventional politics to Anthony Zinni, the general. He might look to Wes Clark, by the way, who I think came out of '04 as a much better politician than he went into it.

MR. CARVILLE: Could be.

MR. RUSSERT: We got to go. And we're going to--a lot more of this discussion on Take Two on the Internet, with some "Saturday Night Live" highlights and your reaction to them.

Coming next, our MEET THE PRESS minute. Forty-three years ago, William F. Buckley was on this program, running for mayor of New York. He died this week at age 82. We'll be right back with Bill Buckley.

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: And we are back.

William F. Buckley Jr. died this week at the age of 82. The author of more than 50 books, 5,000 newspaper columns and founder of the National Review. He appeared as a guest on MEET THE PRESS three times, right here in 1965 when he was a candidate for mayor of New York City.

(Videotape, October 17, 1965)

MR. GABE PRESSMAN (NBC News): Mr. Buckley, you once called Harry Truman the nation's most conspicuous vulgarian. You said of General Eisenhower that when he touches a subject, every ray of light, every breath of air is choked out. Of the Kennedy administration, I quote you: "There are not enough psychiatrists in the country to cure this crazy administration." And you called President Johnson "Uncle Corn Pone." In view of your opinions of the last four presidents of the United States...

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, actually, I didn't say that about Kennedy. I don't know who did. I said the other three, though.

MR. PRESSMAN: Right.

MR. BUCKLEY: I'd be glad to elaborate on them.

MR. PRESSMAN: Well, in view of your opinions of three of the last four presidents, then, what do you think of the American voter?

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, I think the American voter is often, often has intuitions which are better than those of their own presidents. That is to say, I think that presidents tend to, during the recent period, tend to have drawn more strength from the voters than the voters from their presidents. As Franklin Adams once said, "I think the average American is a little bit above average." And under the circumstances, I rejoice over the influence of the people over their elected leaders, since, by and large, I think that they show more wisdom than their leaders or than their intellectuals. I've often been quoted as saying I would rather be governed by the first 2,000 people in the Boston telephone directory than by the 2,000 people on the faculty of Harvard University.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: William F. Buckley Jr., a true intellectual and a unique American character. He is in our thoughts and prayers. And we'll be right back.

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: Two Web extra this afternoon. Stay with MSNBC, NBC for Tuesday's coverage of the primaries. We'll be back next week. If it's Tuesday, it's MEET THE PRESS.

URL: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23434169/page/2/>

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